



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Replacement Dwelling Ballyglass East, Ardrahan

Planning Statement Part 8 Planning Application

JANUARY 2021

Galway County Council
Planning Department (Áras an
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Jennings O'Donovan & Partners Ltd., Consulting Engineers, have prepared this Planning Statement ("the Statement") on behalf of Galway County Council. ("The Applicant") to accompany the application ("the Application") for the proposed ("the Development") submitted to Galway County Council ("The Council") under The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Galway County Council are applying for planning permission for the Development under Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) which will comprise:

- *Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a new dwelling with all necessary site works in the townland of Ballyglass East, Ardrahan, Co Galway.*

1.2 Purpose and Structure of the Planning Statement

This Planning Statement considers the Development in accordance with the principle of Proper Planning and Sustainable Development, having regard to Government, Regional and County-level planning policies and plans including the County Development Plan, together with relevant statutory guidelines.

The Planning Statement is set out as follows:

- **Section 1: Introduction**
- **Section 2: Need for Development**
- **Section 3: The Application Site and Development Description**
- **Section 4: Development Plan Policy Appraisal**
- **Section 5: Analysis of Issues**
- **Section 6: Conclusion**

2 NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

This section outlines the need for the Development proposals and the need to deliver more social housing units across Ireland and in this case, Co Galway.

Section 3.9 of the Galway County Development Plan (GCDP) 2015 - 2021 deals with Rural Housing Policies and Objectives which have been taken into account when selecting these single rural housing projects by the Housing Unit of Galway County Council.

The Housing Allocations Office within the Housing Unit has also confirmed sufficient demand for housing from Galway County Council housing waiting list in these locations and lastly the Department of Housing has approved the expenditure towards these projects. Objectives RHO 6 '*Replacement Dwellings*' and Objective RHO 7 '*Renovation of Existing Derelict Dwelling/Semi Ruinous Dwellings*' are the most relevant objectives associated with this project.

As a result, the Planning Statement accompanying this planning application includes details of the structure and justification for the demolition and rebuild of these dwellings.

2.1 Rebuilding Ireland

The planning application has been funded by Rebuilding Ireland which is a fund set up by the Government. Rebuilding Ireland's third pillar will focus on improving the viability of housing construction, with the objective of doubling the completion level of additional homes in the next four years to deliver over 25,000 homes on average per annum.

Local Authorities, Approved Housing Bodies, the Housing Agency and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government have been advancing a suite of social housing projects, through a range of delivery mechanisms and programmes, and a rich construction pipeline is in place, which will see over 8,430 new social houses being built over the coming years. This represents a major escalation and acceleration in the social housing build programme.

Rebuilding Ireland publication 'An Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness' sets out the Government's ambitious social housing programme to deliver 47,000 new social housing units by 2021, with funding in place of €5.35 billion. Of these 47,000 new social houses that will be delivered for citizens, 26,000 of these will be homes that will be delivered via construction or in some cases through major refurbishment works. The Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness includes a comprehensive Five Pillar approach are the foundations upon which action plan is built. Pillar Two of the Action Plan is to accelerate the provision of social housing.

This Part 8 Planning Application is bringing forward much needed social housing in Galway while reusing previously developed land meeting the objectives of The Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.

3 THE APPLICATION SITE AND DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

3.1 Introduction

This section of the Planning Statement sets out a brief description of the Development, the site where it is proposed ("the Site") and its surroundings, including relevant planning history.

3.2 Site Location and Site Description

The application site is located approximately 4 km to the north-east of Adrahan, Co Galway as shown in **Figure 3.1**. There is an existing dwelling on the site which is a derelict state as shown in photographs. The site comprises an overall area of 0.14 hectares. The site is located off local road L-85391.



Photograph 1: Front Elevation of The Existing taken from outside the site



Photograph 2: Front Elevation of The Existing Dwelling taken from outside the site



Photographs 3: Dwelling opposite the site



Photograph 4: Taken from outside the property looking north bound



Photograph 5: Main road looking south bound



Figure 3.1: Discovery Series Map



Figure 3.3: Extract from the Planning Application Drawings

3.5 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

A Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been prepared as part of the planning application. This AA Screening examined the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans on European sites, that were situated within a zone of influence (Zol), or a distance that has a potential source-pathway-receptor (SPR), both direct and indirect, with the Proposed Development. There are twenty-four European Sites within 15km of the Proposed Development. However, none of these sites are within the Zol of the Proposed Development.

As part of Stage 1 Screening, in addition to the Project, other relevant projects and plans which may interact with the proposal must also be considered. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant effects on the European Sites from the Project in-combination or cumulatively with other plans and projects. This includes an assessment of those plans and projects which would have the potential to interact or impact on any designated European Site, resulting in a cumulative or in-combination effect, either temporally or spatially/geographically, with respect to the sensitive qualifying interests or conservation objectives of such designations.

