

**Submission to the Galway
County Development Plan
2022-2028 (Stage Two)**

Lands at Truskey West, Bearna,
Co. Galway





DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: **The Kennedy Family**

Project Title: **Lands at Truskey West, Bearna, Co. Galway**

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Justification Test prepared by MKO

1. PREAMBLE

We note that Galway County Council are in the review process of the extant *Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021* and preparation of a new development plan for the period 2022-2028 is underway. On behalf of our clients the Kennedy Family; Moya Power, Paula Daly, Maurice Kennedy, Nessa O'Regan and Orla Ryan (hereinafter referred to as the Kennedy Family), we wish to make a submission regarding Stage Two (Draft) of the *Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028* (hereinafter referred to as the Draft Plan) which was published on the 20th of May 2021 and will be on public display until the 30th of July 2021.

In response to the contents of the *Volume 2: Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan* of the *Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028*, this submission will support the request for a change in zoning from 'Residential Phase 2' to 'Residential Phase 1'.

This submission is structured as follows:

- Section 1 – Preamble
- Section 2 – Introduction
- Section 3 – Planning Policy Context
- Section 4 – Assessment
- Section 5 – Submission Objective
- Section 6 – Conclusion

2. INTRODUCTION

The Kennedy Family are in ownership of lands located in Truskey West, Bearná, Co. Galway. **Figure 1** below outlines the location of the lands within the wider area, with **Figure 2** outlining the site boundary that the lands extend to.



Figure 1. Location of subject lands within wider context (Source: My Plan. Edited by MKO)

2.1 Site Location

The subject lands are located to the west of the L-13215 (local road) and are within the townland of Truskey West (Troscáigh Thiar). The site is located approximately 600 metres north of Bearná Village, the village centre is located approximately 6.5km west of Galway City Centre. Bearná is located within the Metropolitan Area and is situated at the gateway of the Gaeltacht area.

2.2 Site Description

The L13215 local road is situated to the east of the proposed site and runs parallel against the lands. The lands in question extend to approximately 1.6 hectares and consists mainly of shrub land. Some green field lands border the lands in question to the west with several two storey detached properties located to the north of the lands. This area is predominately residential, located opposite the lands is West Coast Vets Ltd. and there are a number of B&B/Guesthouses located along the L13215.

The lands are accessed from an existing entrance off the L13215. The proposed N6 Ring Road is to be located approximately 1km north of the lands, with a proposed connection to the N6 via the L13215 as per the most recent design update. The proposed Bearná Inner Relief is to be located approximately 400

metres to the south. There will not be any direct encroachment on the subject lands. Both proposed roads will significantly improve connectivity and access to any future development of the subject lands.

There are no site-specific constraints associated with the lands in question. The lands are not prone to fluvial flooding and are not the subject of any ecological designations. There are also no recorded archaeological sites or national monuments on the lands or in the immediate vicinity of such. The site is easily accessible via the L13215 local road.

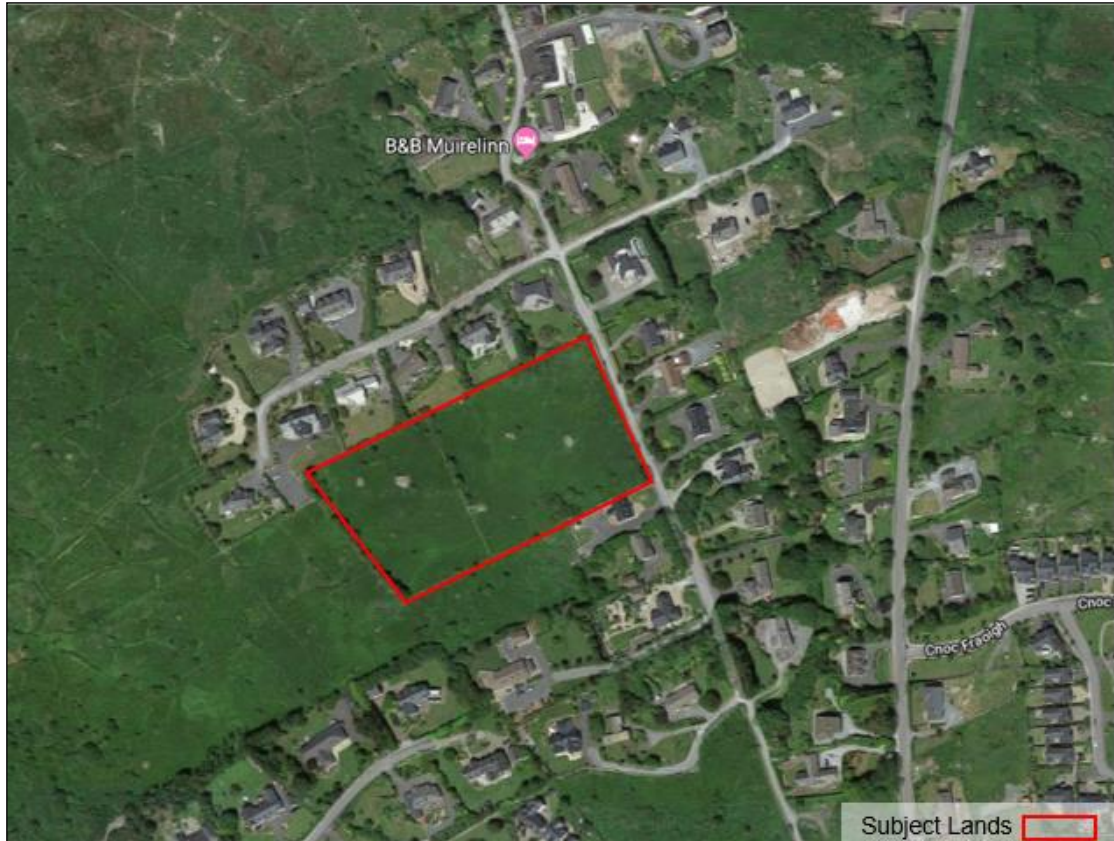


Figure 2. Extent of subject lands (Source: Google Maps. Edited by MKO)

2.3 Planning History

According to the Galway County Council online planning portal there are no recent planning applications on the subject lands. There are 4 no. historic applications which are listed below:

- > Pl. Ref.: 5825
- > Pl. Ref.: 7442
- > Pl. Ref.: Old43346
- > Pl. Ref.: Old44698

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

This submission has been prepared with cognisance to the following National, Regional, and Local planning policy documents;

- National Planning Framework: Project Ireland 2040
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly 2020-2032
- Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021
- Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

3.1 National Planning Framework: Project Ireland 2040

In 2018, the Government of Ireland adopted the National Planning Framework (NPF) entitled *Ireland 2040* to succeed the National Spatial Strategy. The NPF comprises the Government's proposed long-term strategic planning framework to guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions over the next 25 years. It is intended that the NPF will be a strategic document that will provide the framework for future development and investment in Ireland, providing a long-term and place-based aspect to public policy and investment, and aiming to coordinate sectoral areas such as housing, jobs, transport, education, health, environment, energy and communications, into an overall coherent strategy. The NPF has a number of national policy objectives that articulate delivering on a compact urban growth programme and are relevant to the Board's consideration of the proposed Strategic Housing Development. These include:

- National Policy Objective (NPO) 1 (b) relating to population growth in the region;
- National Policy Objectives (NPO) 2(a) relating to growth in our cities;
- NPO 4 relating to attractive, well-designed liveable neighbourhoods;
- NPO 5 relating to sufficient scale and quality of urban development; and
- NPO 6 relating to increased residential population and employment in urban areas.

National Policy Objective 1b states in the context of population growth to 2040:

'Northern & Western Region – population growth of 180,000 additional people.'

