



# 3

## Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods

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## 3.1 Context

The availability of good quality affordable housing in a manner that is socially inclusive and supports good placemaking is essential to meet the needs of a growing city. The Development Plan provides the framework for housing integrated with transportation infrastructure and linked to employment opportunities. It ensures that a policy framework supports the co-ordination of housing with essential services, amenities and community facilities. This approach reflects national and regional policy supporting increased city living, compact growth and vibrant and healthy communities. It supports a reduction in the city carbon footprint by reducing car dependency and the need to travel. The plan gives more certainty for investment decisions by both the private and public sector. A strategic goal of the plan includes to facilitate social inclusion in housing and access for all to the wider environment as part of an equal and inclusive city. This goal is reflected in the policies supporting housing and sustainable neighbourhoods.

As set out in the Core Strategy, the settlement strategy for the city is focussed on regeneration of brownfield and under-utilised sites which have scope for a significant quantum of residential development and development of sites identified for residential led development by reason of their optimum location proximate to existing services and public transport, cycle and pedestrian networks. It includes the Ardaun LAP area, a nationally designated Major Urban Housing Delivery Site (MUHDS) and includes for consolidation within existing suburban housing areas, mainly located in Ballyburke, Ragoon, Castlegar and Doughiska.

A Housing Strategy which includes a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) has been prepared as part of this plan (see supporting documents). It reviewed trends in supply and demand in the city and sets out the projected housing needs over the plan period. It also reviewed the need for specialist housing options.

National policy on housing, *Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland* sets out a road map for the delivery of housing over the next 10 years. It has a target of delivery of 33,000 homes nationally per annum broken down into private sector owner/rental housing, social housing, affordable housing and cost rental housing. The Local Authorities, Land Development Agency (LDA) and Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) will be major players in new housing delivery. Reuse of vacant housing stock and upgrade and retrofit of existing stock meeting climate action objectives as well as housing demand are also key measures.



The policy framework for housing and sustainable neighbourhoods has been assessed through SEA and represents a sustainable settlement option supporting appropriate densities and a compact urban form. The plan includes the requirement to prepare Local Area Plans, Masterplans / Framework Plans and design briefs/statements. These will assist in setting out guiding principles for development to secure high standards in design and layout, to create well connected and permeable neighbourhoods and to ensure the protection and enhancement of existing residential amenity.

## 3.2 Housing Strategy

Planning Authorities are required to prepare and integrate Housing Strategies into their Development Plans. In general, the purpose of a Housing Strategy is to ensure that the housing needs of the existing and future population are met. Plan policy informed by the Housing Strategy seeks to ensure that housing need across all tenures is met for people of different levels of income, including social, affordable and cost rental housing and specialist housing, housing for owner occupation, private rented accommodation and student accommodation. A mix of house types and sizes to satisfy the requirements of various categories of households is supported. This includes the special requirements of older persons and persons with disabilities, the Traveller community and people who are homeless.

### Private Sector Delivery

A significant amount of housing need will be required to be met through the private sector. The Council takes a proactive approach through development management to facilitate private sector housing delivery and collaborates with key stakeholders to progress critical infrastructure delivery. Specific funding streams such as the URDF can also assist housing delivery through funding for enabling infrastructure.

The private sector also has a role in meeting social housing need through the Part V legislation, measures such as turnkey schemes, public private partnerships and in the private rented sector through schemes such as the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme and the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

Other measures to support housing delivery include the vacant site levy which is intended as a mechanism to incentivise the development of vacant sites, enabling them to be brought into beneficial use or encouraging their sale to those who have an interest and resources to develop. The Council continues to examine vacant sites which are suitable for housing and add to the existing Vacant Site Register where appropriate, in accordance with current legislation. Any future measures to introduce a levy for vacant buildings will also be implemented by the Council where appropriate.

It is also recognised that the reuse of existing building stock in the city can supplement housing delivery. Vacant or underutilised upper floor space above ground floor business premises and options for conversion of vacant commercial space to residential use have the potential for supporting residential use particularly in city centre locations and commercial hubs. Initiatives such as the *Housing for All, Croí Cónaithe (Cities) Fund* also support housing delivery.

## Social, Affordable and Cost Rental Housing

The HNDA calculates that 55.4% of households requiring homes during the plan period fall into the social (35%) and affordable (20.4%) categories. This reflects the lack of capacity to purchase houses in the private property market due in part by high existing property prices and rents in Galway City. Although household incomes in the City are relatively high by national standards, high housing costs result in relatively high numbers of households facing affordability challenges. With rents also estimated to grow at a slightly faster pace than incomes, requirements for affordable housing is forecast to grow over the plan period.

Measures to tackle affordability, introduced under *Housing for All* and the *Affordable Housing Act 2021*, includes the Affordable Purchase and Cost Rental housing and will contribute to meeting housing need in the city with delivery by Galway City Council, the LDA and AHBs. *Housing for All* has an increasing focus on the delivery of social housing through new build homes by the local authority, AHBs and through public private partnerships. Acquisition of existing properties will also continue to be a housing option, in particular to meet specific local housing solutions having regard to challenges such as location, design, cost or timescale for delivery. The use of HAP and to a lesser extent the RAS, will continue to play an important role in the city during the plan period, however it is envisaged that reliance on these will reduce as new build supply comes on stream. Changes in housing policy will also result in the phasing out of long term leasing options. Other measures to address the social housing need include supports for delivery through the voluntary and co-operative housing sector.

In support of sustainability and carbon reductions, initiatives such as the Buy and Renew and Repair and Leasing schemes to utilise vacant housing stock will play a role in housing delivery. Also, the extensive programme of deep retrofitting of council housing stock supporting energy efficiency and carbon reductions will continue during the plan period.



## Housing for Specialist Needs

Galway City Council owns and manages housing suited to the needs of diverse groups of people and works to allocate housing that is appropriate to individual needs. AHBs also provide for specialist accommodation. The need to facilitate independent living and supported community based living with maximum independence and choice for people with disabilities is supported by the Council through specialist housing provision and specific housing adaptation grants to enable people with a physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual disability to make modifications and adaptation to their homes. Additional supports for persons with disabilities are also provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and disability organisations to enable people to live in their own home as independently as possible, including personal assistance services and home support. The trend towards an aging population requires support to facilitate ageing in place with dignity and independence through specific new build. Adaptation and mobility grants funded by the Council assist modification of existing homes and enable older people to live independently. Universal design and lifetime adaptability supports both older people's needs and the needs of people with disabilities.

Supported and semi-independent accommodation options can enable independent living and when located within existing communities, allows for greater interaction and easier access to services. In line with the policy statement '*Housing Options for Our Ageing Population*' and '*Age Friendly Principles and Guidelines for the Planning Authority*' (*Age Friendly Ireland, 2021*) and the Galway Age Friendly Programme as updated, the Council will work to support older people in the city. An Age Friendly Technical Advisor within the Council advises both the Council and developers on age friendly and universal design principles in the design and construction process and a range of guidance is available to inform best practice.

Homeless Services are provided on a regional basis in accordance with the *West Region Homelessness Action Plan 2020-2022*. Within the region, Galway City Council has had the greatest number of homeless accessing accommodation. A Galway City local action plan sets out specific actions to be implemented in conjunction with service providers. Under *Housing for All* the government is committed towards the eradication of homelessness by 2030 and the Council will implement any new initiatives arising from *Housing for All* in conjunction with relevant stakeholders. The Housing First Programme for rough sleepers is a critical support to homeless persons utilising one bed accommodation units in the city with significant wrap-around supports provided by key agencies.

