

GALWAY COUNTY TRANSPORT AND PLANNING STRATEGY 2022 - 2028



SYSTRA

GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022 - 2028

GALWAY COUNTY TRANSPORT AND PLANNING STRATEGY 2022 - 2028

IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Client/Project Owner	Galway County Council
Project	Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028
Study	Galway County Transport and Planning Strategy 2022 - 2028
Type of Document	Final Report
Date	May 2021
Reference Number	300748/GCTPS/02
Confidentiality	Public Consultation
Language	English
Number of Pages	137

APPROVAL

Version	Name		Position	Date	Modifications
1	Author	EJ / JR / HM		03/03/2021	Draft (for discussion)
	Checked by	Hazel Morton	Associate	03/03/2021	
	Approved by	Andrew Archer	Director	11/03/2021	
2	Author	EJ / JR / HM		26/03/2021	Final Inc GCC Comments (for consultation)
	Checked by	Hazel Morton	Associate	29/03/2021	
	Approved by	Andrew Archer	Director	29/03/2021	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	9
1.1	OVERVIEW	9
1.2	SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGY	10
2.	INTRODUCTION	13
2.1	OVERVIEW	13
2.2	PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY	13
2.3	STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT	14
3.	POLICY CONTEXT	16
3.1	OVERVIEW	16
3.2	NATIONAL POLICY	16
3.3	REGIONAL POLICY	22
3.4	LOCAL POLICY	28
4.	TRANSPORT CONTEXT	32
4.1	OVERVIEW	32
4.2	STUDY AREA & EXISTING LAND USE CONTEXT	32
4.3	EXISTING WALKING & CYCLING NETWORKS	34
4.4	EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK	35
4.5	EXISTING ROAD NETWORK	39
4.6	TRAFFIC COLLISION DATA ANALYSIS	41
4.7	CENSUS DATA REVIEW	42
4.8	FUTURE DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS – TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE	43
4.9	KEY CHALLENGES	46
5.	STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	47
5.1	OVERVIEW	47
5.2	APPROACH & METHODOLOGY	47
5.3	SUMMARY OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS	48
5.4	ISSUES & OPTIONS CONSULTATION	48
5.5	TRAVEL CORRIDORS DEVELOPMENT	49
5.6	FUTURE YEAR MODEL DATA	51
5.7	OPTION IDENTIFICATION	53

5.8	OPTION COMPARISON & ASSESSMENT	54
6.	CORRIDOR ASSESSMENTS	57
6.1	OVERVIEW	57
6.2	TOWN-BASED MEASURES	57
6.3	CORRIDOR 1: GALWAY - TUAM & NE GALWAY (N83)	58
6.4	CORRIDOR 2: GALWAY - ATHENRY (M6)	61
6.5	CORRIDOR 3: ATHENRY - BALLINASLOE (M6)	64
6.6	CORRIDOR 4: NORTH - SOUTH (M18)	67
6.7	CORRIDOR 5: NORTH - SOUTH (M17 / N17)	71
6.8	CORRIDOR 6: BALLINASLOE - TUAM (R332 / R358)	75
6.9	CORRIDOR 7: GALWAY - CLIFDEN (N59)	77
6.10	CORRIDOR 8: GALWAY - LOUGHREA - PORTUMNA (N65)	81
6.11	CORRIDOR 9: GALWAY - ROSCOMMON (N63)	84
6.12	CORRIDOR 10: LOUGHREA - GORT (R380)	87
6.13	CORRIDOR 11: WEST COAST (R336)	91
6.14	CORRIDOR 12: GALWAY NORTH RADIAL (N84)	94
6.15	CORRIDOR 13: GALWAY – ORANMORE & SW (N67)	97
7.	WALKING & CYCLING STRATEGY	101
7.1	OBJECTIVES OF THE WALKING & CYCLING STRATEGY	101
7.2	GREENWAYS / BLUEWAYS	102
8.	PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY	104
8.1	OVERVIEW	104
8.2	THE ROLE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN GALWAY	104
8.3	BUS SERVICES	105
8.4	PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN RURAL AREAS	106
8.5	PARK & RIDE FACILITIES	106
8.6	RAIL SERVICES	107
9.	ROAD NETWORK STRATEGY	109
9.1	OVERVIEW	109
9.2	EXISTING & PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED ROAD PROJECTS	109
9.3	NATIONAL ROADS	112
9.4	NON-NATIONAL ROADS	114

10.	SUPPORTING MEASURES	118
10.1	DEMAND MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES	118
10.2	TRANSPORT MODE INTEGRATION & TRIP LINKING	118
10.3	PARKING STANDARDS & PARKING CONTROLS	118
10.4	ELECTRIC VEHICLES & LOW-CARBON TECHNOLOGIES	119
10.5	PARK & STRIDE	119
10.6	PARK & RIDE	119
10.7	RURAL HOUSING PROTECTION ZONES & RURAL TRANSPORT SERVICES	120
10.8	INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS AND “MOBILITY AS A SERVICE”	122
10.9	SCHOOL TRAVEL	122
10.10	WORKPLACE TRAVEL	123
10.11	TOURISM & LEISURE	123
11.	TRANSPORT STRATEGY – AREA SUMMARIES	124
11.1	PURPOSE OF AREA SUMMARIES	124
11.2	NATIONAL & REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY	124
11.3	METROPOLITAN AREA (MASP)	124
11.4	BALLINASLOE	125
11.5	TUAM	127
11.6	ATHENRY	128
11.7	LOUGHREA	129
11.8	GORT	130
11.9	PORTUMNA	131
11.10	CLIFDEN	131
11.11	HEADFORD	132
11.12	MAIGH CUILLINN	133
11.13	OUGHTERARD	133
11.14	RURAL AREAS (EAST OF GALWAY CITY)	134
11.15	RURAL AREAS (WEST OF GALWAY CITY)	135
12.	CONCLUSION	136

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.	Option Development Process	13
Figure 3.	NPF National Strategic Outcomes	16
Figure 4.	Galway Metropolitan Area Boundary	23
Figure 5.	Galway Commuting Catchment	24
Figure 6.	Galway Transport Strategy Study Boundary	28
Figure 7.	Highest Trip Volumes (Origins & Destinations)	29
Figure 9.	Existing Galway City Bus Routes (March 2021)	35
Figure 10.	Proposed Galway City Bus Routes	36
Figure 11.	Bus Services in the wider Galway County Area	36
Figure 12.	Local Link Bus Routes	37
Figure 13.	Rail Routes	38
Figure 14.	Total Daily Passengers, Galway County Rail Stations	39
Figure 15.	Galway County Strategic Road Network	40
Figure 16.	Urban Areas & Road Network	41
Figure 17.	Galway County Collision Hotspots (2012-16)	42
Figure 18.	Galway City Ring Road Proposed Route	44
Figure 19.	Funding Stages for Oranmore Station Redevelopment	45
Figure 20.	Oranmore Station Proposals	46
Figure 21.	Summary of Option Development Process	47
Figure 22.	Travel Corridors	51
Figure 23.	NTA Model Sector Map	52
Figure 24.	Model Data Factoring Process	53
Figure 25.	Option Grouping	53
Figure 26.	Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Corridor	58
Figure 27.	Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Issues Identified	59
Figure 28.	Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Proposed Options Summary	61
Figure 29.	Galway - Athenry (M6) Corridor	62
Figure 30.	Galway - Athenry (M6) Issues Identified	62
Figure 31.	Galway - Athenry (M6) Proposed Options Summary	64
Figure 32.	Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Corridor	65
Figure 33.	Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Issues Identified	65
Figure 34.	Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Proposed Options Summary	67
Figure 35.	North - South (M18) Corridor	68
Figure 36.	North - South (M18) Issues Identified	69
Figure 37.	North - South (M18) Proposed Options Summary	71
Figure 38.	North - South (M17 / N17) Corridor	72
Figure 39.	North - South (M17 / N17) Issues Identified	72
Figure 40.	North - South (M17 / N17) Proposed Options Summary	74
Figure 41.	Ballinasloe - Tuam Corridor	75
Figure 42.	Ballinasloe - Tuam Issues Identified	76
Figure 43.	Ballinasloe - Tuam Proposed Options Summary	77
Figure 44.	Galway - Clifden Corridor	78
Figure 45.	Galway - Clifden Issues Identified	79
Figure 46.	Galway - Clifden Proposed Options Summary	81
Figure 47.	Galway - Loughrea - Portumna Corridor	82
Figure 48.	Galway - Loughrea - Portumna Issues Identified	82

Figure 49.	Galway - Loughrea - Portumna (N65) Proposed Options Summary	84
Figure 50.	Galway - Roscommon Corridor	85
Figure 51.	Galway - Roscommon Issues Identified	86
Figure 52.	Galway - Roscommon Proposed Options Summary	87
Figure 53.	Loughrea - Gort Corridor	88
Figure 54.	Loughrea - Gort Issues Identified	89
Figure 55.	Loughrea - Gort Proposed Options Summary	91
Figure 56.	West Coast (R336) Corridor	92
Figure 57.	West Coast (R336) Issues Identified	92
Figure 58.	West Coast (R336) Proposed Options Summary	94
Figure 59.	Galway North Radial (N84) Corridor	95
Figure 60.	Galway North Radial (N84) Issues Identified	95
Figure 61.	Galway North Radial (N84) Proposed Options Summary	97
Figure 62.	Galway – Oranmore and SW Corridor	98
Figure 63.	Galway – Oranmore and SW Issues Identified	98
Figure 64.	Galway – Oranmore & SW (N67) Proposed Options Summary	100
Figure 65.	Rural Housing Policy Map	120
Figure 66.	Population Change 2011 – 2016 (Percentage)	121
Figure 67.	Population Change 2011 – 2016 (Actual)	121
Figure 68.	Galway Metropolitan Area Boundary	125

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.	Galway County Urban Area Hierarchy	32
Table 3.	Galway Rail Stations Usage (Boarding & Alighting)	38
Table 4.	Collision Data Summary (2012-16)	42
Table 5.	Galway County Commuting & Education Origin Trips Mode Share	43
Table 6.	Forecast Residential & Employment Growth, 2016-2039	48
Table 7.	Travel Corridor Summary	50
Table 8.	NTA Model Sectors	52
Table 9.	Example Option Assessment Matrix	55
Table 10.	Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	60
Table 11.	Galway-Athenry (M6) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	63
Table 12.	Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	66
Table 13.	North - South (M18) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	70
Table 14.	North - South (M17 / N17) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	73
Table 15.	Ballinasloe -Tuam (R332/R358)) Proposed Measures and Forecast Benefit	77
Table 16.	Galway - Clifden Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	80
Table 17.	Galway - Loughrea - Portumna (N65) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	83
Table 18.	Galway – Roscommon (N63) Proposed Measures and Forecast Benefit	87
Table 19.	Loughrea - Gort Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	90
Table 20.	West Coast (R336) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	93
Table 21.	Galway North Radial (N84) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits	96
Table 22.	Galway – Oranmore & SW (N67) Proposed Measures and Forecast Benefit	99
Table 23.	National Road Projects	110
Table 24.	Existing Public Car Parks	110
Table 25.	Major National & Local Cycle Networks	111

Table 26.	Regional & Local Projects Proposed for 2022-2028	111
Table 27.	Restricted Regional Roads	114
Table 28.	Proposed Physical Measures – Ballinasloe	126
Table 29.	Proposed Physical Measures – Tuam	127
Table 30.	Proposed Physical Measures – Athenry	129
Table 31.	Proposed Physical Measures – Loughrea	130
Table 32.	Proposed Physical Measures – Gort	130
Table 33.	Proposed Physical Measures – Portumna	131
Table 34.	Proposed Physical Measures – Clifden	132

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 Galway County Council (the Council) has responsibility to produce a new Transport Strategy for the county, alongside Local Transport Plans for the towns of Tuam and Ballinasloe. The Galway County Transport and Planning Strategy (GCTPS) is intended to sit alongside and support the main Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028).
- 1.1.2 SYSTRA Ltd (SYSTRA) has been commissioned by the Council to support the development of the GCTPS. Through this work, SYSTRA has considered the existing Transport infrastructure, services, and travel patterns associated with movement within and through the County, and has subsequently identified a range of measures and options suitable for the context of Galway County relating to the pedestrian, cycle, public transport and road networks. These measures have been designed to address key policy objectives relating to Transport and to support the wider implementation of policies relating to growth and the planning of new development during the period of the County Development Plan (CDP).
- 1.1.3 The GCTPS is distinct from and separate to the published Galway Transport Strategy (2017) which was prepared by Galway City Council in partnership with Galway County Council and the National Transport Authority. However, the GCTPS does consider the relationship between travel demand to and from Galway City by residents of and visitors to Galway County and the associated impacts upon travel choices and use of the transport networks within the County area.
- 1.1.4 A series of Policy Objectives for the GCTPS are set out in Chapter 6 of the CDP. These are as follows:
 - **GCTPS 1 Galway County Transport & Planning Strategy and Galway Transportation Strategy**
- 1.1.5 It is a policy objective of Galway County Council to support and facilitate the implementation of the Galway County Transport & Planning Strategy and Galway Transport Strategy across all modes of transport.
 - **GCTPS 2 Integrated Approach to Land Use & Transportation**
- 1.1.6 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**
- 1.1.7 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**

- 1.1.8 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**

- 1.1.9 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**

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

○ **GCTPS 7 Improvements to Road Network**

- 1.1.11 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**

- 1.1.12 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.

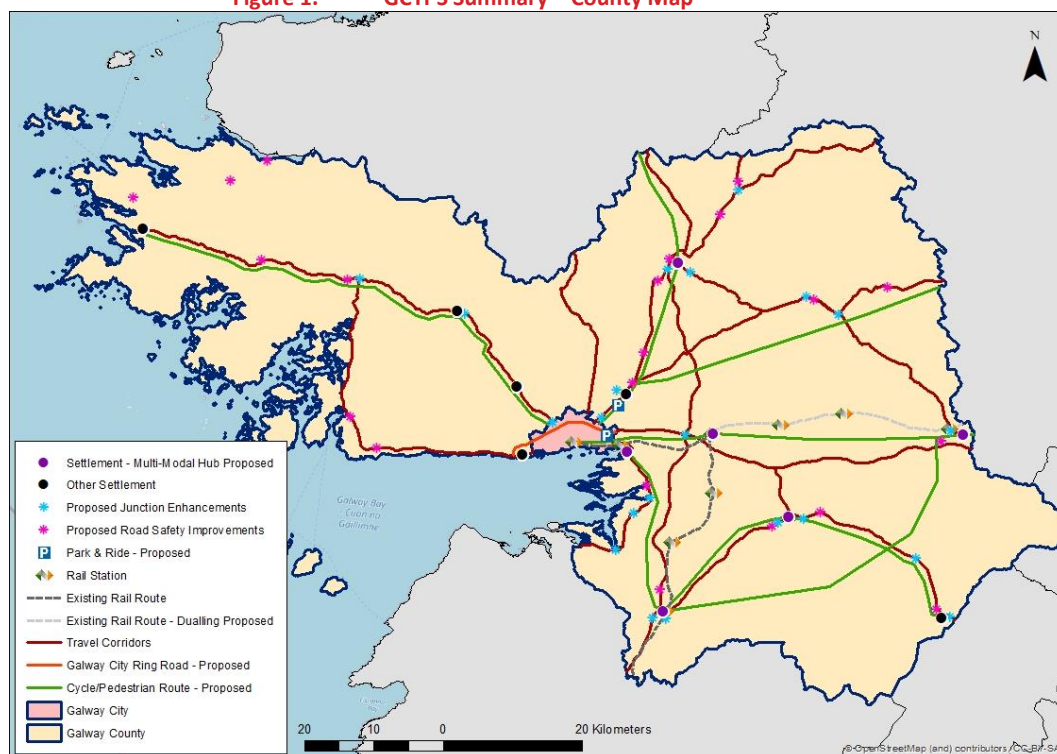
○ **GCTPS 9 Collaboration with Galway City**

- 1.1.13 The 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.

