

Chapter 6

Transport and Movement

To encourage investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport.

6.1 Introduction

Galway County Council recognises that the delivery of transportation infrastructure in a sustainable manner is critical to the future development of the county. This plan will support the investment for both new and enhanced transport infrastructure to ensure economic growth and investment, the delivery of employment opportunities, reduced commuting times, more sustainable communities and enhanced quality of life through improved connectivity within and between the settlements. To deliver on this integrated transport infrastructure the preparation of the Galway County Transport & Planning Study (GCTPS) has been prepared as part of this plan.

The Council recognises the importance of improvements in terms of the provision and maintenance of footpaths, cycleways, road, rail, aviation and marine based infrastructure that promotes a choice of transport modes, which contributes to a sustainable and integrated transport strategy, promotes economic investment and provides a high quality of life with more sustainable communities for the existing and future population of the county.

6.2 Strategic Aims

Galway County Council shall work with the appropriate agencies and state bodies to ensure that transport infrastructure is provided and will accord with the following strategic aims;

- To support the Galway County Transport & Planning Study (GCTPS) and the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS);
- To support the sustainable modes of transport and the transition to a low carbon economy;

- To safeguard the strategic transport function, carrying capacity, including planning for future capacity enhancements of the national road network;
- Promote development on serviced lands in towns and villages, particularly those located along public transport corridors in accordance with the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines (2009)*, having regard to existing settlement patterns;
- To promote the upgrade of the capacity of the Athlone – Athenry – to Galway rail line including the provision of a dual track and increased service stops between Galway and Athlone;
- To promote and support the expansion of County-wide and national Cycling infrastructure;
- Ballinasloe Townspark Relief Road linking also to Townspark Amenity Area

6.3 Strategic Context

This chapter is prepared in the context of the following National and Regional Plans, Policies and Guidelines:

National Planning Framework – Ireland 2040
National Development Plan 2018 - 2027
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region 2020-2032
Spatial Planning and National Roads, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012
Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2013, as updated in 2019
Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Climate Action Plan 2019
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future - A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 - 2020
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways, 2018
National Mitigation Plan 2017
National Policy Framework; Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 - 2030 Permeability Best Practice Guide by National Transport Authority
National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020
National Cycle Manual by National Transport Authority 2011
Age Friendly Strategy for Galway 2014-2019
Galway Transport Strategy and the Galway County Transport and Planning Study National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017 - 2022

6.3.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) places significant emphasis on the importance of the transition towards more sustainable modes of transport and the implementation of planning and transportation strategies. The NPF also places importance on the electrification of public transport, the use of electric vehicles. The design of communities must include the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the future and the improvement of walking and cycle infrastructure.

6.3.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) supports transition from the private car to alternatives and promotes greater efficiency in the use of the transport networks. RPO 3.6.7 of the RSES supports the provision of a new N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) which represents a key priority for the Galway metropolitan area. RPO 6.27 supports the preparation of Local Transport plans for Ballinasloe and Tuam while RPO 3.6.13 supports the delivery of a Greenway Network which includes National Dublin to Galway Cycleway, Oranmore to Bearna Coastal Greenway and the Galway to Clifden Greenway. The following are a list of the key priorities outlined in the RSES:

- Support for maintaining the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network and planning for future capacity enhancements including the N6 Galway City Ring Road, the N59 Upgrade, the N59 Clifden to Oughterard Scheme and the Maigh Cuilinn Bypass;
- Support for Local Transport plans for Ballinasloe and Tuam;
- Support for the delivery of Greenway Network to include National Dublin to Galway Cycleway, Oranmore to Bearna Coastal Greenway and the Galway to Clifden Greenway;
- Support for an enhanced and more connected provision of public transport service including the rural transport programme;
- Support for the delivery of the rail projects including a dual railway track between Galway and Athlone;
- Support provision of Smarter Travel infrastructure;

6.3.3 Galway County Transport and Planning Study and Galway Transport Strategy

The Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) provides an overview and examination of existing transport networks and services within the County and uses this information to identify the key opportunities and challenges which will arise

with regards to transport provision within the period of the County Development Plan and beyond. Current and predicted future patterns of movement have been applied alongside consideration of known and planned growth in housing, employment and other land uses to enable an assessment of how the use and operation of key “corridors” within the County is expected to alter, allowing for a series of options for transport improvements and related measures to be developed which are capable of responding to these patterns. Further, these options have then been assessed against a series of strategic objectives to develop proposals by mode and location which will address existing transport issues, protect the safety and efficient operation of the transport networks within the County area, and work to guide and support future development and growth within locations which are either identified within this plan, or can be shown to be consistent with its relevant policy objectives. In addition, the GCTPS has been prepared so as to be compatible/compliment the Galway Transport Strategy, in particular in regard to the metropolitan (MASP) areas which border the Galway City administrative area. The GCTPS seeks to actively promote and support improvements to the transport networks which will encourage greater use of sustainable transport by existing populations, reduce car dependency and support new development in locations where sustainable travel choices can be encouraged and facilitated through existing and upgraded infrastructure and other measures.

The Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) promotes the integration of land use and transportation within Galway City and suburbs and environs of Galway County. This plan is a joint Galway City Council and Galway County Council 20-year strategy prepared in partnership with the National Transport Authority. The GTS supports reduced congestion and car dependency through increased capacity of reliable and sustainable public transport and the promotion and facilitation of cycling and walking, which in turn promotes the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The strategy includes traffic management, giving priority to walking, cycling and bus movements, modifications to the traffic network, management of parking activities and heavy goods vehicles, improvements to the public realm and use of ‘smarter mobility’.

Policy Objectives for Galway County Transport & Planning Study and Galway Transportation Strategy

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

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

GCTPS 2 Integrated approach to land use and transportation

Galway County Council will pursue a fully integrated approach to land use and transportation, actively supporting measures which facilitate and attract developments to locations with high levels of sustainable transport provision (or which can achieve such provision as a result of the development in question).

GCTPS 3 Sustainable Transport

The County will seek to support a variety of measures which will reduce car dependency for residents, and will specifically seek to improve access to sustainable transport choices (including responsive and “flexible” modes) for those residents in rural areas of the County.

GCTPS 4 Walking and Cycling

Support for, and enhancement of, existing and new walking and cycling networks as the “first choice” for shorter local journeys and to link settlements within the County and to Galway City.

GCTPS 5 Upgrade to Public Transport Networks

Support any proposed major upgrades to the public transport networks, including the Western Rail Corridor and the dual tracking between Galway City and Athlone.

GCTPS 6 Road Based Public Transport

The County will seek to maintain and enhance infrastructure for road-based public transport, and to increase access to existing services (through provision of new stops and improved access via the pedestrian and cycle networks).

GCTPS 7 Improvements to Road Network

The County will manage and maintain the efficient and safe operation of the road network under its control, and will work with TII and NTA to identify locations on the national network where targeted improvements may be required to address specific issues.

GCTPS 8 Enhancement of National Networks

The County will co-operate with TII and the NTA with regard to the maintenance and enhancement of national networks for longer-distance and cross-country travel and movement of through-traffic including freight.

GCTPS 9 Collaboration with Galway City

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

GCTPS 10 Park and Stride

To actively support the development of existing appropriate locations/set down areas to accommodate Park and Stride initiatives at appropriate locations, especially within walking distance to schools.

6.4 Climate Change

The provision of infrastructure such as high-quality public transport and road infrastructure, must be provided in full consideration of the climate action agenda.

The following are key parameters in addressing climate change:

- Sustainable modes of transport;
- Enhanced public transport;
- Reduced emissions;
- The integration of spatial planning with transport planning;
- Measure to support electrical vehicles;
- The promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas.

The policy objectives to follow will accord with the National Strategic Outcome (NSO) no.8 of the NPF and will support the county's transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. In addition, *Chapter 14 Climate Change, Energy and Renewable Resource* will also address in more detail Climate Change and the interrelationship between the policy objectives of this chapter and the transition to a resilient society.

6.5 Transport

6.5.1 Integrated Land Use and Transport Planning

In shaping the pattern of development and influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land-uses, the integration of land-use and transportation can help reduce the need to travel and facilitate sustainable urban development. Conversely, the dispersal of land uses results in increased commuting times, increased reliance on transportation which leads to increased greenhouse gas emissions and a reduced quality of life for our communities which is unsustainable.

The plan therefore promotes an integrated approach to land-use and transportation and supports development in existing towns, settlements and villages within the county in accordance with the Core Strategy, as outlined in Chapter 2 "*Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy & Housing Strategy*" in order to reduce car dependency. The Plan strongly supports the creation of compact urban growth, consolidation of existing settlements and the development of brownfield lands which are all further expanded in *Chapter 3 Placemaking, Regeneration and Urban Living* across the settlement hierarchy. The promotion of brownfield development and consolidation of existing settlements supports a more sustainable modes of transport, namely walking, cycling, and public transport as viable alternatives to the private car.