The City Council will also continue to play a role in conjunction with the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and key agencies in the provision of accommodation and supports to facilitate community integration for Refugees under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme 2020-2023 and any subsequent programmes.

Other specialist housing needs in the city includes student accommodation and the Council will continue to support the provision of purpose built student accommodation in appropriate locations to meet estimated student need and to free up capacity in the private rented sector.

The successful tourism economy of the city creates a high demand for tourist accommodation which impacts on house supply. The Council will continue to control short-term letting accommodation to prevent a negative impact on housing supply and / or an over-concentration of such uses. It is acknowledged that under current legislation, challenges exist for the Council in enforcing breaches in short-term letting. A change to the regulatory regime proposed under *Housing for All* is envisaged and the Council will adhere to any future requirements.

### Policy 3.1 Housing Strategy

1. Ensure that sufficient suitable lands are zoned to meet the extent of housing needs identified in accordance with the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) targeted population for Galway City, supporting compact growth and regeneration including the requirement that at least 50% of all new homes be delivered within the existing built-up footprint.
2. Facilitate the implementation and delivery of the Housing Strategy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2023-2029 to meet the identified housing supply targets for the city and to aim for housing choice to be available to meet all needs and incomes.
3. Require as provided for under the Affordable Housing Act 2021 and Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that 10% of lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, and any land which is not zoned for residential use or a mix of residential and other uses but in respect of which permission for the development of houses is granted, be reserved for the purposes of social housing.  
  
A further 10% shall be reserved for affordable housing in accordance with the aforementioned Acts and any relevant Ministerial guidance and regulations. Any subsequent amendments to the legal requirement to deliver 'Part V' housing during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy will be complied with. Delivery of 'Part V' housing shall be in accordance with relevant legislation and national, regional, and local policy.
4. Engage in pre-planning consultation with private sector developers to facilitate the delivery of housing in accordance with the vision for the housing sector as expressed in the national housing strategy Housing for All- a New Housing Plan for Ireland, the requirements of GCC Housing Strategy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment for Galway City.
5. Work in collaboration with the Land Development Agency to enhance delivery of the long term strategic needs for social, affordable and cost rental housing in the city.
6. Encourage and facilitate the delivery of housing on vacant sites through maintaining a Vacant Site Register and instituting the associated levy in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (as amended).
7. Support a diverse range of housing types, size and tenures within the City Council's housing developments in the interests of achieving good integration and to allow for a choice of community for all persons.
8. Support a diverse range of housing types, size and tenures and endeavour to meet the demand for Owner Occupier housing as projected in the Housing Strategy and the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA).
9. Support the specific housing needs of older people including independent living options as well as semi-independent living options and nursing home accommodation. These facilities should be preferably accommodated within established neighbourhoods and at locations that have good access to community facilities and amenities.
10. Enable older people to continue to live in their own homes, through adaption where necessary or a home more suitable to their needs through rightsizing.
11. Promote life time adaptable homes that can accommodate the changing needs of a household over time.

12. Proactively promote the specific housing needs of persons with disabilities within City Council and AHB housing developments in order to meet the demand for such special needs accommodation in the interests of social inclusion.
13. Address the demand for additional social housing and housing delivery supports through a number of means including the construction of housing, direct acquisition of housing, delivery in conjunction with AHBs and the use of the RAS, HAPs, long term leasing, on a cost rental basis, through affordable housing purchase arrangements, shared equity schemes and any other appropriate housing delivery. Long term leasing as a social housing delivery option will be considered as a less favourable model and in accordance with Housing For All, will be phased out for new entrants.
14. Work with the voluntary, community and public sector in addressing the housing needs of homeless people with the endeavour to eliminate homelessness and having regard to the measures in the West Region Homelessness Action Plan 2020 - 2022 and relevant national policy including those set out in Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland.
15. Encourage the provision of good quality, well regulated, affordable private rented accommodation in order to provide a real choice, stable and attractive housing option to meet the general demands for both short and long term accommodation including for those on social housing support.
16. Support and promote all initiatives that will supplement housing delivery in the city such as the Department of Finance Living City Initiative Scheme (2015); living over the shop type development and where appropriate change of use of vacant office space to residential use.
17. Support the development of high quality and high standard purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) at appropriate locations and of appropriate design (including adequate communal facilities and external communal space) to meet the demand for student housing in accordance with the National Student Accommodation Strategy (2017) and any subsequent updates. Change of use from PBSA to any other form of housing will only be considered where it can be demonstrated through evidence based criteria that an over-provision of student housing exists relative to existing and extrapolated need and where appropriate residential standards and amenities can be achieved.
18. Support the development of sustainable communities and ensure that all new housing developments - private, public and voluntary are carried out in accordance with the DECLG guidelines Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas (2009) and where applicable to apartments, Section 28 Ministerial guidelines - Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2020).
19. Support implementation of government policy in relation to the provision of accommodation for refugees and to facilitate community integration.
20. Planning applications for multiple housing units will be required to include a Statement of Housing Mix detailing the proposed mix and demonstrating that it provides a sufficient range in unit sizes and types to satisfy community mix including the demographic trend of reduction in average household sizes. The needs of special groups such as older persons and persons with disabilities will be required to be considered as part of this process.
21. Continue to monitor and review the HNDA as appropriate in accordance with guidance on HNDA methodology issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

22. Review the Housing Strategy two years following adoption as is required under legislation or at a sooner point should it be required in view of trends in the housing market or changes in national policy such as that which may come about following the preparation of revised national spatial policy.
23. Ensure the provisions of the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2019 and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 and any other future legislation and guidelines are applied where planning permission is required to control short-term letting accommodation to prevent a negative impact on housing supply and /or an over-concentration of such uses. Notwithstanding this, where planning consent is required under legislation for short term letting, there will be a presumption against allowing such a use in view of the status of the city defined as a rent pressure zone
24. Ensure delivery of housing contributes to meeting the objectives for emission targets in line with national legislation and imminent National Climate Action Plan.
25. Support service providers in the provision of domestic violence refuges in the city.

### 3.3 Traveller Accommodation

A mandatory requirement of the Development Plan is inclusion of objectives for the provision of accommodation for Travellers and for the use of particular areas for that purpose. The current Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) for Galway City covers the period 2019-2024. The TAP specifically deals with the accommodation needs of the Traveller Community, details of which are set out in the Housing Strategy. The TAP includes for accommodation to be provided through social and grouped housing and through refurbishment of existing halting sites. Traveller specific accommodation currently provided in the city and environs includes four permanent residential halting sites, one transient halting site and five group housing schemes. Standard City Council and AHB housing and accommodation through the RAS/Leasing and HAP schemes also caters for members of the Traveller community.

The Development Plan makes specific provision for Traveller specific accommodation in a range of land use zones which can facilitate achieving the recommendations contained in the TAP and in any subsequently adopted recommendations.

The Council will continue to work with the Traveller community and the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) to address their specific needs. It will also work with the DHLGH in the implementation of the relevant recommendations set out in the Traveller Accommodation Expert Review Report which was carried out in 2019 which seeks to improve the effectiveness of the arrangements for providing Traveller accommodation.