There is a very significant population growth allocated to the Northern & Western Region in which Galway is the main urban centre. In order to facilitate this population growth there will be a requirement to develop large numbers of new houses and apartments, approx. 20,000 units based on a standard household size of 2.7 people. Given that Galway is currently acutely affected by the housing crisis there is a considerable divide to be bridged in order to bring housing provision from its current under-supply to the level required to accommodate the population growth forecasts. However, it is important that more sustainable development patterns are established in order to facilitate targeted services and infrastructure investment.

3.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Northern & Western Regional Assembly) 2020-2032

The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly 2020-2032 (RSES) was adopted on 24th January 2020. The principal purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework and the economic policies and objectives of the Government by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the regions. Section 3.6 of the RSES sets out the Galway Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). The Vision of this MASP is that Galway will be a leading global city, renowned as a successful, sustainable, competitive, compact and accessible city of scale that supports a high quality of life, maintains its distinctive identity and supports its rich heritage, language and cultural experience.

The RSES outlines arrangements for a co-ordinated metropolitan area strategic plan (MASP) for the Galway Metropolitan Area. The MASP has been provided with statutory underpinning to act as 12-year strategic planning and investment framework. The MASP is an opportunity for Galway to address recent growth legacy issues and build on key strengths, including a vibrant arts and cultural scene, year-round tourism and an attractive natural setting.

A number of strategic locations have been identified that present the opportunity and capacity to deliver the necessary quantum of housing to facilitate targeted growth. These strategic locations are summarised on Page 53 of the RSES (and set out below) and it is noted that Bearna is specifically referred to in this context:

- “> Consolidation of the existing neighbourhoods of Knocknacarra, Rahoon, Castlegar and Roscam.*
- > Development of Regeneration Lands at Ceannt Station Quarter, Inner Harbour and Headford Road*
- > Ardaun*
- > Murrough*
- > Baile Chláir, **Bearna**, Oranmore, Briarhill”* [Our emphasis added]

These strategic locations are also shown on Figure 21 on Page 53 of the RSES (extracted below in **Figure 3**) which identifies Bearna as having potential for residential sites.

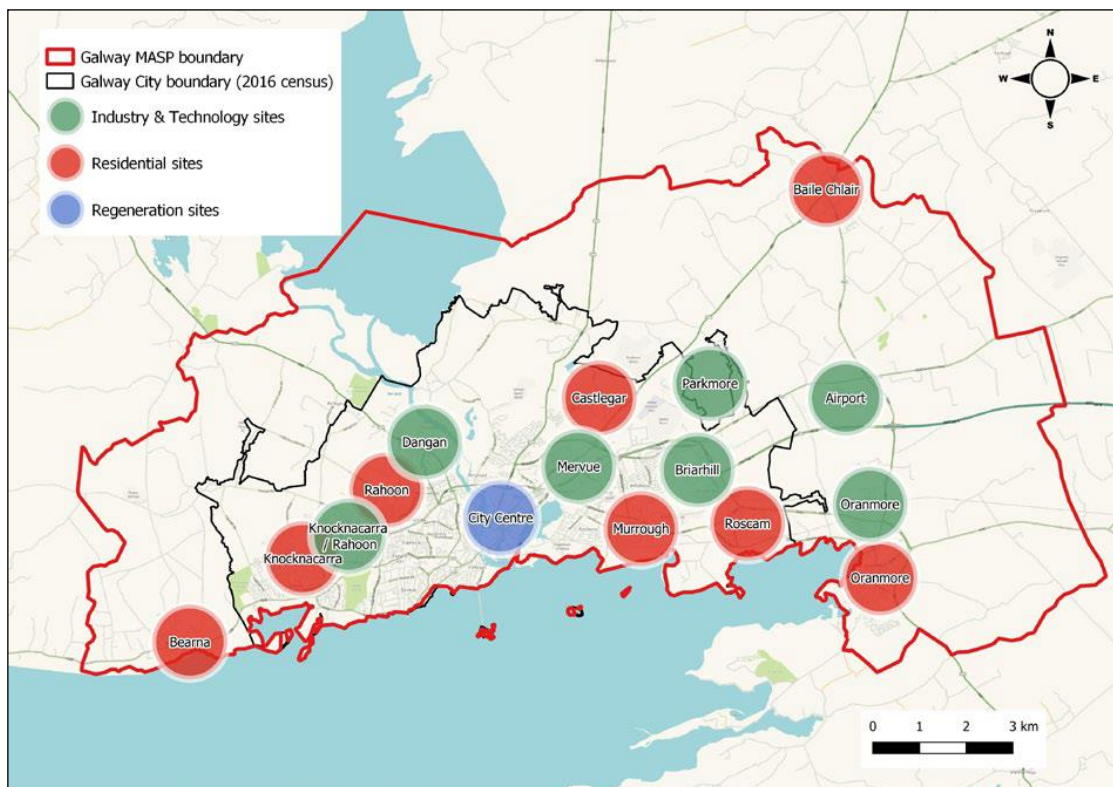


Figure 3. Figure 21 extracted from the RSES

The table on Page 54 of the RSES identifies that the approximate land area designated for “Land Capacity – Lands Available for Housing” in Bearna is 14 Ha.

Moreover, Page 55 of the RSES states as follows in relation to Bearna:

“Bearna is located to the west of the Metropolitan Area, at the gateway to the Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe (County Galway Gaeltacht). It has experienced significant growth in and

surrounding the village and is serviced through the Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. Its location favours future growth that should have a focus that includes the consolidation of built-up areas of the village and the provision of supporting community infrastructure and services that are easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport. The built, archaeological and cultural heritage of Bearna are important assets that should be conserved appropriately, including the Pier Road Architectural Conservation Area. While there is currently circa 14ha of residential phase 1 lands identified in the Bearna Local Area Plan that can accommodate growth in the short/medium term, there are additional lands available to facilitate further growth. The identification of such lands shall be a matter for the statutory plan-making process and shall have regard to environmental considerations, including flood risk and climate change”.

3.3 Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021

3.3.1 Land Use Zoning Objectives

Under the extant Development Plan, the subject lands are zoned ‘Residential Phase 2’. The subject lands in the context of their current land use zoning objectives are illustrated below in **Figure 4**.

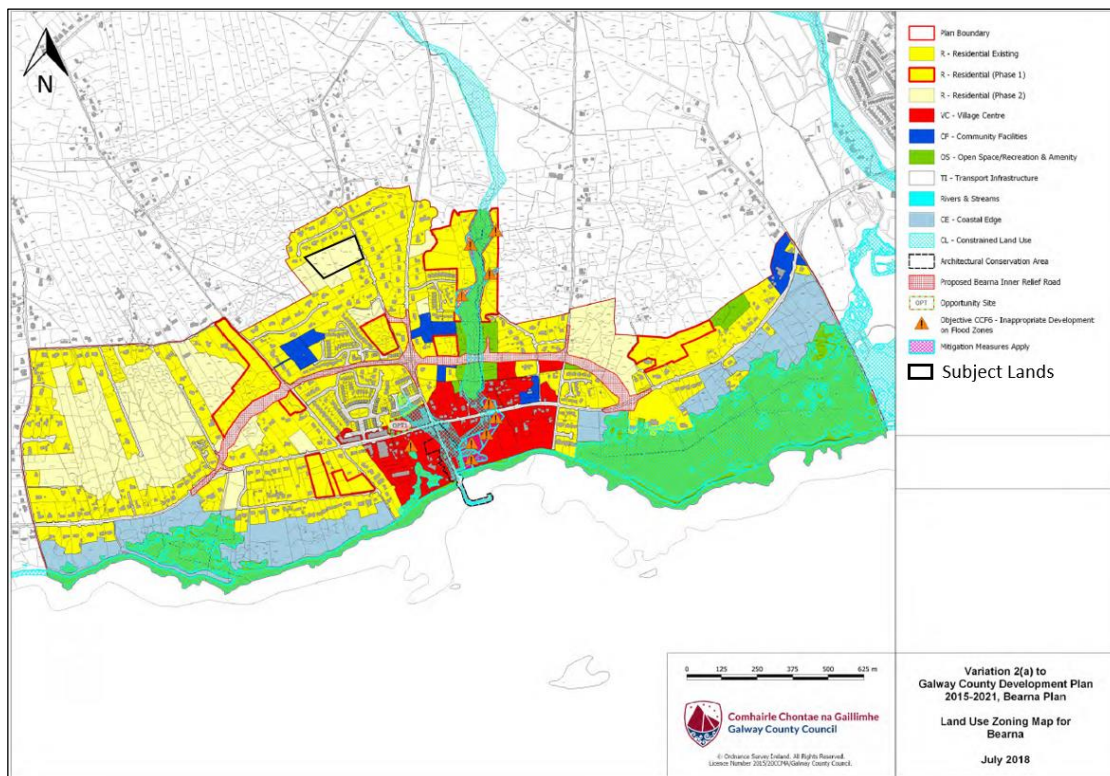


Figure 4. Land Use Zoning Map extracted from the current Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021

