

COISTE COMHAIRLEACH

Plean Gnímh 5 Bhliana Iorras Aithneach

Amendments proposed to Galway Draft Co

Development Plan ...2022-2028.

Submitted 30-7-2021

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(This is the local Consultative Committee in the Carna/Cill Chiaráin area of Connemara that is working with Údarás na Gaeltachta on the 5 year re-generation plan for this area).

N.B. Please note, suggested submissions are included in red.

CHAPTER 13 – The Galway Gaeltacht and Islands.

GA 2

Development of Language Plans

Support the development and implementation of language plans in Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas, Gaeltacht Service Towns and Irish Language Networks.

GA 3

Support the Statutory Development Agencies

Support all of the statutory development agencies, especially Údarás na Gaeltachta, to achieve sustainable development in the Galway Gaeltacht while protecting and promoting the Irish language as the first community language of the area.

PLEASE INSERT THE FOLLOWING AT THIS POINT....

Galway County Council acknowledges that approximately two-thirds of the Connemara area is within Special Areas of Conservation and other environmental designations. It is accepted that this extensive area of conservation is making it inordinately difficult, in many instances, for the attainment of planning permission for both dwellings and industrial and commercial developments. While Galway County Council fully supports the protection of the environment, it is also has the strengthening of rural and Gaeltacht areas as a central objective.

Galway County Council shall seek to open discussions with the Department of the Gaeltacht, Tourism, Culture, Arts and Sports with a view to lessening the impact of Special Areas of Conservation, and other environmental designations, on the construction of essential housing and industrial and commercial developments that create employment in rural and Gaeltacht areas in the County, with the objective of ensuring the viability of rural and Gaeltacht areas.

Galway County Council shall look favourably on applying the principle of de minimis as regards SACs in instances where either housing and/or industrial and commercial developments, that are essential to the viability of rural and Gaeltacht areas, extend onto small sections of SACs.

Galway County Council acknowledges that this is a bilingual County in relation to the official languages of the Republic of Ireland. The preservation and fostering of the Irish language is a primary objective of Galway County Council and it is equally acknowledged that our commitment to the language must be underpinned by the development of infrastructure in the Gaeltacht areas of this county; this is a core policy in relation to the Gaeltacht.

Galway County Council, while abiding with its total commitment to the preservation and fostering of the Irish language in its area of remit, acknowledges that practical measures are urgently needed to strengthen the economic and social fabric of Gaeltacht communities, particularly in peripheral area. A continuous decline in the population in some of those areas, allied to high unemployment and emigration, is acknowledged to be a huge threat to some Gaeltacht communities, and consequently a threat to the status of the Irish language in this county and this country.

Galway County Council recognizes that a number of areas in the County have shown a continual decline in their socio-economic status as highlighted in successive Census. The South West Connemara Gaeltacht is a prime example

of that decline as shown in Galway County Council publications based on examinations of Census reports. The continuing decline in population, employment opportunities, and the resultant demographic imbalance in South West Connemara, poses a threat to the bedrock of the Irish language.

Galway County Council strongly supports the implementation of the Údarás na Gaeltachta 5 Year Plan for the Carna/Cill Chiaráin area, the benefits of which would also accrue to surrounding communities.

Galway County Council supports the development of Páirc na Mara on the site chosen by Údarás na Gaeltacht in Cill Chiaráin and recognize it as an innovative project in utilizing the marine sector for the benefit of the community and acknowledges this to be a project which has the potential to be of national and international significance.

Galway County Council will continue to lend its practical help to Údarás na Gaeltachta's 5 Year Development Plan for the Carna/Cill Chiaráin and west Connemara Gaeltacht area through actions such as the development of the R. 340 and the upgrading of infrastructure in the local villages of Cill Chiaráin and Carna. It is recognized by Galway County Council that those villages are in need of public sewerage schemes and this matter will be stressed in contacts with Irish Water.

CHAPTER 6 – TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT.

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

Routes	Works to be Undertaken
R336, R446, R332, R360, R328, R365	An upgraded R.336 from Screebe to Barna.

Routes	Works to be Undertaken
R340 to be added here.	A new plan for the R. 340 with the objective of a total upgrade of the carriageway of that road.
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 for Quality Bus Corridors on the R446, N83, N59, N84.	In conjunction with Galway City complete the design of the Tuam Road quality bus corridor and reserve lands accordingly. 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.

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.