1.2 Summary of the Strategy

- 1.2.1 **Figure 1** overleaf provides a diagrammatic representation of the key transport infrastructure and routes within the County, and a summary of the measures proposed within the GCTPS to address the key policy objectives and desired outcomes which are described both within the GCTPS itself and within Chapter 6 of the CDP.
- 1.2.2 It should be noted that the routing of new or proposed infrastructure shown in **Figure 1** is *indicative* and does not represent a discrete “preferred” route; all such routing decisions will be subject to appropriate technical studies and consultations with residents, their representatives, and other local stakeholders.
- 1.2.3 Further details of the proposed infrastructure improvements and other measures indicated on the map can be found within **Section 6** of the GCTPS.

Figure 1. GCTPS Summary – County Map



1.2.4 The GCTPS proposes a range of measures, including transport infrastructure upgrades, support for service enhancements, and supporting activities, which will collectively deliver enhancements and changes in travel behaviour within the County which are consistent with the policy objectives defined within Chapter 6 of the CDP. These measures are summarised in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. GCTPS Summary – Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFITS
Safety-Led Improvements (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within identified Travel Corridors; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
Demand Management Improvements (incl. junction layout amendments, additional capacity for sustainable modes)	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout identified Travel Corridors.
Multi-Modal Hubs	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety).
Public Transport Infrastructure Improvements (e.g. Bus Stop Improvements in Centres and on	Promote improvements to bus stops and facilities, and recommend locations of new bus stops to bridge gaps

local routes), in conjunction with NTA	in network to enhance public transport connectivity and accessibility.
Support Rail Dualling (between Ballinasloe, Athenry & Galway City)	Increased service frequency and journey times, enhanced public transport offer.
Support Western Rail Corridor Proposals (subject to outcome of Government Rail Review)	Expansion of sustainable mode choices for travel on the Western rail corridor, including connectivity between Athenry and Tuam.
Local Walking / Cycling Routes	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; wider benefits to bus journey times; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development; enhance linkages with local rural routes.
National Cycle Routes (between Dublin, Ballinasloe, Galway City and Clifden)	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; benefits to bus journey times (through the removal of cyclists from bus lanes which can reduce bus speeds and increase delay).
Support for Park & Ride Provision (e.g. near M6 / N6 junction at Ardaun)	Reduced congestion upon approach and within Galway City by reduction of private vehicle trips improving journey times, wider benefits to journeys to and from Galway City.
Support for Electric Vehicles	Increased use of electric vehicles and gradual reduction in petrol / diesel vehicles for personal use.

- 1.2.5 The measures proposed in the GCTPS will be primarily be delivered via actions from the Council's Roads department (in partnership with bodies such as the NTA and TII where relevant), and through the application of associated policies in relation to the planning and consent of new developments as described within the CDP. The proposed areas of growth which are described within the CDP have been selected in part due to their ability to support the delivery of enhanced active and sustainable modes of travel, either through the direct provision of new infrastructure or via an increase in the customer base for public transport modes.
- 1.2.6 The measures and policies which are described within the GCTPS and Chapter 6 of the CDP are therefore designed to work together to maximise the potential benefits of growth for the transport networks, and to protect the efficient and safe operation of these networks for both existing and future residents of Galway County, and those who visit for work and leisure purposes.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 Galway County Council (the Council) is developing a new Transport Strategy for the county alongside Local Transport Plans for the towns of Tuam and Ballinasloe. The Galway County Transport and Planning Strategy (GCTPS) will sit alongside and support the Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028). The GCTPS is distinct from and separate to the published Galway Transport Strategy (2017) which was prepared by Galway City Council in partnership with Galway County Council and the National Transport Authority.
- 2.1.2 SYSTRA Ltd (SYSTRA) has been commissioned by the Council to support the development of the GCTPS. Through this work, SYSTRA has identified a range of measures and options suitable for the context of Galway County relating to the pedestrian, cycle, public transport and road networks.

2.2 Purpose of the Strategy

- 2.2.1 Chapter 6 of the County Development Plan (CDP) summarises the Council's aims in regards to transport as follows:

'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'.

- 2.2.2 The GCTPS therefore comprises a series of technical exercises which have been carried out to establish current transportation activity patterns, trends, and areas where existing residents and visitors could be better served by the transport networks and infrastructure. The analysis is then expanded to consider the anticipated effects of planned new development as defined within the CDP, and applies these findings to a series of option development exercises for defined corridors of movement within the County, including connections to adjacent Counties and the Galway City area. The option development process considers possible interventions and associated measures by mode which could be delivered either via the Council or in partnership with other key stakeholders; these are then compared against one another in terms of how they respond to identified key objectives for particular corridors which have been defined through consultation with the Council, and the responses received from stakeholders and the public via the recent Pre-draft Issues Paper consultation exercise for the CDP as a whole.

Figure 2. Option Development Process



- 2.2.3 The resulting preferred options for each corridor are then brought together to form mode-based strategies; within each mode strategy, the method for achieving the relevant transport policy objectives (as defined within Chapter 6 of the CDP) is presented. Additional information is also presented with regard to a range of ‘supporting measures’ which will be applied to strengthen the impacts of the strategy as a whole, and to address particular areas of opportunity including rural transport services, workplace and school travel, and application of new and emerging technologies and transport solutions.

2.3 Structure of the Report

- 2.3.1 Following this introductory section, the remainder of the GCTPS is structured as follows:

- **Section 3** provides a summary and assessment of relevant national, regional and local transport policies, with references to other associated policies and the CDP as appropriate;
- **Section 4** establishes the Transport Context for the existing transport networks, examining infrastructure, current levels of use, and expected changes to these patterns as a result of the planned developments set out in the CDP;
- **Section 5** explains how the over-arching principles and key objectives for the strategy have been determined, and how this has in turn informed the methodology for developing the corridor-based assessment approach;
- **Section 6** provides the analysis, results and comparisons of the corridor assessments, the identified alternative options for each, and the identification of the preferred measures based on existing and expected future travel demands;
- **Section 7** sets out the proposed Walking and Cycling Strategy for the County area, including national and regional cycle routes, local connectivity and associated active travel measures;
- **Section 8** addresses the proposed Public Transport Strategy for the County area, including bus and coach services and infrastructure provision, rail services and proposed improvements, access and connectivity to public transport hubs, stations and stops, and the promotion of “seamless” public transport journeys;
- **Section 9** details the proposed Road Network Strategy for the County area, including the approach to maintaining and enhancing the efficient and safe use of the road network, planned improvements to national and regional routes, and access to Galway City;
- **Section 10** sets out how a variety of supporting measures will be investigated and developed to complement the mode strategies, including vehicular and cycle parking, school and workplace travel, Park and Ride / Stride facilities, and rural transport enhancement and support;
- **Section 11** provides summaries of key destinations within Galway County, which have played an important role in influencing the development of the GCTPS. These include the Key Towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam, other urban settlements and the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) area, demonstrating how the corridor strategies, modal strategies and supporting measures will combine in defined geographic areas to achieve the stated Policy Objectives and deliver positive change for residents, employees and visitors to these areas; and
- **Section 12** provides a summary of the GCTPS and draws conclusions on how the implementation of the proposed strategies will deliver against the Policy Objectives

defined within the CDP, and contribute to the wider success and positive growth within Galway County over the plan period.

2.3.2 A series of appendices (A to C) is included with this report:

- **Appendix A:** Bus Service Routing & Frequency;
- **Appendix B:** Model Data Analysis & Factoring Process Overview; and
- **Appendix C:** Travel Corridor Technical Notes.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 This section provides an overview of policy and guidance at a national, regional and local level that has been utilised to inform development of the GCTPS.

3.2 National Policy

Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (NPF)

- 3.2.1 The NPF is a long-term strategic development plan for Ireland, setting out planning policy up to 2040. The NPF outlines key national strategic outcomes and priorities, as identified in **Figure 3**. These are designed to guide public and private investment into the county and help shape future growth. The NPF seeks to enable all parts of Ireland (rural and urban) to “successfully accommodate growth and change, by facilitating a shift towards Ireland’s regions and cities other than Dublin” (Chapter 2.1).

Figure 3. NPF National Strategic Outcomes



- 3.2.2 Table 2.1 alongside National Policy Objectives 1b and 1c set out projected growth across Ireland. The Northern and Western Region, in which Galway County is located, is projected to accommodate population growth of between 160,000 and 180,000 by 2040, increasing the population to just over one million. Of this growth, 40,000 to 45,000 is expected in Galway City and its suburbs, representing a 50-60% growth. Approximately 115,000 additional people are forecast to be in employment in the Northern and Western Region, bringing the total to 450,000 people.

- 3.2.3 Transport and connectivity are key to a number of National Strategic Outcomes detailed in the NPF, and the GCTPS seeks to respond to these.
- 3.2.4 **National Strategic Outcome 1 (Compact Growth)** looks to create more attractive places to live by ensuring sustainable growth. In doing so it promotes a shift towards sustainable modes of travel (walking, cycling and public transport) at all levels, including urban cities, smaller towns, villages and rural areas.
- 3.2.5 **National Strategic Outcome 2 (Enhanced Regional Accessibility)** incorporates improved connectivity and accessibility between key urban centres of population and their regions, and between major cities. Transport sits at the heart of this outcome, with a range of measures identified including:
- Maintaining strategic capacity and safety of the National Road Network;
 - Planning future capacity enhancements;
 - Improving average journey times;
 - Enabling effective traffic management, including the reallocation of road-space in appropriate locations to favour public transport services and walking / cycling facilities;
 - Advancing orbital traffic management solutions such as the Galway City Ring Road;
 - Upgrading sections of the N17 northwards to facilitate development of the Atlantic Economic Corridor from Galway; and
 - Strengthening public transport connectivity between cities and large growth towns, improving services and journey time reliability.
- 3.2.6 **National Strategic Outcome 4 (Sustainable Mobility)** highlights that the overall objectives of the NPF are supported through ‘a well-functioning, integrated public transport system’ and enabling sustainable mobility choices. It notes that that large parts of Ireland are heavily dependent on vehicular travel, resulting in increased congestion, whilst the inter-city rail network is integral in offering sustainable travel alternatives.
- 3.2.7 As such, it looks to expand the public transport offer as a way of discouraging car use, reducing congestion, improving air quality and supporting sustainable population and employment growth. This will be done through the delivery of key bus-based projects in identified cities and towns, providing public transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of smaller towns and rural areas, and development of a comprehensive network of safe cycling routes in metropolitan areas, towns and villages where appropriate.
- 3.2.8 **National Strategic Outcome 3 (Strengthened Rural Economies & Communities)** recognises the importance of Ireland’s rural areas and the role transport can play in supporting these. It seeks to ensure regional and local roads are maintained, with strategic road improvement projects undertaken in rural areas where necessary to ensure access to critical services (such as education, healthcare and employment), whilst also promoting a *‘nationwide community-based public transport system in rural Ireland which responds to local needs under the Rural Transport Network and similar initiatives’*.
- 3.2.9 The NPF also supports the sustainable growth of rural communities, including through development in rural areas and improvements to local connectivity through the transport network.

3.2.10 **National Strategic Outcome 7 (Enhanced Amenities & Heritage)** notes that attractive places provide easy access to amenities and services through an integrated transport network and sustainable travel infrastructure, such as pedestrian and cycling facilities. It stresses that focus is required on improving walking and cycling routes and measures targeted at enhancing permeability and connectivity.

3.2.11 Chapter 3.3 of the NPF sets out region-specific objectives and policies for the Northern and Western Region, including specific to Galway, which are intended to support identified growth targets. From a transport perspective, this includes:

- *‘Progressing the sustainable development of new greenfield areas for housing and the development of supporting public transport and infrastructure, such as at Ardaun;*
- *Improving access and sustainable transport links to, and integration with, the existing employment areas to the east of the City at Parkmore, Ballybrit and Mervue;*
- *Determining the sustainable future development of the Galway Airport site for employment and/or residential use together with supporting facilities and infrastructure;*
- *Provision of a Citywide public transport network, with enhanced accessibility between existing and proposed residential areas and the City Centre, third level institutions and the employment areas to the east of the city;*
- *Development of a strategic cycleway network with a number of high capacity flagship routes; and*
- *Delivery of the Galway City Ring Road’.*

3.2.12 Chapter 6.2 (Healthy Communities) recognises that ability to access services and amenities is a key component in the population’s quality of life and notes an increasing dependency on the car and reduced levels of physical activity. Communities should be designed to support physical activity, for example through *‘generously sized footpaths, safe cycle lanes and accessible recreation areas’*. Wider economic benefits are also recognised. National Policy Objective 27 responds to this:

‘Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages’.

3.2.13 Galway City and its suburbs are recognised as a growth area due to future growth enablers including:

- Regeneration projects around the city centre;
- Opportunities to intensify housing development;
- Sustainable development areas on new greenfield land for housing and the development of supporting public transport infrastructure;

- An enhanced city-wide public transport network with better links between new residential developments and the city centre;
- A focus on improving public realm spaces, especially where residential and employment areas are linked to pedestrian infrastructure;
- Development of a strategic cycle network; and
- Construction of the Galway City Ring Road.

3.2.14 Future homes should be located in areas that can support sustainable development, with efficient provision of infrastructure, easy access to a range of local services and opportunities for sustainable travel modes including public transport, walking and cycling.

3.2.15 The NPF commits to climate action, with targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050 across the transport, electricity and built environment sectors. National Policy Objective 64 commits to improving air quality, including through sustainable development that supports public transport use, walking and cycling.

3.2.16 Through the NPF, the government will support energy-efficient development through housing and employment space located along public transport corridors, enabling an increase in public transport use and a reduction in car dependency. The NPF aims to assist in reducing emissions and supporting public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport in favour of private car use (Chapter 9.4).

NPF SUMMARY

Responding to the NPF, the GCTPS seeks to:

- Promote sustainable growth through improving public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure in appropriate locations;
- Commit to reducing emissions and become climate resilient by encouraging sustainable travel uptake and decreasing dependency on single car trips through improved accessibility to sustainable transport modes;
- Improve connectivity of regional areas with Galway City and its environs, Dublin and other strategic locations; and
- Promote sustainable development through an integrated approach to transport and land use, including suitable relationship between public transport connections and housing / employment growth.

Project Ireland 2040 – National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027

3.2.17 The NDP identifies investment priorities that underpin the spatial strategy and implementation of the NPF over its first ten years. Major investment projects underway set out in the NDP that seek to support the National Strategic Outcomes set out in the NPF include:

- Compact Growth: Housing & Sustainable Investment Development (€14.5bn):
 - Development of high density cities is a key priority with over 50% of future housing to be located in cities and 30% in other regions. This growth will be

supported through investment in high quality public and sustainable transport systems.