### Policy 3.2 Traveller Accommodation

1. Implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 and any subsequent plan in the interest of providing a satisfactory standard of suitable, sustainable accommodation that meets the needs of the Traveller community. Include for engagement in this regard with the Local Traveller Representative Group, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC), Galway County Council and AHB's.
2. Support and facilitate the specific accommodation needs of the Traveller community as identified in the Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2019-2024 through land use zoning objectives and the development management process, in particular to deliver Traveller accommodation as identified in the TAP, to be provided as part of social housing schemes, as group housing schemes, culturally specific housing and through redevelopment and refurbishment of existing halting sites.

### 3.4 Sustainable Neighbourhood Concept

The development of a compact city is characterised by the consolidation of existing neighbourhoods and the establishment of new neighbourhoods. Sustainable neighbourhoods are areas where an efficient use of land, effective integration in the provision of physical and social infrastructure and high quality design are combined to create places where people wish to live, have a sense of belonging, foster community spirit and feel socially inclusive and safe. Sustainable neighbourhoods support a diverse society providing housing choice and affordability for people of all ages and abilities throughout their lifecycle. They contribute to a good quality of life presenting an attractive built and natural environment with good public space. The concept reflects the ambition for a 15 minute city where the daily needs of neighbourhoods, including local services, can be easily accessed within a 15 minute walk, cycle or by public transport. Higher level facilities such as those associated with the city centre/major employment hubs/major attractors would be more readily accessible by the public transport network. While the concept supports a mix of uses within a neighbourhood to support the resident population, it also takes account of the hierarchy of centres set out in Chapter 6, recognising that certain services are more appropriate at a particular location or at a certain scale and nature commensurate with catchment demand.

It is the policy of the Council to promote the neighbourhood concept in existing residential areas and in new developments. Table 3.1 and Fig. 3.1 sets out the framework of residential neighbourhoods in the city.

**Table 3.1 Indicative Neighbourhood Areas in Galway**

Outer Suburbs	Established Suburbs	Inner Residential Areas	City Centre Residential
<b>East</b> Ardaun LAP area Doughiska Roscam	<b>East</b> Renmore Mervue Ballybaan Dublin Road	<b>East</b> Bohermore College Road Lough Atalia	City Core Woodquay Long Walk Henry Street Area
<b>West</b> Knocknacarra Ballyburke Ballymoneen Letteragh	<b>West</b> Dangan Salthill Taylor’s Hill Westside	<b>West</b> Claddagh Shantalla Newcastle Fr. Griffin Road	
<b>North</b> Castlegar Tuam Road	<b>North</b> Tirellan Ballinfoile		

The *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2009* (SRD) and accompanying design manual and *The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2019* (DMURS) and *Permeability a Best Practice Guide, NTA (2015)* provide detailed design guidance in relation to what makes a sustainable neighbourhood. *The Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2020* and at local level the *Galway Urban Density and Building Height Study (UDBHS)(2021)* also provides useful guidance. The development management standards set out in Chapter 11 also gives guidance and standards to different areas. The key elements to consider in achieving a sustainable neighbourhood are further expanded in the following sections.

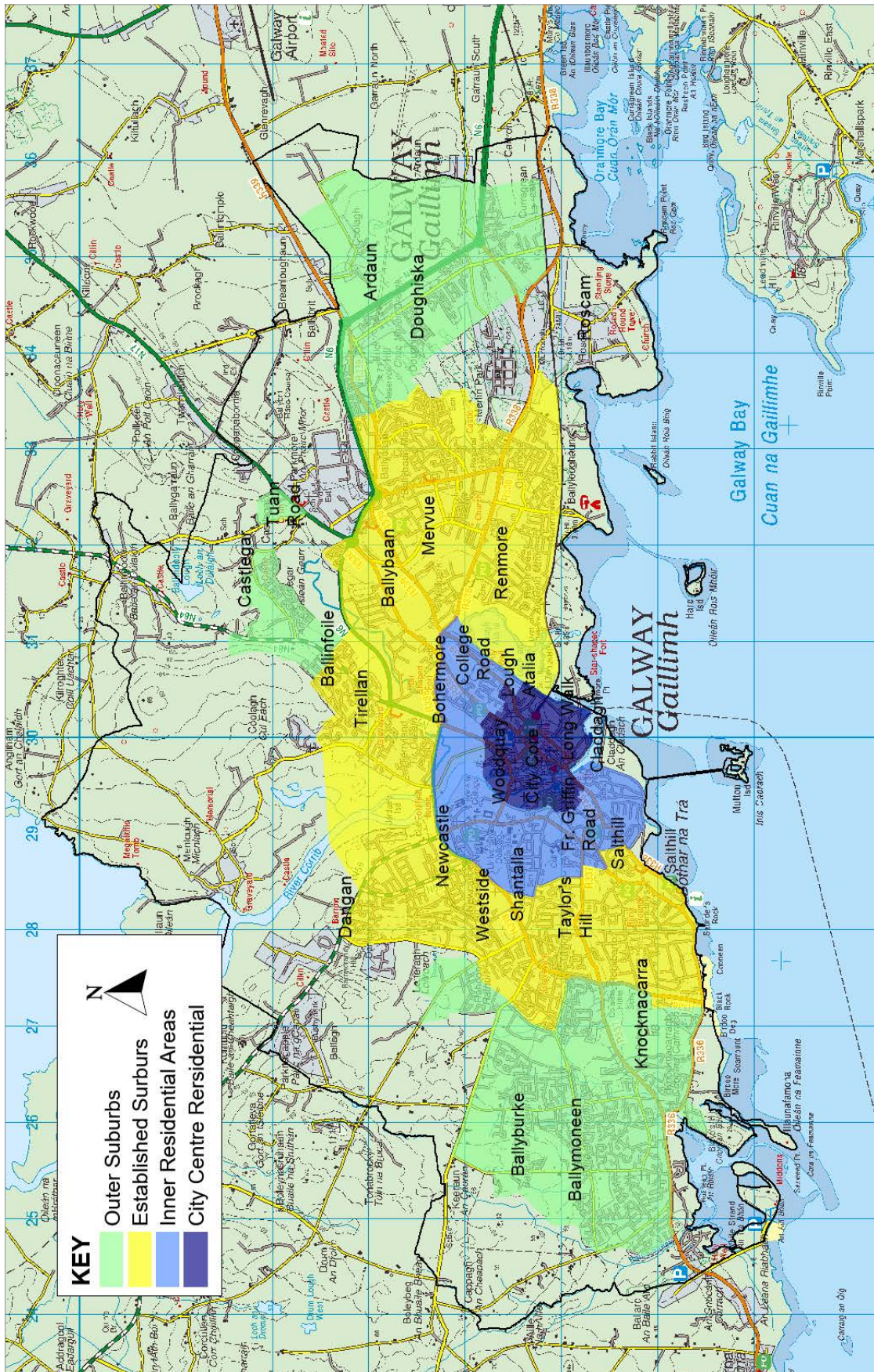


Fig 3.1 Galway City Neighbourhood Areas

## Urban Context

New residential development in both existing and new neighbourhoods will need to have regard to the surrounding context. In certain cases, residential development by virtue of scale or location, may be able to create its own character. In cases of infill, new residential development will need to have regard to the wider context including the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces and not adversely affect the character of the area.