Given the scale, nature and limited duration of the proposed works themselves, there is no potential for the Project to give arise to significant effects 'alone'; and therefore no potential for the scheme to interact with any other project to contribute to cumulative impacts on any European Site.

3.6 Flood Risk

A desktop review of the Office of Public Works (OPW) website and the CFRAM study were accessed (June 18, 2020) to determine flood areas within and near the Proposed Development. There is no potential for flooding to occur at the Proposed Development site (**Figure 3.4**).

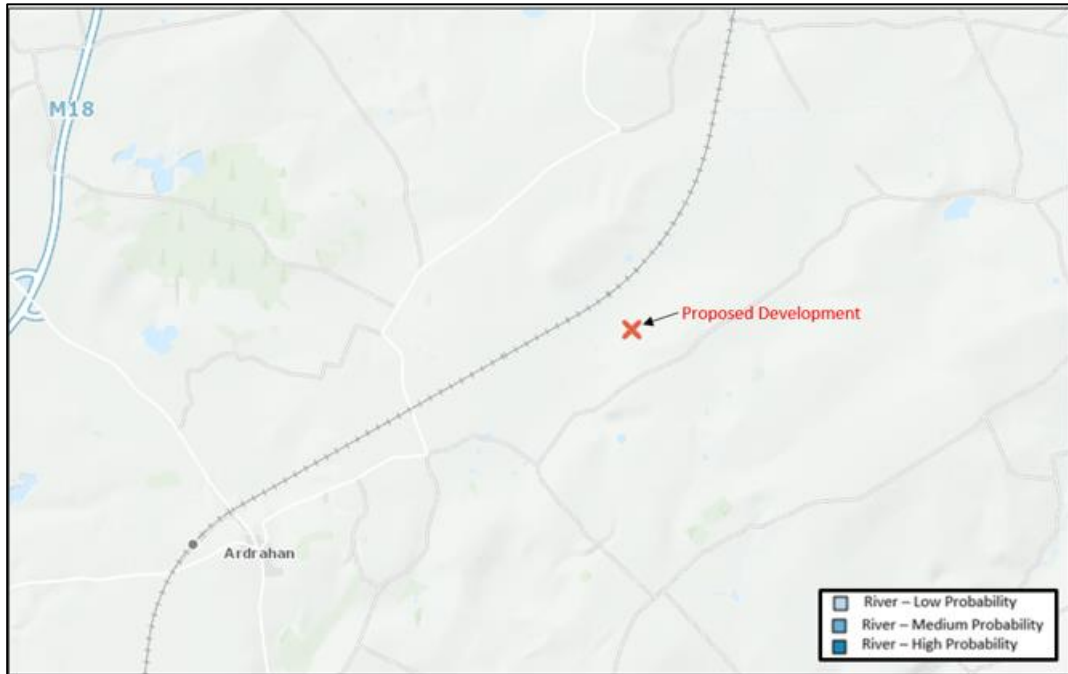


Figure 3.4: Map Extract from the CFRAM Flood Risk Website

3.7 Landscape and Visual Impact

Landscape sensitivity is a measure of the ability of the landscape to accommodate change or intervention without suffering unacceptable effects to its character and values. Sensitivity ratings are derived from a combination of landscape values and landscape character. An assessment of the landscape of County Galway has been carried out indicating landscape character rating, landscape value rating and landscape sensitivity rating.

The Galway County Development Plan has categorised sensitivity under five categories:

- Class 1 – Low sensitivity
- Class 2 – Moderate sensitivity
- Class 3 – High sensitivity
- Class 4 – Special
- Class 5 – Unique Based on the assessment of the landscape and the establishment of sensitivity ratings for various areas of the County, the Planning Authority shall implement the following policies and objectives.

Figure 3.5 shows that the development is located in Class 1 which is of low sensitivity in The GCDP. The site is also located within landscape character area: Southeast Galway (Clarinbridge to Gort).