- A reserve of development land is needed to achieve this objective. €2bn has been allocated to the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund to support the growth enablers in the five cities identified in the NPF, including a regeneration plan for Galway City.
- Enhanced Regional Accessibility: Regional Roads Network & Accessibility to the North – West (€7.3bn):
 - Improvement to road linkages, particularly in the north-west region. A high quality road network is envisioned to ensure all areas are linked to Dublin and to one another.
 - Priority is placed on delivery of the Atlantic Corridor, improving connectivity between Cork, Limerick, Galway and Sligo.
 - Maintaining existing transport networks to a high quality, with the Galway City Ring Road to benefit from maintenance funding.
 - Prioritise funding to enhance the existing inter-urban rail network, including improved journey times and connectivity on the Dublin to Galway route. A programme of introduction of new diesel, electric trains in 2022 is planned, enhancing the rail fleet through provision of approximately 300 new carriages. The potential extension of the Western Rail Corridor from Athenry to Tuam is noted as enhancing connectivity and facilitating an increase in rail passenger numbers.
- Sustainable Mobility: Public Transport (€8.6bn):
 - Delivery of high quality and integrated public transport, with the aim of reversing current congestion issues through improving transport offer.
 - Introduction of traffic management, bus priority and other smart travel projects in Galway City to relieve congestion, such as through the BusConnects programme, which enables a higher frequency of bus services and easier access to services.
 - Public transport investment includes towards bus and rail fleet, delivery of the BusConnects programme, transition to use of low emission buses including electric buses, provision of Park & Ride facilities in strategic locations, delivery of improved walking and cycling networks, supporting rail and bus station improvements, and providing electric vehicle charging infrastructure where required.
- Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate Resilient Society (€21.8bn):
 - Implementation of a new renewable energy support scheme by 2030, enabling a move towards green energy use. Transport-related NDP objectives that respond to the climate challenge include increased uptake in electric vehicles and provision of supporting charging infrastructure; implementation of the BusConnects programme; transition to electric buses; and provision of comprehensive walking and cycling networks.

NDP SUMMARY

The NDP presents a variety of projects and funded schemes which seek to ensure that the National Strategic Outcomes in the NPF are delivered. The GCTPS will:

- Promote sustainable development through ensuring public transport connections are suitably located to serve housing and employment spaces;
- Work with key stakeholders to ensure Galway's road network is maintained to ensure safety;
- Improve facilities and accessibility of public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure to promote uptake in sustainable travel; and
- Give consideration to ways of promoting and encouraging sustainable transport usage, implementation of Park & Ride schemes and other traffic management measures.

National Climate Action Plan (NCAP) 2019

- 3.2.18 As a member state of the European Union, Ireland became a signatory of the Paris Agreement in 2015. This aims to limit global warming to below two degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels and temperature increase to 1.5 degrees. To contribute to the achievement of this, Ireland is required to deliver a 30% reduction (relative to 2005 levels) in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- 3.2.19 Transport was responsible for 20.1% of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions in 2018, and was second only to agriculture in terms of emission share by sector. Road transport accounted for the majority of these emissions, with private cars accounting for 40%, Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) 14% and Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) 6%, with public and private buses accounting for less than 3% of emissions.
- 3.2.20 The NCAP sets out targets, measures and actions for a range of sectors to facilitate the level of decarbonisation required to achieve 2030 targets for carbon emissions and create a pathway towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Decarbonising transport is a key tenet of the NCAP, and requires a significant modal shift from private car use towards public transport and active travel, as well as a significant uptake of electric vehicles and increased use of biofuels.
- 3.2.21 The NCAP seeks to promote:
- Sustainable growth that is less transport intensive through efficient planning, remote and home-working and modal shift towards public transport;
 - Accelerated uptake of electric cars and vans so as all new cars and vans are electric by 2030; and
 - Conversion of public transport fleets to zero carbon alternatives.
- 3.2.22 It is supported by measures set out in Project Ireland 2040 that seek to enable climate-friendly development, including increased electric vehicle use, additional charging infrastructure to cater for planned growth, no new non-zero emissions vehicles to be sold beyond 2030 and

delivery of the BusConnects programme, which targets a 50% increase in bus passenger numbers over the lifetime of the project in major cities.

- 3.2.23 Chapter 10 of the NCAP details targets and actions specific to transport. A range of targets are identified, including reducing transport-related carbon dioxide emissions by 45% to 50% (relative to 2030 pre-NDP projections); increasing electric vehicle use, including cars, vans and buses; provision of a supporting charging network and fast-charging infrastructure; and implementing changes to blend proportions of biofuels in road transport to 10% in petrol and 12% in diesel.
- 3.2.24 To achieve these targets, a suite of measures are identified; these centre on providing high-quality public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure to reduce private car dependency and associated congestion. Measures focus on:
- **Modal Shift:** Implementation of major sustainable-mobility projects, expansion of cycling and walking networks, promotion of compact growth and integration of land use and transport policies development of an overall Park & Ride Implementation Plan, and consideration of local travel planning / behavioural change programmes;
 - **Public Fleet Conversion:** Transition to LEVs including electric buses, creation of a roadmap for transition to LEVs for all public urban bus fleets by 2035, and passing legislation to enable Local Authorities to introduce low- and zero-emission zones; and
 - **Electric Vehicles:** Expansion of the EV charging network, delivery of charging infrastructure under the Climate Action Fund, requirement for new non-residential buildings with more than 10 parking spaces to provide at least one recharging point, and securing public investment to drive confidence in the availability and reliability of public charging infrastructure.

3.3 Regional Policy

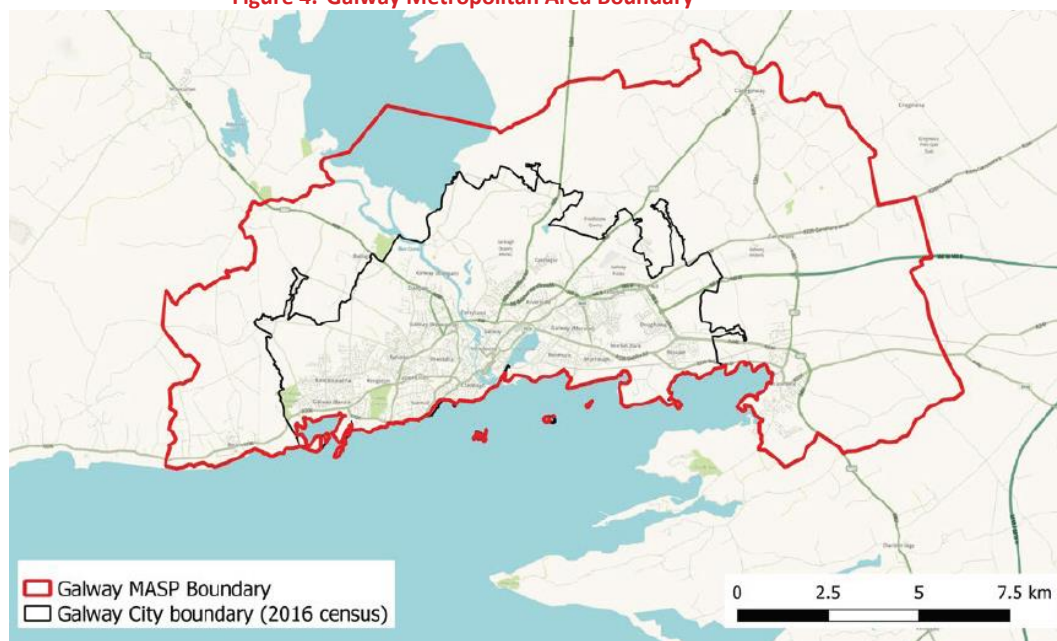
Northern & Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032

- 3.3.1 The RSES provides a development framework for the Northern and Western Region over the 12 year period from 2020 to 2032, supporting effective implementation of the NPF alongside relevant Government economic policies and objectives.
- 3.3.2 The RSES is bespoke to the Northern & Western Region (encompassing Galway alongside Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Mayo, Monaghan, Roscommon and Sligo) and is centred around the National Policy Objectives and National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, responding through a series of Regional Policy Objectives (RPO).
- 3.3.3 The overall strategic vision of the RSES is:

‘To play a leading role in the transformation of this region into a vibrant, connected, natural, inclusive and smart place to work and live’.

- 3.3.4 Five Growth Ambitions are detailed (Figure 16). Connected Ambition recognises the role transport plays in promoting the region's economic competitiveness and attractiveness for living and visiting, and commits to supporting investment in sustainable transport measures.
- 3.3.5 The region is highly dependent on private car use, with 2016 Census data confirming 70% of commuter trips are made by private car. In response, whilst there are limited opportunities for use of sustainable transport modes in parts of the region, the RSES identifies four high-level transport principles:
- Improving strategic and local connectivity;
 - Improving access to public transport facilities;
 - Catering for the role of the car within the region; and
 - Ensuring sustainable development to cater for long-term growth through reducing levels of traffic congestion.
- 3.3.6 A Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) has been prepared for Galway, providing an implementation strategy for development outcomes in the Galway Metropolitan Area, which encompasses Galway City and surrounding parts of the county, as shown in Figure 4.

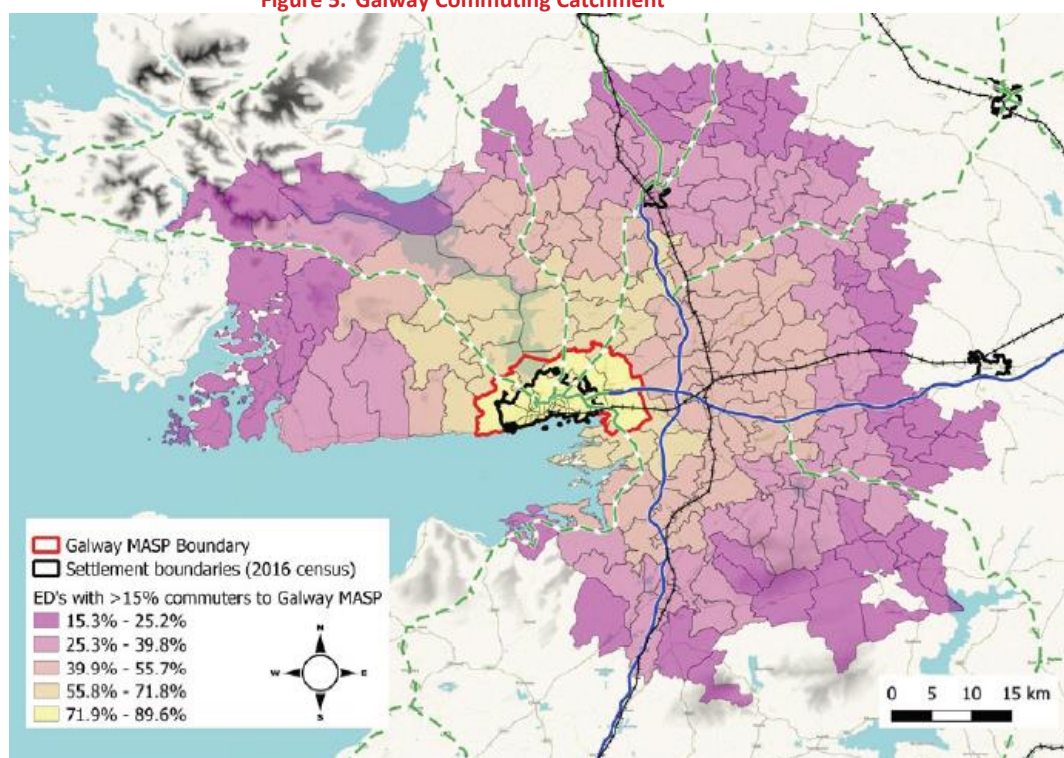
Figure 4. Galway Metropolitan Area Boundary



NWRA RSES, Figure 19

- 3.3.7 The RSES recognises the significant influence Galway has in the development of the region, including the extent of the region from which employees commute to the city centre, detailed in Figure 5. This extends beyond Tuam to the north, Clifden to the west, towards Ballinasloe in the east and beyond Gort to the south.

Figure 5. Galway Commuting Catchment



NWRA RSES, Figure 20

- 3.3.8 The population of the Metropolitan Area is projected to grow by 27,500 to 2026 and by a further 14,500 to 2031, with the population of the city and suburbs accommodating 23,000 to 2026 and a further 12,000 to 2031. Within Galway County, residential growth areas are identified in Bearna to the west, Oranmore to the east and Baile Chláir to the northeast, with industrial / technology growth identified in Oranmore and around the former Galway Airport.
- 3.3.9 Oranmore it is identified as a strategic location for large scale residential development of scale across 33 hectares of land; this is supported through its location on the Galway to Dublin/Limerick rail route and connectivity to the wider road network (M6 and M17/M18 motorways). Oranmore also has potential to accommodate large-scale employment growth (27 hectares), alongside nearby Parkmore (38 hectares).
- 3.3.10 It is recognised that the projected growth in the Galway Metropolitan Area will be accompanied by a range of challenges; the RSES, through the MASP, seeks to address these through integrated and timely provision of infrastructure, as set out within the document over the short (0-6 years), medium (6-12 years) and long-term (12-20 years). At the heart of this is the integration of housing development and transport infrastructure that promote sustainable travel patterns.
- 3.3.11 The Galway Transport Strategy and City Centre Management Plan have been prepared for Galway City, highlighting proposed plans and strategies to improve connectivity within the city and surrounding area. In summary, the following proposals are due to be delivered as part of the Galway Transport Strategy:
- The Galway City Ring Road (currently at planning stage) that aims to support development, improve accessibility and enhance connectivity to the city and areas

to the west of the city. The Ring Road will support city-bound, cross-city and cross-county trips that cannot be facilitated by other measures (RPO 3.6.7). Development of the Tuam Bus Corridor, Dublin Road Bus Corridor and a cross-city bus network, providing high frequency services that extend to Oranmore to the east and Bearna to the west, within the County.

- Provision of a strategic cycle network, incorporating connections between residential areas and areas of employment and a primary network of routes including two greenways to Oranmore and Bearna.
- Improved pedestrian facilities as a means of reducing traffic volumes in the city centre alongside improvements to pedestrian networks in suburban areas, including to places of employment at Parkmore and Ballybrit.
- Provision of Park & Ride facilities on approaches to and periphery of the city, ensuring these link to the wider bus network.
- Long-term development of Ceannt Station Quarter allowing the station to act as a key multi-modal interchange.
- Double tracking of the line between Galway and Athlone, or a more limited provision of stopping bays, is identified as a strategic project to enhance accessibility and connectivity (RPO 3.6.9).

3.3.12 Section 3.8 of the RSES set outs priorities for Key Towns within the region. These are defined as ‘regionally strategic employment centres of significant scale that have the potential to accommodate a significant level of growth in population and employment through appropriate investment in infrastructure, support services and placemaking initiatives’. Ballinasloe and Tuam, are located within County Galway.

3.3.13 Ballinasloe, located close to the border with Roscommon, is noted as ‘an anchor for employment in east Galway’. It is located on one of the County’s Strategic Development Corridors and benefits from its strategic location in terms of access to the rail and road (M6 motorway) network. Three key future priorities for the town relate specifically to transport:

- Promoting sustainable land use and transport solutions, whilst capitalising on the opportunity presented by the railway service and the M6 Motorway, so that sustainable travel, including walking and cycling, and integrated land use and transportation become central to the development of new neighbourhoods and the future development of Ballinasloe.
- Support the delivery of sustainable transport solutions including the improvement of rail facilities and services serving Ballinasloe, including any future expansion of the railway station for passengers and freight as required.
- Encourage and support the development of a series of cycle and pedestrian routes in the Ballinasloe area and in accordance with the Galway to Dublin Cycle Route and the Townspark Relief Road where feasible and in a sensitive manner, incorporating the streams, rivers, woods, and canal.

