



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Replacement Dwelling Woodpark, Portumna, Co. Galway

Planning Statement Part 8 Planning Application

January 2021

Galway County Council
Planning Department (Áras an
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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

PROJECT	Replacement Dwelling, Woodpark, Portumna, Co Galway	
CLIENT / JOB NO	Galway County Council	6140
DOCUMENT TITLE	Planning Statement	

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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 and all necessary site works in the townland of Woodpark, Portumna, 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 Proposed Development site is located approximately 1.8km north-west of Portumna, a town of County Galway. The site of the Proposed Development is located off the N65, a national secondary road that links the N52 at Borrisokane, Co. Tipperary to the M6 north of Loughrea, Co. Galway. The site area is approximately 0.39 hectares. The location of the site is outlined in **Figure 3.1**.



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



Photographs 2: Photograph taken of the rear of the property



Photograph 3: Flank Elevation and intervening access road between the adjoining dwelling house



Photograph 4: Photograph taken from outside the property from the main road (looking north bound)



Photograph 5: Photograph taken from outside the property from the main road looking south bound

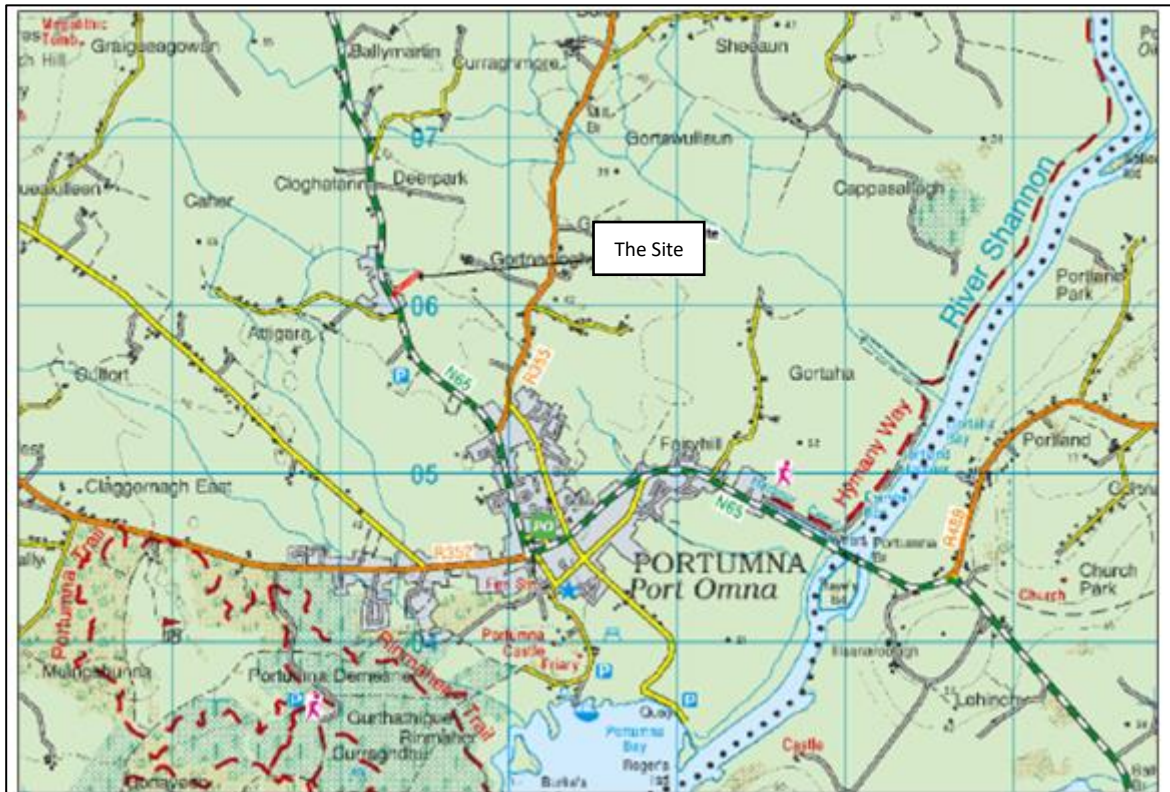


Figure 3.1: Discovery Series Map

3.3 Proposed Development

The proposed works will consist of the demolition of the existing house, clearance of the existing site, construction of a new dwelling, comprising 2-bedroom, dwelling house and all ancillary site works including the connection to the adjacent Irish Water foul sewer. All surface water generated from the development will be discharged to on-site soakaways.