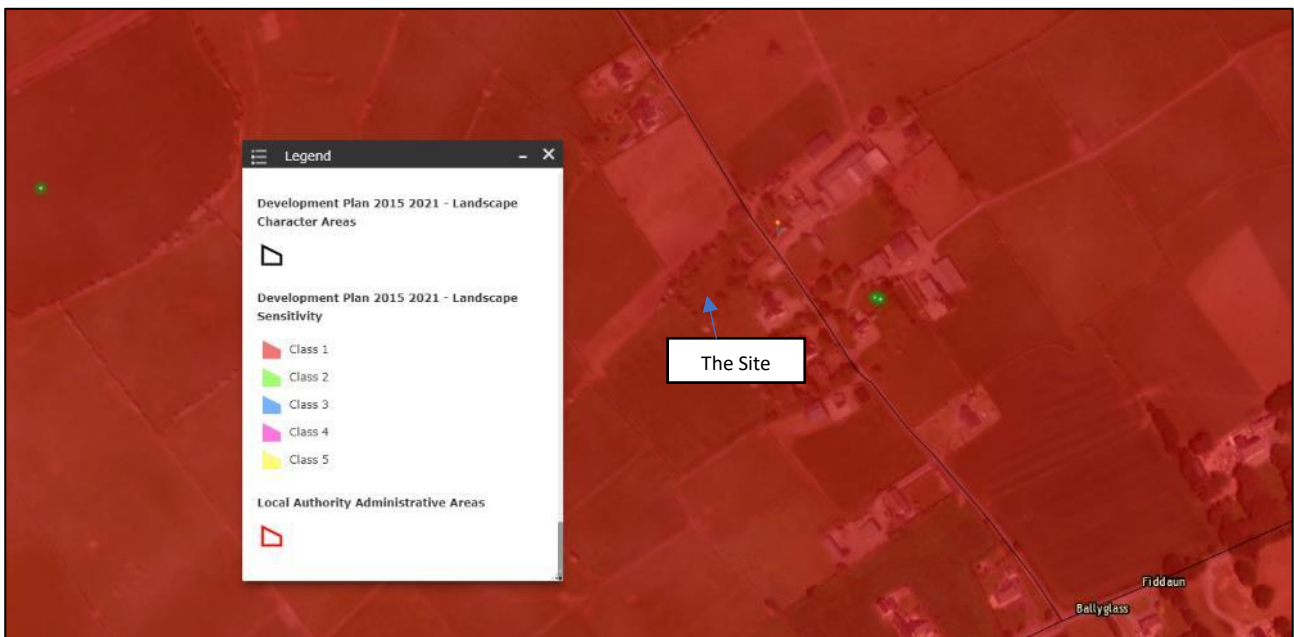


Figure 3.5: Extract from the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021

3.8 National Monuments

There are no know national monuments or protected structures on the site. The nearest protected is the thatched cottage opposite to the site and is shown in **Photograph 3**.

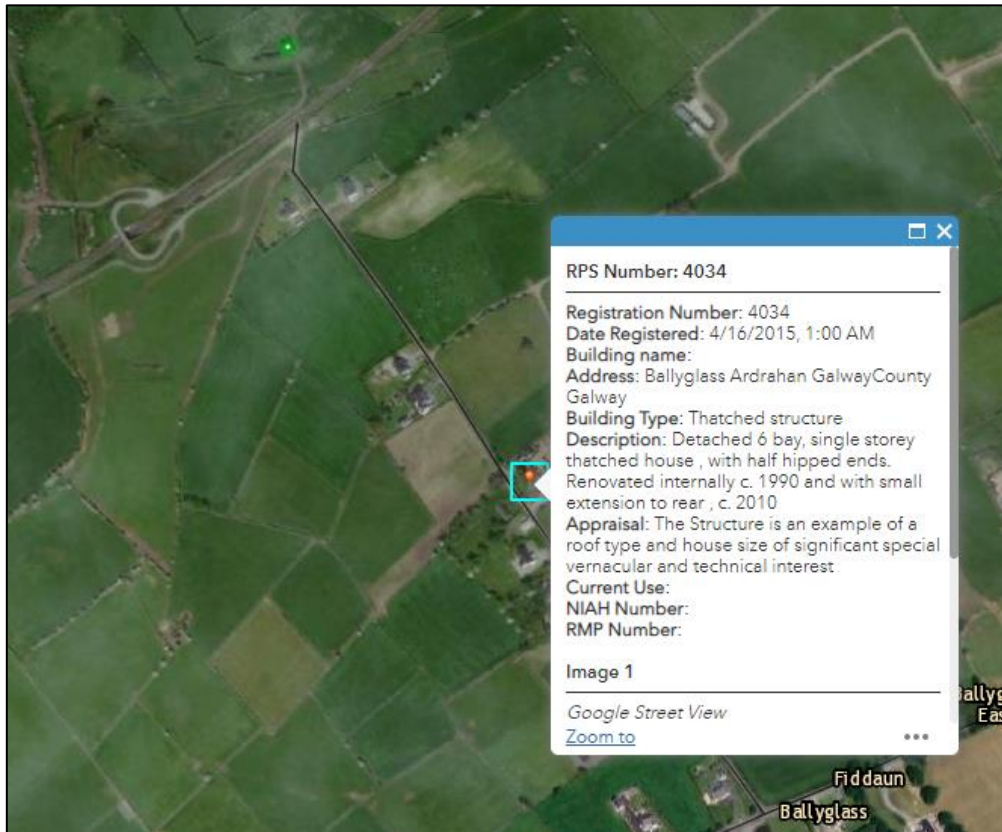


Figure 3.6: Map Extract from The Galway County Development Plan of nearest protected structure which is opposite the site

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

This section provides an assessment of the Development against the relevant planning policies.