3.3.14 Tuam is located 33km from Galway City and is directly connected to Ireland West Airport Knock, Shannon Airport and Limerick via the N17 northbound and recently opened M17/M18 motorway southbound, whilst the M6 and M17 provide connectivity to Dublin in

approximately two and a half hours. Five main locations for development are identified, with key priorities including:

- Address deficiencies in the existing pedestrian and cycle network to promote walking, cycling and broader sustainable travel initiatives and resultantly reduce car dependency.
- Capitalise on the compact urban form of Tuam town centre by encouraging greater connectivity for new development which promotes and encourages walking and cycling ensuring that principles of sustainable transportation along with practical design measures become central to the development of new neighbourhoods.

3.3.15 The RSES advises the preparation of Local Transport Plans (LTP) for identified key towns to support compact growth and sustainable mobility. LTPs should identify and prioritise objectives in relation to sustainable travel infrastructure and plan for the efficient movement of people within and outside of the area served by the LTP, which should deliver appropriate measures to promote walking, cycling and public transport use to create accessible spaces (RPO 6.29).

3.3.16 Section 5.8 details development priorities in relation to walking and cycling networks. A 'Strategy for Future Development of National and Regional Greenways' has been developed, providing a framework for the future development of Greenways. This includes provision of a Dublin to Galway National Greenway and the Conamara Greenway, alongside the international Eurovelo Routes 1 and 2. In addition, the RSES supports the development of Blueways along existing and disused waterways (RPO 5.20). Identified routes include the Lough Derg Blueway, extending from Portumna to Killaloe / Scarriff.

3.3.17 Sections 6.2 and 6.3 of the RSES set out challenges, opportunities and investment priorities related to transport. Identified outcomes from this investment include strengthening public transport, walking and cycling accessibility within Galway City and surrounding areas, improving public transport reliability and journey times to Dublin and other regional cities and protecting road capacity. Key transport investment priorities within the RSES include:

- **Road Network:** RPO 6.5 states that the capacity and safety of the region's road networks will be maintained, managed and enhanced to ensure optimal use, with future capacity enhancements planned where appropriate. RPO 6.6 states that investment commitments such as delivery of the Galway City Ring Road will be secured by 2027
- **Rail Network:** Improvements should be made to service frequencies, travel time reductions and the integration of local transport services. Key priorities include dualling the track between Athlone, Athenry and Galway to increase service frequency (RPO 6.12), completion of a review of the Western Rail Corridor proposals to link Limerick, Galway and Sligo, including Phases 2 (Athenry to Tuam) and 3 (Tuam to Claremorris) for passenger and freight movement (RPO 6.11), and pre-appraisal and early planning of a rail line between Athenry, Tuam, Claremorris and Sligo (RPO 6.13).
- **Bus Network:** Improvements should be focused on the connectivity between regional areas, with RPO 6.20 stating how transport network reviews should be

undertaken to identify where additional regional support is required. RPO 6.21 discusses how bus services, including rural programmes, will need to provide a better connected public transport service. Key interchange facilities should also be provided where necessary, with improved passenger information services. There is a commitment to using low emission bus fleets.

- **Rural Transport:** Rural bus services are provided through the Transport For Ireland (TFI) Local Link programme, meeting the needs of communities outside larger settlement areas. Sustainable travel modes should continue to be provided in rural areas, supported by walking and cycling infrastructure (RPO 6.23).
- **Walking & Cycling:** There is move to increase sustainable travel in favour of private car use. RPO 6.26 notes walking and cycling infrastructure and networks should be improved through the implementation of Local Transport Plans for the Galway Metropolitan Area and further regional growth areas and key towns (including Ballinasloe and Tuam).
- **Electric Vehicles:** There is move to reduce dependency on fossil fuels in favour of alternative fuels for transport. RPO 6.34 notes that safe recharging points should be provided across the region, including in public parking and employment spaces.

3.3.18 To support the creation of healthy places and a healthy environment, RPO 7.9 supports the promotion of high quality and accessible public open spaces, including prioritising access to walking and cycling networks. RPO 7.12 seeks to ensure local housing and transport accessibility is developed to meet the needs of an aging population, those with disabilities and younger people.

RSES SUMMARY

The RSES provides a provides a development framework to support effective implementation of the NPF. The GCTPS will:

- Promote the integration of housing and employment land uses with key public transport corridors and interchanges;
- Support measures and investment priorities detailed in the Galway Transport Strategy;
- Improve local connectivity through improved bus facilities and walking and cycling infrastructure, developed from reviews of existing services;
- Cater for long-term growth in the area through encouraging a modal shift away from private car use and the development of LTPs to help achieve this; and
- Ensure Ballinasloe and Tuam are key focus areas in terms of improving sustainable transport connections.

3.4 Local Policy

Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028)

- 3.4.1 The County Development Plan (CPD) sets out the strategy and methods through which future planning and sustainable development of the county will be achieved for the period to 2028. Preparation of the CDP commenced in June 2020, with the first of three public consultation periods running between June and September 2020.
- 3.4.2 Chapter 6 (Transport & Movement) sets out the ways in which appropriate provision for the safeguarding and upgrading of existing transport infrastructure will be ensured. It seeks to build on the existing strengths within the county while also addressing deficiencies in a sustainable manner, including through taking account of climate change and creating more sustainable communities.
- 3.4.3 The CDP looks to:

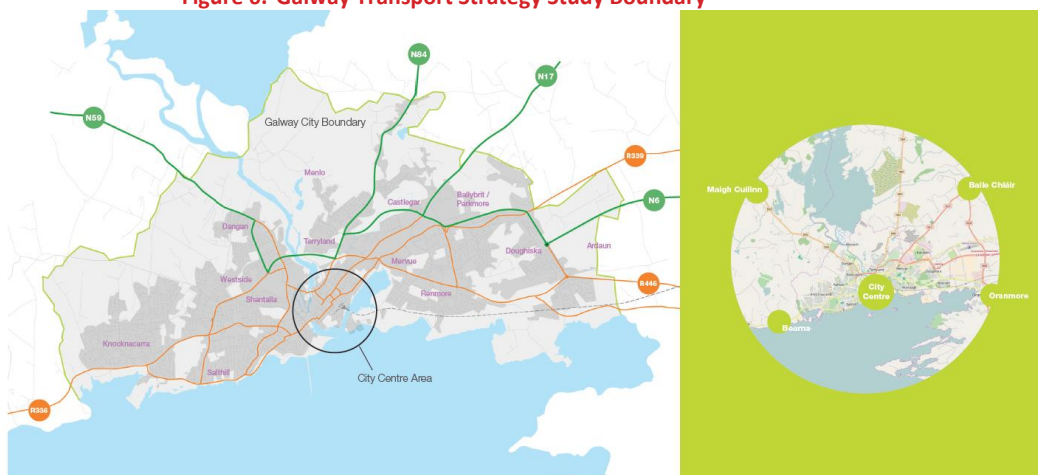
'encourage investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport'.

- 3.4.4 A number of strategic aims and associated policy objectives are identified to help achieve this.

Galway Transport Strategy (2017)

- 3.4.5 The Galway Transport Strategy was developed by Galway City Council, in partnership with Galway County Council and the National Transport Authority, to address current and future identified transport issues and opportunities within Galway City and the surrounding metropolitan area; this includes Bearna, Oranmore and Baile Chláir, as identified in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6. Galway Transport Strategy Study Boundary



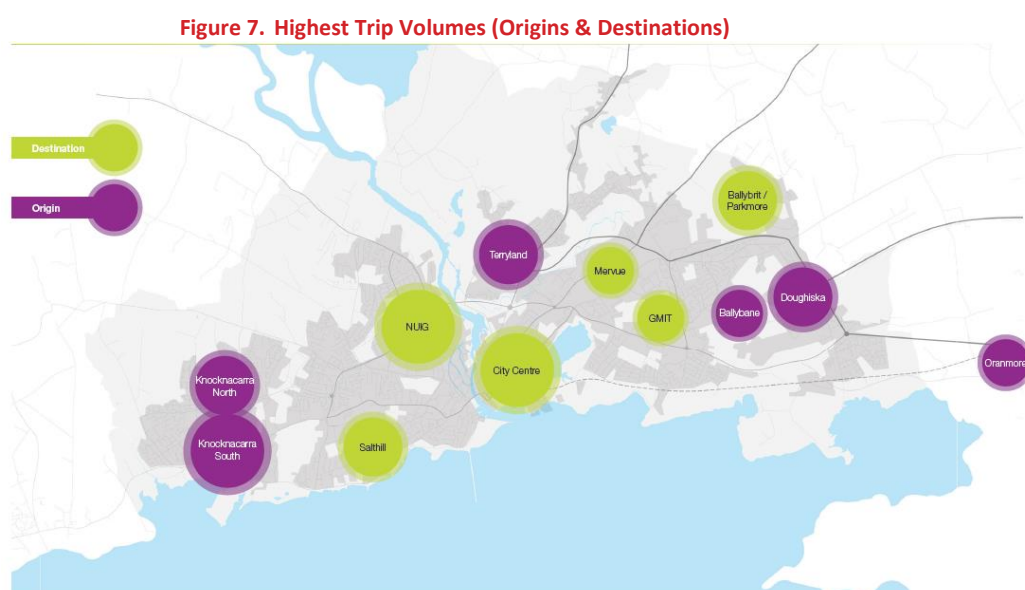
Galway Transport Strategy (Figure 2.1)

- 3.4.6 It is intended to provide an implementation framework for transport proposals covering a 20 year period, and underpins identified aims and objectives of both the Galway City Development Plan and Galway County Development Plan.

3.4.7 The Galway Transport Strategy recognises that Galway City (and surrounding areas) experience congestion, particularly in peak hours, resulting in journey time unreliability for all transport modes. This is exacerbated by an overreliance on private car use, and results in safety concerns, junctions and key links operating above capacity. The Strategy's overarching vision and principle is:

'To address the current and future transport needs of the city, a shift is needed towards sustainable travel, reducing the dependence on the private car and taking action to make Galway more accessible and connected, improving the public realm and generally enhancing quality of life for all'.

3.4.8 The Strategy provides an overview of key origin-destination trips within the study area. It notes that private car use is the most dominant travel mode, hosting approximately 60% of all trips within the City and surrounding area. It notes that over 45,000 total trips are recorded within POWSCAR for Galway City and surrounding area, with high trip volumes from key origins and destinations shown in Figure 2.3 of the Transport Strategy, presented in **Figure 7** for information.



Galway Transport Strategy (Figure 2.3)

3.4.9 A suite of transport interventions are identified and set out within the City Transport Strategy, split by mode. This includes for:

- Traffic Network;
- Local Public Transport;
- Regional Public Transport;
- Walking & Cycling; and
- Supporting Transport Measures.

3.4.10 In terms of public transport measures that have scope to impact upon travel patterns within the County, the strategy (Table 5.1) includes for upgrades to existing main bus corridors to provide high frequency routes, including to Parkmore to the east of the city centre. As detailed in Chapter 3 of the report, the Brown bus route would extend to Bearna to the west and

Oranmore to the east, both located within Galway County. The strategy aspires for these routes to operate at a frequency of at least once every 15 minutes, with high frequency to be maintained across the daily period as opposed to just within peak hours.

- 3.4.11 Section 6.3 notes that a high proportion of trips to or from Galway City start or end outside the city, and the provision of Park & Ride services can help to provide an alternative to private car use within the city centre through a high frequency and reliable service. Corridors for Park & Ride services are identified, with sites proposed including on the M7, the N17 and to the west of the city.

GALWAY TRANSPORT STRATEGY SUMMARY

The Galway Transport Strategy details a range of priority transport infrastructure projects, improvements and investments for Galway City and its environs. In response, the GCTPS will:

- Support key measures that impact upon movement and travel patterns within the county and ensure further interventions taken forward are complementary to these, where appropriate;
- Promote sustainable travel options between identified key origins and destinations within the county for trips to and from Galway City; and
- Consider suitability for Park & Ride site and scheme provision within the county, tying to Galway City Council proposals.

Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy

- 3.4.12 The Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy examines and deals with primary walking and cycling aspects of commuting, tourism and community exercise and activities in Galway County. Tuam, Ballinasloe, Oranmore and Clifden are designated as major study towns.
- 3.4.13 The current cycling network is described as variable, with the better-quality cycling facilities usually provided as a result of road improvement schemes. The Strategy identifies the Council's goals for walking and cycling as to:
- Encourage modal shift for students and workers from cars to walking and cycling;
 - Boost tourism within the County through the creation of walking and cycling attractions and facilities;
 - Develop local walking and cycling facilities to encourage uptake in local sporting and physical exercise; and
 - Raise public awareness of the benefits of walking and cycling.
- 3.4.14 Schemes identified by the Council to be pursued as part of the Walking & Cycling Strategy include:
- New Greenway routes, linking Galway City with Clifden, Oughterard, Ballinasloe, Claregalway, Oranmore and Bearnna;
 - Cycle tracks along the N59 between Clifden and Galway City;
 - Cycle routes between Tuam and Athenry, Bearnna and Scrib, Portumna and Ballinasloe, and Loughrea and Gort;

- Upgrades to the National Cycle Routes from Clifden to Leenane and from Oranmore to Kinvara; and
- Provision of cycle hubs at Clifden, Oughterard and Maigh Cuillinn.

3.4.15 The following targets are set out as part of the Strategy:

- Increase the proportion of people who walk to work within the County from 5% to 20%;
- Increase the mode share for cycling for journeys to work from 1% to 8%;
- Increase the number of children between ages five and twelve who walk to and from school from 13% to 21%;
- Increase the number of children between five and twelve years old who cycle to and from school from 1% to 6%;
- Students aged between 13 and 18 years –
- Increase the proportion of students aged 13 to 18 who walk to school / college to match the national average as a minimum; and
- Increase the number of students between 13 and 18 years old who cycle to school / college from 1% to 8%.

4. TRANSPORT CONTEXT

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 This section of the GCTPS provides a concise overview of existing transport conditions within the county, alongside committed and proposed future transport infrastructure schemes. Transport conditions are identified so that the context of the forecast growth as detailed within the County Development Plan and its potential impact on the local road and transport network can be fully understood.
- 4.1.2 The transport network in the county predominantly reflects its largely rural and sparsely populated nature. Large parts of the county are served by limited accessibility to suitable transport modes alternative to the private car available due to the dispersed population and low level of urbanisation.

4.2 Study Area & Existing Land Use Context

- 4.2.1 The GCTPS covers the entirety of Galway County, including the metropolitan area surrounding Galway City and the key towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam. Whilst Galway City itself sits outside the spatial scope of the GCTPS, it is recognised that it plays an important role and influence in travel patterns and demand within the county.
- 4.2.2 A summary of the key towns and urban centres within the County that form part of the spatial scope of the GCTPS is provided in [Table 2](#).

