

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held on Monday 6th December 2021 at 11.00 a.m. in Corrandulla
Sports Hall

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Peter Keaveney
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

Baill: Comh./Cllr. T Broderick, J. Byrne, I. Canning,
L. Carroll, J. Charity, D. Collins, D. Connolly, M. Connolly,
G. Cronnelly, D. Ó Cualáin, J. Cuddy, T. Ó Curraoin, A.
Dolan, G. Donohue, G. Finnerty; D. Geraghty, S.
Herterich Quinn, M. Hoade, P. Keaveney, D. Kelly, D.
Killilea, G. King, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion,
J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, A. McKinstry, P.J.
Murphy, Dr. E. Francis Parsons, A. Reddington, P.
Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

Apologies: Cllr. S. Curley, C. Keaveney, M. Kinane

Oifigh: Mr. L. Hanrahan, A/Chief Executive, Mr. G. Mullarkey,
Head of Finance, Mr. M. Owens, Director of Services,
Ms. J. Brann, Meetings Administrator, Ms. V.
Loughnane, Senior Planner, Mr. B. Dunne, Senior
Executive Planner, Ms. A. O Moore, Assistant Planner,
Ms. A. Power, Senior Staff Officer and Ms. C. Egan,
Assistant Staff Officer

At the request of Cllr. Hoade, Cllr. P. Keaveney invited her to address the Meeting. Cllr. Hoade advised that there were 3 no. Members who were regarded as “close contacts” in relation to Covid-19 and were not in a position to attend the Council Meeting today and therefore unable to vote on the Development Plan which is one of their most important functions as Councillors. She advised that she was making a proposal today that in advance of any further meetings, that an urgent CPG Meeting be held to discuss the holding of future Council Meetings and the proposed options available to Members. Cllr. McClearn supported Cllr. Hoade’s proposal and suggested going to full remote meetings or to hybrid meetings conducted from the Council Chamber. He suggested that if they could accommodate 13 no. Members in Council

Chamber and could rotate the Members as to whom attends on what day. He suggested that by specifically excluding people from taking part in the process may leave themselves open to a legal challenge in the future. He requested Mr. Owens to examine the matter to see if Members can be accommodated. On the proposal of Cllr. Hoade, seconded by Cllr. McClearn it was agreed that an emergency CPG Meeting would be held to discuss options regarding the holding of future Council Meetings. Mr. Owens advised that the Standing Orders as they currently stand allows for a meeting to be held in person or remotely. He advised that presently the Standing Orders do not allow for hybrid meetings to take place. Cllr. P. Keaveney advised that they would be having an emergency CPG meeting following today's Special Meeting.

Item No. 1: To consider the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received to the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 under Part 11, Section 12(5) and (6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

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Cllr. D. Connolly advised that the Members of Ballinasloe Municipal Area had a meeting via Zoom last night with regard to OPR Recommendation 9 – Rural Map/NPO 19 in relation to the extension of GCTPS to the east of the County and OPR mapping on Page 32. He advised that a motion had been submitted by him and seconded by Cllr. M. Connolly and queried if their motion could be dealt with in advance of consideration of other submissions. Mr. Owens advised that the OPR submission includes a recommendation in relation to the GCTPS and advised if the Members were not accepting that recommendation, they may forward an alternative motion and outline reasons for their decision. He further stated that if members wish to propose a motion on the matter, they may do so at that time. Cllr. M. Connolly advised that the submission in question has been dealt with on Page 283 in CE's report and stated that it was a cause of great concern for the Members of the Ballinasloe Municipal area. He stated that he considered that if the GCTPS was extended, it was going to result in devastation in the east of the county in terms of rural decline. Ms. Loughnane advised that the appropriate place to deal with this was when the meeting was discussing the OPR recommendation on Rural Housing and Chapter 4.

Mr. Owens advised that in accordance with the Clár the purpose of the special meetings is to facilitate the Members consideration of the Chief Executive's Report on Public Submissions to the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022 -2028 as previously circulated to the Members.

He confirmed that the statutory 10-week consultation period for the Draft County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 began on the 20th May and concluded on the 30th July 2021. The public consultation process was facilitated through a number of means including notices in the local print media and radio and a 10-week social media campaign. A number of events to encourage public engagement were also held

including public webinars on the 30th June and 1st July and a specific webinar for the Public Participation Network on the 22nd June 2021.

He referenced that the success of the public consultation process is clearly evident in that a total of 2,877 submissions were received including submissions from members of the public, Elected Members and Prescribed Bodies. 1,654 submissions were received predominantly relating to the Quiet Man Greenway, 537 submissions were received in Irish, and 723 submissions were received relating to the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy. All of the submissions remain available to view on the consultation portal consult.galway.ie

He welcomed the unprecedented level of public engagement in the process outlining that it demonstrates a shared commitment to the development of a plan that will underpin the continued planning and sustainable development of our county.

He outlined that Members have 12 weeks to consider the Chief Executive's Report on the submissions received and in doing so must take account of the statutory obligations of the local authority and any relevant policies of the Government.

He acknowledged the time and commitment that the Cathaoirleach and Members have afforded to the review to the Chief Executive's Report through their active participation in a series of 11 online workshops held over 8 days from Tuesday, 9th November and concluding on Thursday, 2nd December 2021. He also acknowledged the commitment and dedication of the Forward Planning Team supported by their colleagues in the Planning Unit for the work undertaken to date in the development plan process including their facilitation of the workshops. He stated that he was confident that the collective commitment of the Cathaoirleach, Elected Members and staff to the workshops and in particular the level of discussion and engagement facilitated through the workshops will assist greatly the consideration and decision making in respect of the 2,877 submissions

He outlined that as recommended by the Corporate Policy Group and agreed by the Members at the November Plenary meeting, a series of 8 meetings have been scheduled to facilitate your consideration of the CE's Report and Draft Plan. Due to public health concerns associated with Covid that in-person meetings will be restricted to a maximum time of one hour and fifty-five minutes. Therefore, the Executive in consultation with the Corporate Policy Group, will facilitate meetings as required by the Members, to conclude their consideration of the CE's Report and Draft Plan within the statutory timeframe and no later than Thursday, 13th January 2022.