4.1.1 **The National Planning Framework**

In 2018 the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government published the finalised National Planning Framework (NPF) under Project Ireland 2040, the overarching policy and planning framework for social, economic and cultural development in Ireland.

The NPF together with the National Development Plan sets the context for each of Ireland's three regional assemblies to develop their Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies taking account of and co-ordinating local authority County and City Development Plans in a manner that will ensure national, regional and local plans align.

The NPF highlights the importance of providing social housing for those unable to provide accommodation within their own resources. There is a plethora of planning policies in the NPF which seek to facilitate the provision of social housing across Ireland.

4.1.2 **The Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021**

The Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 was adopted on the 26th January 2015. The Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 sets out a vision for the County which is to *“enhance the quality of life of the people of Galway and maintain the County as a uniquely attractive place in which to live, work, invest and visit, harnessing the potential of the County’s competitive advantages in a sustainable*

and environmentally sensitive manner”.

Section 1.9 of The GCDP 2015-2021 sets out that „ *the principle of sustainable development is a major component of the plan which is reflected throughout the policies and objectives in the document, with sustainable development described as a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while respecting the environment, so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future. Key considerations in the plan which underpin the principle of sustainable development are the protection of the natural environment, the conservation of natural resources, promoting renewable energy, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, encouraging reduction in travel demand, facilitating environmentally friendly patterns of development, energy efficiency and high quality designs.*

The site is located in the open countryside, in an area which is defined as ‘Rural Areas under Strong Urban Pressure’ (GTPS) as shown in **Figure 4.1**.