The plan promotes the creation of transport hubs and enhanced public transport infrastructure to facilitate increased capacity and additional service. At strategic locations along these public transport corridors the plan promotes higher density development which will increase the number of people within the walking catchment of the public transport service, which will increase the numbers of passengers using the service, and leads to an increase in the overall economic viability of the service

and consequently reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to the reduced numbers dependent on cars.

This strategy is evident within the plan through the preparation of the Garraun Framework Plan which has identified lands for development around the existing train station in Oranmore. A number of infrastructural works are required to the existing train line which will result in increased frequency and capacity of the train service. The GCTPS also sets out the intention to investigate the provision of new and improved “hub” facilities at the Key Towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam, and enhancement of facilities serving the rail station at Athenry.

Land Use and Transportation Strategies also play a vital role in supporting better coordination and integration of development planning. This plan is accompanied by and has also been informed by the Galway County Transport & Planning Study. This chapter also includes policy objectives for the preparation of Local Transport Plans for the Key Towns of Tuam and Ballinasloe as part of the review of the Local Area Plans for these settlements.

Policy Objectives for Integrated Land Use and Transport Planning

ILUTP 1 Sustainable Transportation

Encourage transition towards sustainable and low carbon transport modes, through the promotion of alternative modes of transport, and ‘walkable communities’ and Active Travel, together with promotion of compact urban forms close to public transport corridors to encourage more sustainable patterns of movement.

ILUTP 2 Local Transport Plans

To prepare Local Transport Plans in accordance with the Area Based Transport Assessment Guidelines (TII, 2018) and in consultation with national transport agencies and other relevant stakeholders for Key Towns of Tuam and Ballinasloe as part of the preparation of the Local Area Plans for these settlements.

ILUTP 3 Local Transport Plans

To seek to prepare Local Transport Plans/Mobility Plans in accordance with the Area Based Transport Assessment Guidelines (TII, 2018) and in consultation with national transport agencies and other relevant stakeholders for settlements in Level 3 and Level 4 of the settlement Hierarchy.

6.5.2 Sustainable Transport

Based on the analysis of the 2016 census, there has been significant dependence within the county on the private car which has become the dominant mode of transport. This chapter in conjunction with both the Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) and the Galway Transport Strategy aims to support a shift away from the private car to more sustainable transport options. The modal share within the county including Galway City is detailed below within Table 6.2 which is based on the 2016 Census. The transition to more sustainable transport within the county is considered essential in order to meet the requirements under section 10(2)(n) of the Act (Climate.). The following sections set out the various modes of transport within the county from walking and cycling to public transport.

6.5.2.1 Walking and Cycling

There are a number of benefits to the promotion of both walking and cycling including a reduction of congestion in urban areas, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, a healthier population, enhanced quality of life and more sustainable communities. The more people who can actively be encouraged to both walk and cycle will also result in a reduced number of private cars within our urban areas resulting in a lower demand for parking spaces and street space which could result in enhancements of the public realm in our urban areas.

This plan supports the design standards contained within the National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets in terms of the design of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure with all new developments required to demonstrate how their proposals would be in accordance with these documents. The implementation of the principles of good urban design through the arrangement of land uses and the creation of well-connected streets and neighbourhoods between residential areas, neighbourhood centres, schools, and places of work, will encourage people to walk and cycle more frequently.

Policy Objective for Walking and Cycling

WC 1 Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure

To require the design of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to be in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards set out in the National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, TII Publications, 'The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads', and the NTA document Permeability: Best Practice Guide.

WC 2 Bicycle Parking

To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities and associated facilities within the public realm of towns and villages throughout the County.

WC 3 Sustainable Transport Movement

To require sustainable transport movement and good permeability to be given priority at the earliest design stage of development proposals.

WC 4 Modern Network of Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

To continue to work and engage with the National Transport Authority, the Department of Transport and other agencies in developing a modern network of walking and cycling infrastructure in the County.

WC 5 Traffic Free Cycle Routes

To provide, where possible traffic free pedestrian and cyclist routes including filtered permeability particularly where such routes would provide a more direct, safer, and more attractive alternative to the car.