The existing dwelling house has been derelict for a number of years and is not suitable for renovation for the following reasons:

- The building is extensively damaged due to the length of time it has been left derelict.
- The fabric of the existing building does not comply with current Building Regulations and some areas of the building will require extensive structural remediation works.
- The layout of the existing dwelling does not comply with current Building Regulations including Part B-Fire Safety and Part M-Disability Access.
- The floor areas and layout of the existing building does not provide Galway County Council with the appropriate accommodation for the housing need of the area.

3.4 Design Approach

The design approach adopted for the site was to provide a single storey two-bedroom dwelling. The design approach adopted for the site was driven by the need for providing smaller residential units responding to housing needs in the area. The overall floor area of the proposed dwelling comprises approximately 75 square metres. The proposed layout of the dwelling is shown in figure 3.2 below.



Figure 3.2: Extract taken site layout drawing

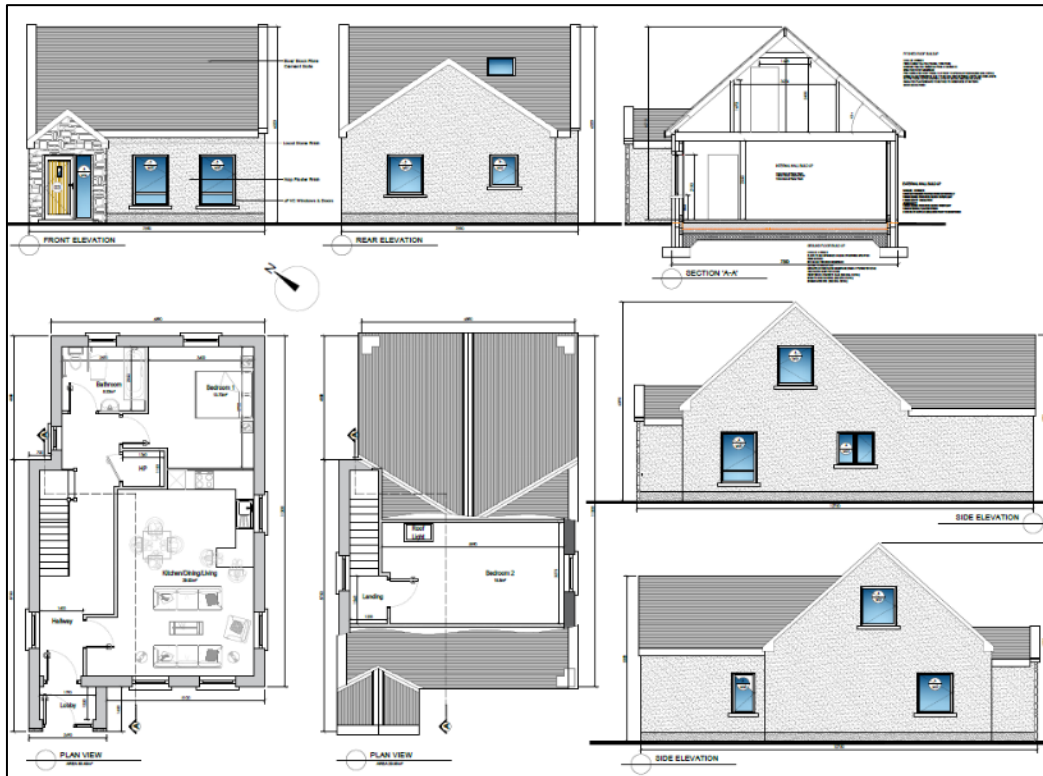


Figure 3.3 – Extract from the Planning Application Drawings

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 (Zoi), or a distance that has a potential source-pathway-receptor (SPR), both direct and indirect, with the Proposed Development.

There are no European Sites located outside the 15km buffer that are considered to be within the Zoi of the Proposed Development. The locations of the seventeen (17) designated sites are shown on Figure 4.1 and the Qualifying Interests (QI) or Species of Conservation Interest (SCI) of these designated sites are outlined below and identified in **Figures 3.4 & 3.5**.