3.4 Draft Galway County Development 2022-2028

Within the Draft Plan there are a number of policy objectives that are proposed in relation to residential development in Bearna, as outlined below:

Policy BMSP 1 Sustainable Residential Communities: Promote the development of appropriate and serviced lands to provide for high quality, well laid out and well landscaped sustainable residential

communities with an appropriate mix of housing types and densities, together with complementary land uses such as community facilities, local services and public transport facilities, to serve the residential population of Bearna Metropolitan settlement plan.

Policy BMSP 14 New Village Street: Support the completion of the proposed new Village Street (Inner Relief Road) north of the existing R336 and prohibit any development that would affect the future construction of the approved route.

3.4.1 Land Use Zoning Objectives

The applicable land use zoning objective as outlined in *Volume 2: Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan* of the *Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028* is 'Residential Phase 2', see **Figure 5** below which illustrates the context of the subject lands with regard to the proposed land-use zoning objectives/

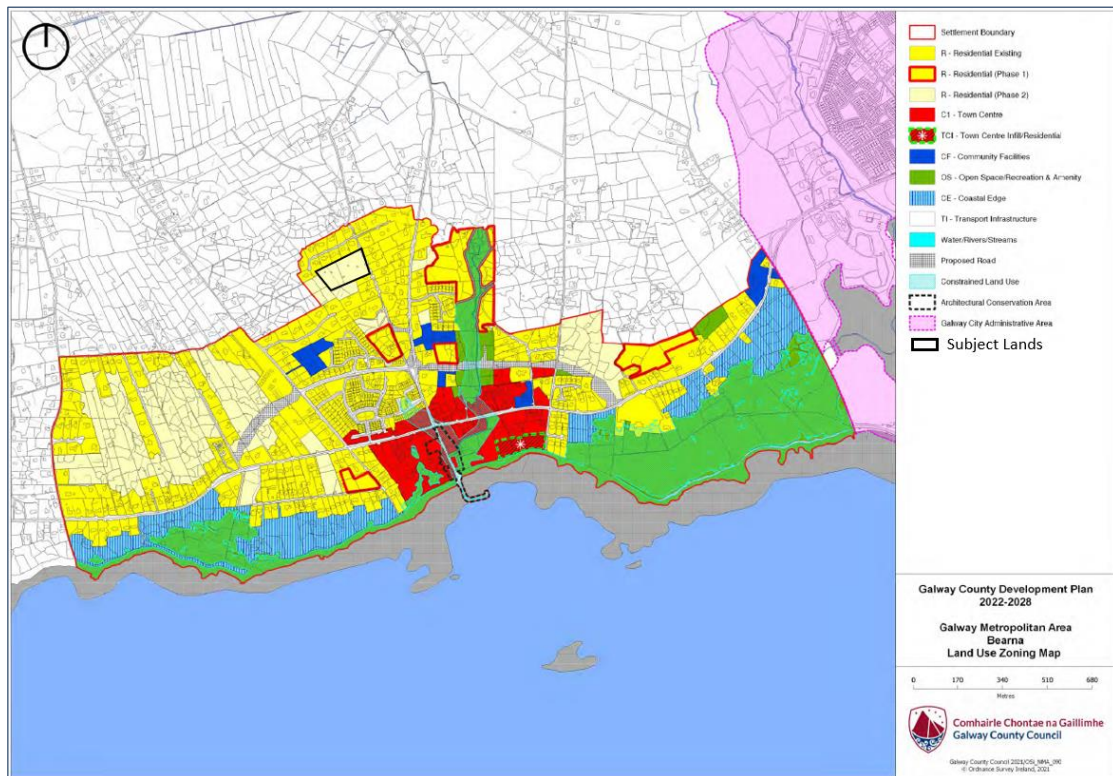


Figure 5. Land Use Zoning Map extracted from the Draft County Galway Development Plan 2022-2028

Volume 2 of the Draft Plan (Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan) refers to the land use zoning objectives and categorises residential development under two phases, as outlined below:

Residential Phase 1

Objective – To protect, provide and improve residential areas within the lifetime of this plan.

Description – To facilitate for the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types, and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.

Residential Phase 2

Objective – To protect, provide and improve residential areas.

Description - To facilitate the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. Phase 2 residential is generally not developable during the lifetime of this plan subject to the provisions below. (*Single House developments for family members on family owned lands:

*Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area;

*Where it is apparent that R-Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered in a phased manner on some residential (Phase 2 lands).

Policy GCMA 1 Residential Development: Support the development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the County Development Plan, subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements, and reserve the lands designated as Residential (Phase 2) for the longer term growth needs of the area. Residential (Phase 2) lands are generally not developable within the lifetime of this Plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority within the lifetime of this County Development Plan subject to a suitable case being made for the proposal:

1. Single house developments for family members on family owned lands.
2. Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area.
3. Where it is apparent that Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered in a phased manner on some Residential (Phase 2) lands.

The above exceptions will be subject to compliance with the Core Strategy in the County Development Plan, the Policy Objectives in this Metropolitan Plan, the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and to meeting normal planning, access and servicing requirements. Developments will only be permitted where a substantiated case has been made to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and the development will not prejudice the future use of the lands for the longer-term growth needs of this metropolitan area.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 Projected Population Growth Targets

Under table 2.4 Projected Growth in Population and Settlement Structure, the population projection for Bearna for the lifetime of the plan is 750 (2022-2028), with the quantum of residential lands required outlined as 10.00 hectares. The Draft Plan also states that the settlement areas have been examined in the context of planning for compact growth to ensure alignment with the principles of the NPF and RSES.

Table 1. Projected Growth in Population and Settlement Structure, Table 2.4 in the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

Settlement	Census 2016	Population Projection	Residential Units	Potential Residential units within Town Centres	Quantum of Residential Lands required(ha)
Baile Chlair	1248	975	390	117	13.00
Bearna	1998	750	300	90	10.00
Oranmore	4990	1540	616	184	20.53
Garraun	*	1258	503	*	14.38
Briarhill	*	977	391	*	13.03

The National Planning Framework (NPF) target predicts that Galway – City and Suburbs will grow between 40,000 and 48,000 between 2018 and 2040. Across this 22-year period, it is predicted that the city and its suburbs will grow anywhere between 1,818 and 2,181 per year. The provision of a population projection for Bearna of 750 for the lifetime of the Draft Plan (2022-2028) means that there is projected growth of 125 persons per year for Bearna during this 6-year period. Considering that Bearna, alongside Baile Chlair and Oranmore are well established and serviced locations within the Metropolitan Area, the population projection of 750 is considered low based on Galway City and Suburbs having a predicted growth rate in this 6-year period of anywhere between 10,908 and 13,086 persons. Bearna has the capacity, services, availability of lands, and the proximate location to Galway City Centre to justify the consideration of increasing the population projection of the population and settlement structure.