6.5.2.2 Greenways and Blueways

The Council actively supports the provision of greenway infrastructure within the county and acknowledges that benefits from a recreational amenity perspective which encourages an active and healthy lifestyle for our communities. The Council also acknowledges the economic benefits which arise from greenways particularly from a tourism perspective. The Council will continue support and facilitate the provision of greenways where appropriate within the county. Greenways are further examined and detailed in *Chapter 9 Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure and Natural Heritage*.

Policy Objectives for Greenways and Blueways

GBW 1 Greenways

To support the development of an integrated Strategic Greenway Network of national and regional routes and maximise connectivity to existing greenways through linkages of cycling and walking infrastructure in a manner that is compatible with nature conservation and other environmental policies. This will include but is not limited to the following which are of National and Regional importance;

- National Greenway Dublin to Galway
- Connemara Greenway i.e. (Clifden to Oughterard, Galway to Oughterard)

GBW 2 Future Development of Network of Greenways

To support the delivery of sustainable strategic greenway/blueway projects in the county in accordance with the Strategy for Future Development of National and Regional Greenways.

6.5.2.3 Electric Vehicles

The Council support the provision of electric vehicles including Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) including electric cars, bikes and scooters as a more sustainable low carbon option to the conventional private motor vehicle. These vehicles are both clean and energy efficient and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and noise pollution particularly in our urban areas. There are currently limited number of electric vehicle charging points located in the county. The plan will therefore support the installation of charging points at appropriate locations throughout the county to enable the transition to electric vehicles become more accessible.

Policy Objectives for Electric Vehicles

EV 1 Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure

To support and facilitate the switch to Electric Vehicles through supporting the roll-out of additional Electric charging points at appropriate locations within the County in association with relevant agencies and stakeholders.

6.5.2.4 Public Transport

There are a number of modes of public transport within the county including bus, rail, rural transport services, air, boat and taxi services. These services provide a number of connections both between settlements the county, the mainland and our islands, the wider region and various locations throughout the country.

Bus Services

The County is currently served by an extensive network of bus services both public and private operators, connecting rural areas, linking settlements within the county and connecting to Galway City nearby regional airports and other large centres nationally.. The plan in terms of bus services is in accordance with the GCTPS and the GTS and supports the consolidation of future growth, which should in turn reinforce and create expanded markets for bus services in the longer term.

Public Transport in Rural Areas

The provision of rural public transport is essential to ensure rural isolation is minimised. In the county the National Transport Authority provides rural transport services through the Local Link Rural Transport Programme with over 80 services a week including demand responsive and door to door service provided. This service is an important method of addressing rural social exclusion while also assisting in the integration of rural transport services with other public transport services.

Park and Ride Facilities

The Council will investigate the provision park and ride facilities at appropriate locations with the main focus on encouraging commuters to utilise public transport, reducing congestion and assisting in the transition to a low carbon county.

Rail Services

The county is served from the south and from the east via the Athenry/Limerick (Western Rail Corridor) and Galway/Dublin rail lines respectively. The Galway/Limerick line intersects with the Galway/Dublin line in Athenry. The disused rail line between Athenry and Claremorris via Tuam provides the potential for additional rail services to the north of the county and the extension of the Western Rail Corridor to provide rail access to the north west of the country. The council

supports the opening of the Western Rail Corridor route from Athenry to Tuam, Claremorris and Collooney as an option for passenger and cargo transportation. In this regard it is acknowledged that the Government has announced an All Ireland Strategic Rail Review.

At present the existing railway line which serves Galway to Athlone is limited in terms of its capacity due to the infrastructural constraints. This plan supports the upgrade of this line including provision of a dual line being provided between Galway and Athlone which would significantly increase both the speed and frequency of service on this line. The Council considers the development of enhanced rail infrastructure to be critical in terms of facilitating balanced regional growth and the development of the Galway Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). The Council will continue engage with Iarnród Éireann and other service providers in seeking to improve rail services and infrastructure at appropriate locations in the County.

Policy Objectives for Public Transport

PT 1 Sustainable Modes of Transport

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

PT 2 Development of Public Transport Infrastructure

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

PT 3 County Bus Services

To support the National Transport Authority (NTA) and other stakeholders and community groups in improving bus services infrastructure.

PT 4 Rural Transport

To continue to support the 'Local Link' rural transport service and to encourage operators to improve the service to meet the social and economic needs of the rural communities in the County.

PT 5 Park and Ride

To work with the National Transport Authority (NTA), Iarnród Éireann, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Galway City Council and any other stakeholders in identifying suitable locations for and the development of Park and Ride facilities in the County.