- Middle Shannon Callows SPA
- River Little Brosna Callows SPA
- Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA
- Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA
- Ardgraique Bog SAC
- River Shannon Callows SAC
- Redwood Bog SAC
- Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC
- Arragh More (Derrybreen) Bog SAC
- Kilcarren-Firville Bog SAC
- Liskeenan Fen SAC
- Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC
- Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC

- Pollnacknockaun Wood Nature Reserve SAC
- Rosturra Wood SAC
- Barroughter Bog SAC
- Cloonmoylan Bog SAC

Given the scale, nature and limited duration of the proposed works themselves, there is no potential for the Project to give rise 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.

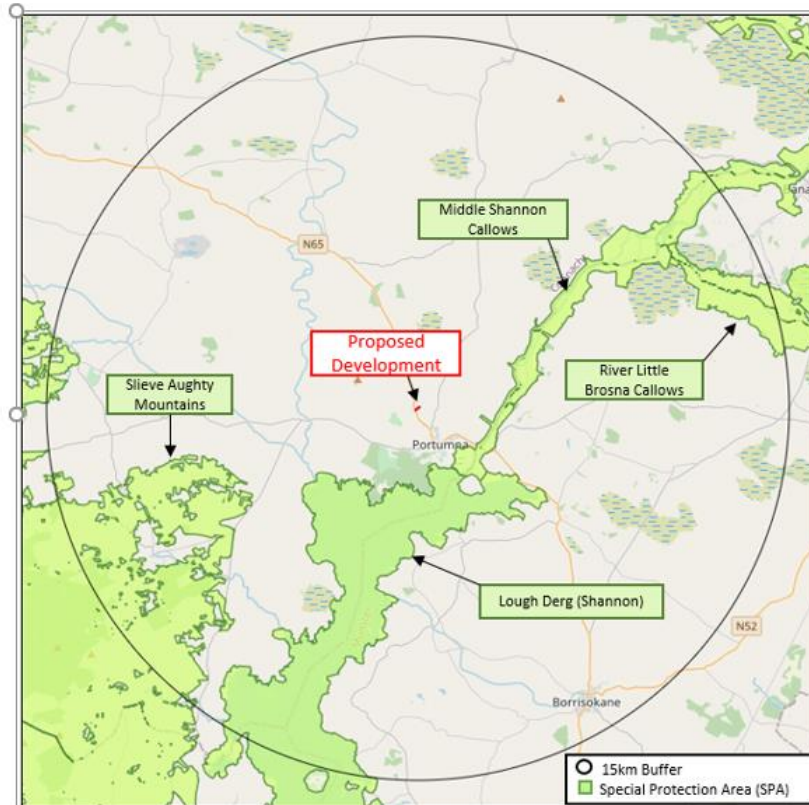


Figure 3.4: European Sites (SPAs) within 15km of the Proposed Development Site

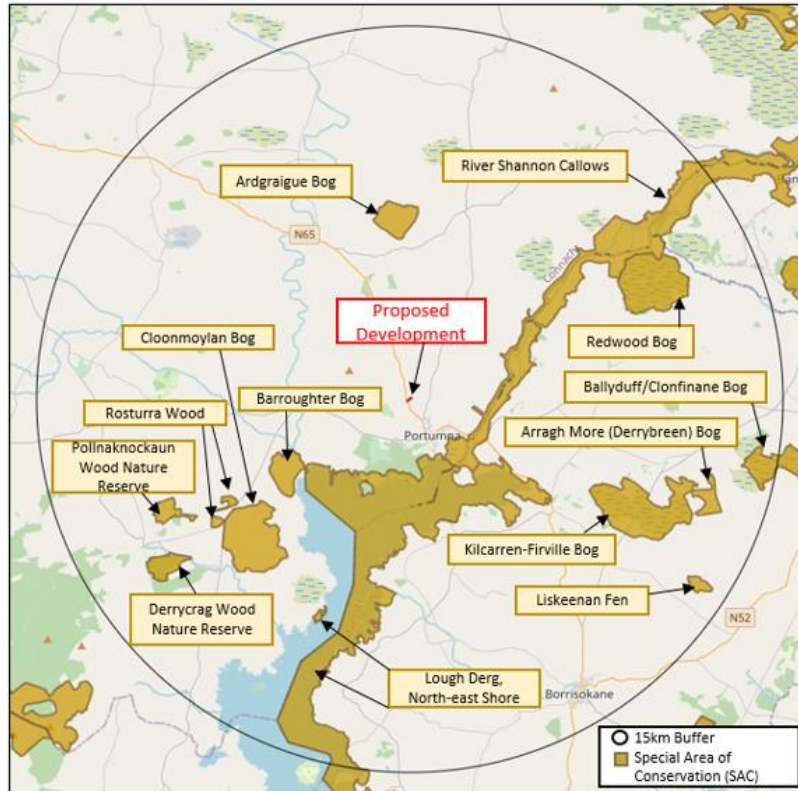


Figure 3.5: European Sites- (SACs) within 15km of the Proposed Development Site

3.6 Flood Risk

A desktop review of the Office of Public Works (OPW) website and the CFRAM study were accessed (May 25, 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 3.5).