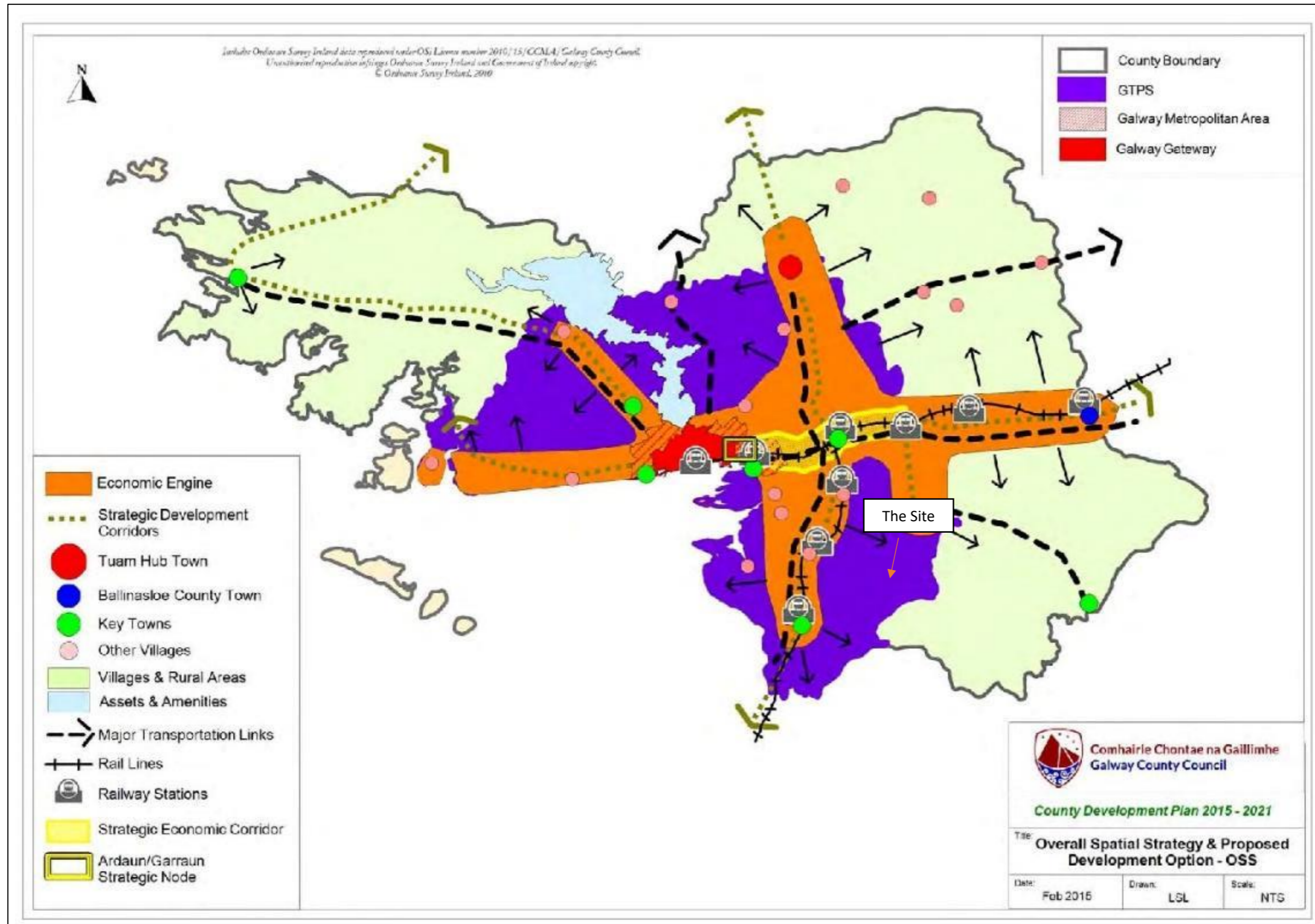


Figure 4.1: Overall Spatial Strategy Map

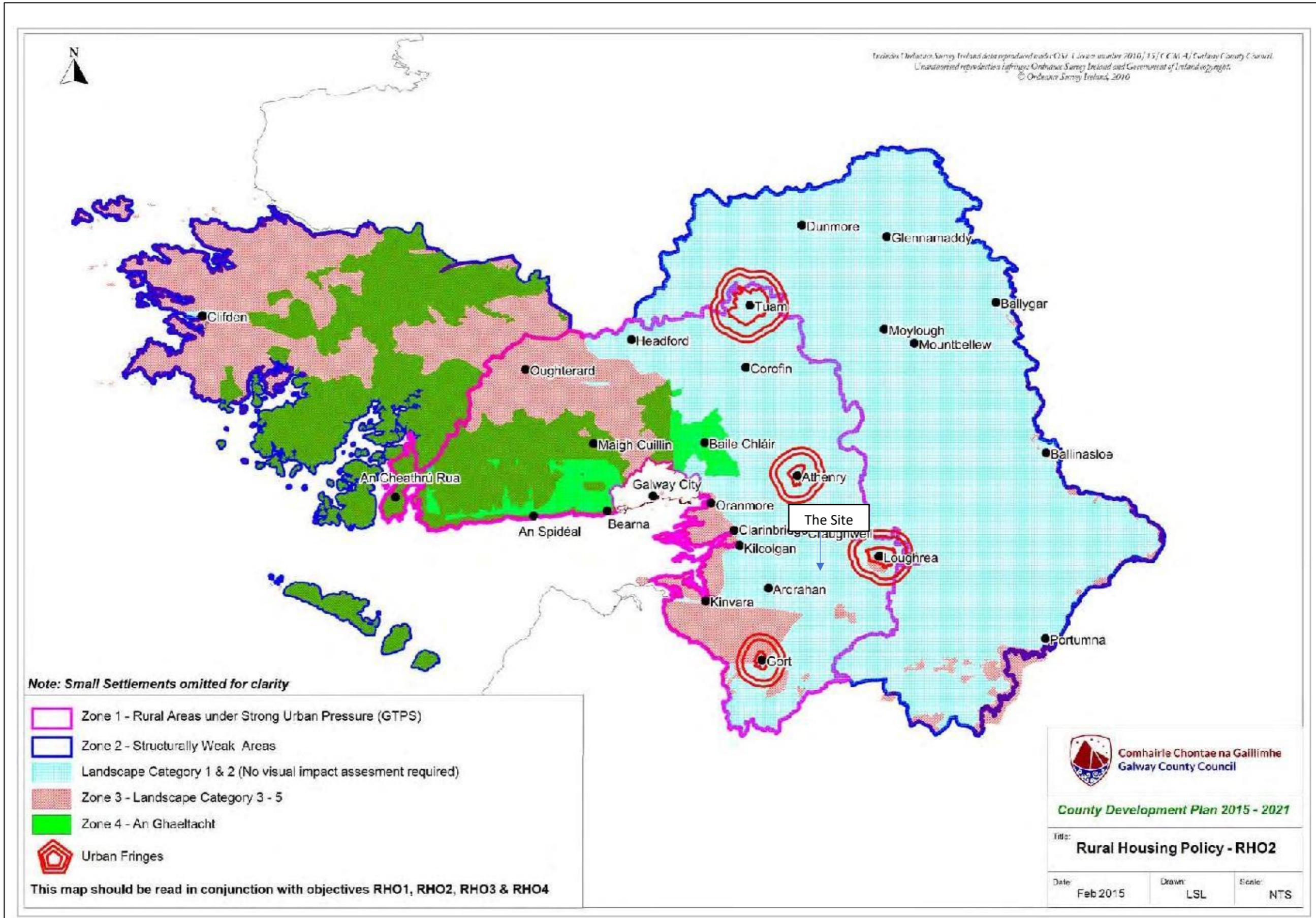


Figure 4.2: Rural Housing Policy Map

4.2 County Development Plan Assessment

Table 4.1: Relevant Planning Policies from The Galway County Development Plan

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
<p>Chapter 2 Spatial Strategy of the County</p>	<p>Development Strategy Objectives</p> <p>DS 7 – Flood Risk Management and Assessment</p> <p><i>Ensure that proposals for developments located within identified or potential flood risk areas, or which may exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere, are assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any updated/superseding document) the relevant policies, objectives and guidelines within this plan and shall also take account of the National CFRAM Programme Flood Hazard Mapping and Flood Risk Management Plans when they become available.</i></p> <p>DS 10 – Impacts of Developments on Protected Sites</p> <p><i>Have regard to any impacts of development on or near existing and proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Salmonoid Waters, refuges for flora and fauna, Conamara National Park, shellfish waters, freshwater pearl mussel catchments and any other designated sites including future designations.</i></p>	<p>Chapter 2 provides the Core Strategy for the County.</p> <p>The planning application complies with the broad thrust of the planning policy objectives in Chapter 2. In particular development strategy objectives DS7 and DS10.</p>
<p>Chapter 3 Urban & Rural Housing</p>	<p><i>Section 3.7 refers to Single Housing in the Countryside and has regard to the distinction between urban and rural generated housing and the requirement for sustainable rural housing</i></p> <p>Rural Housing Policies</p> <p>Policy RHO 1 - Management of New Single Houses in the Countryside</p> <p><i>It is a policy of the Council to facilitate the management of new single houses in the countryside in accordance with the Rural Housing Zones 1, 2, 3 and 4 and to support the sustainable re-use of existing housing stock within the County.</i></p> <p>Policy RHO 2 - Adherence to the Statutory</p>	<p>This chapter outlines the different types of housing that are required for the changing needs of individuals, with objectives that ensure that the provision of social and specialist housing for individuals/groups is addressed.</p> <p>The site is located within a rural area which is located in Zone 1 which is a Rural Area Under Strong Urban Pressure.</p> <p>The planning application seeks to demolish the existing dwelling on site and construct a new dwelling which would meet the planning</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
	<p>Guidelines & County Development Plan</p> <p><i>It is a policy of the Council to ensure that future housing in rural areas complies with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005 (DOEHLG), the Core/Settlement Strategies for County Galway, Rural Housing Objectives and the Development Management Standards and Guidelines of this plan.</i></p> <p>Objective Rural Housing Zone - Rural Housing Zone 1</p> <p><i>It is an objective of the Council to facilitate Rural Housing in the open countryside subject to the following criteria:</i></p> <p>1.(a) <i>Those applicants with Rural Links* to the area through long standing existing and immediate family ties seeking to develop their first home on 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.</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p>1.(b) <i>Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing 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. Consideration shall be given to special circumstances where a landowner has no immediate family and wishes to accommodate a niece or nephew on family lands. 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 criteria and provided the site does not encroach into the Urban Fringe* of the towns of Gort, Loughrea, Athenry or Tuam. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p>1.(c) <i>Those applicants who can satisfy to the Planning Authority that they are functionally dependent on the immediate rural areas in which they are seeking to develop a single house as their principal family residence in the countryside.</i></p>	<p>policy objectives set out in Chapter 3.</p> <p>The existing dwelling is in a state of dereliction and would cost a considerable amount to refurbish the existing dwelling.</p> <p>The subject site is located in a rural area which is designated in the development plan as being a Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence.</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