Please insert the following at this point:

Galway County Council has the objective of creating good infrastructure in all parts of the County. Significant development of the road network, in many

parts of the County, in recent years, has brought about a substantial improvement in connectivity.

The western part of the county continues to be impacted by substandard roads that leave many communities – some of which are a long distance from necessary services such as employment, essential services, and hospitals- at a serious disadvantage in terms of infrastructure. Galway County Council is mindful of the need to substantially improve the road network in Connemara and has made attempts to do that, some of which have not met with success mainly on environmental grounds.

Given the notable improvement in roads in other parts of the County, it is now the intention of Galway County Council to focus on a total upgrade of the part of the N. 59 in Connemara and on the development of a new R. 336 road from Bearna to Screebe in the Development Plan 2022-2028, and a total upgrade of the R. 340 road which is a vital link between the R. 336 and the N. 59 in the West Connemara Gaeltacht. Roads of a lower grading in the National Transport hierarchy in Connemara will also be focused on.

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.

9.7 Marine and Coastal Economy

The marine sector has provided a source of employment generation within the county. Its importance is therefore recognised and reflected in this chapter. Challenges to this sector include the effects of external shocks to fishing exports such as Brexit and the requirement to transition to a low carbon economy.

Ireland's marine sector employed in the region of 30,000 full time equivalents in 2019. The annual turnover of the marine sector in Ireland was estimated to be approximately €6 billion.

The profile of the ocean economy in Ireland is made up of a range of sectors which include some the following:

- Shipping and Maritime Transport;
- Marine Coastal Tourism;

- Marine Aquaculture;
- Seafood Processing;
- Marine Technology Products;
- Marine Renewable Energy.

The shipping, maritime transport and tourism sectors are a significant contributor to the ocean economy.

Please insert here.

Galway County Council is mindful of the decline in traditional fishing methods as a means of generating income and proposes to adopt a policy that encourages the utilisation of our marine resources along our extensive coastline of 700 kilometres as a source of employment in communities that are contiguous to the Atlantic. In pursuance of that objective, Galway County Council will, in principle, look favourably on planning applications for the development of marine-related industries and activities.

Galway County Council supports the development of Páirc na Mara on the site chosen by Údarás na Gaeltacht in Cill Chiaráin and recognize it as an innovative project with a very significant employment creating potential and with the capacity to attain national and international significance.

Cill Chiaráin pier is a primary focal point of fishing and marine activities on the southwest Connemara coastline. It is a strategic objective of Galway County Council to plan for an extension and upgrade of Cill Chiaráin pier so that the facility will be fully developed for the purposes of fishing, marine developments in climate change and seagoing activities related to tourism.

***In acknowledging the importance of the marine in our geographic location Galway County Council intends to deploy more personnel to assist in energising industries that are based the marine, on the bays and seashore around us. The ambit of such activities will include industry, services and recreational/tourism facilities pertaining to the marine.**



8.5 Tourism in County Galway

The tourism sector is extremely important to the economic development of the county. There are a number of explanations for the strength of tourism in the county, with its extraordinary natural beauty and cultural assets which includes the largest Gaeltacht in Ireland. The county extends from the Atlantic coastal regions in the west and the dramatic landscape of the Conamara mountains to the callows bordering the River Shannon in the east. At its centre, the County contains the largest inland lake in the Republic of Ireland, Lough Corrib, and to the southeast, Lough Derg. Tourism supports job creation; local enterprise development; increases revenues to the County as well as supporting sustainability of towns and villages, while also contributing to the conservation of built and natural heritage.

The county encompasses some of the key tourism destinations in the country and currently ranks as the most visited County in Ireland; it has traditionally maintained a high ranking among the most visited counties. Galway City and County attracted 1 million domestic visitors in 2018 and generated €175million, with the number of international visitors attracted at 1.729million visitors generating €626 million in revenue.

The Council will support the co-ordination of industry partners across the County, including agencies such as Fáilte Ireland, OPW, Waterways Ireland, Coillte and Údarás na Gaeltachta; as well as the industry that that underpins tourism development. The Council will also continue to lead specific product development projects and supports the development of visitor information services as well as engaging in marketing and public relations to ensure that the County is advantageously positioned in a competitive domestic and international visitor economy. The continued growth and development of the tourism is of utmost importance as it is noted that 12-14% of businesses in Galway are involved in tourism and the sector accounts for 21,000 jobs in Galway (City and County; IHF 2020), while hospitality forms 27.6% of total employment in Clifden, (WDC Insights March 2019) .