PT 6 Galway to Athlone Rail Line

To secure in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann improved rail infrastructure and services between Galway to Athlone which includes a dual railway track and additional improvement works to include an additional platform and a passing loop at Garraun, Oranmore to ensure enhanced capacity and frequency of service.

PT 7 Western Rail Corridor

To support the opening of the Western Rail Corridor route from Athenry, Tuam, Claremorris to Collooney as an option for passenger and cargo transportation.

PT 8 Loughrea Rail Infrastructure

To support the addition of Loughrea to the Western Rail Corridor and to plan for the addition of a commuter route from Loughrea to Galway by linking Loughrea to either Attymon or Athenry train station to create a commuter tributary to Galway.

PT9 National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022

To require the dishing of footpaths and accessible infrastructure including bus stops in accordance with action 108 & action 109 of the 'National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022.

6.5.3 Roads

The Council recognises the importance of the public road network in the county and the importance of the continued safeguarding and development of this infrastructure to ensure the safety of road users, the transport of goods and services and connectivity between the settlements and the wider region. There are a number of motorways(M6/M17/M18) and national routes which provide excellent access routes into and out of the county which are extremely important in terms of the economic

and social development. At a more local level there are a number of regional and local roads which provide connectivity between towns and villages and their wider rural hinterlands.

Whilst the plan supports the promotion of sustainable transport and a low carbon county the Council recognises that due to the significant number of rural communities within the county and the importance of maintaining movement of goods that roads infrastructure will retain an integral part of the overall transportation network for the county.

Galway County Council will continue to support extensions and improvements to existing roads infrastructure within the County with the priority projects listed with Tables 6.1 and 6.2 as follows:

National Roads

- N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6GCRR)
- N59 Clifden to Oughterard (N59 Clifden to Maam Cross and N59 Oughterard to Maam Cross)
- N59 Clifden to Leenane (Mayo County Border)
- N59 Galway to Oughterard
- N84 Galway to County Boundary
- N67 Kilcolgan to County Boundary,
- N17 Tuam to County Boundary,
- N63 Annagh Cross to Ballygar
- N83 Tuam to Dunmore and to County Boundary
- N65 Kilmeen to Portumna
- N18 at Carrowmoneash northwards towards the interchange with the M6

Critical Town Bypasses

- N59 Maigh Cuilinn By-pass;
- N17 Baile Chláir By-pass;

Public Car Parks

- Gort Car Park;
- Headford Car Park;
- Kinvara Car Park;
- Oranmore Car Park;
- Oughterard Bus Parking;

National and Local Cycle Networks

- Dublin to Galway
- Galway to Clifden

Table 6.1 Priority Transportation Infrastructure Projects for County Galway 2022-2028

Routes	Works to be Undertaken
R336, R446, R332, R360, R328, R365, R333 from Kilbannon to Mayo Border.	Network improvement works, strengthening overlay and improvements.
Oranhill Link Roads.	To complete link roads.
N6 at Carrowmoneash to link to Oranmore Industrial Area on N18.	Investigate and provide for a pedestrian crossing.
Tuam Road Quality Bus Corridor Consider creation of additional lanes or alteration of existing lanes	In conjunction with Galway City complete the design of the Tuam Road quality bus corridor and reserve lands accordingly.

for Quality Bus Corridors on the R446, N83, N59, N84.	Complete the design of Quality Bus Corridors and reserve lands accordingly.
Local and regional road networks within the County.	Continue strengthening, improvements and realignment work where necessary, to these networks.

Table 6.2: Regional/Local Projects Proposed for 2022-2028

Policy Objective Priority Roads Projects	
PRP 1	Proposed Roads Projects
Galway County Council will facilitate the progression of the necessary infrastructure improvements including new roads/projects listed in Table 6.1: Priority Transportation Infrastructure Projects for County Galway 2022-2028 and those listed within Table 6.2: Regional/Local Projects Proposed for 2022-2028 subject to relevant Irish planning and European environmental legislation including Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and/or other environmental assessment, where appropriate.	
PRP 2	Corridor and Route Selection Process
Policy objectives relating to new roads and other transport infrastructure projects that are not already provided for by existing plans/ programmes or are not already permitted, are subject to the undertaking of feasibility assessment, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the policy objectives of the Plan relating to sustainable mobility. Where feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection; and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.	
PRP 3	R336 Bearna-Scrib via Ros a Mhíl
It is a policy objective of Galway County Council to support the preparation of a feasibility study in relation to the R336 within the lifetime of the plan.	