He advised that following consideration of the CE's Report by the Elected Members and the making of amendments to the Draft County Development Plan, a 3-week period is allotted for the preparation of the amendments to the Draft, subject to where the proposed amendment(s) is (are) material, the Planning Authority must also determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment or an Appropriate Assessment or both, are required to be carried out (and the clock stops if necessary).

He confirmed that thereafter the material amendments only will be put on public display for a period of 4-weeks and made available for the public to view and make submission as required.

Mr. Owens acknowledged that the preparation of the County Galway Development Plan 2022 – 2028 is a significant function of local democracy that will guide the future development of our county. The role of the executive is to advise and assist the Members in incorporating the wide range of legislative and policy requirements that are relevant to the development plan process in your decision-making, ensuring that the Development Plan supports the delivery of the right development in the right place, at the right time and supports the securing of funding and investment resulting in a county and communities where people will wish to live, work, study, invest and visit.

He referenced that the planning system is a very open one allowing for input by all parties and that it was all the more important therefore that consideration of planning matters is carried out in a transparent fashion, follows due process, and is based on what is relevant while ignoring that which is irrelevant within the requirements of the statutory planning framework.

Prior to proceeding to consider the CE's Report and Draft Plan, Mr. Owens reminded the Elected Members of the provisions of Part 15 of the Local Government Act and the Code of Conduct for Councillors that provides the Ethical Framework for local government including provision for the disclosure of pecuniary or other beneficial interests.

He outlined that under the Act, Councillors must disclose at a meeting of the local authority any pecuniary or other beneficial interest, (of which they have actual knowledge) they or a connected person have in, or material to, any matter with which the local authority is concerned in the discharge of its functions, and which comes before the meeting. The Councillor must withdraw from the meeting after their disclosure and must not vote or take part in any discussion or consideration of the matter or seek to in any other aspect influence the decision making of the Council.

He confirmed that it is also necessary that where a Councillor has actual knowledge that a matter is going to arise at a meeting at which s/he will not be present, but if s/he were, a disclosure would be necessary, then in advance of the meeting s/he must make such disclosure in writing to the Ethics Registrar

He advised that the foregoing statutory requirements must be observed at all times, and failure to do so is an offence under Section 181 of the 2001 Act.

In addition to the disclosure of pecuniary or other beneficial interests, Mr. Owens outlined that there may be other private or personal interests (not necessarily involving financial matters) which can also pose a real potential for conflict of interest or damage to public confidence in local government. He advised that such interests must not be allowed to conflict with public duty or improperly influence the decision-making process. Where such interests, of which a Councillor is aware, arise in relation to a matter which comes before a meeting for consideration, they should be dealt with in a transparent fashion. This is necessary so that public trust and confidence in local government is upheld – disclosure of such an interest is invariably appropriate except where it is of a remote or insignificant nature, if in doubt disclosure should be made.

He detailed that the test to be applied by a Councillor is not just what s/he might think - but rather whether a member of the public knowing the facts of the situation would reasonably think that the interest concerned might influence the person in the performance of his or her functions. If so, disclosure should follow, and a Councillor

should consider whether in the circumstances s/he should withdraw from consideration of the matter.

He stated that Councillors must not seek to use their official position so as to benefit improperly themselves, their professional or business interests, or others with whom they have personal, family, or other ties. Likewise, they must not seek to use or pass on for personal gain or the personal gain of others, official information that is not in the public domain, or information obtained in confidence as a result of their public position.

Mr. Owens referenced the Local Government Act 2001 as amended outlining that it provides that it is the duty of every Councillor (and employee) to maintain proper standards of integrity, conduct and concern for the public interest. Councillors should base their conduct on a consideration of the public interest and the common good. They are individually responsible for being alert to a potential conflict of interest, avoiding such conflicts and for ensuring that their actions, whether covered specifically or otherwise by the Code of Conduct for Councillors, are governed by the ethical and other considerations implicit in it.

He advised therefore, that in the event that a Councillor wishes to declare a pecuniary or other beneficial interest or a potential conflict of interest, in a matter the subject of a submission or motion before the Meeting, they should prior to the consideration of the relevant submission or motion advise the meeting of the pecuniary or other beneficial interest or a potential conflict of interest and thereafter as appropriate withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the consideration of the submission or motion.

Mr. Owens outlined that the first submission to be considered by the Members is the submission from the Office of the Planning Regulator.

He noted that the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended gives the OPR a statutory basis to carry out three main functions including the evaluation of Statutory Plans. He advised that in accordance with sections 31AM and 31AO of the Act, the OPR has responsibility for independently assessing all statutory forward planning with a view to ensuring that the plan provides for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area concerned. This includes evaluating the county development plan. Firstly, the OPR provides the relevant planning authority with observations and/or recommendations regarding how a plan should address legislative and policy matters. He stated that once the OPR has provided statutory inputs to the plan-making process, the relevant planning authority must outline how such inputs will be addressed, taking account of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. It was noted that if an adopted plan is subsequently not consistent with any statutory recommendations, the OPR may issue a notice to the Minister recommending that powers of direction, specified under section 31 of the Act, be utilised to compel the planning authority to address the matter.