Of importance also are the linkages between new housing and local services, the green network, public transport and active travel network. New residential development will need to consider the layout of adjoining developments supporting opportunities for connections between streets and open spaces, while establishing its own character and legibility.

Within existing neighbourhoods, designated residential open spaces which have a high amenity value and which are allied to existing residential developments will be protected for such use. Exceptions to allow for infill development will only be considered on underutilised lands which do not contribute positively to the urban structure and form and lack community value. Such infill development will only be considered where it contributes to placemaking and community, improves the quality of the neighbourhood and can enhance the built environment with better informal supervision of the public realm.

## Residential Densities

To support population increases and reflect national policy on compact growth and in order to render efficiencies from infrastructural investment, higher residential densities are required at appropriate locations, especially in conjunction with public transport facilities and active travel networks. Well designed and located high density housing can enhance the viability of services, reduce energy demand and add to the vitality and vibrancy of existing neighbourhoods and provides greater housing choice.

Guidance with regard to higher density residential development is set out in the *SRD* guidelines and the *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines (2020)*. In addition the *Galway UDBHS (2021)* gives direction on the suitability of different neighbourhoods in the city to accommodate increased densities. This study was carried out to accord with an objective of the *Galway Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)* and having regard to the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines. The capacity of areas to accommodate increased density was based on a range of criteria. This included scope for regeneration and consolidation, proximity to service centres and the green network, access to sustainable transport and scope to achieve carbon reductions. This approach has taken account of sensitivities including protected views, the historic city core, natural heritage and existing character and residential amenity. Application of density standards will be balanced with general criteria such as standards of layout and design, architectural quality and provision of open space. In the established neighbourhoods, residential densities will be required to be balanced with protection of existing residential amenity and character of these areas.

## Housing Mix

The creation of successful residential neighbourhoods is about the provision of opportunities for homes which respond to the housing needs of people at all stages of life and where communities can become established and grow. Providing a mix of house types and sizes supports 'lifetime communities' where people can access accommodation suitable to their needs over their lifetime within their neighbourhood. It allows for sustainable use of community services and increased social inclusion. It can also provide a more attractive residential development due to diversity of form. Proposed residential developments will need to provide sufficient housing mix to meet the requirements of different households and demographics and in particular to reflect emerging household trends. The provision of live-work homes to accommodate small enterprise and home working can add to housing diversity and will be considered having regard to impact on residential amenity, traffic generation and car parking.

## Housing Stock and Adaptability

Within all neighbourhoods, there is also scope for reuse/adaption of existing building stock for residential use. The Council will encourage the refurbishment of older buildings and the bringing of unused or underused buildings into use, or converting buildings from other uses to residential use supporting an increased population. The conversion of buildings from other uses to residential use will be considered having regard to the value to the neighbourhood of the existing use proposed to be replaced. Extensions and modifications to dwellings can enable people to meet their changing needs. Such development will be required to have regard to Development Plan standards, impact on surrounding residential amenity and also to consider the potential for sustainable benefits through design.



## Open Space and Amenities

The best open spaces are those which not only provide for safe play, passive and active recreation and relaxation but also contribute to the development of good placemaking and a sense of identity and community. Open spaces can support biodiversity and pollinator friendly species, they can assist in carbon capture and provide valuable habitat. They can also support nature based solutions in particular Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). To give new developments a context and identity, open space should be designed to incorporate existing natural features such as trees, hedgerows, slopes and rock outcrops. Open spaces should be well designed and integrated into the layout of development. They should be accessible, overlooked and allow for passive surveillance to maximise safety and security. They should provide an attractive outlook to the neighbourhood and serve a range of amenity functions and support biodiversity. Open spaces should be designed to complement Galway as a Child Friendly City through provision of appropriate recreation facilities and these measures will need to be incorporated into the open space design proposals.

## Streets and Movement

The layout of residential development needs to create spaces where the car becomes secondary and where the street has an important public realm function beyond the movement of traffic. Design principles and measures should consider the following:

- *Connectivity and Permeability:* Provide convenient access to places, particularly to schools and places of work. Routes within the area should be accessible for everyone including the needs of all users, including the elderly and people with a disability, and should be as direct as possible.
- *Sustainability and Climate Action:* Prioritise the needs of walking, cycling, public transport and minimise the need for car-borne trips. Incorporate green infrastructure such as SUDs and permeable pavements where appropriate.
- *Sense of Place:* Ensure streets contribute to the creation of attractive and lively mixed-use places. Streets should not just serve a movement function, their design should include consideration of appropriate opportunities for events and social interaction. The use of street names with a connection to the area can also reinforce a sense of place.
- *Safety:* Provide for safe access on streets, paths and cycle routes for users of all ages and degrees of personal mobility.
- *Biodiversity:* Provide road verges as linear green corridors. Off road routes should incorporate nature based and biodiversity features to support wildlife corridors and connections to the green network.
- *Legibility:* Ensure residents and visitors can easily find their way around the area.
- *Micro-climate:* the layout should be so designed to reflect the optimum micro-climate and to have the maximum impact on the level of comfort for users complemented by good quality hard and soft landscaping.

## Services and Community Facilities

Local facilities bring residents together and reduce the need for traffic movements. The Council through policy and zoning objectives will encourage the provision of community, commercial and local employment facilities of a scale appropriate to serve the local community supporting the 15 minute city concept. The clustering of services and facilities can facilitate viability where they are within walking distance of local residents and can create a focal point for the neighbourhood. The range of facilities can include schools, childcare facilities, community centres, primary health care centres and local commercial services. The use of existing facilities for multifunctional uses, including for evening use, can also assist viability and add to the vitality of neighbourhoods.

The provision of school facilities in tandem with large scale development is critical to supporting sustainable communities and reducing the need to travel. The planning system can facilitate the provision of schools through land use zoning and designation of particular sites. An assessment of the demand for school places and the capacity of nearby schools has been incorporated into design guidance requirements for large scale residential development.

## Universal Design

The application of universal design principles and lifetime adaptability in the design and layout of new development is more inclusive and future proofs housing for changes in individual lifecycles. This approach assumes that every person experiences barriers, reduced functioning, or some form of disability, either temporary or permanent, at some stage in life. It seeks to make public places and the built environment accessible, understood and used comfortably and with minimum effort and to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. Best practice guidance including *Buildings for Everyone* (2012) by the NDA provides guidance on the design of accessible spaces.

## Sustainable Housing

In the design and layout of residential development, there are opportunities to minimise energy use and maximise efficiency. New developments should aim to achieve high levels of natural daylight entering buildings to maximise daylight and sunlight including dual aspect design and orientation broadly to the south. Sources of renewable energy include solar panels and heat pumps can minimise energy demands. Opportunities for residential schemes or neighbourhoods to incorporate districting heating or Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems can also contribute significantly to improved energy efficiency. Use of green infrastructure such as green roofs and green walls and provision of shelter through planting should also be a consideration in design. In the delivery of housing the use of 'lean construction' practices can also support sustainability.

## Homezones

Within new residential development the Council will encourage the use of homezones. These consist of shared surfaces, indirect traffic routes, areas of planting and features to encourage the use of the street for amenity. These elements allow for traffic calming and include design features that are used to indicate to traffic the presence of a homezone. Homezones allow streets to become play and amenity areas and therefore can contribute to Galway's role as a 'Child Friendly City'. Detailed guidelines are available which demonstrate opportunities for homezones and give advice on their design and the range of elements required to create a homezone.