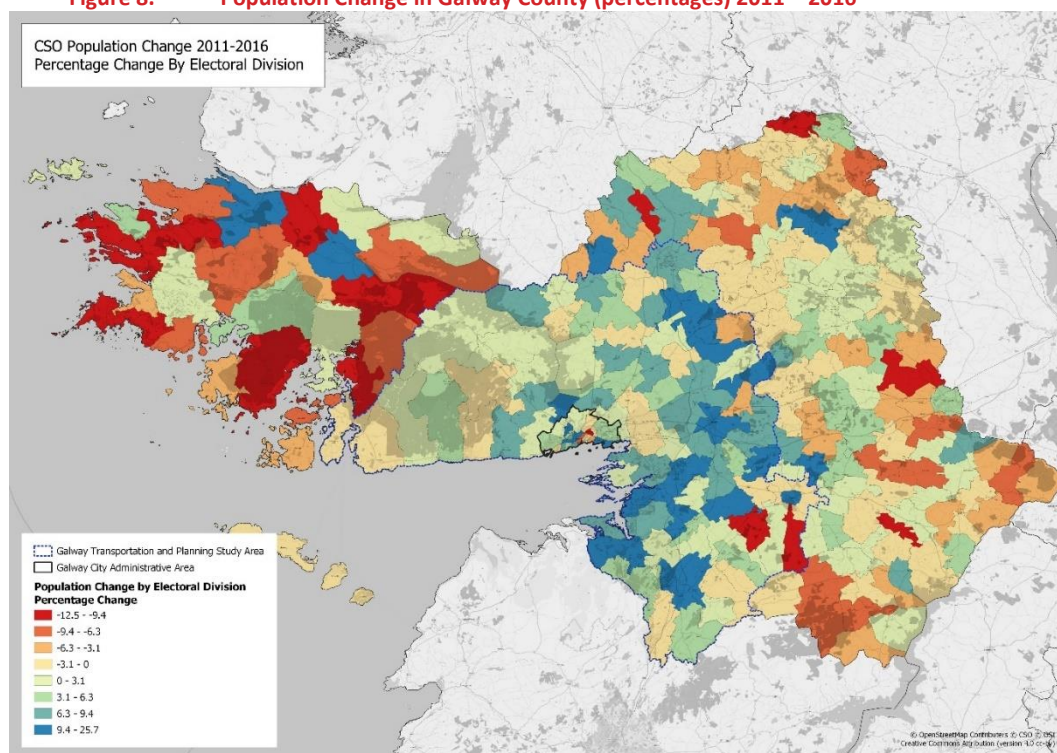
Table 2. Galway County Urban Area Hierarchy

DESIGNATION	LOCATION
Metropolitan Area	Baile Chláir
	Bearna
	Oranmore
	Garraun
	Briarhill
Key Town	Ballinasloe
	Tuam
Strategic Potential	Athenry
Self-Sustaining Town	Gort
	Loughrea

Small Growth Town	Clifden
	Maigh Cuilinn
	Oughterard
	Portumna
	Headford

- 4.2.3 Outside of these areas, the County is populated via a large number of small villages and “ribbon” development alongside the local road networks. The overall pattern of population change observed in the period 2011 to 2016 for the County is shown in **Figure 8**; the mapping shows that certain parts of rural Galway have experienced a reduction in population, whereas other areas have seen an increase. The largest decreases in population within this period were recorded in the Electoral Divisions (EDs) of Kilchreest (-12.5%) and Mountain (-10.1%) whereas the largest increases were recorded in Galway Rural (+18.5%), Kinvarra (+13.7%) and Gort (+13.7%).

Figure 8. Population Change in Galway County (percentages) 2011 – 2016



- 4.2.4 It can be observed from this data that the areas of greatest negative change are largely found in the western and south-eastern areas of the County, with the areas of greatest increase located on the eastern side of the Galway Transportation and Planning area. It is understood that, outside of growth of the larger settlements identified in the urban hierarchy, increases in population during this period have been driven by small-scale local development for housing; the strategy of “compact growth” which is set out in the relevant national and regional planning policy documents seeks to re-direct future housing provision (and associated increases in population) to locations where the benefits of higher density

development (including for transport provision) can be realised. The impacts of these policies for the provision of transport to, from and within the rural areas of the County are considered further in **Section 10** of the GCTPS.

4.3 Existing Walking & Cycling Networks

- 4.3.1 The Council has previously developed a Walking and Cycling Strategy (2013); this discusses proposed improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure throughout the county. It recognises that, as the average distance between neighbourhoods is not conducive for trips on foot or by cycle, focus for the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure is within or along the fringe of key neighbourhood centres to reflect demand rather than between villages and towns.

Walking Network & Infrastructure

- 4.3.2 Local pedestrian networks are of variable quality throughout the county; most populated areas benefit from some form of pedestrian network, however these frequently give only limited space to pedestrians or are “informal” shared spaces on local roads which do not possess separate pedestrian paths. Where footways exist, the quality of the surfacing varies and this has the potential to present problems for the less mobile, and those using mobility aids or pushchairs / buggies for children. There are a variety of walking trails around the county including but not limited to, the Ballinasloe Architectural Trail, Tuam Architectural Trail and Oranmore Sli na Slainte.

Cycling Network & Infrastructure

- 4.3.3 There are multiple national cycle routes which pass through the county, including the N17, N18, N59, N63, N65, N66, N67 and N83; these primarily run to and from the Galway City area in a radial pattern, connecting to adjacent counties. There are also a variety of local cycling trails, including quiet cycling loops situated within the county.
- 4.3.4 However, it is noted that on-street cycle infrastructure is variable in quality and limited across the county, in part due to spatially constrained road carriageway widths. Cycle lanes and supporting infrastructure are not provided within a number of town centres, resulting in cyclists required to mix with other road traffic and vehicles.
- 4.3.5 Sport Ireland provide details regarding a range of on- and off-road cycling trails within the county. It is noted that on-road routes are predominantly located within the west of the county, extending from Claddaghduigg to Ballyconneely / Roundstone.
- 4.3.6 Off-road cycle trails include the Derroua Mountain Bike Trail, Aghrane Castlekelly Loop and a number of trails within Portumna Forest Park.
- 4.3.7 A public cycle hire scheme operates within Galway City, with 22 docking stations providing access to 195 cycles. It is noted that, whilst spatial coverage of the scheme does not extend into the county, it offers potential for first and last mile connectivity for journeys made to and from the county via public transport.
- 4.3.8 The Eurovela (European Cycling Routes) Atlantic Coast and Capital routes will run through the county. The Atlantic Coast route is currently under development and will extend to the west

and south of Galway City, whilst the Capital route is at planning stage and is proposed to run from Galway City to Oranmore, Athenry and Ballinasloe.

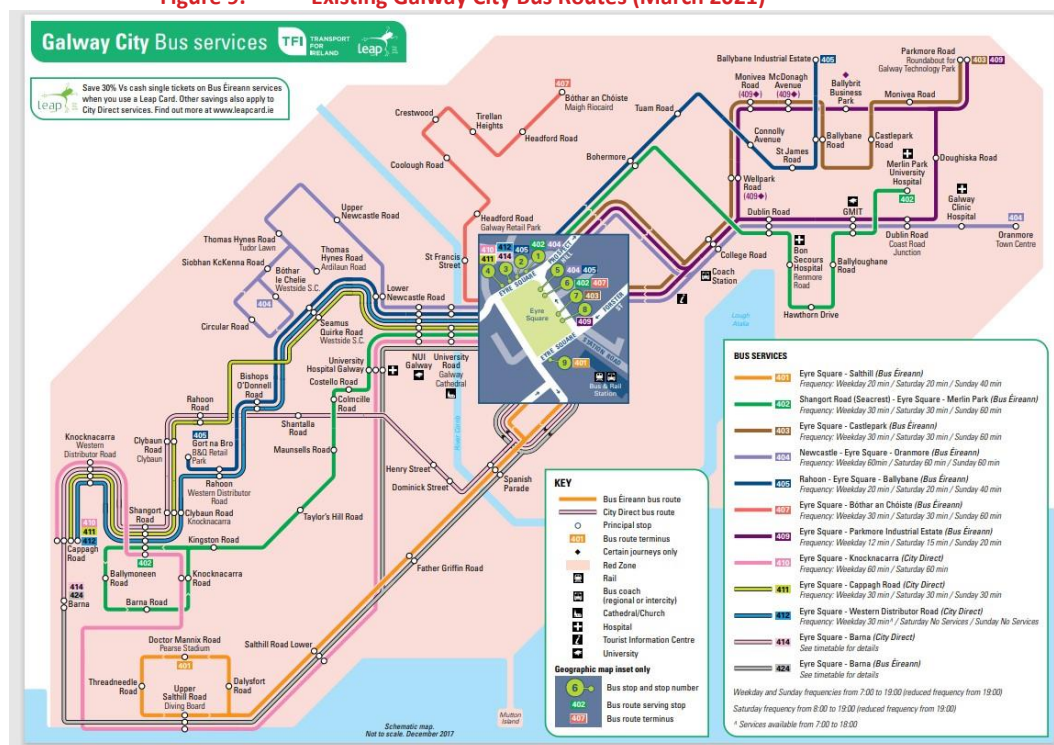
4.4 Existing Public Transport Network

- 4.4.1 This section provides an overview of existing public transport infrastructure across the county. This includes a comprehensive network of bus services run by multiple operators including both regional and local services, and key rail links.

Bus & Coach

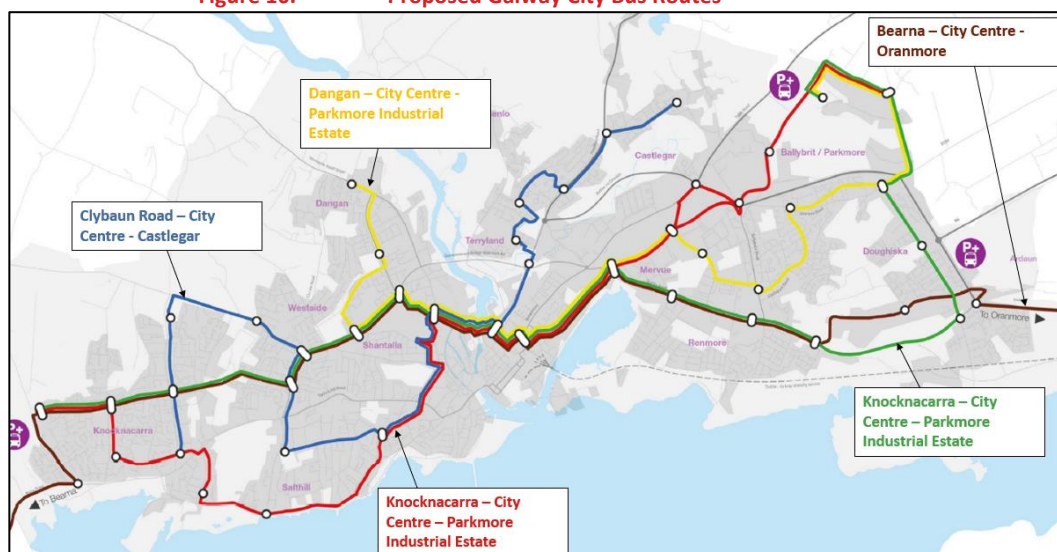
- 4.4.2 Galway City and surrounding environs attract commuters from across the region and it is therefore important to understand current and future proposed bus services provision, both within Galway City and the county more widely.
- 4.4.3 Currently 12 bus routes operate within Galway City, eight of which are funded through the Public Service Obligation operated by Bus Éireann, with four routes commercial services operated by City Direct. The frequency of bus services on a typical weekday varies between one and five an hour.

Figure 9. Existing Galway City Bus Routes (March 2021)



- 4.4.4 A cross-city network proposal has been developed as part of the Galway Transport Strategy known as the Galway BusConnects scheme. Proposed bus routes identified within the Galway Transport Strategy are shown in Figure 10, with annotations showing the origin and destination locations of each route. Whilst the proposed routes predominantly serve the city centre, one route (brown) extends to Bearna to the east and Oranmore to the west; this will allow interchanges onto local link bus routes operating further afield within the county.

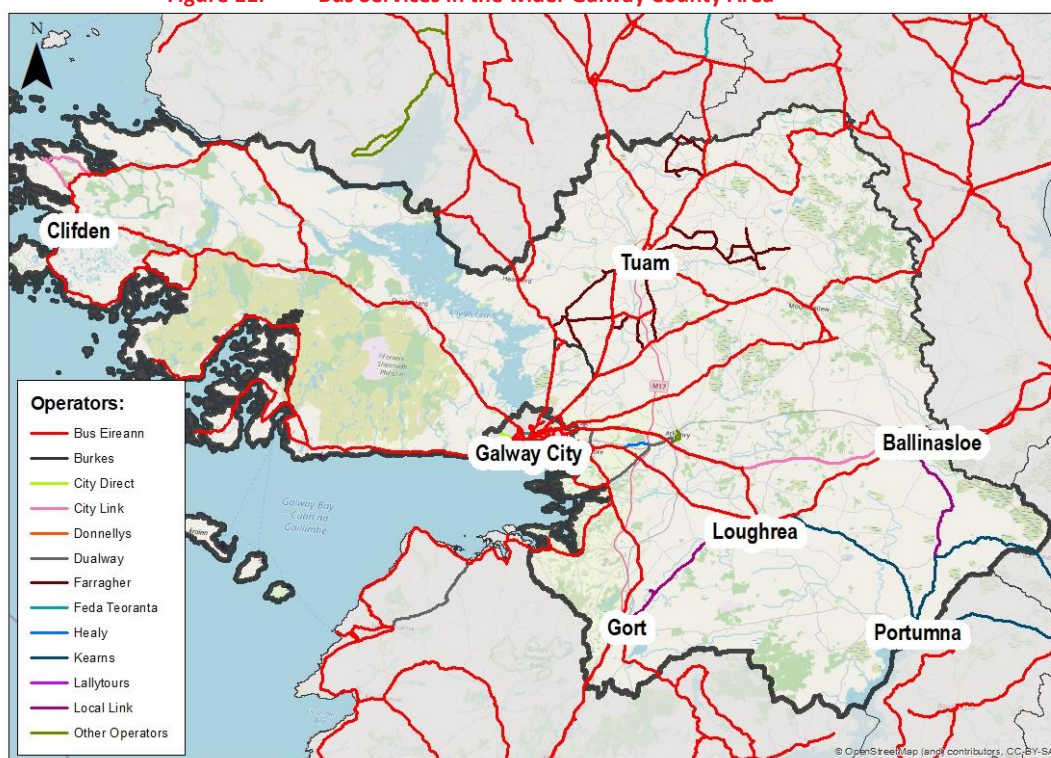
Figure 10. Proposed Galway City Bus Routes



Galway Transport Strategy

- 4.4.5 The proposed routes will provide enhanced service frequency and a cashless fare system. A network of Park & Ride sites are also proposed to be located on the periphery of the city to enable efficient interchange onto buses.
- 4.4.6 A number of bus operators run services throughout the county. These serve key destinations including Galway City, Tuam, Ballinasloe, Portumna, Loughrea, Gort and Clifden. The routes and general distribution of these services are shown in **Figure 11**.