Mr. Owens advised that the OPR has evaluated and assessed the Draft Plan and has made a 43 Page submission. This submission contains 17 recommendations and 12 observations. He highlighted that it was important to note that recommendations issued by the OPR relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions, of the national or regional policy framework and/or the policy of Government as set out in the Ministerial guidelines under Section 28. As such the planning authority is required to ensure consistency with the relevant policy and legislative provisions.

He noted that observations take the form of a request for further information, justification on a particular matter or clarification regarding particular provision of a plan on issues that are required to ensure alignment with policy and legislative provisions. The planning authority is requested by the Office to action an observation.

He indicated that the Chief Executive's Report as required by Section 13 of the Act summarises these recommendations and observations and recommends a manner in which they can be addressed.

He outlined that at the end of this process, the Chief Executive is required to notify the Office of the Planning Regulator within five working days of the decision of the planning authority in relation to the draft Plan. He advised the Members that it was important to note that where they decide not to comply with the recommendations of the OPR or otherwise make the plan in such manner as to be inconsistent with the recommendations made by the OPR, then the Chief Executive shall inform the OPR and give reasons for this decision. Accordingly, should the Members decide not to comply with the recommendation of the OPR and the CE it shall be necessary to outline and agree the reasons for such decisions. He stated that to assist in this process a template for motions relating to the submissions from the OPR has been drafted and circulated to the Members. It requires the Members to outline their motion and in addition to detail the reasons for same. In the event that a motion contrary to the recommendation of the OPR or CE is adopted, the detail of the motion and the reasons for same as agreed by the Members will form the basis for the reply to the OPR on the conclusion of this stage of the process.

He also that that there is a further requirement should the planning authority decides not to comply with a recommendation relating to the submission from the Northern Western Regional Assembly the Council must inform the NWRA and indicate reasons for the decision. This requirement will be outlined in further detail prior to the consideration of the submission from the NWRA.

He informed the Members that it was important to note that the Members are restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development plan relates, the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government.

Mr. Owens proceeded to invite Ms. Loughnane, Senior Planner and Mr. Dunne, A/Senior Executive Planner to present the CE's Report commencing with the submission from the Office of the Planning Regulator and Recommendation No. 1.

Ms. Loughnane stated that a number of Workshops (11 No.) were held over the past three weeks and thanked the Cathaoirleach for hosting them and the Members for their participation in same. She stated that arising from these Workshops, there was awareness that concerns existed in relation to the OPR Submission. She stated that it was proposed to go through the OPR submission and explained that there were 7 themes identified in the OPR submission and they would go through these individually in relation to the Summary of the Submission, Chief Executive's Response and Chief Executive's Recommendation.

It was suggested that as each topic/theme from the OPR submission was being discussed that there would possibly be elements that the Elected Members would agree and other elements that may give rise to further discussion and review including the Core Strategy & Settlement Hierarchy and Rural Housing.

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Mr. Dunne stated that the submission from the OPR has identified 7 themes as follows:

1. Core Strategy & Settlement Hierarchy

The OPR wishes to acknowledge the considerable and evident work that Galway County Council has put into the preparation of the draft plan against the backdrop of an evolving national and regional planning policy and regulatory context and the establishment of the Office. The Office wishes to acknowledge the high standard of presentation and layout of the Draft Plan and supporting documents, which provide a clear and concise strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the county.

Reference has been made to the recent Ministerial Letter to Local Authorities relating to Structural Housing Demand in Ireland and Housing Supply Targets and associated section 28 Guidelines: Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning.

It is considered that the Development Plan has embraced a number of challenges and opportunities identified in the NPF, the RSES and the Galway MASP, by establishing a strong strategic approach to compact growth through the settlement hierarchy, by directing population and economic growth to the MASP, key towns and settlements in a balanced and measured way.

The Planning Authority is commended on the plan led approach to provide a vision for new growth areas and demonstrates the Planning Authority's commitment to provide vision for new growth areas. The provision of concise policies, land use maps and identification of opportunity sites for a significant proportion of the county's smaller towns and rural villages all support the National Strategic Objectives for strengthening rural economies.

Recommendation 1 – Core Strategy

The Planning Authority is required to review the proposed Core Strategy (including settlement strategy and associated identification of development potential and zoning exercises), Housing Strategy and HNDA, and to revise as necessary to comply with the requirements of the Section 28 Guidelines: Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning and Appendix 1 of the accompanying Ministerial Letter to Local Authorities

Mr. Dunne outlined the Chief Executive's Response as follows:

With respect to the ESRI research work "*Structural Housing Demand at County Level*" published on 14th December 2020, the "Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning" published by DHLG in December 2020, and the Ministerial Letter advising these publications as the most up to date approach towards demand

projection, this projection has been revised. According to this method, housing allocation over the plan period is to be calculated by not only relying on the population projection, but also factoring in two elements of supply and unmet demand in the county. The Core Strategy Table (2.9) will also be updated accordingly to take account of the revised housing allocation. The Core Strategy Table has also been updated to take account of mixed-use development in brownfield/infill sites in town centre/village centre. The policy objective and the purpose of such uses specifies residential use along with the primary policy objective (commercial) of that zoning.

In relation to the Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) and the associated Housing Circular 28/2021 on Affordable Housing Act 2021 - Part V Requirements will require amendments to **Chapter 2 Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy**, namely Section 2.5.

Mr. Dunne outlined that effective from 3rd September 2021, the Housing Circular 28/2021, amended Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The Programme for Government contained commitments in relation to expanding Part V to encompass affordable purchase and cost rental units and introducing affordable homes requirements to Part V. Part 6 of the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which was enacted on 21 July 2021, gives effect to this commitment.