TOU 1 Tourism Sector

To co-operate with all relevant stakeholders in initiatives that strengthen the tourism sector in the county.

TOU 2 Key Economic Pillars

To promote and facilitate tourism as an economic pillar of the County's economy and to support the provision of appropriate visitor attractions and improvement in public spaces to promote attractive and vibrant town centres and key places for tourists.

Insert the following here:

Tourism is a major industry and a means of producing real foreign earnings in County Galway. It is the policy of Galway County Council to increase the number of staff assigned to assist in the promotion of tourism.

Galway County Council aspires to appoint three of its staff to the development of the tourism potential of this county with one of those specifically assigned to South Connemara.

Policy Objectives Rural Housing

Proposals – Planning in Rural and Gaeltacht areas.

***Galway County Council acknowledges that family and community networks are a supportive and traditional part of the fabric of rural County Galway. It is also acknowledged that the continuation of farming and marine activities are vital to the socio-economic fabric of the county and that those activities**

have also formed a large part of our heritage and culture.

In order to sustain those ways of life in agriculture and the marine, it is acknowledged that a strong young population imbued in the skills and culture of agriculture and the marine is vital in rural and coastal communities. This has implications for our planning policy which will be favourably focused towards keeping young people in the rural townlands.

RH 1 Rural Housing Zone 1(Rural Metropolitan Area)

It is policy objective to facilitate rural housing in this Rural Metropolitan Area subject to the following criteria:

Those applicants with long standing demonstrable economic and/or social Rural Links* to the area through existing and immediate family ties, seeking to develop their first home on the existing family farm holdings.

Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case by case basis. An Enurement condition shall apply for a period of 7 years, after the date that the house is first occupied by the person or persons to whom the enurement clause applies.

***Galway County Council shall institute a policy of allowing rural houses to be built on a quarter-acre site in townlands in the countryside.**

RH 2 Rural Housing Zone 2 (Rural Area Under Strong Urban Pressure-GCTPS-Outside Rural Metropolitan Area Zone 1)

It is policy objective to facilitate rural housing in this rural area under strong urban pressure subject to the following criteria:

1(a). Those applicants with long standing demonstrable economic and/or social Rural Links* to the area through existing and immediate family ties seeking to develop their first home on the existing family farm holding.

Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case by case basis.

OR

1(b). Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing demonstrable economic and or social Rural links* and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have immediate family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area. Having established a Substantiated Rural Housing Need*, such persons making an application on a site within a 8km radius of their original family home will be accommodated, subject to normal development management. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case by case basis.

OR

1(c). Those applicants who can satisfy to the Planning Authority that they are functionally dependent in relation to demonstrable economic need on the immediate rural areas in which they are seeking to develop a single house as their principal family Residence in the countryside. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case by case basis.

OR

1(d). Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved away and now wish to return and build their first house as their permanent residence, in this local area. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to illustrate their links to the area in order to justify the proposed development and it will be assessed on a case by case basis.

2. An Enurement condition shall apply for a period of 7 years, after the date that the house is first occupied by the person or persons to whom the enurement clause applies.

*See definitions on Page 80

RH 3 Rural Housing Zone 3 (Structurally Weak Areas)

It is a policy objective of the Council to facilitate the development of individual houses in the open countryside "Structurally Weak Areas" subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the Development Management Standards outlined in Chapter 15 and other applicable standards with the exception of those lands contained in Landscape Classifications 2,3 and 4 where objective RH4 applies.

RH 4

Rural Housing Zone 4 (Landscape Classification 2,3 and 4)

Those applicants seeking to construct individual houses in the open countryside in areas located in Landscape Classification 2,3 and 4 are required to demonstrate their demonstrable economic or social Rural Links* and they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives i.e have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have immediate family connections in the area e.g son or daughter, **niece or nephew**, of longstanding residents in the area and require to establish a Substantiated Rural Housing Need*.

Favourable consideration for the construction of individual houses in RH 4 will also be given to the following categories of applicants:

Those applicants from outside the area who are providing employment in the area such as industrial projects and services.

Those applicants who may be natives of some other parts of the county, country or from outside the State and who are working on a long term or permanent basis in the area.

Returning emigrants.

In addition, an Applicant maybe required to submit a visual impact assessment of their development, where the proposal is in an area identified as “Focal Points/Views” in the Landscape Character Assessment of the County Class 3 and Class 4 designated landscape areas. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case by case basis. An Enurement condition shall apply for a period of 7 years, after the date that the house is first occupied by the person or persons to whom the enurement clause applies.