6.5.3.1 National Roads

The following national roads schemes are currently developing/progressing within the county in accordance with the National Development Plan:

- N6 Galway City Ring Road(N6GCRR);
- N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass;
- N59 Oughterard to Maam Cross.

The delivery of the N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) is of significant importance to ensure the success of the Galway MASP and the wider region. The city and environs will continue to grow and without intervention the current congestion on the approach into the city from the county area will impact on the overall function and success of the Galway City metropolitan area and county. The GCTPS and the GTS have both outlined measures needed to address this problem including the delivery of a new orbital route (ie. N6 GCRR).

The proposed N6 GCRR road development will function as part of the TEN-T network that includes the core transport routes in all EU Member States for transport modes. The N6 GCRR around Galway forms part of the TEN-T comprehensive network in Ireland and is governed by EU regulations associated with such designation. This designation of the N6 GCRR will be a high-quality road with limited access. This is to ensure that the road functions as intended in improving the transport infrastructure of Galway with proper control of access via junctions thus ensuring unhindered flow along the proposed route.

The N6 GCRR is consistent with the priorities as set out in a number of the government's national policy documents including the *National Development Plan 2018-2027*, *the RSES and NPF* which include strategic policy objectives to tackle transportation infrastructure deficits.

The construction of the N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass is due to commence in 2021 and will provide improved connectivity to the Conamara region. The N59 Oughterard to Maam Cross is under construction at the moment.

The policy objectives within this plan will seek to ensure the protection of the safety, carrying capacity and efficiency of the existing and future national road networks. In

addition, future schemes are safeguarded whilst also making provision to encourage sustainable compact forms of development which will have minimal impact on the carrying capacity, efficiency and safety of the national road network.

Policy Objectives for National Roads

NR 1 Protection of Strategic Roads

To protect the strategic transport function of national roads and associated national road junctions, including motorways through the implementation of the 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities' DECLG, (2012) and the Trans-European Networks (TEN-T) Regulations.

NR 2 Key Roads Infrastructure Developments

To support the delivery of the Galway City Ring Road (N6GCRR), N59 Maigh Cuilinn Bypass and the Galway – Clifden (N59) Schemes.

NR 3 Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA)

Require all applications for significant development proposals which have the potential to impact on the National Road Network to be accompanied by a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA), carried out by suitably competent persons, in accordance with the TII's Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines and TII Publications (Standard) GE-STY-01024 (Road Safety Audit) respectively.

NR 4 New Accesses Directly on National Roads

The policy objective of the Planning Authority will be to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60 kmh apply. This provision, in accordance with the relevant TII Guidelines, applies to all categories of development'. Consideration will be given, where appropriate, for the facilitation of regionally strategic projects and utility infrastructure.

NR 5 Route Corridor

To protect the study area, route corridor options and thereafter the preferred route corridor selected for the national road schemes being progressed in the Development Plan in accordance with National Development Plan Objectives and to prohibit development that could prejudice their future delivery.

6.5.3.2 Non-National Roads

In order to maintain the efficiency and functionality of the regional road network it is important that the number of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses are restricted. These restrictions minimise risks to road safety as new entrances can result in additional stopping and turning movements, which give rise to the potential for additional traffic accidents. Where a National Road is declassified to Regional Road status during the lifetime of the plan it shall become a Restricted Regional Road.

1	Ballinasloe to City Boundary North of Oranmore	R446
2	Tuam – Bearnaderg – Horseleap	R332
3	Galway – An Spidéal – Ballinahow Cross	R336
4	Galway – Carnmore – Monivea	R339
5	Derrydonnell – Athenry	R348
6	Headford – Tuam	R333
7	Ballinasloe – Portumna	R355
8	Ballinasloe – Mountbellew	R358
9	Gort – Loughrea	R380
10	Lough George – Annagh Hill	R354
11	Kilcolgan – Galway /Clare County Boundary	R458
12	Baile Chláir – M6 (Junction 19) – Oranmore	R381

Table 6.3 Restricted Regional Roads

Policy Objectives for Non National Roads

NNR 1 Restricted Regional Roads

To safeguard the capacity and safety of Restricted Regional Roads listed in Table 6.3, against development where a maximum speed limit applies in order to protect the carrying capacity and safety of such roads.

NNR 2 Safeguard Regional and Local Roads

To safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of the County's regional and local road network.