The principal change to Part V effected by these amendments is to *increase the Part V contribution for new housing developments from up to 10% for social housing to a mandatory 20% requirement, at least half of which must be applied to social housing provision and up to half of which may be applied to affordable and cost rental housing.*

It is noted that these changes to Part V primarily apply to land purchased on or after 1 August 2021. Any new planning permissions for housing development on that land will have a 20% Part V requirement. However, a 10% Part V requirement will apply where land already has planning permission or was purchased between 1 September 2015 and 31 July 2021 and planning permission is granted before 31 July 2026.

As a result, Mr. Dunne stated that it is considered that there would be amendments to reflect the Circular in **Chapter 2 Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy** as outlined above.

Mr. Dunne outlined the following Chief Executive's Recommendation in response to the OPR Recommendation No.1:

It is considered stated that the aforementioned Guidelines will be included in **Chapter 2 Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy** and **Appendix B Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment**. It is recommended that the following text and table is amended and inserted in Section 2.3.6, 2.3.7 and 2.3.8 of Chapter 2 and Appendix B.

2.3.6 Population Scenarios at Settlement/County Level

In this policy intervention scenario, the above population targets are used as the fixed variables and then an interpolation of the required level of change per annum was developed from baseline year 2016 to NPF/RSES target years 2026 and 2031; thus, producing annualised figures over the period of 2022 and 2028 which is the lifetime of the Development Plan.

Year	Total Population in County Galway	Annual Population Increase during year	Annual Population Increase 2022-2028	Total Population Increase 2022-2028	Total Population Increase 2016-2028
2006	159,256	68.70%			
2011	175,124	69.90%			
2016	179,390	69.50%			
2017	182,001	1.46%	2,611		
2018	184,612	1.46%	2,611		
2019	187,223	1.46%	2,611		
2020	189,834	1.46%	2,611		
2021	192,445	1.46%	2,611		
2022	195,056	1.46%	2,611		
2023	197,667	1.46%	2,611		
2024	202,278	1.46%	2,611		
2025	2028,889	1.46%	2,611		
2026	205,500	1.46%	2,611		
2027	208,300	1.36%	2,800		
2028	211,100	1.36%	2,800	18,655	31,810
2029	213,900	1.36%	2,800		
2030	216,700	1.36%	2,800		
2031	219,500	1.36%	2,800	27,055	40,110

Table 2.7: Projected Population Growth Over the Plan Period based upon NPF/RSES 2026 & 2031 Targets

2.3.7 Average Household Size

The census 2016 data indicates that Galway has a population to household size of 2.8 which is slightly higher than the state average of 2.7. However, the NPF states that this state average is expected to decline to around 2.5 by 2040, while also acknowledging that household sizes in urban areas tend to be smaller than in suburbs or rural parts of the county. ~~As outlined in the Housing Strategy (Appendix 2) an analysis of historical trends of household size in the county was carried out to determine the evidence based graduated reduction in average household size,~~

which has been identified as 2.5 for the plan period. By applying the relevant household size to the projected population increases, it is possible to forecast required household numbers to 2028 and beyond.

2.3.8 Housing Supply Target

With respect to the:

- ESRI research work “*Structural Housing Demand at County Level*” published on 14th December 2020,
 - *Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning* published by DHLGH in December 2020, and
- Ministerial Letter advising these publications as the most up to date approach towards demand projection, this projection has been revised. According to this method, the housing allocation over the Plan period is to be calculated by not only relying on the population projection, but also factoring in the two elements of housing supply and unmet demand in the county. Table 2.8 below reflects the data that has been collated to calculate the housing demand for the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

	County Council	Annual Avg. Households	Total Households
A	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2017 to Plan end year, 2028	1,427	17,118
B	Actual new housing supply 2017 to most recent available year or quarter period to Plan commencement (2017-2021Q2 CSO data + estimated 2021Q3-2021Q4)	678	3,390
C	Homeless households (latest data), and unmet demand as at most recent Census	N/A	146
D	Plan Housing Demand = A - B + C	2,312	13,874
E	Potential adjustment 1 to end 2026 portion of plan period to facilitate convergence to NPF strategy (where justified)	Mid-point between ESRI NPF and Baseline scenarios to 2026 in lieu of A above	Adjusted Total

E1	ESRI Baseline scenario projected new household demand 2017 to 2028	904	10,846
E2	Mid-point between A and E1 - ESRI NPF and Baseline scenarios, to 2028	1,165	13,982
E3	Adjusted Total Plan Demand calculation based on E2 in lieu of A above	1,534	10,738

Table 2.8 ESRI Household Projections 2017-2028

According to the ESRI published excel spreadsheet utilising the ESRI NPF method, an overall of 17,118 no. households over 2017-2028 is expected. This is 10,846 no. households when applying the ESRI Baseline method. The county is facing an overcrowding and concealed housing demand of 55 units, while the latest published statistics on homeless by DHLG (December 2020) indicates 225 persons are homeless in county. This gives an overall unmet demand of 146 units. On the supply side, a total number of 3,390 units had been delivered over 2017-2021, as recorded on CSO Stat Bank.

To identify the housing demand the figures above were applied using the formula as indicated in the "Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning" published by DHLG in December 2020:

$$\text{Housing Demand 2021-2028} = (\text{Total Projection 2017-2028} - \text{Unit Completions 2017-2021}) + \text{Total Unmet Demand} \quad [E3 = E2 - B + C]$$

Therefore, the overall housing demand over the plan period is expected to be 10,738 units, which equates to 1,534 housing units per annum.