	<p><i>Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p><i>1.(d) Where applicants can supply land registry or folio details that demonstrate that the lands on which they are seeking to build their first home, as their permanent residence, in the area have been in family ownership for a period of 20 years or more, their eligibility will be considered. Where this has been established to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, additional intrinsic links will not have to be demonstrated.</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p><i>1.(e) In cases where all sites on the family lands are in a designated area, family members will be considered subject to the requirements of the Habitat's Directive and normal planning considerations</i></p> <p><i>2.(a) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved away and who now wish to return and build their first house as their permanent residence, in this local area. Special consideration will be given to one member of the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area to live near their immediate family. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the</i> <i>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.</i></p> <p><i>2.(b) To recognise that exceptional health circumstances, supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and disability organisation, may require a person to live in a particular environment or close to family support. Documentary evidence shall be submitted to the Planning Authority to justify the proposed development and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</i></p> <p><i>3. 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.</i></p> <p>Rural Housing Objectives Objective RHO 6 - Replacement Dwelling</p> <p><i>It is an objective of the Council that the refurbishment of existing habitable dwelling houses would be encouraged, as a more sustainable option than the demolition and construction of a new</i></p>	<p>It is an objective of the Council that the refurbishment of existing habitable dwelling houses would</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
	<p><i>dwelling house, unless a conclusive case for demolition based on technical evidence is made for the Planning Authority's consideration on a case-by-case basis. It will be a requirement that any new dwelling house be designed in accordance with Galway County Council's Design Guidelines for Rural Housing in the countryside. Applicants, who require the demolition of an existing dwelling house shall be accommodated without the requirement to establish a Housing Need or proof of residence and will not be subject to an enurement clause.</i></p> <p>Objective RHO 9 - Design Guidelines</p> <p><i>It is an objective of the Council to have regard to Galway County Council's Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House with specific reference to the following:</i></p> <p><i>a) It is an objective to encourage new dwelling house design that respects the character, pattern and tradition of existing places, materials and built forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape.</i></p> <p><i>b) It is an objective to promote sustainable approaches to dwelling house design and encouraging proposals to be energy efficient in their design and layout.</i></p> <p><i>c) It is an objective to require the appropriate landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by using predominately indigenous/local species and groupings.</i></p> <p>Objective RHO 12 - Waste Water Treatment Associated with Development in Un-Serviced Areas</p> <p><i>Permit development in un-serviced areas only where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed wastewater treatment system is in accordance with the Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses EPA (2009)/ EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels (1999) (or any superseding documents) and subject to complying with the provisions and objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive.</i></p>	<p>be encouraged, as a more sustainable option than the demolition and construction of a new dwelling house. The existing dwelling is in a state of disrepair and it would not be viable to retain the existing dwelling.</p> <p>The rural housing design guidelines have been assessed and adopted in the overall design of the dwelling. Further consideration to the rural housing guidelines in section 4.3.</p> <p>The planning application provides Effluent Treatment System in accordance with the EPA Guidelines. Further consideration is given to wastewater treatment in the site suitability report which accompanies this planning application.</p>
	Policy FL 1 – Flood Risk Management	The planning application is not