A Report published by the National Investment Office – The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform ‘Assessing the alignment of the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan’ has carried out a high-level assessment of the population projections and housing needs as outlined in the NPF. The Rebuilding Ireland action plan set a target to reach a delivery of 25,000 homes per year in Ireland. With the impact of Covid-19 on these targets, a revised estimate for housing was developed in December 2020 which stated that the average housing supply will need to increase to an annual average of 33,000 per year.

4.2 Justification Test

Within the Draft Plan, there are 10 hectares of land zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’. According to the RSES the approximate land area designated for “Land Capacity – Lands Available for Housing” in Bearna is 14 hectares. Similarly, as outlined above in **Section 4.1** it is our understanding that based on revised housing targets, and the targets of the NPF for growth in Galway, the 10 hectares of land zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ in Bearna is a miscalculation. This test has been carried out in accordance with Land Use Zoning Objective Residential Phase 2 and Policy GCMA 1 Residential Development which states that

“...Residential (Phase 2) lands are generally not developable within the lifetime of this Plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority within the lifetime of this County Development Plan subject to a suitable case being made for the proposal:

...3. Where it is apparent that Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered in a phased manner on some Residential (Phase 2) lands”

As part of this submission, MKO prepared a Justification Test, to assess the lands zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ in the Draft Plan, based on their commitment to development or any constraints on these lands that may indicate that there is a need to amend the land use zoning of the Draft Plan. This Justification Test can be found in **Appendix 1**. The conclusion of this was as follows;

- There are 7 no. Phase 1 Residential zoned sites in Bearna. This equates to approximately 9.24 hectares of land.
- 4 no. of the 7 no. sites are committed to development (granted permissions, recorded commencement notice), currently map reference 4 is subject to judicial review and map reference 7 is under consideration by An Bord Pleanála.
- Approximately 6.8418 hectares of the 9.24 hectares zoned under ‘Residential Phase 1’ are committed to development.
- This concludes that of the lands zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ only 2.3982 hectares of land can be considered readily available for development.
- Of the available land, 2.04 hectares of land have ecological concerns being located within close proximity to the Trusky River which has hydrological connections to Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site code. 000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site code. 004031). This constraint may impact the potential for development on these lands.
- Under ‘Volume 2 Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan’ (MASP) of the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, the Core Strategy Table identifies a population projection of 750 for Bearna during the lifetime of the six-year lifetime of the plan.
- As referenced previously in this document, it is in our professional opinion that the population projection for Bearna has been extremely underestimated, giving its key location with the Metropolitan Area of Galway.
- Given a projection of 750, the quantum of residential lands required to meet this growth is 10.00 hectares. This assessment has concluded that of the lands zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ 6.8418 hectares of land are considered as committed to development. The quantum of land of 10.00 hectares requires re-assessment of the Phase 2 lands in order to fill the capacity of these lands required to provide housing for the 750-no. population increase.
- Furthermore, of the 4 no. lands (map reference 1, 2, 4, 7) committed to development, if developments were to be completed as granted on these sites, this would result in the construction of 186 no. units on 6.8418 hectares of land. Regarding the remaining 2.3982 hectares of land, the capacity of these lands to provide residential units for the remaining 564 no. population is unviable.

5. SUBMISSION OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this submission is to present a case for the rezoning of lands from ‘Residential Phase 2’ to ‘Residential Phase 1’. The applicable land use zoning objective as outlined in the *Volume 2: Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan* of the *Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028* is ‘Residential Phase 2’, see **Figure 6** below which illustrates the context of the subject lands with regard to the proposed land-use zoning objectives.

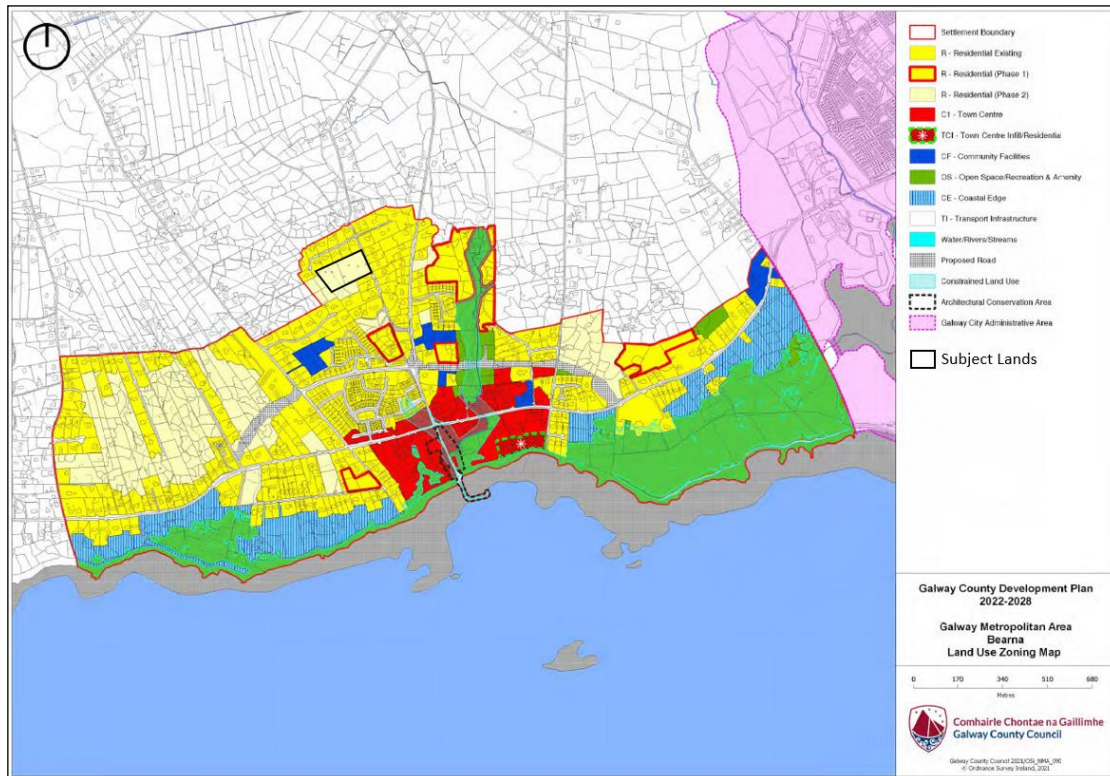


Figure 6. Bearna Land Use Zoning Map (as taken from the *Volume 2: Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan*. Edited by MKO)

Our request for rezoning from ‘Residential Phase 2’ to ‘Residential Phase 1’ is supported by the results of the Justification Test that indicate that the 10 hectares of land zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ within the Draft Plan is not accurate. With 6,8418 hectares of this land considered as committed to development, it is essential that further ‘Residential Phase 2’ lands are rezoned in order to meet the housing targets.

The provision of a population projection for Bearna for the lifetime of the Draft Plan (2022-2028) means that there is a projected growth of 125 persons per year for Bearna during this 6-year period. This population projection of 750 no. persons is considered low based on Galway County having a predicted growth of approximately 14,000 people during this 6-year period. Bearna has the capacity, services, availability of lands, and the proximate location to Galway City Centre to justify the consideration of increasing the population projection of the population and settlement structure.

With consideration to the above information, it is our understanding that

- The 10 hectares of land zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ is underestimated, and there is capacity to increase this figure.
- As a large portion of the ‘Residential Phase 1’ lands are committed to development, it is requested that Galway County Council reconsider the parcels of land zoned to include alternative lands zoned for ‘Residential Phase 2’ lands.
- The population projection of 750 no. persons for Bearna for the lifetime of the Draft Plan (2022-2028) is considerably low and Bearna has the capacity to cater for a higher population

within the lifetime of the plan. If this figure were reconsidered, the justification for a change in 'Residential Phase 1' lands would be further supported.