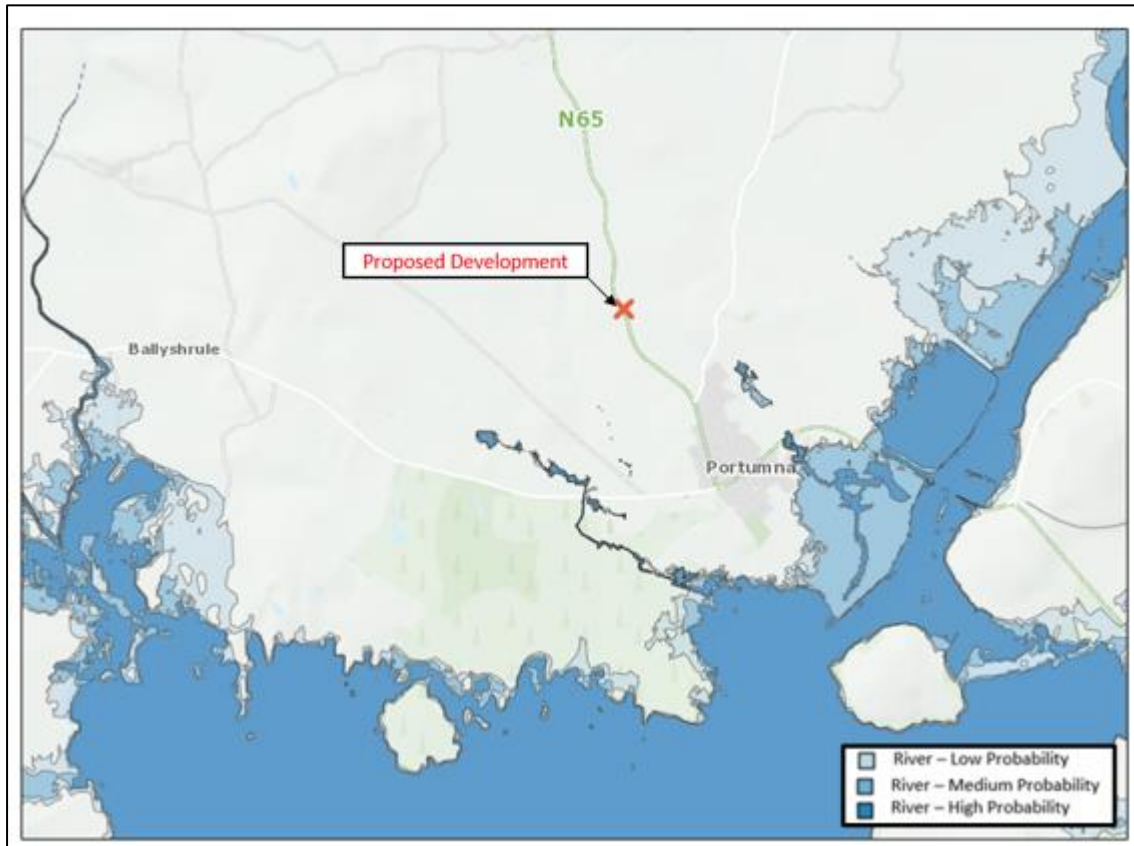


Figure 3.6: Map Extract from the CFRAM Flood Risk Website

3.7 Cultural Heritage

There are no known cultural heritage assets or archaeological sites within the site. The nearest cultural heritage assets are located within the townland of Portumna located to the 0.75 km to the east of the site "National Monument: GA12213: Disused sand pit"

3.8 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 3.7 shows that the development is located in Class 1 which is of low sensitivity. The site is also located within landscape character area East central Galway (Athenry, Ballinasloe to Portuma).