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
<p>Chapter 8 Climate Change and Flooding</p>	<p>Guidelines</p> <p><i>It is the policy of Galway County Council to support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010) and the DEHLG/OPW publication The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009) (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). Galway County Council will also take account of the Shannon International and Western Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies.</i></p> <p>Objective FL 4 – Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Applications and CFRAMS</p> <p><i>Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all planning applications in areas at risk of flooding, even for developments appropriate to the particular flood zone. The detail of these site-specific FRAs will depend on the level of risk and scale of development. A detailed site-specific FRA should quantify the risks, the effects of selected mitigation and the management of any residual risks.</i></p> <p><i>The Council shall have regard to the results of any CFRAM Studies in the assessment of planning applications.</i></p>	<p>located within a Flood Zone. There is no potential for flooding to occur at the Proposed Development site.</p>
<p>Chapter 13 Development Management Standards and Guidelines</p>	<p>DM Standard 1: Qualitative Assessment</p> <p>DM Standard 5: Rural Housing</p> <p>DM Standard 6: Assimilation of Development into Landscape</p> <p>DM Standard 7: Site Size for Single Houses using Individual On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems</p> <p>DM Standard 8: Landscaping</p> <p>DM Standard 18: Access to National and Other Restricted Roads for Residential Developments</p> <p>DM Standard 20: Sight Distances Required for Access onto National, Regional & Local Roads</p> <p>DM Standard 21: Building Lines</p> <p>DM Standard 22: Parking Standards</p> <p>DM Standard 27: Surface Water Drainage and Flooding</p> <p>DM 29: Effluent Treatment Plants</p>	<p>The planning application proposals meets all the relevant development management guidelines set out in Chapter 13 of the GCDP. In particular:</p> <p>The planning application makes the best of use of land by reusing previously developed land rather than a greenfield site.</p> <p>The design of the dwelling is low profile and of modest scale.</p> <p>The proposal can be assimilated into the landscape. If anything, it will improve the appearance of the site where currently there exists a single storey dwelling</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
		<p>which is in a state dereliction.</p> <p>A speed survey was carried out in October 2020; the site distances comply with table 13.4 of the DM Standard 20.</p> <p>The result of the speed survey provided an 85th percentile speed of 38.74km/h north bound and 41.65km/h south bound, which corresponds with an achievable site distance of 45 metres in both directions.</p>

4.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

The planning application has also had regard to ‘*The Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*’ produced by Galway County Council in the overall design of the new dwelling. The proposed dwelling has had regard to the following criteria:

1. Location

The proposed dwelling is situated in an area which is located within a Rural Area under Strong Urban Pressure in the GCDP. The proposed development seeks to demolish the existing unprepossessing dwelling with a replacement dwelling. The proposal will retain the natural boundary features which including mature vegetation and trees which surround the site. The orientation and height of the building is traditional in nature and in keeping with the prevailing character of the area. The proposed dwelling will not detract from the setting of the thatched dwelling opposite the site.