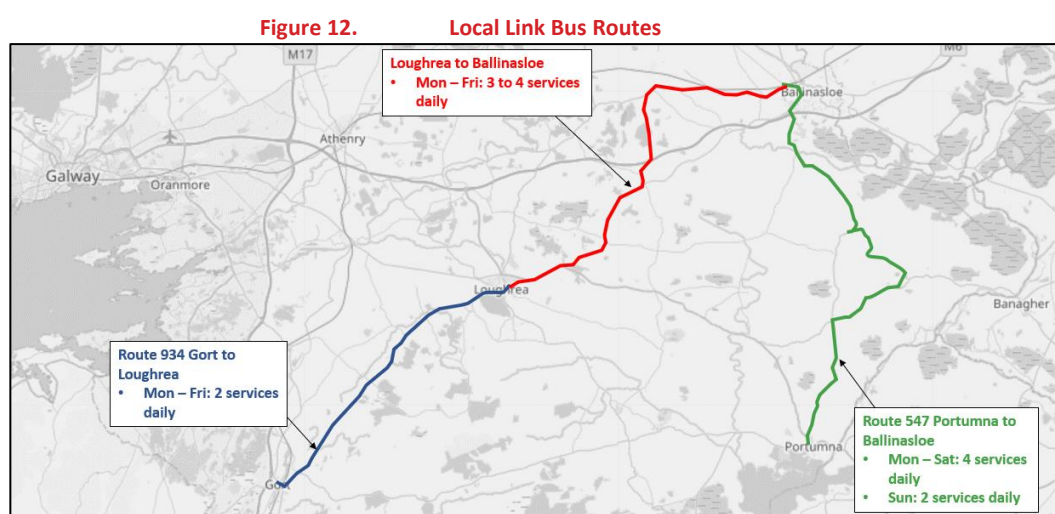
Figure 11. Bus Services in the wider Galway County Area



4.4.7 Transport for Ireland (TFI) Local Link provides local bus services to enable better links between rural transport and national bus / rail services throughout Ireland. Two types of local link service operate in Galway:

- **Timetabled Rural Services:** daily bus services operating on a fixed route and timetable; and
- **Door-to-Door Routes:** services that operate based on local demand that require pre-booking.

4.4.8 There are three regular rural services that operate within Galway, as detailed in [Figure 12](#). These provide connectivity between Portumna and Ballinasloe, Loughrea and Gort, and Loughrea and Ballinasloe.



OpenStreetMap (February 2021)

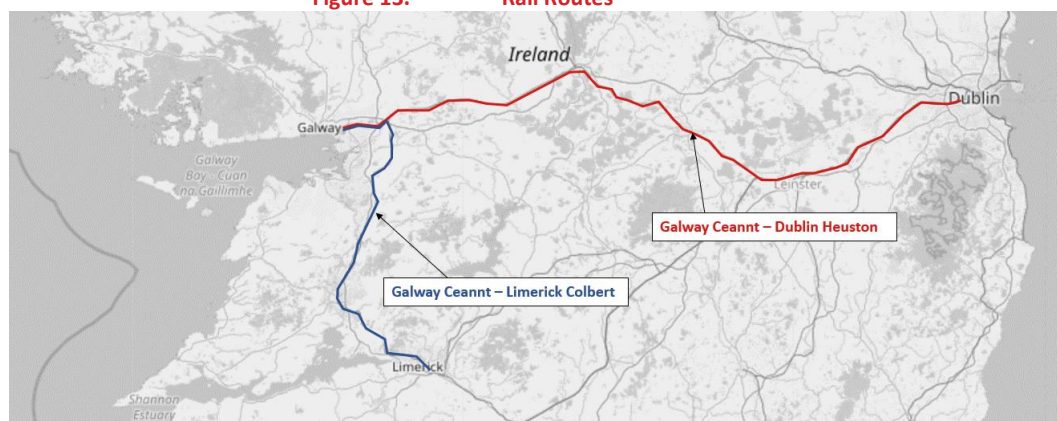
4.4.9 Door-to-door services provide connectivity to multiple areas within the county. All services are run on a demand responsive basis and so timetables are of a flexible nature.

4.4.10 A total of 53 door-to-door services operate within the county, with the majority providing a service on weekdays only. Full details of destinations served and service frequency is contained at [Appendix A](#).

Rail

4.4.11 Two rail routes operated by Iarnród Éireann run within the county, from Galway Ceannt to Dublin Heuston and from Galway Ceannt to Limerick Colbert. The routes of the two rail routes are shown in [Figure 13](#). Within the county, the Galway Ceannt to Dublin Heuston route serves Oranmore, Athenry, Attymon, Woodlawn and Ballinasloe, whilst the Galway Ceannt to Limerick Colbert serves Oranmore, Athenry, Craughwell, Ardahan and Gort.

Figure 13. Rail Routes



OpenStreetMap (March 2021)

- 4.4.12 Up to nine services operate in each direction between Galway and Dublin every weekday, with one service in the morning peak hour. It is noted that additional east-west services run that call at Athenry but not at Ballinasloe, bring total service numbers to 17 per day in each direction. Five services operate in each direction between Galway Ceannt and Limerick Colbert every weekday and Saturday, with four services operating in each direction on Sundays.

Rail Usage

- 4.4.13 The NTA National Rail Census Report (2019) presents data regarding rail patronage on routes across Ireland. **Table 3** details the daily total number of passengers boarding and alighting at stations within Galway, combining travel in either direction.

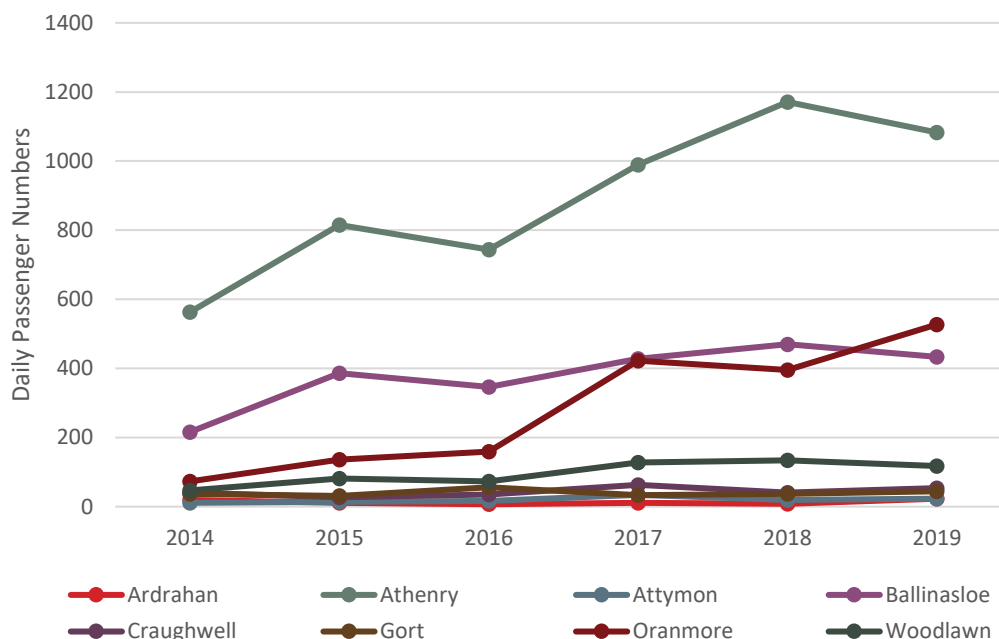
Table 3. Galway Rail Stations Usage (Boarding & Alighting)

STATION	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ardrahan	19	11	7	11	8	23
Athenry	563	815	744	989	1,171	1,083
Attymon	11	14	17	34	19	23
Ballinasloe	216	386	346	428	470	433
Craughwell	41	27	35	63	41	54
Gort	37	31	56	33	37	44
Oranmore	73	136	159	422	395	527
Woodlawn	47	81	73	128	134	118

NTA National Rail Census Report (2019)

- 4.4.14 This is summarised graphically in **Figure 14**.

Figure 14. Total Daily Passengers, Galway County Rail Stations



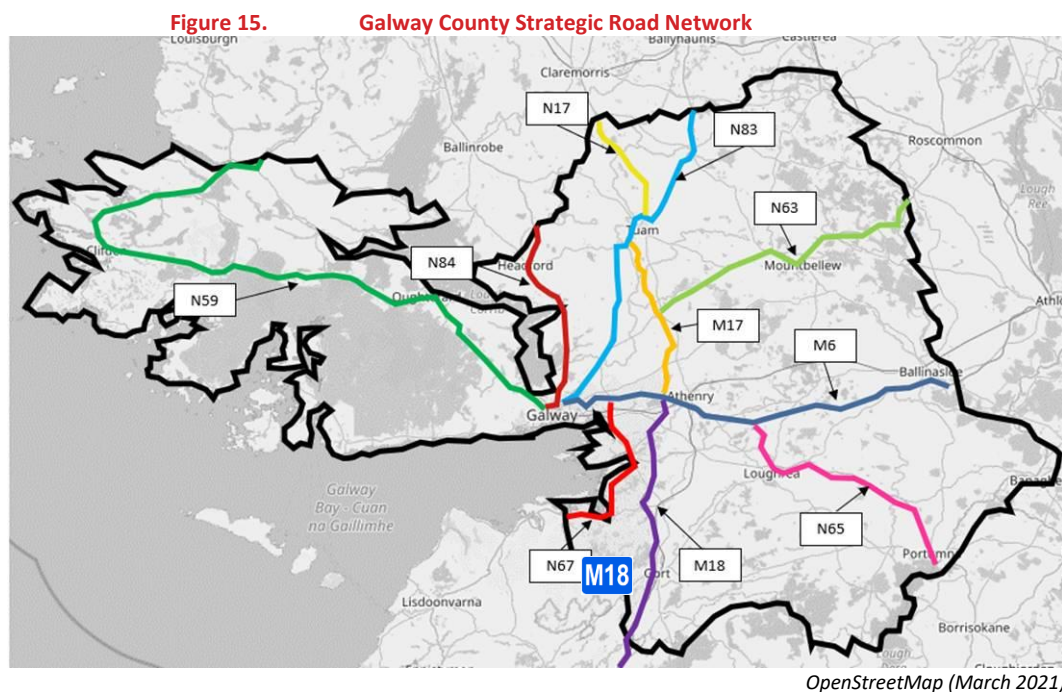
- 4.4.15 It can be seen that Athenry receives the highest total number of daily passengers boarding and alighting (1,083 in 2019). Usage of the station has grown significantly since 2014, with almost double the number of passengers boarding and alighting in 2019 compared to 2014.
- 4.4.16 In general, passenger numbers have steadily increased at the majority of stations, with notable increases also recorded at Ballinasloe, Oranmore and Woodlawn.
- 4.4.17 The low usage of some stations (such as Ardrahan, Attymon and Gort, which recorded daily passenger numbers below 50 in 2019) reflects the small population of towns served by these stations and limited draw from wider catchment areas.

4.5 Existing Road Network

- 4.5.1 Two motorways pass through the county. The M6 runs east to west, connecting the eastern fringes of Galway City with Ballinasloe, Athlone and Dublin. The M17/18 routes in a north-south direction through the county, connecting Tuam with Limerick to the south, passing approximately 16km to the east of Galway City. The M17 runs to the north of the M6 towards Tuam, before forming the N17 to the north of Tuam and continuing towards Sligo.
- 4.5.2 It is noted that an objective of National Strategic Outcome 2 (Enhanced Regional Accessibility) of the NPF is to upgrade sections of the N17 to the north of Tuam to facilitate development of the Atlantic Economic Corridor from Galway.
- 4.5.3 The secondary road network largely comprises radial routes from Galway City, including:
- **N59:** Connecting route between Galway City and the west of the county;
 - **N63:** East to west route running parallel to the M6 that links to the M17;
 - **N65:** Connects Loughrea, Portumna and the southeast of the county to the M6;
 - **N67:** Connects Galway City with coastal areas to the south;

- **N83:** Connects Galway City with Tuam and the Roscommon border; and
- **N84:** Connects Galway City with the north of the county and the Mayo border.

4.5.4 A map of the key road routes within the county is shown in **Figure 15**.

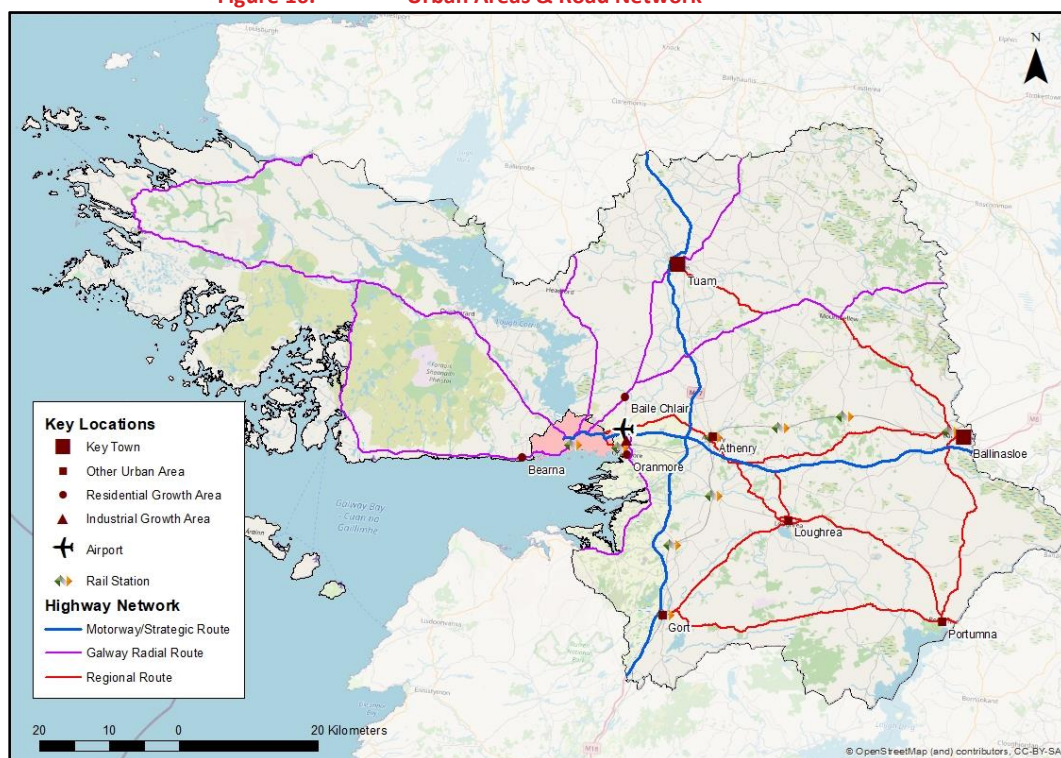


4.5.5 Regional routes provide connectivity to the key towns of Tuam and Ballinasloe alongside smaller urban areas including Oranmore, Gort, Loughrea and Portumna. Key regional routes include:

- R353 (Gort - Portumna);
- R380 (Gort - Loughrea);
- N65 (M6 - Loughrea - Portumna);
- R355 (Ballinasloe - Portumna);
- R358 / N63 / R332 (Tuam - Ballinasloe, via Mountbellew);
- R348 (Ballinasloe - Athenry – Oranmore - Galway City); and
- R336 (Coastal Route, Galway City - Tearmann Eanna).

4.5.6 **Figure 16** overleaf details main urban areas alongside the strategic road network.