NNR 3 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

Implement the national design standards outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2019) for urban streets and roads within the 50/60 kph zone.

NNR 4 Traffic Management in Town Centre

Seek where possible the reduction of through-traffic passing through town centres and also to manage the movement of through traffic through town centre giving priority to pedestrian, cycle and public transport vehicles.

NNR 5 School Travel Plans

Increase the safety of children at schools by assessing safe routes to schools for school children and by the installation of traffic management measures. Require School Travel Plans to be submitted with applications by schools or colleges in accordance with actions as set out under Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020.

NNR 6 Transport and Traffic Assessments and Road Safety Audits

To require the preparation of Transport and Traffic Assessments and Road Safety Audits for new developments in accordance with the requirements set out in the TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.

NNR 7 Mobility Management Plans

To require mobility management plans to be submitted with applications for trip intensive developments.

NNR 8**Car Parking**

Provide/improve parking facilities in towns and villages in a manner which supports policies relating to promotion of sustainable transport choices and modal shift. The requirements for car parking shall be in accordance with the standards as set out within Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of this plan under Guidelines for Transportation, Roads, Parking, Loading and Storage.

6.5.4 Air Transport

The Council supports the continued operation and growth of both Ireland West Airport Knock to the north and Shannon Airport to the south of the county as an important element of transport and communications infrastructure. The Council considers the enhancement of connections particularly by public transport from the county to nearby airports to be of critical importance to ensuring connectivity to international markets which will be of benefit to the local economy.

The Council are also mindful of the Conamara Airport located at Indreabhán which provides an important connection between the mainland and Oileáin Árann. This airport provides a critical link between these islands and the mainland with a significant economic benefit to the islands particularly through access to the tourism market. This issue is further examined within *Chapter 12 The Galway Gaeltacht and Islands*.

Policy Objectives for Air Transport**AT 1****Regional Airports**

To support the continued operation and growth of our regional airports, in line with the RSES and measures to enhance connections, particularly by public transport, from the county to these airports and the other airports in the country.

AT 2**Local Airstrips**

- a. Galway County Council shall liaise with the Irish Aviation Authority with regard to the effects of any development proposals in the vicinity of local air strips.
- b. Support that the Cleggan and Inishbofin airstrips be brought into use to support economic development.

- c. Bringing these airstrips into use would need to be subject to detailed studies and formal approval of any proposals by Galway County Council. Any proposal would need to demonstrate: a contribution towards the proper planning and sustainable development of the county; compliance with all environmental legislation and policy objectives contained within the Plan and higher level planning documents, including the National Planning Framework and the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy; and that no effect on the integrity of any European Site would occur.

AT 3 Helipad Facilities

The Planning Authority shall facilitate the provision of helipad facilities in industrial/commercial areas, strategic development sites or in areas in close proximity to hospitals, medical services facilities or emergency facilities where feasible and appropriate.

6.5.5 Ports, Harbours, Piers and Slipways

The Council recognises the importance of our marine infrastructure including Ports, Harbours, Piers and Slipways from an employment, economic, tourism and social perspective to our coastal communities. The Council will support the continued development of the ports and ferry operators which provide an extremely important connection between the mainland and the islands. The foremost of these important pieces of Infrastructure is the port at Ros An Mhíl which is designated as one of the country's six Major Fishery Harbour Centres. Ros An Mhíl Port also provides extremely important connectivity for passengers and goods between the mainland and Oileáin Árann. The Council will also support the development of the port including the road network serving the port to meet the increased traffic generated as the port continues to develop.

The Council will continue to support, enhance and enable investment in the development of the marine infrastructure as appropriate and subject to environmental considerations and as resources permit.

Policy Objectives for Ports, Harbours, Piers and Slipways

PH 1 Sustainable Development of Ros an Mhíl Sea Port and Galway Harbour

Galway County Council shall continue to recognise the strategic importance of Ros an Mhíl and Galway Harbour and shall promote and facilitate their sustainable development.

PH 2 Sustainable Development of Ports, Harbours, Piers and Slipways

- a) Support the development of Ros an Mhíl Harbour as a deep water port and support and facilitate improvements and maintenance to other harbours, piers and slips throughout the County and consider any new marine infrastructure where appropriate;
- b) Facilitate the safe and convenient access to the water for the purpose of public transport, industry, commerce, sea rescue, tourism, aquaculture and recreation where appropriate and as resources allow.