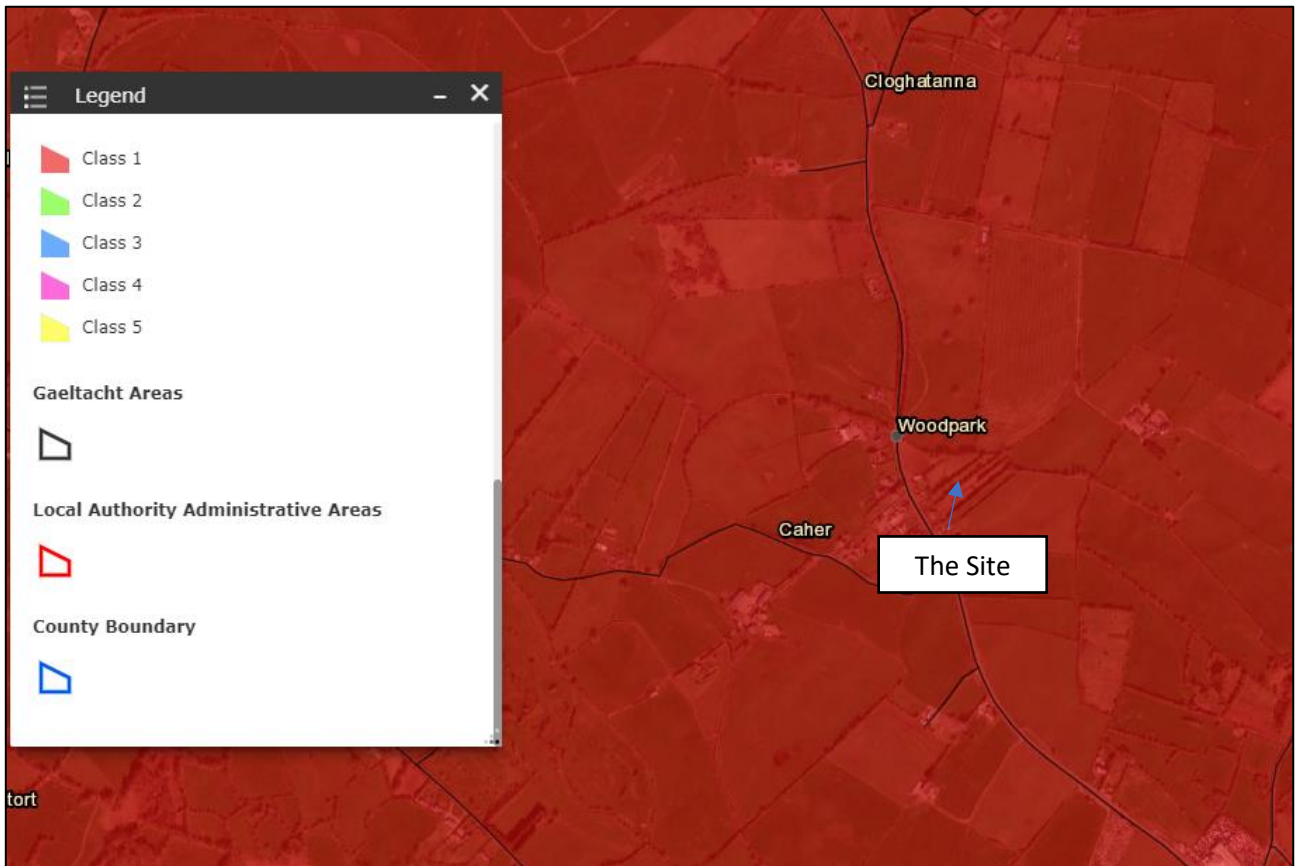


Figure 3.7: Extract from the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021

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 within an area designated as ‘Village & Rural Area’ in the overall spatial strategy for the county and is identified in **Figure 4.1**. The site is located in Woodpark, Portumna which is designated as a ‘Structurally Weak Area’ in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021.