## Placenames

In the development of new neighbourhoods, the naming of places and areas contributes to the legibility of the city. Naming can reflect local neighbourhood identity, heritage and cultural associations and can be important in knowledge, orientation and travel function.

The naming of new residential developments in the city reflects the locality, local heritage and landscape expressed in the Irish language. In the interests of community identity and legibility, naming of parks, community facilities and roads is also promoted, using a bilingual approach.

### Policy 3.3 Sustainable Neighbourhood Concept

1. Promote the development of compact, well designed, safe and attractive neighbourhoods that deliver efficient use of land and have effective integration with social and physical infrastructure, including public transport, that will enable the development of successful communities and facilitate the growth strategy for Galway City as envisioned in the NPF and RSES.
2. Endeavour to contribute to decarbonisation and achievement of national emission targets in the housing sector through encouraging sustainable densities in housing, adherence to sustainable practices in construction, use of materials and standards, facilitating retrofitting, re-use and effecting Decarbonisation Zones that include residential areas.
3. Support neighbourhoods that can meet the needs of an aging and increasingly diverse society and that can accommodate social and physical inclusiveness and contribute to a good quality of life and general wellbeing.
4. Encourage sustainable neighbourhoods, through appropriate guidelines and standards and through the implementation of local area plans, masterplans / frameworks / area plans.
5. Encourage higher residential densities at appropriate locations as guided by the Galway Urban Density and Building Height Study (2021). Such locations include strategic Regeneration and Opportunity Sites, and residential and mixed use zoned sites located close to public transport routes and routes identified in the Galway Transport Strategy as suitable for high frequency, public transport services.
6. Protect and enhance new/existing residential neighbourhoods through appropriate guidelines and standards, preparation of framework plans and through the use of development briefs and design statements.
7. Ensure the design of residential developments have regard to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) and demonstrate compliance with the Urban Design Manual-A Best Practice Guide and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019).
8. Support through policy and design standards the concept of a '15 minute city' where the daily needs of communities can be accessed within a 15 minute walk, cycle or by public transport.
9. Ensure designated residential amenity open spaces, which are in use and reflect high residential value and are allied to existing residential developments are protected for such use. Exceptions to allow for infill development will only be considered on underutilised lands which do not contribute positively to the urban structure and form and lack community value. Such development will only be considered where it contributes to place making and community, improves the quality of the neighbourhood and can enhance the built environment with better informal supervision of the public realm and can, where housing is part of the proposal, provide a mix in size and type of housing units.



### 3.5 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Outer Suburbs

The outer suburbs of the city are areas which have accommodated the greatest population growth in the city in recent years. As indicated in the Core Strategy, there is opportunity to further consolidate these neighbourhoods through the development of existing serviced and zoned residential land and through development of the Ardaun LAP area. New residential development will be required to adhere to the principles for sustainable neighbourhoods set out in the previous section and development management standards set out in Chapter 11. The Council will work in conjunction with stakeholders to progress improvements such as provision of additional sports, recreation and community facilities. The Council will also progress measures to improve connectivity, supporting safe walking, cycling and greenways. A new Greenspace Strategy and a social and community infrastructure audit will inform future sustainable development of these areas.

The western outer suburbs largely comprises the Knocknacarra, Ballyburke, Ballymoneen and Letteragh residential communities. These suburbs have a mix of densities, house types and sizes with newer developments in particular along the Western Distributer Road, Ballymoneen Road and Letteragh accommodating a greater diversity in house type. Local centres are designated to provide services to meet the daily needs of the resident population. The designated district centre at the Gateway Retail Park provides the main cluster of commercial activity to serve these neighbourhoods and a wider catchment. The area is also served by a number of important community facilities including schools, a community centre and church. The green network for this area includes the city park linking Barna Woods, Cappagh Park and Lough Rusheen and smaller parks and open spaces.

Under the Core Strategy, residential zoned lands are identified to accommodate new housing in the western outer suburbs. To support this growth, the designated district centre and I zoned lands will provide for further services and employment opportunities. Additional strategic facilities such as the proposed N6 GCRR will provide additional accessibility and connectivity in the area in addition to identified investment in other GTS measures to support public and sustainable transport.



The northern outer suburbs include residential communities along the Headford Road at Ballinfolle and Castlegar with a mix of densities and diversity of house type. This area is served by two local service centres with the main area of commercial activity located along the Headford Road serving a wider catchment. It is also proximate to existing employment areas including University Hospital Galway (UHG), NUI Galway and Liosban Industrial Estate. A number of schools, places of worship and a community centre are part of the community infrastructure of the area. The green network in this area includes the Terryland Forest Park and river valley and a network of smaller parks and open spaces. The Core Strategy identifies residential zoned lands to accommodate future growth and a number of specific development objectives set out in Chapter 11 section 11.2.8 relate to these lands. Future development of the commercial

zoned lands along the Tuam Road will provide for additional services and employment opportunities to support this growth. The preparation of an area plan for Castlegar will consider improved connectivity, infrastructure and linkage including to the green network and will investigate opportunities for improvements in community facilities, recreation amenities, high quality green spaces, and other neighbourhood assets in consultation with local stakeholders.

The eastern outer suburbs represent the newest suburbs in the city. They are characterised by the residential communities of Doughiska, Curragrean and Roscam with a diversity of housing. These suburbs are well served by the Doughiska district centre and local services and are proximate to large employers including Merlin Park Hospital, Galway Clinic and Briarhill/Parkmore employment hubs. The area is also served by a number of important community facilities including schools, places of worship and the Cumasú centre. The green network in the area includes Merlin Park Woods, recreation and amenity zoned lands sports facilities, playgrounds, open spaces and playing pitches. There are opportunities for future housing growth in this area to consolidate the existing neighbourhood of Doughiska to capitalise on its locational advantages and range of services. Development of the commercial zoned lands along the Doughiska Road will add to the mix of uses and services.

The development of Ardaun is a key urban extension on the east side of the city. It is part of the settlement strategy of the city with the capacity to accommodate significant growth and a new city neighbourhood. The Ardaun Local Area Plan 2018-2024 sets out a range of policies and objectives to guide the future development of this area.

### Policy 3.4 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Outer Suburbs

1. Facilitate consolidation of existing residential development and densification where appropriate within the outer suburbs to deliver on population targets while ensuring the reasonable protection of the residential amenities.
2. Ensure that sustainable neighbourhoods are places where housing, streets, open spaces and local facilities come together in a coherent, integrated and attractive form with appropriate community infrastructure delivered in tandem with new growth.
3. Require the integration of biodiversity measures, green infrastructure and energy efficiency in the design and layout of residential development.
4. Encourage a mix of housing types and sizes within residential developments.
5. Encourage the use of homezones within residential developments.
6. Require residential developments of over 10 units to provide recreational facilities as an integral part of the proposed open space.
7. Ensure the design and layout of residential developments has regard to adjoining developments.
8. Encourage the promotion of universal design principles and lifetime adaptability in the design and layout of residential developments.
9. Promote the use of appropriate placenames for new residential development in accordance with the policy of An Coiste Logainmneacha and in support of recognition of Galway City as a Bilingual city.