***Galway County Council acknowledges that a high proportion of land conservation and other environmental designations have been applied to cer**

parts of the County and that Connemara, both in the Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht areas, and the offshore islands are primary examples of this process.

It is acknowledged by Galway County Council that these high planning application costs may lead to particular stress and substantial extra expense in obtaining planning permission for the building of dwelling houses which,

in turn, may deter or prevent young people from settling in their native communities. Ensuring the continued vibrancy of rural areas and of Gaeltacht areas are both Galway County Council objectives and it is recognized that outward migration of local people would have a deleterious effect on the stability of rural communities and on the efforts to strengthen Gaeltacht areas.

In the furtherance of this objective Galway County Council will seek to

identify means of recompense for a portion of the high costs resulting to applicants for planning permission for a house in rural areas –

both Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht - from National and European sources in the event that such inordinate expenses to the applicant result from land and environmental preservation and protection designations. This strategy is aimed at ameliorating the stress and expense suffered by many people due to the imposition of environmental designation.

Inordinate expenses shall be defined as being a greater sum than that which would be the average cost of attaining planning permission for a house in rural areas of Galway which are not subject to SACs, NHA, Bird protection areas or Landscape Sensitivity Areas 2,3 and 4.

RH 5 Rural Housing Zone 5 (An Ghaeltacht)

It is a policy objective of the Council to facilitate Rural Housing in the open countryside subject to the following criteria:

(a) Those applicants within An Ghaeltacht which are located in Zone 1 (Rural Metropolitan Area) and Zone 2 (Rural Area Under Strong Urban Pressure-GCTPS) and Zone 4 (Landscape Sensitivity) shall comply with the policy objectives contained in RH 1, RH 2 and RH 4 as appropriate.

(b) It is a policy objective of the Council that consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to speak Irish in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate the ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1 and 2. It will extend into Class 3 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. This consideration will not apply to applicants seeking to build in Zone 1 (Rural Metropolitan Area).

A Language Enurement of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category

RH

4.6 Rural Housing Strategy in the Open Countryside

4.6.2 Structurally Weak Rural Areas (East and West of GCTPS)

From the analysis carried out in Section 4.6 above, it was determined that the areas west and east of the GCTPS can be categorised as Structurally Weak Rural Areas. This rural area can be categorised as the rural area to the west and east of the GCTPS as illustrated on 4.1. These areas consist mainly of a low population base and have not experienced the same level of growth in population as the areas within the GCTPS/Urban pressure. There are areas that have declined in population, while a number of areas have experienced an increase in population between the 2006 and 2016 Census. There are reduced services and infrastructure available in these areas due to the low population base.

In this rural area type, the key objectives of the Council are:

- To accommodate residential development proposals as they arise subject to satisfactory site suitability and technical considerations;
- To accommodate residential development proposals in accordance with *Chapter 15 Development Management Standards*;

- To maintain and strengthen existing towns and villages and to direct urban generated housing demand into these areas;
- To protect areas located in Landscape Categories 2, 3 and **4 while also acknowledging the need to protect the future of the communities in these areas.**

4.6.3 Rural Housing Development Strategy 2022-2028

In order to incorporate the requirements of the NPF and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005) it is considered necessary that the following specific policy responses are incorporated into the plan to ensure that the provision of rural housing in the open countryside is managed efficiently and appropriately.

In addition to the areas identified above (Rural Metropolitan Area, Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Pressure and Structurally Weak Areas), it is considered necessary to include the areas affected by Landscape Sensitivity 2, 3 and 4 and also the areas located within the Gaeltacht. In areas which are classified in the Landscape Sensitivity 2, 3 and 4 an applicant seeking to construct a rural house in the open countryside is required to demonstrate substantiated Rural Housing Need and their Rural **Links or a connection to the area which is in keeping with Galway County Council's objectives of strengthening structurally weak areas. The categories specifically included here including:**

Those applicants from outside the area who are providing employment in the area such as industrial projects and services.

Those applicants who may be natives of some other parts of the county, country or from outside the State and who are working on a long term or permanent basis in the area.

Returning emigrants.

- Rural Housing Zone1: Rural Metropolitan Area-
- Rural Housing Zone 2: Rural Area Under Strong Urban Pressure-GCTPS
- Rural Housing Zone 3: Structurally Weak Areas
- Rural Housing Zone 4: Landscape Sensitivity 2,3 and 4
- Rural Housing Zone 5: An Gaeltacht