This indicates a discrepancy of 110 no. units per annum when compared with the previous method, which can be explained through factoring in the two elements of housing supply and unmet demand in the ESRI method, resulting in a more accurate housing target.

Performing the same calculations to estimate housing demand up to 2031, the overall housing demand is expected to be 14,524 units. This equates to 1,351 housing units per annum over 2021-2031.

County Council	Annual Avg. Households	Total Households
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A	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2017 to 2031	1,457	21,851
B	Actual new housing supply 2017 to most recent available year or quarter period to Plan commencement (2017-2021Q2 CSO data + estimated 2021Q3-2021Q4)	678	3,390
C	Homeless households (latest data), and unmet demand as at most recent Census	N/A	146
D	Plan Housing Demand = A - B + C	3,101	18,607
E	Potential adjustment 1 to end 2026 portion of plan period to facilitate convergence to NPF strategy (where justified)	Mid-point between ESRI NPF and Baseline scenarios to 2026 in lieu of A above	Adjusted Total
E1	ESRI Baseline scenario projected new household demand 2017, to 2031	912	13,684
E2	Mid-point between A and E1 - ESRI NPF and Baseline scenarios, to 2031	1,185	17,768
E3	Adjusted Total Plan Demand calculation based on E2 in lieu of A above	1,351	14,524

Table 2.8 ESRI Household Projections 2017-2031

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Byrne, the Members agreed to accept the Recommendation in the Chief Executive's Report in respect of Recommendation 1 (i)

2.3.12 Core Strategy Map & Core Strategy Table

The Core Strategy Map (Map 2.1) is a diagrammatic representation of the spatial planning Strategy for County Galway. The Core Strategy table 4.2 on page 39 sets out the population projections and household allocation for each settlement and rural countryside up to 2028 and for 2028-2031.

Land which allows for a mix of uses including residential has also been indicated. For the purpose of this Plan, such uses consist of Mixed Use and Town/Village Centre, where the policy objective and purpose of that zoning specifies residential use along with the primary objective (commercial/retail) of that zoning.

Settlement Plans in Volume 2 reflect these figures and indicates the quantum of future development for the plan period. It is considered that the lands identified for residential development are sufficient to meet the population targets set out in the Core Strategy Table and reflects each settlement's role in the Settlement Hierarchy. The amount of zoned lands required in each settlement was determined using an evidence based typology and asset-based approach and also an Infrastructural Assessment in Appendix A.

- (i) In addition, Table 2.9 Core Strategy is amended.
Please see separate section on page 64, at the end of the OPR Section with Core Strategy Table, Recommendation No 1, 2, 7 and 15 relating to the removal/addition of Residential Phase 1 lands.
- (ii) Revised Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment -Appendix B
- (iii) Amendments to Chapter 2 to reflect Circular 28/2021 on Affordable Housing Act 2021

1.1 2.7 Part V Provision

Social and affordable housing is delivered through a provision known as Part V in an effort to address housing segregation and provide a good mix of housing tenure in any location. In light of the Government's recent publication of the "Affordable Housing Act 2021", the "Housing Circular 28/2021 on Affordable Housing Act 2021 - Amendments to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000", and "Housing for all; a New Housing Plan for Ireland" in September 2021, the changes to Part V primarily apply to land purchased on or after 1 August 2021. Any new planning permissions for housing development on that land will have a 20% Part V requirement. However, a 10% Part V requirement will apply where land already has planning permission or was purchased between 1 September 2015 and 31 July 2021 and planning permission is granted before 31 July 2026.

In accordance with the provision of national legislation, 20% of all lands zoned for residential uses, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for the provision of social and/or affordable housing in order to address the requirement for social and affordable housing under Part V, thus promoting tenure diversity and socially inclusive communities within the County. Outlined in the Housing Circular 28/2021, the Part V contribution applicable to a grant of planning permission remains at 10% (to be applied to social housing only) where land already has planning permission or until 31 July 2026 for all land purchased in the period between 1 September 2015 and 31 July 2021. The applicable percentage will be 20% in all other cases.

~~In accordance with the provision of national legislation, 10% of all lands zoned for residential uses, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for the provision of social and/or affordable housing in order to address the requirement for social housing under Part V, thus promoting tenure diversity and socially inclusive communities within the County.~~

~~Section 94 of the Planning and Development Act stipulates that a percentage not exceeding 10% of land with a residential zoning or a mix of uses that includes~~

residential shall be reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing. This is secured through a Part V agreement.

PV1 Part V Provision

~~It is a policy objective of the Council to secure implementation of the Part V Housing Strategy in accordance with section 95(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in particular, through the reservation of 10% of all land zoned solely for residential use, or for a mixture of residential or other uses, to be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing referred to in section 94(4)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and shall be provided in accordance with an Agreement referred to in section 96 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and in accordance with Part V Ministerial Guidance or any future revised Guidance.~~

It is a policy objective of the Council to secure implementation of the Part V provision of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), through the reservation of 20% of all lands zoned for residential uses, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be made available for the provision of social and/or affordable housing in order to address the requirement for social and affordable housing under Part V, thus promoting tenure diversity and socially inclusive communities within the County. Outlined in the Housing Circular 28/2021, the Part V contribution applicable to a grant of planning permission remains at 10% (to be applied to social housing only) where land already has planning permission or until 31 July 2026 for all land purchased in the period between 1 September 2015 and 31 July 2021. The applicable percentage will be 20% in all other cases.

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Byrne, the Members agreed to accept the Recommendation in the Chief Executive's Report in respect of Recommendation 1 (iv). It is noted that there will be further discussion at a later stage in relation to Chief Executive Recommendation 1(ii) and (iii).