## 3.6 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Established Suburbs

Galway has a variety of established suburbs, all of which contribute to the diversity and character of the city. On the westside of the city are established residential areas of Salthill, Taylors Hill, Westside and Dangan which are supported by employment and service hubs such as Salthill village, Westside district centre, UHG and NUI Galway. Significant amenities include the River Corrib, coastline, beaches, Westside sports facilities and NUI Galway campus facilities. A number of neighbourhood parks and open spaces and community facilities such as Westside library and community centre and local schools contribute to sustainable neighbourhoods. On the east side are established residential areas of Ballinfoile, Tirellan, Mervue, Renmore and Ballybaan. These areas are also supported by a broad range of commercial, community and amenity facilities including employment and service hubs at Terryland, Liosbán, Tuam Road, Mervue Industrial Estate, GMIT and the Bon Secours hospital. These neighbourhoods have good access to amenities such as the River Corrib, Terryland Forest Park, Ballyloughane beach, Merlin Woods, Liam Mellows GAA facilities, Deacy Park, Mervue sports facilities and also have a range of neighbourhood parks and open spaces. The Ballinfoile/Castlegar community centre, Renmore Sports centre and Ballybaan resource centre and library and local schools also support a sustainable neighbourhood.

The character of these areas are varied but each area has an important function in the support of neighbourhoods through provision of homes and essential local services and community facilities. As indicated in the Core Strategy, there is opportunity to further consolidate these neighbourhoods through development of Regeneration and Opportunity Sites at Westside, Sandy Road, Crown Square and Renmore for residential and mixed uses. The development of these sites will provide opportunities to enhance the vitality of these neighbourhoods and support the 15 minute city concept being located in areas that have a significant legacy of accessible services. Within these Regeneration and Opportunity Sites there are opportunities to enhance services and amenities by encouraging the development of a range of mixed uses, good public realm and the creation of new linkages and connections to the green network. These sites, when redeveloped with appropriate densities and high quality design, have potential to become exemplars of good urban design and placemaking and will add to the value of the neighbourhood.

It is acknowledged that the established suburbs may require additional community and local services. Existing community facilities in the area will be supported where the need has been identified through a social and community infrastructure audit. It is anticipated that additional neighbourhood services will be delivered as part of the development mix on Regeneration and Opportunity Sites. Additional services can also be accommodated along main roads where these can support a local catchment need or add vitality to an existing hub. Such development will be required to assimilate into the neighbourhood fabric and respect and contribute to existing amenity and character.

Potential exists in the established suburbs for smaller infill development opportunities which can enhance the diversity of house type and contribute to local character. Infill development will be required to have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces and should not be of such a scale that represents a major addition to, or redevelopment of, the existing urban fabric. The protection of existing residential amenity and character is a priority but must be balanced with opportunities for sustainable high quality regeneration and appropriately scaled infill.

Such development will be required to demonstrate a positive contribution to the urban fabric, respect and contribute to existing amenity and character and deliver sustainable benefits. Similarly where replacement dwellings are proposed, the sustainable benefits must be clearly demonstrated and any such development must make a positive contribution to the area's urban fabric and amenity and character.

## Residential Neighbourhood Regeneration Areas

There are neighbourhoods in the established suburbs which have extensive tracts of communal open space lands. The scale and layout of the communal open space in these areas has created pockets of open space lands which are under-utilised and that do not contribute to the urban structure. This can consequently lead to these areas becoming derelict and attracting uses that have no community value. These areas can also represent latent opportunities to contribute to addressing the current housing crisis and to achieve a more efficient use of the built environment in the interests of sustainability and climate resilience. In addition, these areas have potential to improve neighbourhood character through enhancement of urban design. Through a high standard of infill development improvements in environmental quality can be brought about. This infill development could be in the form of community facilities and/or residential development. Such development can contribute to the quality of the neighbourhood and can enhance the built environment by providing effective linkages between residential areas, better informal supervision of open spaces and by diversifying the mix and size of housing units.

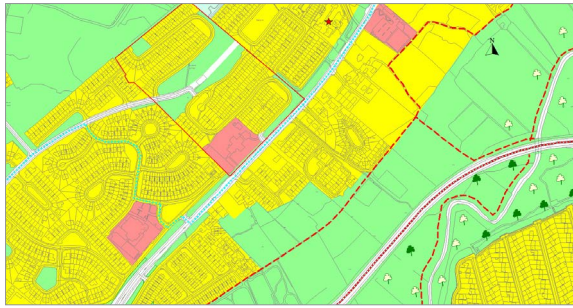


Figure 3.2: Ballinfoile

Specifically, there are opportunities to achieve improvements in the Ballinfoile neighbourhood as identified in the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile entitled A Better Ballinfoile. It highlighted a number of actions within the neighbourhood which if implemented would bring about significant improvements. Most of these actions have potential for delivery as they are located on public lands. It is an objective of the Council to review this plan in consultation with the community (see Fig. 3.2).

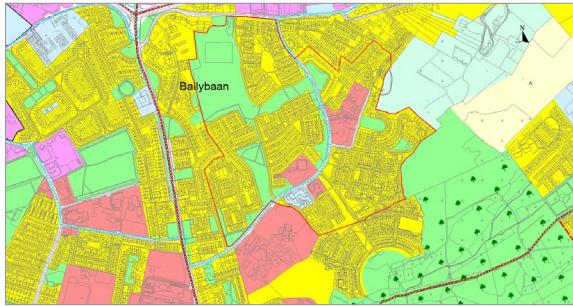


Figure 3.3: Ballybaan

In the Ballybaan area, there are opportunities to achieve improvements and potential for infill development (see Fig. 3.3). In this case opportunities for regeneration will be reviewed in particular on small pockets of open space which have low community, amenity and recreational value. A local regeneration plan will be prepared in conjunction with community consultation and any development will only be considered where it contributes to placemaking, community value and improves the quality of the neighbourhood. Where housing to address prevailing need, is part of the proposal, a mix in size and type of housing units will be required to be provided.

## Environmental Improvement Schemes

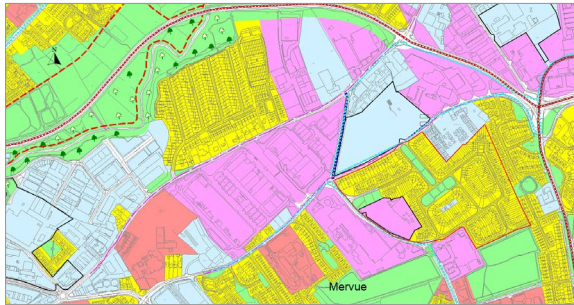


Figure 3.4: Mervue

There are opportunities to achieve environmental improvements in residential and visual amenity in the Mervue area. The Council will examine, in conjunction with local residents, the potential for environmental improvements for the Mervue area (see Fig.3.4) through enhancements in safety and convenience of linkages, enhanced public realm, urban greening and opportunities for green infrastructure and enhanced biodiversity.

## Decarbonisation Zone

A pilot decarbonisation project is currently under preparation for the area including Westside, Shantalla and parts of Ragoon. The aim of the project is to contribute to the reduction in emissions with the objective to achieve a target emission cut of 51% by 2030. New development should be so designed to align with target emission ambitions for this area.

### Policy 3.5 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Established Suburbs

1. Facilitate consolidation of existing residential development and densification where appropriate while ensuring a balance between the reasonable protection of the residential amenities and the character of the established suburbs and the need to provide for sustainable residential development and deliver population targets.
2. Encourage additional community and local services and residential infill development in the established suburbs at appropriate locations.
3. Enhance established suburbs, such as the Mervue residential area, through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes and the protection of all open spaces including existing green spaces.
4. Review and implement the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled A Better Ballinfoile in consultation with the local community and stakeholders.
5. Prepare a regeneration plan focusing on the open space areas in Ballybaan in consultation with the local community and stakeholders.