PH 3 Smart Ports

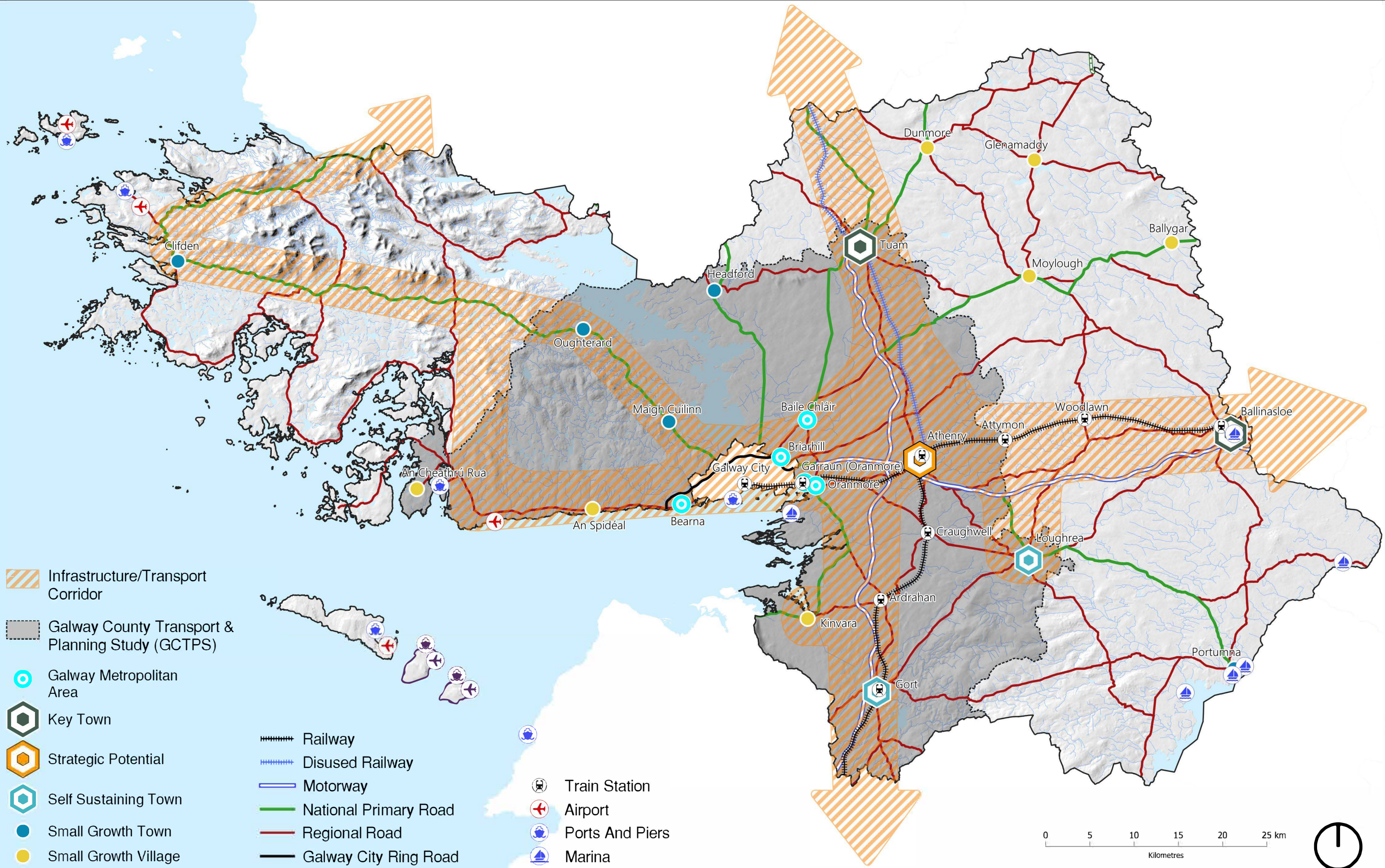
Support the development of technology in our seaports/harbours in their transition towards becoming Smart Ports.

PH 4 Water Bourne Transport

Support the operation of ferry/cargo services between the mainland and the offshore islands within the county and those serving adjoining counties. Land use proposals that would prejudice the sustainable operation of these services will not normally be permitted.

PH 5 Pier Infrastructure on the Islands

Support the enhancement and development of new pier infrastructure to the islands that shall provide for safe access by sea and include but shall not be limited to Improved pier infrastructure on Inis Oír and Inis Meáin in the Aran Islands.



Map 6.1: Transport Network