In response to Cllr. Broderick's query on population figures on Page 10, Ms. Loughnane explained that the figure of 18,655 is the proposed total population increase for 2022-2028. She explained that in the last plan 2015-2021, that figure was approx. 13,200. She advised that in the current plan the only area that exceeded its population figures for the whole county was Tuam and stated that they were confident, that the population figures as presented were sufficient to meet population needs for the next six years. She further advised that there will be a census carried out in 2022 which will be taken into account in the Mid Term Review in 2024 and if a population increase were required, it will be applied following that Mid Term Review.

Observation 1 – Settlement Hierarchy (Tier 7)

Mr. Dunne outlined the contents of Observation No. 1 on Page 15.

Having Regard to NPO 15, RPO 3.4 and the Section 28 Rural Housing Guidelines, which support renewal and regeneration of rural areas, the Planning Authority is requested to revisit the approach to the designation of rural settlements/rural villages within tier 7 (level 7) of the settlement hierarchy. Consideration should be given to the following:

- (i) An internal hierarchy of settlements, villages and/or rural nodes within level 7
- (ii) Inclusion of village maps to define the settlement boundary for those settlements of larger scale or with greater capacity to absorb development
- (iii) Inclusion of, or a policy to prepare, village design statement to map and outline specific local objectives for these settlements e.g village core area, focal spaces, amenities, local features, opportunity sites etc.
- (iv) A composite map showing the location of all rural villages in level 7.

Mr. Dunne outlined the Chief Executive's Response in relation to Observation 1 as follows:

- (i) In relation to the rural settlements/rural villages the distribution of population and household growth in the county was evidence based. This was also applicable to towns and villages in Level 1-6 of the settlement hierarchy. On review of the Level 7 settlement hierarchy, it was considered appropriate to further disseminate these settlements/villages into two further categories of **Rural Settlements Level 7 (a) and Rural Nodes Level 7 (b)**. It is considered that the rural villages listed in the new category of Rural Settlements (7a) are of similar size and structure. It is considered that policy objective **SS7 Development of Small Villages (Level 7)** should be amended to take account of the revised hierarchy within level 7.
- (ii) It is not considered warranted at this time to include village maps for the rural settlements as planning applications will be determined on the built envelope of these villages and in accordance with policy objectives in **Chapter 2 Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing strategy**. It is considered that **Policy Objective SS7 Development of Small Villages (Level 7) and SS8 Development of Rural Communities** provides guidance at a settlement hierarchy level for growth. In **Chapter 4 Rural Living and Development** section 4.5.2 Residential Development Potential in Level 7 Settlements-Serviced/Un-Serviced Villages and the countryside provides a suite of policy objectives that supports residential development in these villages.
- (iii) It is considered that a policy objective should be included in relation to village design statement in relation to Rural Settlements. In relation to the specific policy objective **RC7 Guidelines for Cluster Housing Schemes in Villages**, it is considered that additional wording would be inserted to reflect village design statements for Rural Settlements (Level 7 a).
- (iv) A composite map illustrating level 7 (a) Rural Settlements has been prepared.

Mr. Dunne outlined the following Chief Executive's Recommendation in response to the OPR Observation 1:

- (i)

- Amend **Policy Objective SS7 Development of Small Villages** **Rural Settlements and Rural Nodes in Chapter 2 Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy**

- Amend Section 4.5.2 Residential Development Potential in **Level 7 (a) Rural Settlements and 7(b) Rural Nodes**- Serviced /Un-Serviced Villages and Countryside in **Chapter 4 Rural Living and Development**

A number of the villages in this category of the settlement hierarchy are small villages that consist of a cluster of houses and limited level of services available. Some of these villages are served by public mains water and /or wastewater supply, whilst there are others that are un-serviced. It is recognised in this Plan that there is capacity in these villages to accommodate a small level of growth, with the capacity to accommodate growth dependant on the size of the village. **There are two categories of rural villages indicated on Table 2.10 Settlement Hierarchy; Rural Settlements and Rural Nodes.** Placemaking within the rural villages as outlined in **Chapter 3 Placemaking, Regeneration and Urban Living** are key components to enhance the rural vitality and rural experience.

- Amend/Split Level 7 of the Settlement Hierarchy Table 2.10 as follows:

Level 7 (a):

Rural Settlements:

Craughwell, Corofin, Clarinbridge, Ardahan, Kilcolgan, Cor an Dola, New Inn, Lackagh, Turloughmore, Abbeyknockmoy, Cluain Bú, Monivea, Eyrecourt, Menlough, Williamstown, Milltown, Woodford, Killimor, Ballinderreen, Na Forbacha, Ros an Mhíl, Cill Chiaráin, Cill Rónáin, Roundstone, Carna, An Fhairche, Leenane, Cleggan, Letterfrack

Level 7 (b):

Rural Nodes:

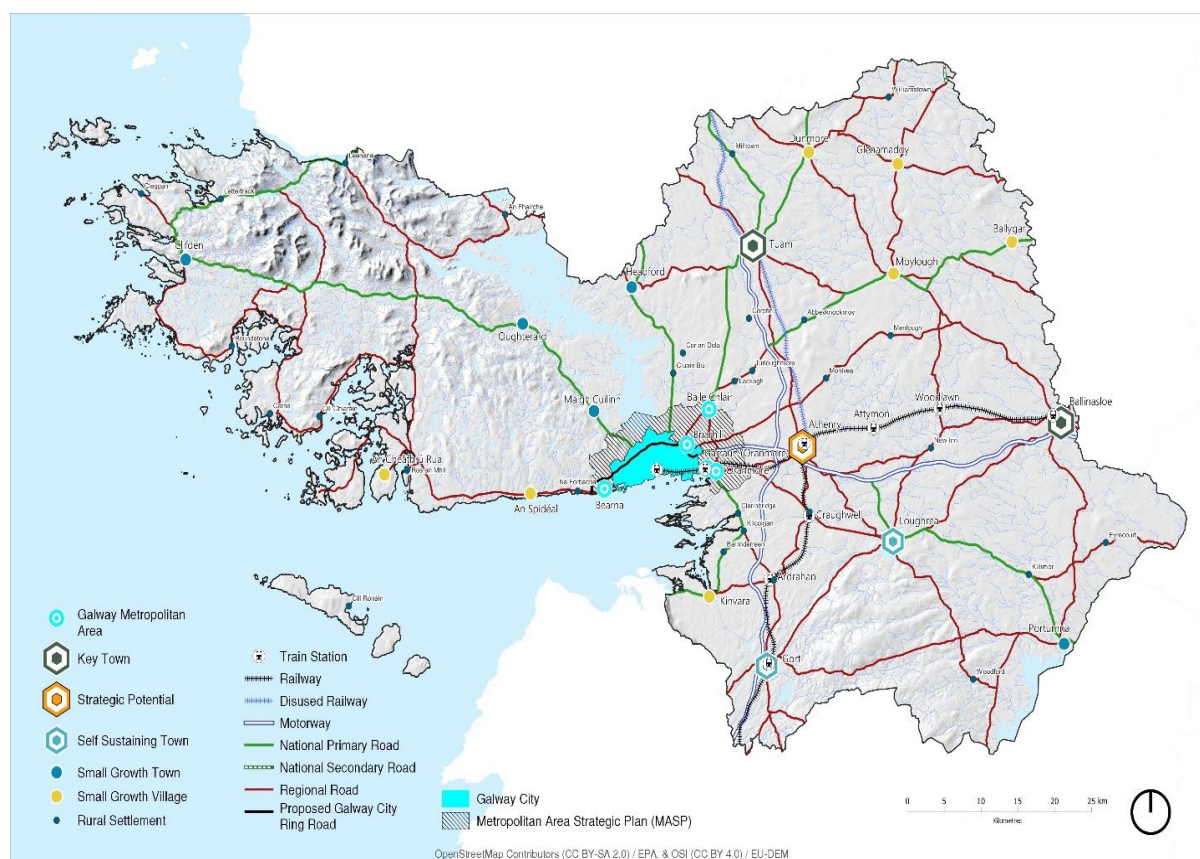
An Tulaigh/Baile na hAbhann, Woodlawn, Kilconnell, Ballymacward, An Carn Mór, Eanach Dhúin, Ahascragh, Attymon, Banagher, Aughrim, Caltra, Clonfert, Kiltormer, Lawrencetown, Fohenagh, Killoran, Castleblakeney, Ballinamore Bridge, Gorteen, Cappataggle, Kilkerrin, Barnaderg, Belclare, Kilbennan, Briarfield, Newbridge, Ballymoe, Kilconly, Caherlistrane, Brownsgrrove, Sylane, Lavally, Foxhall, Newbridge, Cashla, Kiltelvna, Glinsk,

Ballyglunin, Laragh More, Ballymana, Esker, Carrabane, Kiltullagh, Derrydonnell Beg, Kilchreest, Ballinakill, Moyglass, Peterswell, Killeenadeema, Drim, Kilconieran, Labane, Tynagh, Kilreekil, Abbey, Bullaun, Castledaly, Coose, Newcastle, Cooloo, Shanaglish, An Cnoc, Na Minna, Rosscahill, Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin, Leitir Móir, Tully/Renvyle, Glinsk, Leitir Mealláin, Béal an Daingin, Tullycross, Rosmuc, Casla, Corr na Móna, Ballyconneely, Sraith Salach, Claddaghduff, An Mám, Maam Cross, An Aird Mhoir, Maree, Kilbeacanty, Cloghanover, Camas.

- (ii) No Change.
- (iii) Amend as follows:

RC 7 Guidelines for Cluster Housing Schemes in Villages

- (a) Prepare Guidelines for Cluster Housing Schemes in Rural Villages within the lifetime of the Development Plan as resources permit.
- (b) Prepare Village Design Statements for the Rural Settlements Level 7(a) as resources permit.**
- (iv) See composite map for Level 7 (a) Rural Settlements.



Ms. Loughnane advised that this observation deals with rural settlements/villages. She stated that the OPR had requested that the settlements listed in the Level 7 should be mapped. In addition, Mr. Dunne outlined that it was considered warranted to split the settlements as indicated above.

Cllr. Byrne made reference to the Core Strategy Table. He referred to previous discussions at Workshops where he stated that it became apparent that the 911 figure set out for rural housing on green field sites in the Core Strategy, once reached will inevitably mean that no further planning permissions will be allowed. He stated that the Members were of the view that the figure of 911 is totally at variance with NPO 19 in the National Planning Framework (NPF). In addition, Cllr. Byrne referenced the

Housing Strategy & Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) and specifically referenced a figure of expected rural housing of 628 per year, which is clearly at variance with the 911 figure from the Core Strategy.

Cllr. Byrne proposed the following motion:

That the number of 911 in Tier 7 be disregarded and no housing numbers would be allocated to the Core Strategy figure.

This was seconded by Cllrs. Hoade and Welby. He advised that he had submitted that Motion and the reasons for same were set out in the motion.

It was advised by Ms. Loughnane that this motion will have to be discussed at a later stage in conjunction with Recommendation 1(i) of the OPR Submission.