### 3.7 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Inner Residential Areas

The inner residential neighbourhoods have a varied character and a range of house types reflecting their period of construction. In the west, areas such as The Claddagh, Fr. Griffin Road, Shantalla and Newcastle are distinct communities and University Hospital Galway, NUI Galway and St. Marys College gives the area a strong urban definition. To the east Bohermore, College Road and Lough Atalia support residential communities. These areas have access to significant local assets including the coastline, a range of open spaces, sports facilities, schools and local service areas. The character of these areas are varied but each area has an important function in the support of neighbourhoods through provision of homes and essential local services and community facilities. As indicated in the Core Strategy, there is opportunity to further consolidate these neighbourhoods through development of Regeneration and Opportunity Sites along the Headford Road and Seamus Quirke Road for residential and mixed uses.

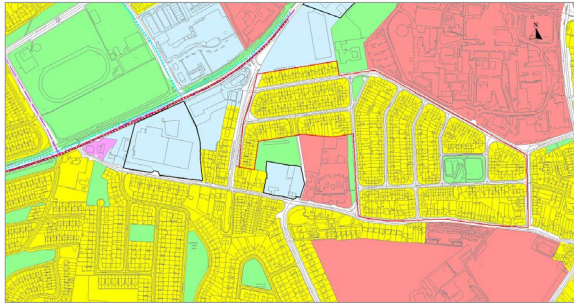
Significant regeneration opportunities for mixed use development exist in the Headford Road area. These regeneration sites in view of their scale and location, have capacity to create their own character with high quality architecture and can become exemplars of good urban design and placemaking. They have potential to make a transformative difference, creating a better urban form, bringing new life and footfall to the area and increasing housing supply close to the city centre. They can also support GTS measures providing easy access to the proposed public transport and active travel networks, including the proposed bridge link to NUI Galway and greater connectivity to the green network.

Identified Opportunity Sites along the Seamus Quirke Road and Shantalla Road have scope to grow existing communities. These opportunity sites have potential to add vitality to the neighbourhood, bring new life and footfall to the area and contribute to the 15 minute city concept being close to existing services and facilities and having good linkage.

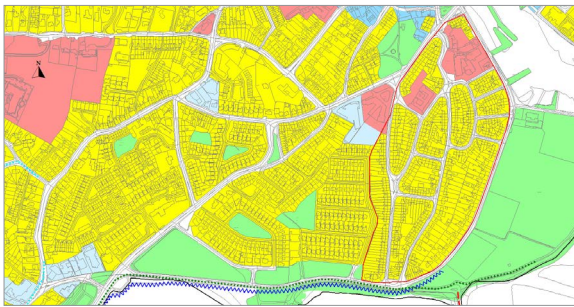
It is acknowledged that the inner residential areas may require additional community facilities and local services. Existing community facilities in the area will be supported where the need has been identified through a social and community infrastructure audit. It is anticipated that additional neighbourhood services will be delivered as part of the development mix on Regeneration and Opportunity Sites. Additional services can also be accommodated along main roads where these can support a local catchment need or add vitality to an existing hub. Such development will be required to assimilate into the neighbourhood fabric and respect and contribute to existing amenity and character.

Galway has a variety of house types in the inner residential areas, with a mix of private and public housing. Places such as Claddagh, Shantalla and areas of Bohermore provide valuable housing in strong sustainable communities close to the city centre. These areas are under pressure with demand for housing extensions and for limited infill development. They have also experienced considerable pressure from traffic and car parking which has reduced their residential amenity. It is recognised that these areas are dynamic and that potential still exists for some additional residential development which can make efficient use of existing public transport routes and social and physical infrastructure. It is the priority of the Council to ensure that new development will not adversely affect the character of these areas. In this regard infill development and housing extensions should not be of such a scale that represents a major addition to, or redevelopment of the existing urban fabric. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces. Infill development will also have regard to the scale and proportion of existing buildings, building lines, massing and height of buildings in relation to the street.

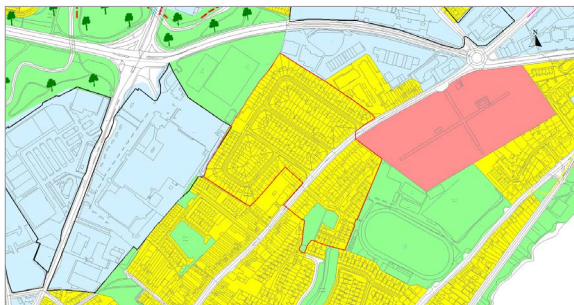
The protection of existing residential amenity and character is a priority but must be balanced with opportunities for sustainable high quality regeneration and appropriately scaled infill. Such development will be required to demonstrate a positive contribution to the urban fabric, respect and contribute to existing amenity and character and deliver sustainable benefits. Similarly where replacement dwellings are proposed, the sustainable benefits must be clearly demonstrated and any such development must make a positive contribution to the area's urban fabric and amenity and character.



**Fig.3.5 Shantalla**



**Fig 3.6 Claddagh**



**Fig 3.7 Bohermore**

It is recognised that these areas in particular, Shantalla, Claddagh and Bohermore, would benefit from improvements primarily in the pedestrian and street network. The application of objectives in the GTS and Galway Public Realm Strategy (PRS), in particular with regard to sustainable transport improvements, street planting and urban greening measures, can enhance the general amenities of these areas. These measures can also improve the health and wellbeing of residents supporting active travel and improved air quality through reduced car use on local streets. Other strategic projects such as the Corrib go Cósta Galway Flood Relief Scheme will ensure neighbourhoods, in particular the Claddagh, are resilient to the impacts of climate change.

### Policy 3.6 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Inner Residential Areas

1. Protect the quality of inner residential areas including Claddagh, Shantalla and Newcastle (to Quincentenary Bridge) by ensuring that new development through consolidation, infill and redevelopment does not adversely affect their character and has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.
2. Enhance inner residential areas such as Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore, through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes and the protection of all open spaces, including existing green spaces.

## 3.8 Sustainable Neighbourhoods: City Centre Residential Areas

As a residential area, the city centre is a very attractive place to live. It has a high quality built and natural environment and easy access to services, employment opportunities and arts and culture activities. The compact urban form and the network of streets also enables easy access and good walkability. The Plan, reflecting national and regional policy, supports a strong objective to increase the residential population and employment activities in the city centre. This will add vitality to the city centre and represents a sustainable and efficient use of land that will reduce car dependency. Increased city centre living also supports the city centre as an employment hub for strategic investment and innovation activity. Planned improvements to the public realm, GTS measures, climate adaptation and mitigation measures, and use of smart technologies, will further enhance the liveability of the city centre.

There are opportunities in the city centre to create new neighbourhoods and to expand and support existing communities. The redevelopment opportunities of the designated regeneration sites at Ceannt Quarter and the Inner Harbour area offer potential for large scale development, bringing new life and footfall to the area and increasing housing supply close to the city centre. Other identified regenerations sites in the city centre at Eyre Square East and the Nuns Island Masterplan area have scope to expand existing communities at these locations while taking account of sensitivities such as the historic context and existing residential amenity.