Figure 16. Urban Areas & Road Network



Open Street Map with SYSTRA Annotations

4.6 Traffic Collision Data Analysis

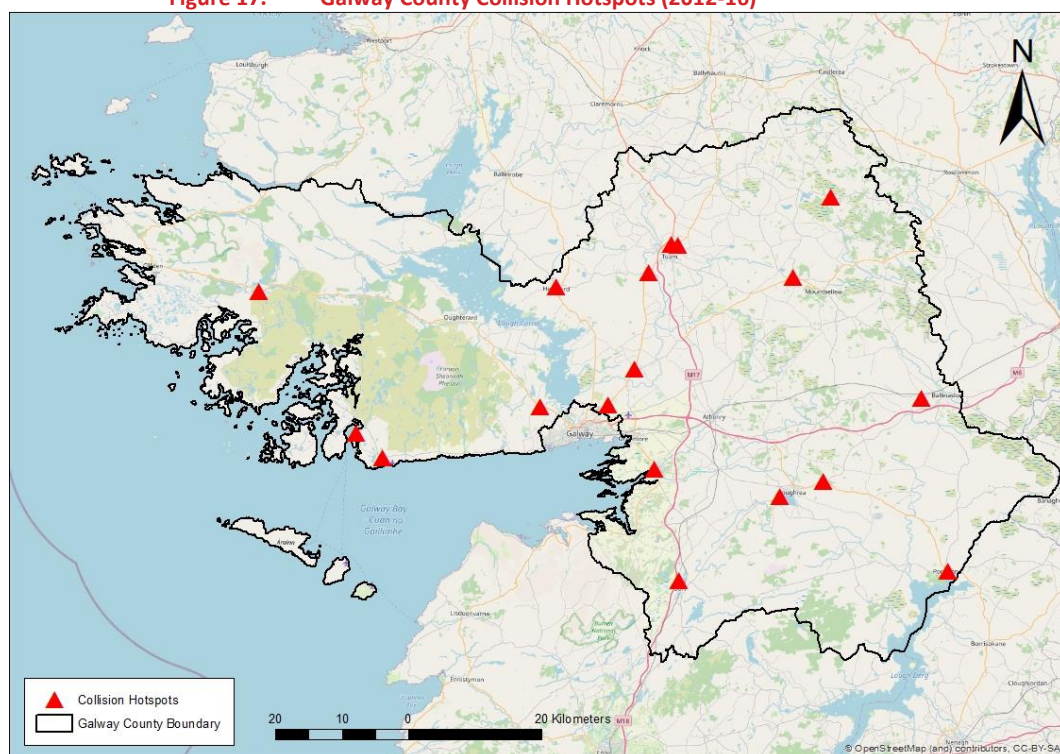
- 4.6.1 A collision data analysis exercise has been conducted to determine locations of accident clusters in the county, focusing on fatal and serious incidents on key routes, utilising data for the most recently available five year period (2012 to 2016) from the Road Safety Authority's Ireland Road Collisions dataset. This dataset incorporates all recorded collisions within both Galway County and Galway City.
- 4.6.2 A collision hotspot has been defined as multiple incidents concentrated on a particular junction or stretch of road, including at least one incident classed as serious or fatal.
- 4.6.3 **Table 4** provides an overview of collisions recorded within the county over the five year period. Almost 60 fatal incidents were recorded alongside approximately 150 incidents classed as serious and 1,400 classed as minor. This equates to an average of approximately 11 fatal, 30 serious and 278 minor incidents a year in Galway.

Table 4. Collision Data Summary (2012-16)

YEAR	MINOR	SERIOUS	FATAL
2012	294	24	18
2013	284	17	13
2014	282	34	5
2015	281	43	12
2016	249	31	9
Total	1,390	149	57

- 4.6.4 The RSA's Provisional Review of Fatal Collisions (2019) details a provisional figure of eight fatalities for the 2019 calendar year within Galway (City and County), representing an improvement on the annual average for the 2012-16 period.
- 4.6.5 The locations of identified clusters are shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Galway County Collision Hotspots (2012-16)



Open StreetMap (with SYSTRA annotations of Road Safety Authority data)

4.7 Census Data Review

- 4.7.1 Data from the 2016 Census has been extrapolated and analysed to understand mode share held for commuting and education-based trips within Galway County; this is summarised in

Table 5. It can be seen that private vehicle use is dominant for both commuter and education-based, with 90% and 65% of the respective trips made as a car or van driver or passenger.

Table 5. Galway County Commuting & Education Origin Trips Mode Share

MODE	WORK	EDUCATION
Foot	5%	11%
Cycle	1%	1%
Bus / Minibus / Coach	2%	22%
Rail	0%	1%
Motorcycle/Scooter	0%	0%
Car Driver	76%	5%
Car Passenger	4%	60%
Van	10%	0%
Other (incl. lorry)	1%	0%
Total	100%	100%

Central Statistics Office – 2016 Census Data

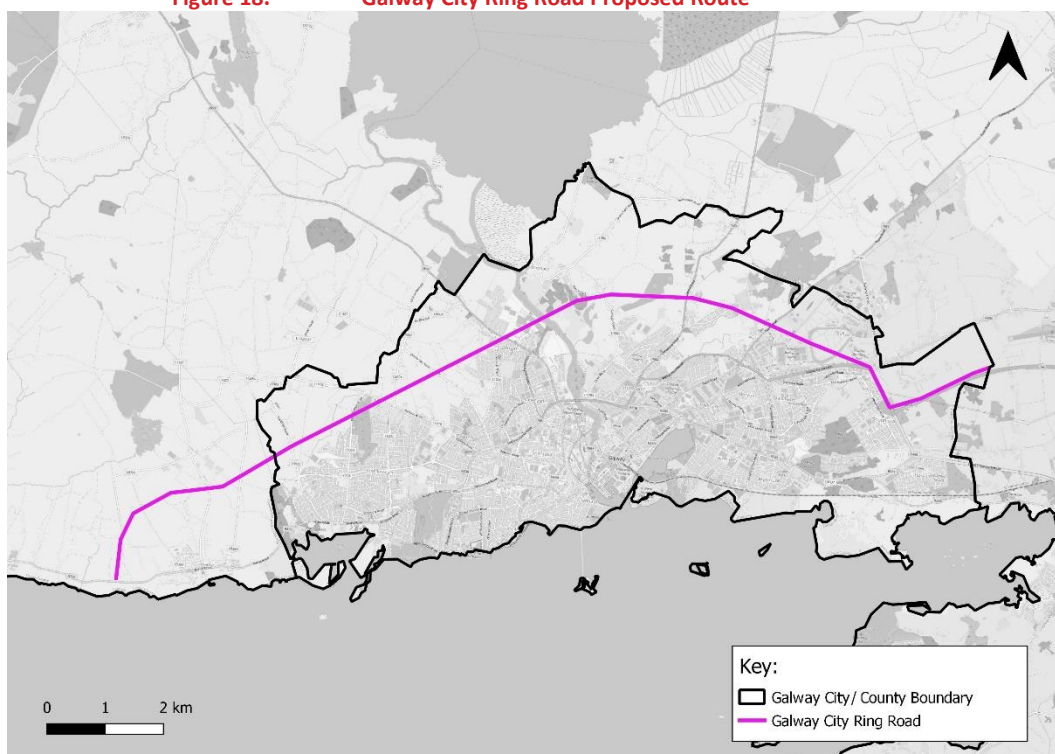
- 4.7.2 Only 2% of commuter trips are made by either bus or rail, whilst almost one quarter (23%) of education trips are made by public transport (the majority by bus). Such a relatively low mode share of public transport trips in Galway County is not unexpected, given the public transport network provides for limited journeys, especially for those not originating or terminating in Galway City, and does not offer competitive journey times in most instances when compared with private car journeys.

4.8 Future Development Considerations – Transport Infrastructure

Galway City Ring Road

- 4.8.1 The proposed Galway City Ring Road, developed by both the City and County Council, is currently at Phase 4 (Environmental Impact Assessment / Statutory Processes) of the National Roads Authority 2010 Project Management Guidelines.
- 4.8.2 Implementation of this scheme would improve vehicular access for trips between the eastern and western portions of Galway County and minimise the need to travel through the city itself, helping to alleviate congestion issues. The proposed route of the ring road is shown in red in [Figure 18](#).
- 4.8.3 The implementation of the Galway City Ring Road will have an impact on traffic volumes and distribution across the county more widely and therefore consideration is given to scenarios both with and without the Ring Road within the GCTPS.

Figure 18. Galway City Ring Road Proposed Route



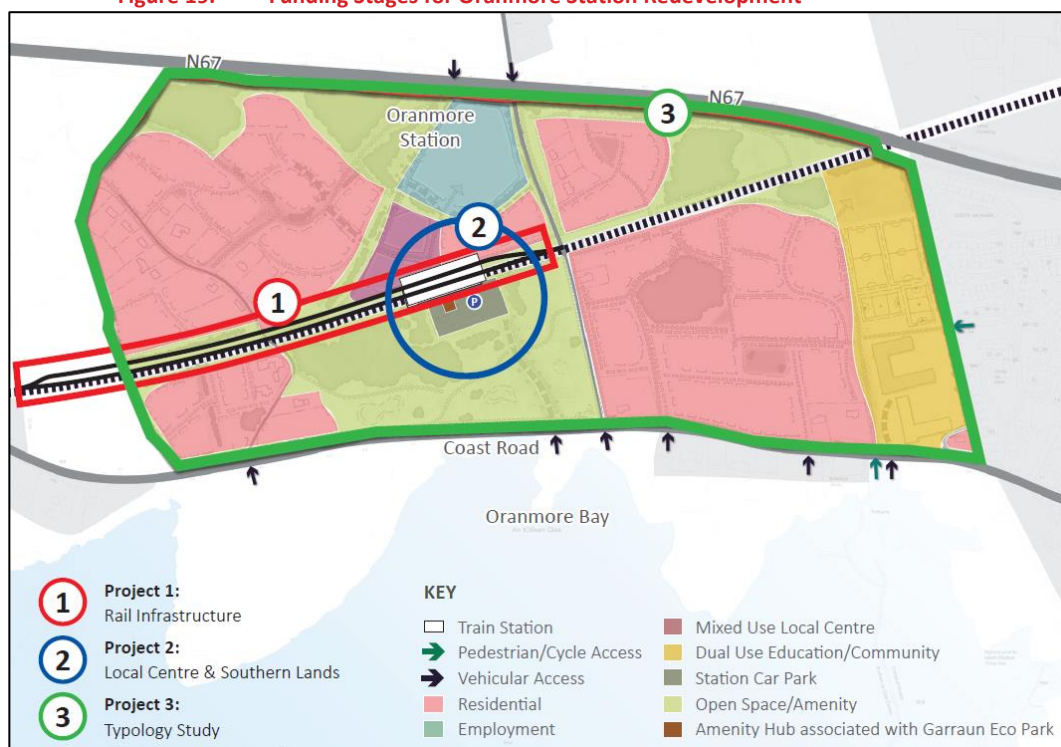
Open Street Map with SYSTRA Annotations

Oranmore Rail Station

4.8.4 The Council submitted an application to the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) in May 2020 to acquire funding for the redevelopment of Oranmore station. Land surrounding the station is subject to an Urban Framework Plan (UFP). Funding has been secured in March 2021 for the following, as shown in **Figure 19**:

- Infrastructure upgrades including a 1km passing loop, additional platform and associated station improvement infrastructure (€12 million);
- Design of a 'Local Centre' in the immediate vicinity of the station, including land to the south (€300,000); and
- A study on the Design Development of Typologies to implement the UFP (€75,000).

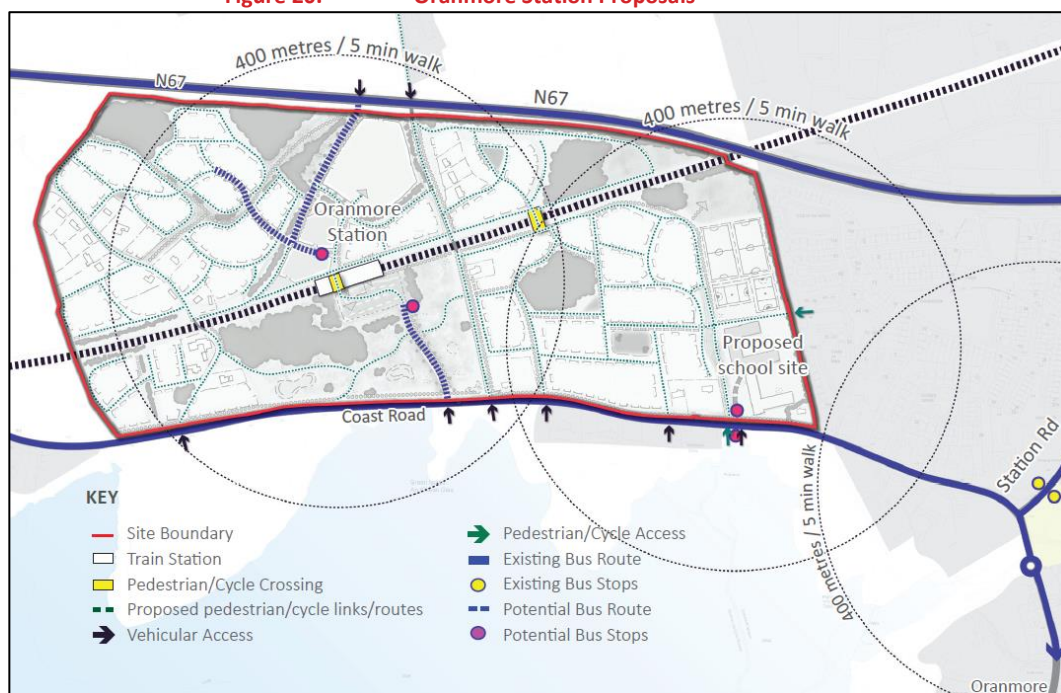
Figure 19. Funding Stages for Oranmore Station Redevelopment



UDRF Funding Application

- 4.8.5 The proposals seek to improve wider public transport connections, including through the provision of new bus stops, as identified in **Figure 20**. Proposed pedestrian and cycling infrastructure would provide a dominant focus on the safety of pedestrian and cyclist movement around the station. The addition of the passing loop enables the potential to increase service frequency on the Galway to Dublin route to four / five services per hour during peak periods.
- 4.8.6 An increase in rail services to approximate 12 minute intervals in peak periods equates to a 40% increase in rail capacity and would facilitate a 'turn up and go' service for commuters and other users.

Figure 20. Oranmore Station Proposals



UDRF Funding Application

4.9 Key Challenges

KEY CHALLENGES SUMMARY

Key challenges relating to current transport conditions, network coverage and travel patterns within Galway County that the GCTPS seeks to address include:

- Dominance of private car use for travel within the county, including for trips to and from Galway City and surrounding environs, which can result in instances of congestion;
- Limited public transport coverage within parts of the county, particularly within rural areas;
- Significant employment and residential growth is forecast across the county, which will place increasing demand and pressure on the transport network;
- Issues associated with road safety exist, with a number of traffic collision clusters and hotspots identified within the county; and
- A suite of transport interventions are proposed or committed for future implementation; it will be important to ensure these are brought forward to facilitate future development in a sustainable fashion.

5. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 This section sets out the method through which the GCTPS has been developed. This includes the development of Travel Corridors subject to travel demand, analysis of NTA model data to confirm anticipated growth in trips within the county, and identification of suitable measures and a process for their appraisal.

5.2 Approach & Methodology

- 5.2.1 The process used to inform the development of the GCTPS has included:
- Information gathering exercise to review relevant policy documents at a national, regional and local scale, enabling key aims and objectives to be identified (**Section 3**);
 - A review of the baseline transport network for vehicular, public transport and active modes to understand existing provision and consider opportunities and constraints for future proposals (**Section 4**); and
 - Definition of a series of Travel Corridors connecting key settlements within the county following the information gathering and sifting exercises. This was:
 - Data driven through an analysis of Origin – Destination data to understand existing demand and growth to 2028; and
 - Informed by an understanding of the key road and public transport links across the county.
- 5.2.2 Subsequently, an optioneering process has been undertaken for the identified Travel Corridors, informed by an identification of issues including safety considerations, congestion hotspots, route demand and existing infrastructure. Transport upgrades from previous studies are supported to help alleviate existing issues and from this a series of measures have been put forwards to promote the efficiency of the travel corridor.
- 5.2.3 Options have been appraised via a framework which provides a qualitative scoring assessment of interventions in line with objectives relevant to the travel corridors.
- 5.2.4 A summary of the option development process undertaken is shown in **Figure 21**.