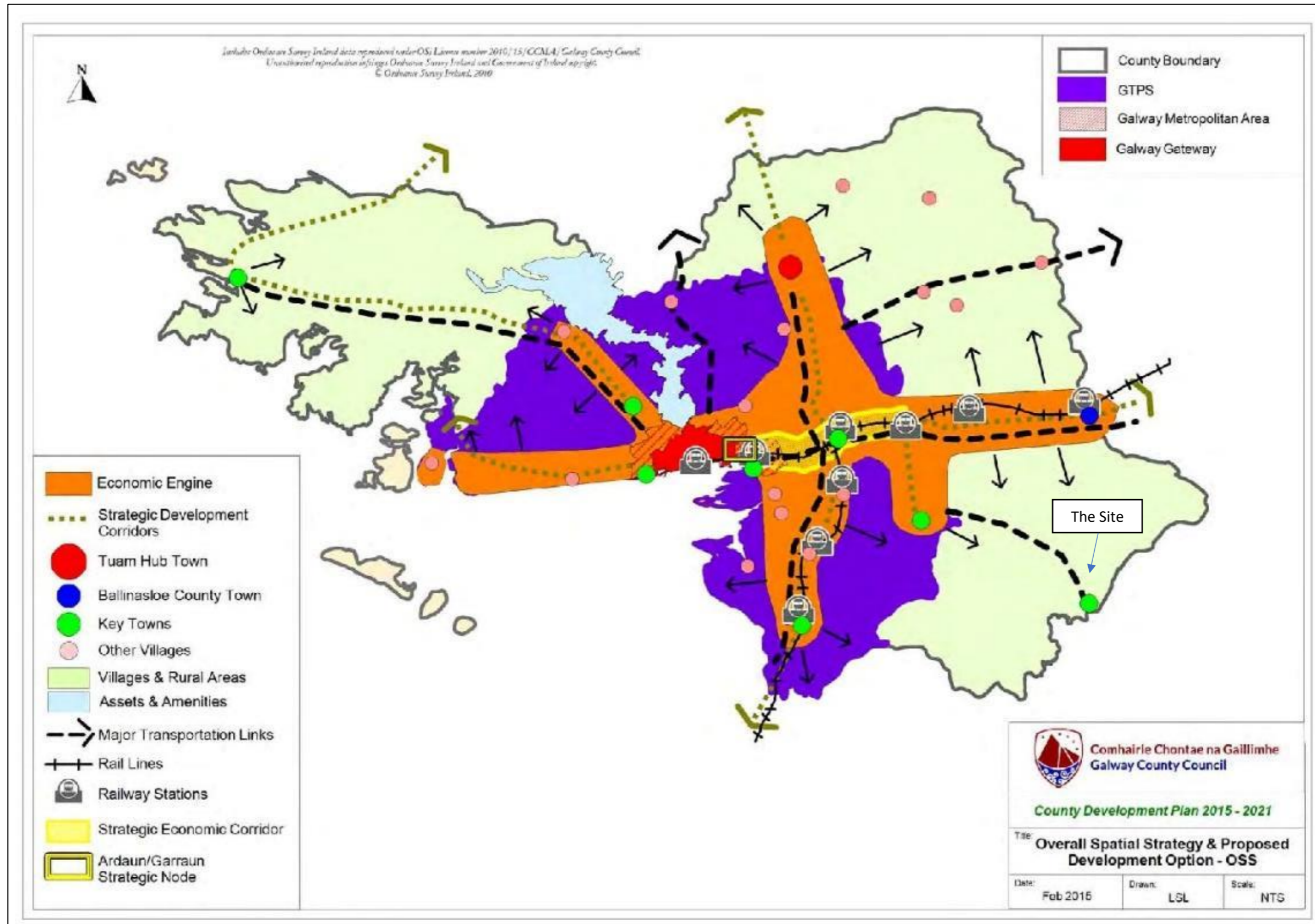


Figure 4.1: Overall Spatial Strategy Map

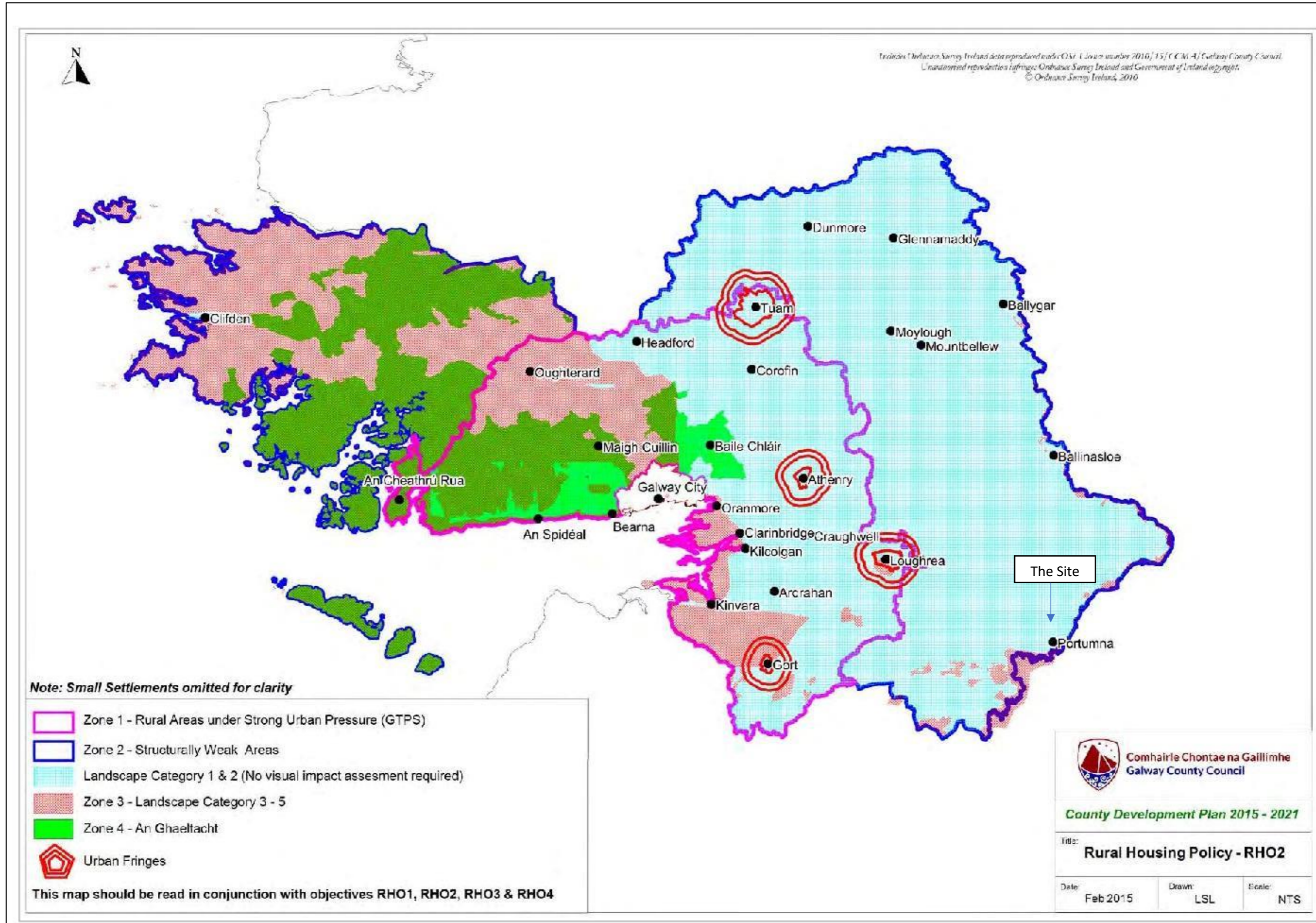


Figure 4.2: Rural Housing Policy Map

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
Chapter 2 Spatial Strategy of the County	<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. In particular development strategy objectives DS7 and DS10.</p>
Chapter 3 Urban & Rural Housing	<p>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</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 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</i></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 2 which is a Structurally Weak Area.</p> <p>The planning application seeks to demolish the existing dwelling on site and construct a new dwelling which would meet the planning policy objectives set out in Chapter 3.</p> <p>The existing dwelling is in a state of dereliction and would cost a</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
	<p><i>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 RHO 2 - Rural Housing Zone 2 (Structurally Weak Area)</p> <p><i>It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the development of individual houses in the open countryside in "Structurally Weak Areas" subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the Development Management Standards and Guidelines outlined in Chapter 13 and other applicable standards with the exception of those lands contained in Landscape Categories 3, 4 and 5 where objective RHO3 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 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</i></p>	<p>considerable amount to refurbish the existing dwelling.</p> <p>The existing house is located within an area designated as Structurally Weak in the county development plan, where the principle of development is acceptable subject to the development management standards set out in chapter 13.</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 has had regard to the criteria set out in policy RH09. The design of the dwelling respects the character of the area. The proposal will adopt the use of traditional materials in the overall design of the dwelling.</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
	<p>landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by using predominately indigenous/local species and groupings.</p> <p>Objective RHO 12 - Waste Water Treatment Associated with Development in Un-Serviced Areas</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The planning application provides for a connection to the existing IW public foul sewer located on the public road.</p>
<p>Chapter 8 Climate Change and Flooding</p>	<p>Policy FL 1 – Flood Risk Management Guidelines</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Objective FL 4 – Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Applications and CFRAMS</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Council shall have regard to the results of any CFRAM Studies in the assessment of planning applications.</p>	<p>The planning application is not located within a Flood Zone. There is no potential for flooding to occur at the Proposed Development site.</p>