Cllr. McClearn stated that as outlined by Cllr. Byrne, there is a variance between the Core Strategy and the National Planning Framework (NPF). He advised that he had contacted some colleagues in Meath County Council who have now concluded their County Development Plan which was adopted on 3rd November 2021. He stated that they did not include a number in relation to rural houses in their Core Strategy. He stated that following on from this the Minister has decided a review needed to be carried out in relation to the Rural Housing Strategy and until that review takes place, which will take some time, it would be premature for the Members to be including a number for One-Off Rural Houses in their plan. He stated that when the findings of that review are prepared, the Members may then need to amend the plan at that stage which may coincide with the Mid Term Review being carried out.

Cllr. Welby, Cllr. Collins, Cllr. Reddington, Cllr. Cuddy, Cllr. Donoghue, Cllr. M. Connolly, Cllr. Geraghty & an Comh O Cualáin all supported the Motion.

Cllr. McKinstry stated that they had to be careful not to give false hope to people that rural housing would be sustainable and financially viable into the future. He stated that many will find it very difficult to afford to live in the countryside in terms of transport and heating requirements. He stated the importance of encouraging people to live in proposed settlements as opposed to living in the open countryside

Cllr. Cronnelly sought clarification on the cross over between the Urban Fringe and Rural Settlements and Rural Nodes in 7(b). Ms. Loughnane stated that the urban fringes were omitted from the Draft Development Plan by the Elected Members and that they originally existed around the towns of Athenry, Loughrea, Gort and Tuam. Ms. Loughnane also advised that submissions have been received in relation to the Urban Fringe and would be discussed later. She advised that the urban fringes would not impinge on these settlements.

Mr. Owens advised that the figure for single rural houses was set out in Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA). He stated that the clear advice is to retain reference to the number of residential units to be delivered during lifetime of plan in the Core Strategy and referred to the figure of 10,738 which is the overall Housing Allocation for County Galway for 2022-2028. Ms. Loughnane referred to the figure of 628 residential units which was referenced earlier by Cllr. Byrne, and

explained that this was what was expected if the trend continued which was clearly unsustainable. She recommended that the Members revert back to the figures as set out in Core Strategy on Page 64 of report circulated to Members

Cllr. Byrne referred to NPO 19 of NPF which determines the criteria needed to build housing in the countryside and that what they were proposing was appropriate. Ms. Loughnane again stated that it was their role to advise the Members as best they could and to give all the technical information so as the Members can make an informed decision. She asked for clarification on what figures were being adopted by the Members. Mr. Owens stated that additional clarity was required and enquired if the Members were requesting that an additional new line be inserted and what figures they were proposed to be removed or be left blank.

Cllr. Walsh advised that the Members did not want to arrive at a situation where a planning application was being refused for someone who had a genuine housing need because of having reached a quota for rural housing and asked the Executive to outline to the Members how best this could be avoided. He suggested that the Core Strategy should not apply to rural housing need. He stated that from meetings with TD's, Members were advised that it was not the intention of the NPF to curtail rural housing from a national perspective. Ms. Loughnane stated that effectively what the Members were proposing is that there is no allocation of housing units for rural housing in the county. She stated that the CE report was prepared on foot of 2,877 submissions and the Executive's advice is to adopt the Core Strategy in accordance with Page 64 of this report which is in compliance with the Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment.

In response to query on reallocating the figure of 911 units and the impact on the overall figure of 10,738 from Cllr. McHugh Farag, Mr. Owens confirmed that it was the role of the Executive to implement the Core Strategy as adopted by the Members or if the situation were to arise as directed by the Minister and again clearly and strongly advised against reallocating the housing units from greenfield sites as proposed in the motion before the meeting. Cllr. Byrne again advised that a limit cannot be put against the number for rural housing because of non-compliance with NPO 19 in the NPF and that was why they were not including a figure in that section of the Core Strategy Table. Cllr. Dolan queried if the Members adopted the Core Strategy table as proposed, would that limit them in relation to numbers in MASP tables. Mr. Dunne explained that if the Members adopted the Core Strategy figures on Page 64, this would not be open to Members to readjust or revisit this again during this stage of the process. Ms. Loughnane advised the Members to note that there were other amendments to the Core Strategy table to be considered further on. In relation to additional lands zoned in Garraun /Briarhill, Cllr. Welby queried if these could be assigned to Bearnna. Cllr. Killilea stated that given the importance of the figures given, he suggested that the Members re-examine the matter and that further discussion was required before a final decision was made. Mr. Owens stated that it was clear from the Members discussion that it was premature to adopt changes to the Core Strategy table at today's meeting and suggested that it be given further consideration prior to adoption. He stated that the current position is that the topline figure in the Core Strategy of 18,655 has been adopted by the Members. He also noted that the Members agreed that the Rural

Reminders figure be amended to transfer the recommended allocation for Rural Reminders on greenfield sites to brownfield/infill thereby leaving the figure for greenfield blank.

Cllr. D. Connolly stated that he had submitted a motion that his colleagues would like to support. He stated that he wanted to include the towns listed in 7(b) with 7(a) in order that they would have the same parity. He suggested by putting them in a lower category, may affect the settlement centres. This was seconded by Cllr. Broderick. He queried if it was proposed to include the 911 figure in rural settlements and rural nodes and queried if they were in a position to accommodate that in the 112 settlement areas in 7(a) & 7(b).

It was agreed to defer the decisions on the issues raised at this Council Meeting until Meeting scheduled on 10th December 2021.

The Meeting was then adjourned to the 10th December 2021.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach:  _____

Date: _____ **07/03/2022** _____