The subject lands within our client's ownership can be considered as infill development, given the existing residential development that encompasses the lands. The subject lands are well serviced and have the capacity for residential development of appropriate density (meeting Policy BMSP1). The lands are within good distance of the village centre, 600m north, with a walking distance of just 8 minutes. There is footpath connectivity from Bearna Village which ends approximately 350m south of the subject lands. With enhanced pedestrian connectivity the site is further suitable for 'Residential Phase 1' zoning (meeting Policies BMSP15 and BMSP19).

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion of the information outlined in this submission, the request of this submission is for a change in land use zoning from 'Residential Phase 2' to 'Residential Phase 1'. The justification for this change has been appropriately illustrated, facilitated by the results of the 'Justification Test' prepared by MKO. It has been outlined that Bearna does have the capacity to provide residential development for an increase of the 750 no. persons outlined within the Draft Plan. The 10 hectares of land zoned for 'Residential Phase 1' is considered a miscalculation, and it is requested that Galway County Council reassess both their population projection for Bearna, and the 10 hectares of land zoned for 'Residential Phase 1'.

We wish to note that in the event that Galway County Council do not rezone these lands to 'Residential Phase 1', it is important that the lands remain zoned as 'Residential Phase 2'.



APPENDIX 1

*'JUSTIFICATION TEST' PREPARED BY
MKO*



BRIEFING NOTE

Project Reference	190221
Date & Time	5 th July 2021
Subject	Justification Test for lands from 'Residential Phase 2' to 'Residential Phase 1'
Author(s)	Lucy Hammond, Planner
Reviewed By	Pamela Harty, Senior Planner

Residential Phasing

'Volume 2 Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan' of the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 outlines the residential phasing policy, in Section 1.10.1 Land Use Zones. **Figure 1** below illustrates the Bearna Land Use Zoning Map, taken from the Draft Plan. The black line denotes the subject lands of which this Justification Test has been prepared in order to support a submission for the change in zoning from 'Residential Phase 2' to 'Residential Phase 1'.

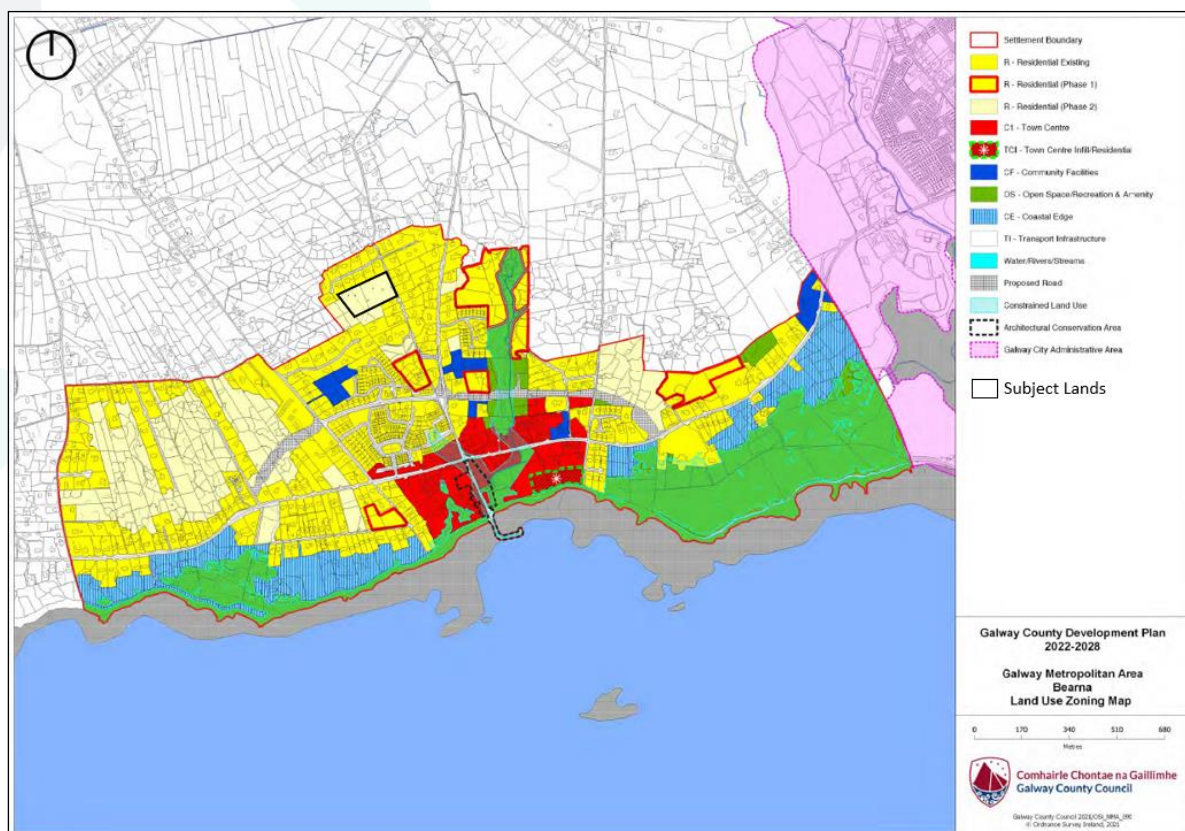


Figure 1. Bearna Land Use Zoning Map and the outline of the subject lands (From the MASP Draft Plan. Edited by MKO)



Residential Phase 1

Objective – To protect, provide and improve residential areas within the lifetime of this plan.

Description – To facilitate for the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.

Residential Phase 2

Objective – To protect, provide and improve residential areas.

*Description - To facilitate the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. Phase 2 residential is generally not developable during the lifetime of this plan subject to the provisions below. (*Single House developments for family members on family owned lands:*

**Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area;*

**Where it is apparent that R-Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development maybe considered in a phased manner on some residential (Phase 2 lands).*

Furthermore, it states that

Zone R: Residential – Phase 1 is phased for residential development within the lifetime of this Plan;

- Phase 2 is generally not developable during the lifetime of this Plan, subject to the provisions and exceptions set out under Policy Objective GCMA 1.

Policy Objective GCMA 1

Support the development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the County Development Plan, subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements, and reserve the lands designated as Residential (Phase 2) for the longer term growth needs of the area. Residential (Phase2) lands are generally not developable within the lifetime of this Plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority within the lifetime of this County Development Plan subject to a suitable case being made for the proposal:

- 1. Single house developments for family members on family owned lands.*
- 2. Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area.*
- 3. Where it is apparent that Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered in a phased manner on some Residential (Phase 2) lands.*

The above exceptions will be subject to compliance with the Core Strategy in the County Development Plan, the Policy Objectives in this Metropolitan Plan, the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and to meeting normal planning, access and servicing requirements. Developments will only be permitted where a substantiated case has been made to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and the development will not prejudice the future use of the lands for the



longer-term growth needs of this metropolitan area.

Projected Population Growth Targets

Under Table 2.4 Projected growth in population and settlement structure, the population projection for Bearna for the lifetime of the plan is 750 (2022-2028), with the quantum of residential lands required outlined as 10.00 hectares. The Draft Plan also states that the settlement areas have been examined in the context of planning for compact growth to ensure alignment with the principles of the NPF and RSES.

Settlement	Census 2016	Population Projection	Residential Units	Potential Residential units within Town Centres	Quantum of Residential Lands required (ha)
Baile Chlair	1248	975	390	117	13.00
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Oranmore	4990	1540	615	184	20.53
Garraun	-	1258	503	-	14.38
Briarhill	-	977	391	-	13.03

The National Planning Framework targets predict that Galway – City and Suburbs will grow between 40,000 and 48,000 between 2018 and 2040. Across this 22-year period, it is predicted that the city and its suburbs will grow anywhere between 1,818 and 2,181 per year. The provision of a population projection for Bearnna of 750 for the lifetime of the Draft Plan (2022-2028) means that there is projected growth of 125 persons per year for Bearnna during this 6-year period. Considering that Bearnna, alongside Baile Chlair and Oranmore are well established and serviced locations within the Metropolitan Area, the population projection of 750 is considered low based on Galway City and Suburbs having a predicted growth rate in this 6-year period of anywhere between 10,908 and 13,086 persons. Bearnna has the capacity, services, availability of lands, and the proximate location to Galway City Centre to justify the consideration of increasing the population projection of the population and settlement structure.