Policy Topic	Policy Details	Development Policy Accordance
<p>Chapter 13 Development Management Standards and Guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DM Standard 1: Qualitative Assessment • DM Standard 5: Rural Housing • DM Standard 6: Assimilation of Development into Landscape • DM Standard 7: Site Size for Single Houses using Individual On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems • DM Standard 8: Landscaping • DM Standard 18: Access to National and Other Restricted Roads for Residential Developments • DM Standard 20: Sight Distances Required for Access onto National, Regional & Local Roads • DM Standard 21: Building Lines • DM Standard 22: Parking Standards • DM Standard 27: Surface Water Drainage and Flooding • DM 29: Effluent Treatment Plants 	<p>The planning application proposals meets all the relevant development management guidelines set out in Chapter 13 of the GCDP. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning application makes the best of use of land by reusing previously developed land rather than a greenfield site. • The design of the dwelling is low profile and of modest scale. • The proposal can be assimilated into the landscape. • The proposed sightlines are in accordance with DM Standard 20. The proposed dwelling is located off a National Road. The sight distances will comply with table 13.3 whereby the speed limit is 50km/h corresponds with an achievable site distance of 70 metres.

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 a Structurally Weak Area 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.

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, consistent with the adjoining dwelling to the east of the site.

3. Landscape Design

The site located with an area in the county development plan which is of low sensitivity and can accommodate change with any negative impacts on the surrounding area. The proposal will if anything enhance the appearance of the surrounding area.

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 above.

The replacement dwelling will be single storey in scale and will be set further forward which will be in keeping with adjoining residential properties to the east of the site. The overall footprint of the proposed dwelling will be 75 square metres thus creating more openness on the site.

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.”

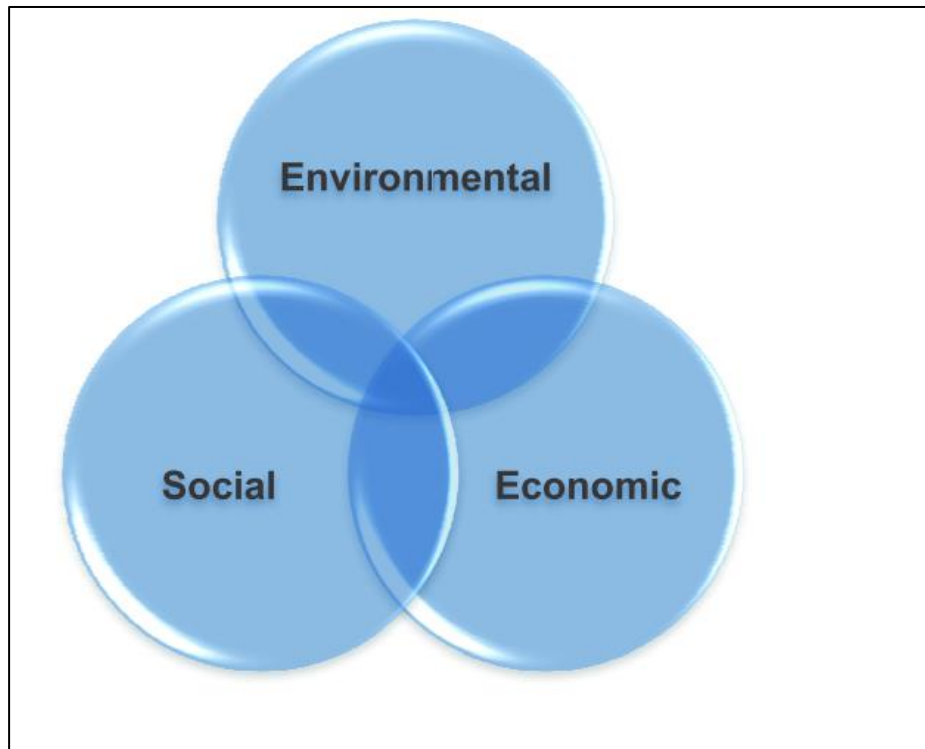


Figure 5.1: The Three Facets to Sustainable

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'*.

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.