Communities such as Henry Street, Bowling Green, Long Walk and Woodquay contribute significantly to the vitality and liveability of the city core. These residential communities experience residual pressure by virtue of their location. To date Development Plan policies have endeavoured to protect them as resilient neighbourhoods. Opportunities for population growth in these residential areas are limited and any new development will be required to respect the existing character of these neighbourhoods in terms of density and building height. It is recognised also that certain city residential areas have experienced a reduction in residential amenity due to the impacts of adjacent city centre development. The implementation of the Public Realm Strategy (PRS) and the GTS and specific projects funded under the URDF will support improvements in city centre areas creating healthier spaces, encouraging social interaction and local community events, supporting active travel and improved air quality through reduced car use on local streets. Other strategic projects such as the Corrib go Cósta Galway Flood Relief Scheme will ensure neighbourhoods, in particular the Long Walk, are resilient to the impacts of climate change. There are also opportunities to implement greening measures through the development of parklets and micro spaces supporting SuDs and greater biodiversity. Amenity improvements in the green network and along the canals and waterways will also enhance these areas.



To support an increased city centre population, the Council will continue to ensure that residential is embedded in the use mix of schemes in order to enliven streets, increase potential for passive surveillance of the public realm and add life and vitality to the city centre. Exceptions to this may be made based on the limited scale of a site and its redevelopment opportunity. Within the city core, there is also scope for reuse/adaption of existing building stock for residential use, in particular the use of vacant upper floors of city centre shops and commercial premises. The Council will encourage the refurbishment of older buildings, bringing unused or underused buildings into residential use supporting both an increased population and also maintaining the built heritage of the city centre. Any such proposals will be required to respect the architectural and historic character of such buildings, in particular with respect to protected structures and buildings located within a designated ACA. The Council will continue to support initiatives such as the Living City Initiative which encourages refurbishment of older buildings for owner occupation in certain areas of the city centre.

### Policy 3.7 City Centre Residential Areas

1. Prioritise the provision of new homes on designated Regeneration and Opportunity Sites in the city centre at appropriate scales to enable the development of new sustainable city centre communities.
2. Protect and enhance established city centre residential communities by discouraging encroachment from commercial development and unacceptable infill developments.
3. Enhance city centre residential areas through implementation of environmental improvement schemes and improvements to the public realm, including, where appropriate, homezones and recreational facilities in conjunction with local residents.
4. Encourage the expansion of the city centre residential community by requiring a residential content in new development proposals.
5. Consider the redevelopment of the City Council car park at Bowling Green to meet social and/or affordable housing needs.

### Low Density Residential Areas

Low Density Residential areas (LDR) are areas of the city, which have been zoned for residential development at a lower density than other lands zoned residential. The prescribed residential densities in these areas are considered appropriate due to environmental sensitivity, deficiency in service provision, established residential pattern and significance of landscape. Given the diverse, unique and sensitive characteristics of these areas, each area requires specific development objectives which are outlined in Chapter 11.

### Policy 3.8 Low Density Residential Areas

1. Protect Low Density Residential Areas by reason of their character, environmental vulnerability and limited services capacity, and ensure new development has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.
2. Protect the characteristics of these areas through development standards and guidelines.

## Village Envelopes/Areas

Galway has retained a number of village settlements within the city. These are Menlough, Castlegar, Coolagh-Briarhill and Coolagh-Menlough. These villages have a historic pattern of development and have opportunities for sensitive infill development. It is Council policy to allow housing and limited local services or community facilities where they contribute to enhancing the area's character.

Menlough village and environs has a distinct character, informed by its location on the Corrib, historical pattern of development and vernacular buildings. The area has a significant natural environment including the Lough Corrib cSAC and SPA and Menlough Woods. The area has a rich built heritage which includes a 'clachan' settlement pattern and contains a number of thatched cottages which are protected structures. Menlough Castle is adjacent to the village and in conjunction with adjoining lands has potential for use for recreation and amenity purposes.

While the area still maintains a distinctive character it has potential for an increase in amenity and recreation facilities making it a valuable resource for the city. Its location adjacent to the Corrib and within walking and cycling distance of the city centre gives huge potential for the development of greenway and blueway networks to facilitate active travel. Potential also exists for community facilities, for limited local services serving the area and for improvements to the built environment through conservation and high quality new development. In recognition of this the Council will carry out, in conjunction with local residents, a plan which will have the aim to conserve and improve the distinctive quality of Menlough and explore the potential of the facilities of the area as a major asset to the city.

The consolidation of the existing residential community of Bothar an Coiste with the undeveloped residential zoned lands at Castlegar and commercial and residential zoned lands along the Tuam Road will provide opportunities to strengthen the identity of Castlegar as a neighbourhood. In this regard, the Council will carry out in conjunction with the local community, a plan for the area which will focus on objectives to enhance neighbourhood activity, build on the existing assets of the community and to protect and enhance the existing character and amenity of Castlegar.

The plan will consider and prioritise improved linkages, improved pedestrian, cycle and traffic movement, heritage enhancement, opportunities to enhance the green network and biodiversity, development of amenities and community facilities and design and layout of new development. The plan will take cognisance of strategic objectives in the area.

### Policy 3.9 Village Envelopes/Areas

1. Strengthen the character of specified villages through encouraging appropriate development. Vehicular access to Coolagh-Briarhill village shall be limited to the existing road access only. The objective for a proposed cycle network link from this road is indicative and an alternative alignment outside the village envelope is preferable.
2. Protect and enhance the character and amenity of Menlough and prepare a plan for the area, which will include for flood mitigation measures.
3. Reinforce the identity of Castlegar through protection and enhancement of existing amenities and through provision of additional community facilities.

## Mews Housing Development

Mews development contributes to efficient use of land and supports a compact urban form. Within the city there are limited opportunities for the development of mews housing. The development of mews housing must be designed in a co-ordinated manner and can only be achieved where there is no impact on existing residential amenity. The Council will examine certain areas of the city for potential for this type of development. Such development will not be permitted in advance of a co-ordinated plan for those areas which have potential for mews housing. Certain criteria must be adhered to and the development must have regard to the existing built form, the character of the area, the impact on residential amenity and must satisfy standards for access, open space and parking where applicable.

### Policy 3.10 Mews Housing Development

1. Prepare a co-ordinated plan for areas of the city which have potential for mews housing development in consultation with local residents.

## 3.9 Specific Objectives

### Specific Objectives

1. Prepare an environmental improvement scheme for the Mervue residential area that reflects good practice in urban design and includes for green infrastructure measures.
2. Prepare environmental improvement schemes for Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore residential areas that reflects good practice in urban design and includes for green infrastructure measures.
3. Prepare a regeneration plan for the open space areas of Ballybaan that reflects good practice in open space and urban design and includes for green infrastructure measures.
4. Review and update the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled 'A Better Ballinfoile' and implement actions where feasible and subject to funding.
5. Develop best practice advice and guidelines for the design of homezones.
6. Review guidance in conjunction with Recreational and Amenity and Environment Section on open space design, hard and soft landscaping, recreational facilities and biodiversity enrichment.
7. Prepare a plan for the Menlough area. This will include guidance on new design and conservation and will explore the amenity potential of the area.
8. Prepare a plan for the Castlegar area in consultation with local residents taking cognisance of strategic proposals in the immediate area.