A Report published by the National Investment Office – The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform ‘*Assessing the alignment of the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan*’ has carried out a high-level assessment of the population projections and housing needs as outlined in the NPF. The Rebuilding Ireland action plan set a target to reach a delivery of 25,000 homes per year in Ireland. With the impact of Covid-19 on these targets, a revised estimate for housing was developed in December 2020 which stated that the average housing supply will need to increase to an annual average of 33,000 per year.

Justification Test – Assessment of Phase I Residential Lands

In order to demonstrate compliance with the residential phasing policy detailed above, and to outline that the quantum of Phase 1 lands in Bearnna are significantly under-zoned, it is necessary to undertake a review and assessment of the Phase 1 Residential lands in the village to establish:

1. What proportion of Phase 1 lands have been fully developed or committed to development?



2. Of the Phase 1 lands that have not been committed to development, is there evidence of any constraints associated with those lands to explain why they have not been committed to development to date and are unlikely to be committed to development?

The review identified 7 no. Phase 1 sites which are outlined in **Figure 2** below, as edited by MKO for clarification of each site in the assessment that will follow. These sites are illustrated in the 'Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 – Galway Metropolitan Area – Bearna Land Use Zoning Map'. Each site was assessed to establish whether any development had taken place or was underway. A note of any extant planning permissions was made. Finally, they were assessed to establish if there are any constraints on the lands. **Table 1** below provides an overview summary of the exercise which is discussed in further detail below. This exercise is carried out by MKO with documentation available at the time of preparation (June 2021), all measurements are approximate, and the information outlined has not been confirmed by MKO.

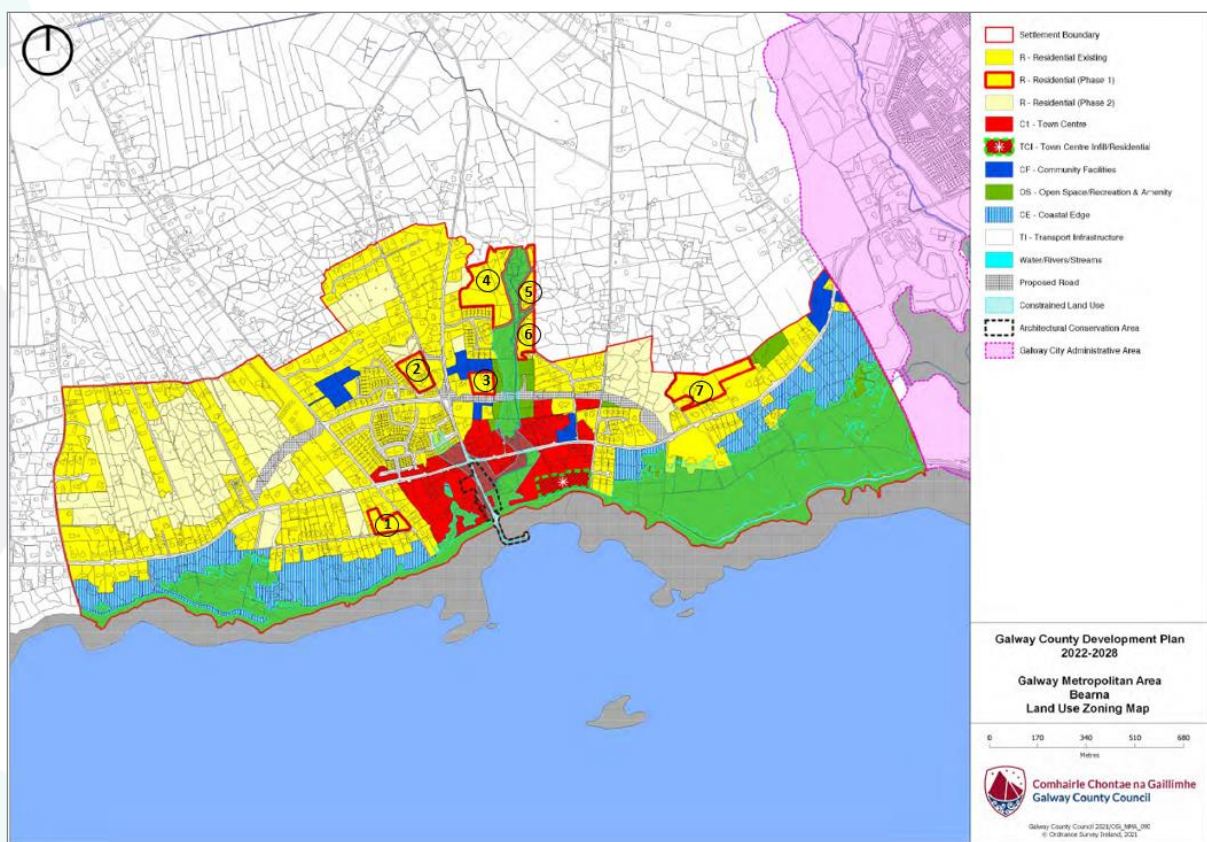


Figure 2. Land Use Zoning Map which outlines the 7 no. Phase 1 Residential lands (Edited by MKO)



Table 1. Overview summary of Phase 1 Residential lands

Map Ref.	Approx. size in hectares	Committed to Development	Evidence of Constraints	Relevant Planning History References	No. of Units Committed to/Built	Constraints?
1	0.9	0.5418 hectares is committed to development	Yes	07/2757 07/5028 14/1175 14/1146 14/1174 16/361 16/362 16/363 16/398 19/1179 19/1180 20/1723	3 no. units	Refused under Pl. Ref.: 19/1179 and Pl. Ref.: 19/1180 based on poor connectivity to the site from the existing pedestrian infrastructure in Bearna Village.
2	1	Yes	Yes	19/1983	40 units: 22 no. houses and 18 no. apartments	Yes – located within the site boundary is the Trusky River which provides a hydrological connection to the Galway Bay Complex SAC and the Inner Galway Bay SPA Site is within the foraging range of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat which has roost sites in the Bearna Woods



Map Ref.	Approx. size in hectares	Committed to Development	Evidence of Constraints	Relevant Planning History References	No. of Units Committed to/Built	Constraints?
3	0.44	No	Yes	No planning history recorded.	N/A	Located adjacent to the Trusky River which may have impact on the Galway Bay Complex SAC and the Inner Galway Bay SPA
4	3.1	Yes	Yes	09/686 09/1278 ABP-300009-17 ABP-302216-18 ABP-308431-20	121 no. units	Ecological constraints as referenced above as map reference 3 which have been mitigated under ABP-308431-20 with the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report, a Natura Impact Statement and an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
5	0.8	No	Yes	No planning history recorded.	N/A	Same as map reference 3
6	0.8	No	Yes	No planning history recorded.	N/A	Same as map reference 3 and 5
7	2.2	Yes	No	19/314	22 no. units	No constraints



Map Ref.	Approx. size in hectares	Committed to Development	Evidence of Constraints	Relevant Planning History References	No. of Units Committed to/Built	Constraints?
				20/2060		

Map Reference 1

Table 2. Map Reference 1 - Planning History (Source: Galway County Council online planning portal)

Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
Pl. Ref.: 07/2757	Caroline Gannon	Permission to (a) demolish existing dwelling (b) construct new dormer two-storey dwelling and detached garage/boiler house (c) carry out associated siteworks/services including provision of temporary septic tank/percolation area pending connection to Phase 1 Barna Sewage Scheme (Gross floor area 316.20 sqm)	Application withdrawn 01/10/2007
Pl. Ref.: 07/5028	Caroline Gannon	Permission to a) demolish existing dwelling; b) construct new dormer two-storey dwelling and detached garage/boiler house; c) carry out associated siteworks/services including proposed connection to Phase 1 Barna Sewage Scheme (Gross floor area 316.20 sqm)	Granted permission 12/09/2008 subject to 17 no. conditions
Pl. Ref.: 14/1175	M Kavanagh	Permission for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom, dwellinghouse, new entrance and associated site works (gross floor space 259sqm)	Granted permission 16/12/2014 subject to 14 no. conditions
Pl. Ref.: 14/1146	M Kavanagh	Permission for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom, dwellinghouse, new entrance and associated site works (gross floor space 259sqm)	Granted permission 19/01/2105 subject to 14 no. conditions
Pl. Ref.: 14/1174	M Kavanagh	Permission for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom, dwellinghouse, new entrance and associated site works (gross floor space 259sqm)	Granted permission 26/01/2015 subject



Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
			to 14 no. conditions
Pl. Ref.: 16/361	Martina Connelly	Permission to construct a service dwellinghouse and domestic garage (gross floor space 260sqm)	Application withdrawn 02/09/2016
Pl. Ref.: 16/362	Martina Connelly	Permission to construct a service dwellinghouse and domestic garage (gross floor space 260sqm)	Application withdrawn 02/09/2016
Pl. Ref.: 16/363	Martina Connelly	Permission to construct a service dwellinghouse and domestic garage (gross floor space 260sqm)	Application withdrawn 02/09/2016
Pl. Ref.: 16/398	Peter & Anne Canavan	Permission to change the house plans to previously granted under planning file reference 14/1175 (gross floor space 195sqm)	Granted permission 05/07/2016 subject to 15 no. conditions
Pl. Ref.: 19/1179	M Connelly	Permission for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom dwelling house (approximately 277 sqm) and all associated site works including a new entrance and a new connection to the public sewer. Gross floor space of proposed works: 277sqm	Refused permission 19/09/2019 *Reasons for refusal outlined below.
Pl. Ref.: 19/1180	M Connelly	Permission for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom dwelling house (approximately 259 M2) and all associated site works including a new entrance and a new connection to the public sewer. Gross floor space of proposed works: 259 sqm	Refused permission 30/07/2019 *Reasons for refusal outlined below
Pl. Ref.: 20/1723	M Connelly	Permission for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom dwelling house (approximately 311 sqm) and all associated site works including a new entrance and a new connection to the public sewer. Gross floor space of proposed works: 311 sqm	Incomplete Application



Committed to Development:

Pl. Ref.: 16/398 – 0.1795 hectares (has a registered commencement notice on the Galway Planning Portal on 26/07/2016)

Pl. Ref.: 14/1146 – 0.1795 hectares

Pl. Ref.: 14/1174 – 0.1828 hectares

Map Reference 1 extends to a size of approx. 0.9 hectares. With regard to the above 3 no. planning permissions, 0.5418 hectares of the site is committed to development. The remaining 0.3582 has been subject to a number of planning permissions made by Martina Connelly. With regard to Pl. Ref.: 19/1179, Pl. Ref.: 19/1180 the proposed development was refused permission by Galway County Council having regard to

- 1) the location of the site on residential zoned, phase 1 lands as set out in the Bearna Plan;
- 2) the density proposed which is below that set under DM Guideline DM1-Development Densities;
- 3) the absence of pedestrian infrastructure proposals on site or connectivity from the site to the existing pedestrian infrastructure in Bearna Village;

Map Reference 2

Table 3. Map Reference 2 - Planning History (Source: Galway County Council online planning portal)

Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
Pl. Ref.: 19/1983	Truskey West Property Holdings Ltd.	Permission for the construction of a housing development comprising of 40 no. residential units (i.e. 22 no. houses and 18 no. apartments). The development will consist of: - 2 no. House type "B" - 3 bed two storey semi-detached houses - 8 no. House type "C" - 4 bed two storey semi-detached houses - 2 no. House type "C1" - 4 bed two storey semi-detached houses - 6 no House type "D" - 3 bed two storey terraced houses - 4 no. House Type "D1" - 3 bed, two storey terraced houses The 18 no. apartments are proposed within a single two and a half storey building block. This will accommodate 8 no. 1 bed apartments, 9 no. 2 bed apartments and 1 no. 3 bed apartment. The proposed development includes: - The construction of a section of the " Bearna Inner Relief Road" previously permitted under Part 8 Planning Reference No. LA2706. This new section of roadway (link road) will connect the L-13215-0 County road and L-1321-58 County	Refused by Galway City Council 19/12/2019 Third Party to Appeal to An Bord Pleanála resulted in the Board granting permission for the development subject to 20 conditions 18/12/2020



Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
		road, with the provision of a new priority junction with the L-1321-58, to serve the area. - The permanent closure of a section of the L-13215-0 County road to vehicular traffic, and the provision for this section of the road to be used as a pedestrian and cyclist route. - The construction of a new access junction off the proposed new link road to serve the proposed housing development. - Connection to public mains water infrastructure, including connection to existing surface water and foul drainage networks, to serve the development, - Provision of public open space, a playground, private open space, a surface level car parking, bicycle parking, bin store, footpaths, public lighting, landscaping with reuse of ruins of agricultural stone shed, revised boundary treatments, together with site works and services associated with the proposed development. A Natura Impact Statement will be submitted to the planning authority with the application. Gross floor space of proposed works: 3927.8 sqm	

Committed to Development:

The site is committed to the above development of 40 no. units; 22 no. houses and 18 no. apartments (under Pl. Ref.: 19/1983 and ABP-308037-20). Based on the online planning portal there is no recorded commencement notice, however, there are several documents which allude to the fact that pre-commencement discussions and works have taken place for the development.

Map Reference 3

There is no planning history recorded on this site. There may be ecological constraints for development based on the proximate location of the site to the River Trusky which has hydrological connection to the Galway Bay Complex SAC and the Inner Galway Bay SPA.

0.44hectares of land.

Current ownership of GY78760F – lands are registered to Anna Hickey (Freeport Bearna County Galway)



Map Reference 4

Table 4. Map Reference 4 - Planning History (Source: Galway County Council online planning portal)

Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
Pl. Ref.: 09/686	Liam O'Toole	Permission for the following; the demolition of 3 no. sheds/outbuildings, the construction of 94 no. dwellings comprising of 74 no. two storey semidetached units, 16 no. two storey detached units, 4 no. bungalow units, 3 no. two and a half storey buildings comprising of 5 no commercial/retails units, 10 no. apartments and a creche, the provision of parking and ancillary delivery areas, the construction of 3 no. link bridges, 4 no. ancillary storage buildings, a bring bank facility, connection to the existing Cnoc Fraoigh (Heather Hill) development access road and entrance/exit onto the Bearna to Moycullen public road to the west of the site, internal development access road and footpaths, the installation of a new public foul effluent treatment system with treated effluent connection and discharge into the new public foul sewer in the Moycullen Road, the removal of an existing effluent treatment system and percolation area, ancillary landscaping along with connection to public services and sewers including all associated site development works. The development also includes a proposed site for a National School to be provided in accordance with the Community Facility and Amenity provisions of the Bearna Local Area Plan 2007-2013	Application invalidated 05/05/2009
Pl. Ref.: 09/1278	Liam O'Toole	Permission for the demolition of 3 No. sheds/outbuildings, the construction of 94 No. dwellings comprising of; 54 No. two storey semidetached units, 20 No. two storey terrace units comprising of 5 No. terrace blocks, 16 No. two storey detached units, 4 No. bungalow units, 3 No. two and a half storey buildings comprising of 5 No. commercial/retail units, 10 No. apartments and a creche, the provision of parking and ancillary delivery areas, the construction of 3 No. link bridges, 4 No.	Granted permission 09/02/2010 subject to 31 no. conditions Third Party Appeal lodged to the Board under PL07.236240 and



Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
		ancillary storage buildings, a bring bank facility, connection to the existing Cnoc Fraoigh (Heather Hill) development access road and entrance/exit onto the Bearnna to Moycullen public road to the west of the site, internal development access road and footpaths, the installation of a new foul effluent treatment system with treated effluent connection and discharge into the new public foul sewer in the Moycullen Road, the removal of an existing effluent treatment system and percolation area, ancillary landscaping along with connection to public services and sewers including all associated site development works. The development also includes a proposed site for a National School to be provided in accordance with the Community Facility and Amenity provisions of the Bearnna Local Area Plan 2007-2013 (gross floor space 14,620.15sqm)	subsequently refused by the Board 24/09/2010
ABP-300009-17	Burkeway Homes Ltd	SHD - Demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of 113 no. houses, 2 no. vehicular entrances and 6 no. pedestrian link bridges, provision of visitor parking areas, landscaping, decommissioning of existing wastewater treatment plant and all associated site development works.	Refused permission by the Board 23/01/2018 for 2 no reasons: 1) The density of the development was considered too low based on its location within the development boundary of Bearnna, on Phase 1 Residential lands and within the Galway Metropolitan area as designated in the settlement strategy in the County



Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
ABP-302216-18	Burkeway Homes Ltd	SHD - The demolition of existing outbuildings and the construction of 197 no. dwelling houses, community room and associated site works.	<p>Granted permission by the Board 30/10/2018 subject to 23 no. conditions</p> <p>The application was brought to judicial review by the neighbouring resident's group in which Mr. Justice Garrett Simons overturned the board's decision on the conclusion that there were two material contraventions to the Galway County Development Plan and the 197 no. units proposed was considered to breach Bearná's core strategy and that a justification test would be required</p> <p>(Order of the High Court in Heather Hill Management Company</p> <p>CLG Anor. v An Bord Pleanála (2019 No.20 J.R.)</p>



Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
ABP-308431-20	Burkeway Homes Ltd	SHD - Demolition of existing outbuildings, construction of 121 no. residential units (comprising of 52 no. houses and 69 no. apartments), childcare facility and all other associated site works.	<p>Granted permission by the Board 29/01/2021 subject to 30 no. conditions</p> <p>This application is currently under review following the decision by the neighbouring resident's group to pursue a judicial review challenging the Board's decision of approval</p>

Committed to development:

Yes, this site is technically considered committed to development of 121 no. units under ABP 308431-20. Whilst this case is currently under judicial review following the appeal by local residents, it does have a grant of permission by the Board, and as such, this decision could potentially be supported during the Judicial Review process. Regarding this, it is considered that the site of map reference 4 is committed to development.

Map Reference 5

There is no planning history recorded on this site. There may be ecological constraints for development based on the proximate location of the site to the River Trusky which has hydrological connection to the Galway Bay Complex SAC and the Inner Galway Bay SPA.

0.8 hectares of land.

Current ownership of GY81825F – lands are registered to Burkeway Barna Ltd.

Map Reference 6

There is no planning history recorded on this site. There may be ecological constraints for development based on the proximate location of the site to the River Trusky which has hydrological connection to the Galway Bay Complex SAC and the Inner Galway Bay SPA.



0.8 hectares of land.

Current ownership of GY76484F – lands are registered to Burkeway Barna Ltd.

Map Reference 7

Table 5. Map Reference 7 - Planning History (Source: Galway County Council online planning portal)

Planning Ref.	Applicant	Description	Decision
Pl. Ref.: 19/314	M Walsh	Permission for the construction of 20 no. residential units (4 no. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings & 16 no. 5 bed detached dwellings) including the construction of a new road accessed via the existing Dreasla housing development, infrastructure, ESB Substation and all associated external works. Gross floor space of proposed works: 4461 sqm	Granted permission 29/03/2019 subject to 32 no. conditions
Pl. Ref.: 20/2060	M Walsh	Permission for amendments to a previously approved residential development [Pl. Ref. 19/314] to include an enlarged site accommodating 2 No. additional dwelling houses [2 No. 5 bedroom detached dwellings], amendments to previously approved house type D at sites 7 to 12 inclusive and associated site works. Gross floor space of proposed works: 720 sqm	Granted permission 15/05/2021 subject to 16 no. conditions Schedule II – Decision to refuse permission for previously granted Pl. Ref.: 19/314 First Party Appeal by applicant on Schedule II decision (ABP-310510-21)

Committed to development:

The site is committed to development under Pl. Ref.: 19/314 and Pl. Ref.: 20/2060. The refusal under Schedule II of Pl. Ref.: 20/2060 is currently under review by first party appeal (ABP-310510-20).

Conclusion



The foregoing assessment has established that:

- There are 7 no. Phase 1 Residential zoned sites in Bearna. This equates to approximately 9.24 hectares of land.
- 4 no. of the 7 no. sites are committed to development (granted permissions, recorded commencement notice), currently map reference 4 is subject to judicial review and map reference 7 is under consideration by An Bord Pleanála.
- Approximately 6.8418 hectares of the 9.24 hectares zoned under 'Residential Phase 1' are committed to development.
- This concludes that of the lands zoned for 'Residential Phase 1' only 2.3982 hectares of land can be considered readily available for development.
- Of the available land, 2.04 hectares of land have ecological concerns being located within close proximity to the Trusky River which has hydrological connections to Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site code. 000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site code. 004031). This constraint may impact the potential for development on these lands.
- Under 'Volume 2 Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan' (MASP) of the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, the Core Strategy Table identifies a population projection of 750 for Bearna during the lifetime of the six-year lifetime of the plan.
- As referenced previously in this document, it is in our professional opinion that the population projection for Bearna has been extremely underestimated, giving its key location with the Metropolitan Area of Galway.
- Given a projection of 750, the quantum of residential lands required to meet this growth is 10.00 hectares. This assessment has concluded that of the lands zoned for 'Residential Phase 1' 6.8418 hectares of land are considered as committed to development. The quantum of land of 10.00 hectares requires re-assessment of the Phase 2 lands in order to fill the capacity of these lands required to provide housing for the 750-no. population increase.
- Furthermore, of the 4 no. lands (map reference 1, 2, 4, 7) committed to development, if developments were to be completed as granted on these sites, this would result in the construction of 186 no. units on 6.8418 hectares of land. Regarding the remaining 2.3982 hectares of land, the capacity of these lands to provide residential units for the remaining 564 no. population is unviable.

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the land-use zoning objective 'Residential Phase 2' which states that

"Where it is apparent that R Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development maybe considered in a phased manner on some residential (Phase 2 lands)".

And is purposed to ensure that Policy Objective BMSP of the MASP is met which states that with regard to Sustainable Residential Communities it is a policy objective to

"Promote the development of appropriate and serviced lands to provide for high quality, well laid out and well landscaped sustainable residential communities with an appropriate mix of housing types and densities, together with complementary land uses such as community facilities, local services and



public transport facilities, to serve the residential population of Bearna Metropolitan settlement plan”
(our emphasis added).

This assessment demonstrates clearly that the number of lands zoned for ‘Residential Phase 1’ will not cater for the predicted growth of Bearna within the lifetime of the upcoming plan. It is therefore necessary to consider the rezoning of ‘Phase 2 Residential’ lands to cater for this population growth.

Caveat

The planning advice contained in this briefing note is given without prejudice, and ultimately, the development potential of the subject lands will be determined through the statutory planning process. The area and boundaries of the subject lands used in this report are based on the available documentation and have not been verified by MKO.