2. Siting

The siting of the proposed dwelling will be located on the footprint of the existing dwelling. The layout and orientation of the proposed dwelling has been slightly reconfigured in order to achieve the building line, parallel to the existing roadway.

3. Landscape Design

The site located with an area in the county development plan which is of low sensitivity i.e., within an area where no visual impact assessment is required and can accommodate change with any negative impacts on the surrounding area. The proposal will if anything enhance the appearance of the surrounding area, in particular the thatched cottage opposite the planning application which is a protected structure.

4. House Design

The proposed house is modest in scale and is comparable in overall footprint and height to the existing dwelling on the site.

5. Detailed Design

The design of the proposed is well proportioned of simple plan form using traditional materials which are vernacular. In particular the use of traditional material such as local stone and traditional finishes.

5 ANALYSIS OF ISSUES

5.1 Principle of Development

There is an existing dwelling on site which is in a state of disrepair/dereliction. The principle of residential development on the site is acceptable having regard to those specific planning policies relating to rural housing as set out in **Table 4.1**.

The Development could not be a better example of sustainable development, enshrined in the National Planning Framework. There are three facets to sustainable development which are economic, social and environmental. The Development meets each of the three facets of sustainable development. The Bruntland Report on sustainable development set out a definition of sustainable development:

“Sustainable Development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

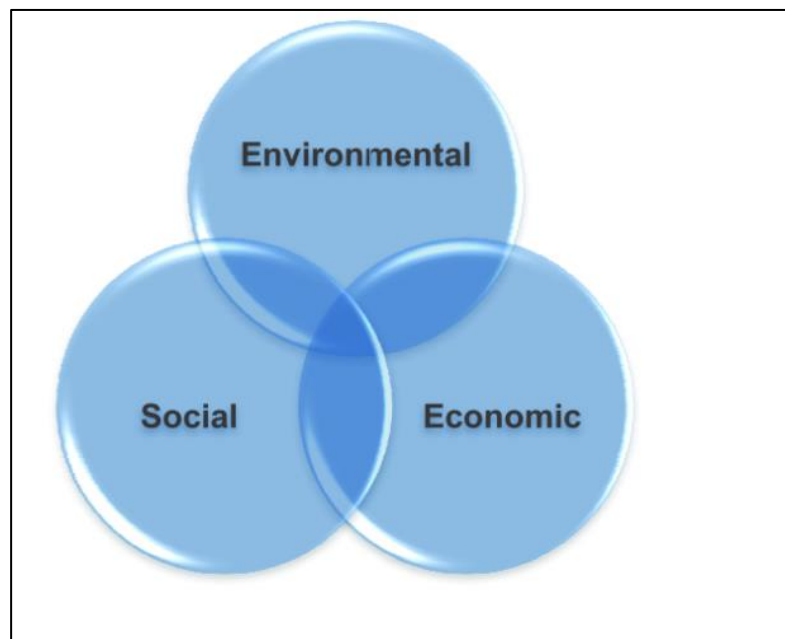


Figure 5.1: The Three Facets to Sustainable

5.2 Land Use and Nature Conservation

An AA screening was carried out as part of the planning application and forms part of the planning application submission. The AA Screening concluded that there will be no significant effects on the any European Sites as a result of the development.

5.3 **Summary / Planning Balance**

All planning applications have to be determined upon their individual merits with due consideration given to the overall planning balance of a scheme. While many development proposals will encompass both positive and negative aspects that require consideration, planning weight should air on the side of a *'presumption in favour of development unless material considerations indicate otherwise'*.

The proposed development meets the three facets of sustainable development.

6 **CONCLUSION**

In accordance with The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, this Planning Statement has assessed the Application against the provisions of the GCDP, and relevant material considerations. Planning permission should be granted for this Part 8 development for all the reasons outlined above.

Based on an assessment of the Development's compliance with the relevant policies of the County Development Plan, and compliance with the relevant regional planning policies and relevant guidance, it is concluded that the Development fully accords with the National Planning Policy, Regional Planning Policy and the County Development Plan hierarchy when read as a whole.