Figure 21. Summary of Option Development Process



5.3 Summary of Future Development Proposals

Residential & Employment Growth

- 5.3.1 A summary of forecast employment and residential growth within Galway County is set out in **Table 6**, extracted from the N6 Galway City Ring Road, Request for Further Information Response. For information, corresponding data for Galway City is also provided.

Table 6. Forecast Residential & Employment Growth, 2016-2039

SCENARIO	2016 CENSUS	NTA / GCC NPF FORECASTS	
		TOTAL	% INCREASE FROM 2016
RESIDENTIAL			
2039 Galway County Population	179,390	218,459	+22%
2039 Galway City Population	78,668	121,741	+55%
EMPLOYMENT			
2039 Galway County Jobs	32,420	48,487	+50%
2039 Galway City Jobs	41,775	63,647	+52%

Transport Infrastructure Proposals

- 5.3.2 The Galway City Ring Road is currently at Phase 4 (Environmental Impact Assessment/ Statutory Processes) of the National Roads Authority 2010 Project Management Guidelines. The Coolagh Roundabout forms one end of the scheme and would provide a direct connection to the M6, helping to alleviate identified congestion hotspots. Consequently, the GCTPS recognises the importance of this scheme to improving connections across the county, minimising the need to travel through Galway City.
- 5.3.3 The previous Galway County Development Plan (2015-2021) identified two key transport proposals that have either been implemented or are in the process of being implemented – the Tuam Bypass and works on the section of N83 between Tuam and Dunmore. These are not considered in further detail within the strategy development.
- 5.3.4 The 57km M18 / M17 Gort to Tuam motorway scheme, identified within the Galway County Development Plan (2015-2021), was completed in September 2017, replacing the previous N17 & N18 routes. As this scheme has been fully implemented, there are no elements that are required to be carried over directly into the GCTPS.

5.4 Issues & Options Consultation

- 5.4.1 The Chief Executive's Report on Pre-Draft Public Consultation Stage of the Galway County Development Plan Review (October 2020) provides a detailed overview of public consultation

undertaken and responses received in relation to the preparation of the CDP. Submissions were received from a number of stakeholders, including the NTA and TII.

- 5.4.2 These submission have been taken into consideration, where appropriate, within the development of measures and recommendations set out within the GCTPS. A number of topics have been identified by the NTA and TII for consideration within the CDP, with key topics set out below as raised by each body respectively.

National Transport Authority

- Integration of integrated land use and transport planning, including consolidation of urban-generated development within existing urban areas;
- Phasing development to ensure it is accessible on foot, by cycle and by public transport, including through maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distances of their neighbourhood;
- Maintain and protect strategic transport function of the national road network;
- Application of maximum parking standards for non-residential development, and taking an area-wide approach to limit car parking provision;
- Clear explanation of how a reduction in car dependency will be promoted and provided for;
- Undertake an assessment of inter-settlement travel patterns;
- Recognise the importance of bus provision, including rural transport services;
- CDP development objectives to accord with the DOECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012); and
- Incorporate due consideration to guidance documents identified by the NTA, including National Cycle Manual (NCM) and Design Manual for Urban Roads (DMURS) when preparing the CDP.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland

- Allow the network of national roads to continue to serve their intended strategic role and cater for inter-urban and inter-regional transport requirements;
- Ensuring existing transport networks are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of service, safety, accessibility and connectivity to all users;
- Avoid policies and objectives that may lead to the creation of new access points from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads;
- Request to reference RSA and RSIA requirements in the Draft County Development Plan relating to development proposals with implications for the national road network;
- Give due consideration to TII Policy on Service Areas (August 2014), which identifies the need for an on-line service area to serve the M6/M17/M18 and identifies that TII in consultation with the Council will lead its development;

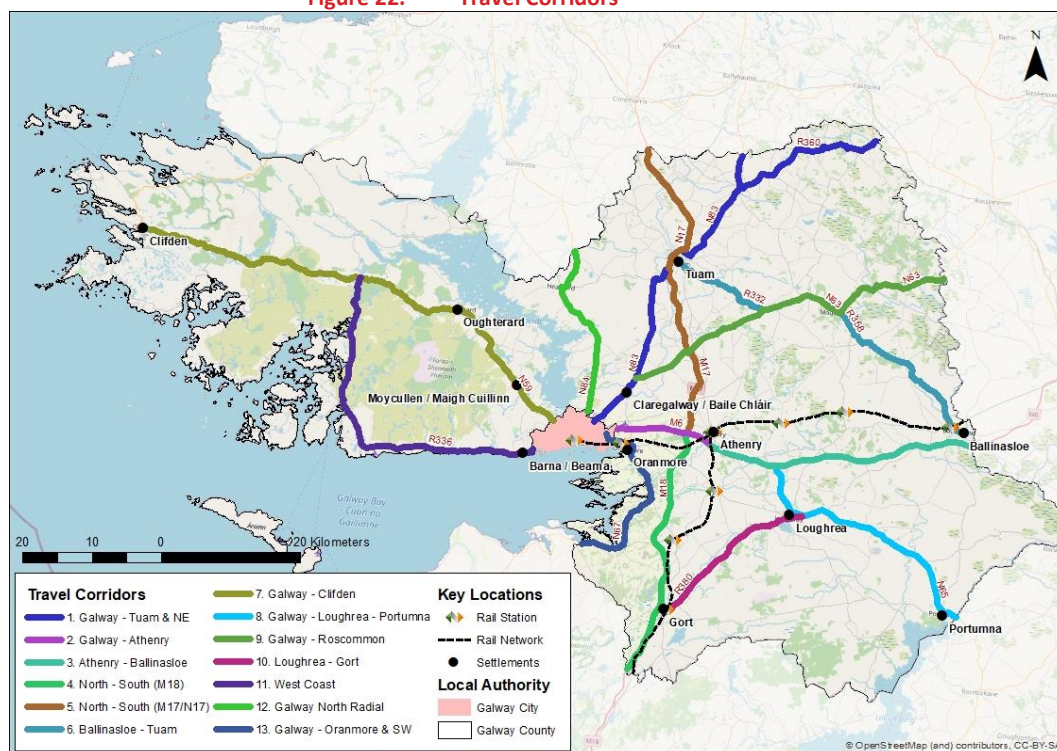
5.5 Travel Corridors Development

- 5.5.1 A total of 13 travel corridors have been defined through this process, summarised in [Table 7](#) and as shown in [Figure 22](#). Travel Corridors have considered both radial routes towards Galway as well as regional routes between key towns including Ballinasloe and Tuam.

Table 7. Travel Corridor Summary

#	CORRIDOR	KEY ROAD
1	Galway - Tuam & NE Galway	N83
2	Galway - Athenry	M6
3	Athenry - Ballinasloe	M6
4	North - South	M18
5	North - South	M17 / N17
6	Ballinasloe - Tuam	R332 / R358
7	Galway - Clifden	N59
8	Galway - Loughrea - Portumna	N65
9	Galway - Roscommon	N63
10	Loughrea - Gort	R380
11	West Coast	R336
12	Galway North Radial	N84
13	Galway - Oranmore & SW	N67

Figure 22. Travel Corridors



5.6 Future Year Model Data

- 5.6.1 A key element of importance to the corridor development process has been gaining an understanding of current and future travel patterns in terms of origins, destinations and key demand routes. As such, in order to understand the extent of trips that start and finish within the County (as opposed to through trips), outputs from the NTA's Western Regional Model (WRM) have been extrapolated and analysed.
- 5.6.2 The WRM presents data for a base and future year scenario, with a linear pattern of growth incorporated:
- **2016:** Baseline; and
 - **2039:** Future Year, aligned to the National Planning Framework growth forecast.
- 5.6.3 The model divides Galway County (as well as the remainder of the country) into a number of sectors, from which trips originating and finishing are identified. A total of 16 sectors are located within the county, including standalone sectors for key towns and larger sectors covering more rural areas of the county. Model sectors are shown in Figure 23 and summarised in Table 8 for information

Figure 23. NTA Model Sector Map

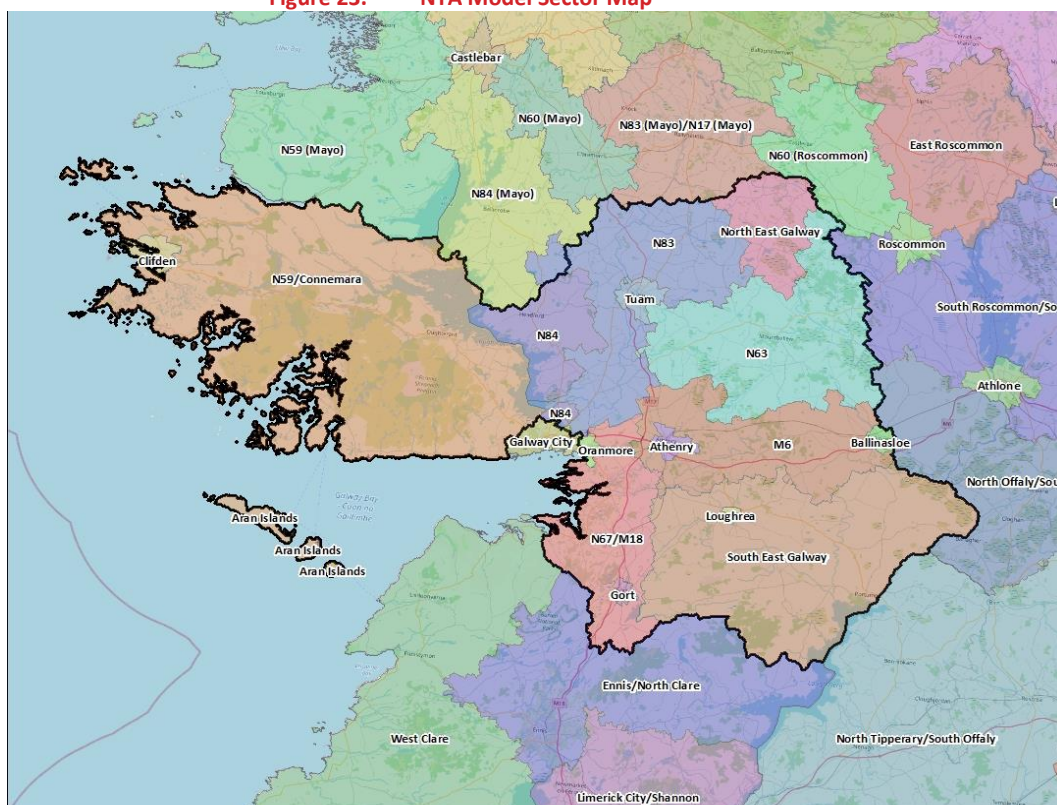


Table 8. NTA Model Sectors

MODEL SECTOR	
Galway City	Gort
Oranmore	N67 / M18
Clifden	Athenry
N59 / Connemara	M6
N84	Ballinasloe
Tuam	N63
N83	North East Galway
South East Galway	Loughrea

- 5.6.4 Data from the 2016 model has been used to establish baseline trends, with patterns of growth on particular corridors confirmed through comparison against the 2039 model. To ensure reported growth is representative for the lifespan of the County Development Plan, a factoring process has been undertaken to calculate anticipated trip demand for 2028, the end year of the CDP, as shown in **Figure 24**.

Figure 24. Model Data Factoring Process



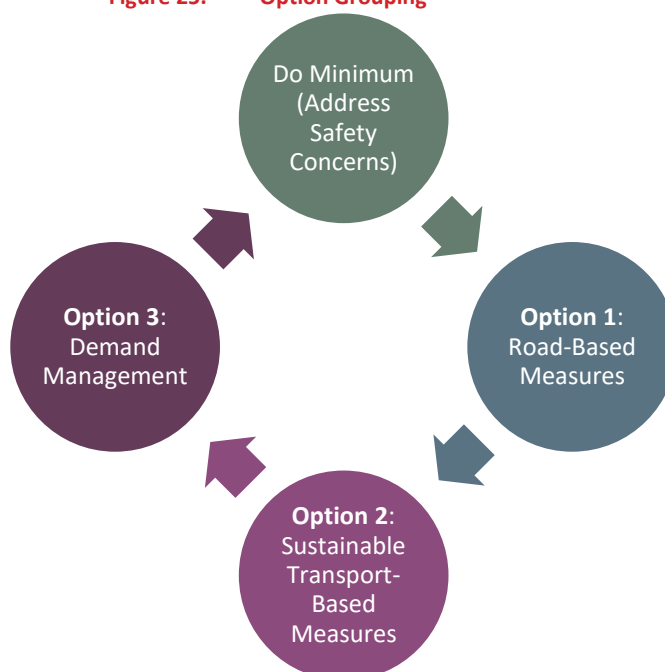
5.6.5 Full analysis of the model data and factoring process undertaken is contained at [Appendix B](#) for information.

5.7 Option Identification

5.7.1 Optioneering exercises have been undertaken to respond to issues identified for each individual Travel Corridor. The optioneering process seeks to develop measures to address issues identified during the information sifting and data gathering stages. This has been augmented by local knowledge of constraints and opportunities along the corridor.

5.7.2 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been developed to address the issues identified for each individual Travel Corridor. Measures have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in [Figure 25](#).

Figure 25. Option Grouping



Do Minimum (Address Safety Concerns)

5.7.3 This option considers schemes and measures that seek to address identified **Safety Concerns** within the Travel Corridor only. This recognises the importance of reducing the risk of collisions for all road users as a key priority for the Council, as set out within the Galway

County Development Plan which notes that the continued safeguarding and development of the public road network is key in ensuring safety of road users (Section 6.5.3).

Option 1: Road-Based Measures

- 5.7.4 This option incorporates measures that are road-based, with aims of improving conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of **congestion** and **delay**.
- 5.7.5 However, as detailed within **Sections 6 to 11**, the GCTPS does not advocate the implementation of measures that seek to manage demand for vehicles alone; rather, it is important that a range of measures including those focused on sustainable travel and demand management are considered and implemented to support NPF Strategic Outcomes, UN Sustainable Development Goals and RSES objectives.

Option 2: Sustainable Transport-Based Options

- 5.7.6 Sustainable travel incorporates the movement of people or goods through public transport, walking and cycling, with an overall goal to facilitate modal shift in favour of public transport and active modes. An increase in the proportion of trips made by active travel modes can result in health benefits and contribute to addressing climate challenges.
- 5.7.7 It is recognised that the Council, whilst not responsible for the provision of all sustainable transport networks, plays a role both in the development of efficient transport networks and planning for the future transport needs of residents and workers of Galway.
- 5.7.8 This option encompasses a range of measures targeted at increasing the proportion of trips made by public transport, on foot and by cycle.

Option 3: Demand Management

- 5.7.9 Traffic Demand Management covers a range of measures aimed at reducing the adverse impacts of car use and promoting the use of sustainable travel modes. It incorporates measures that seek to alter travel patterns and behaviour, with aims of reducing the length and number of single occupancy car trips, reducing the need to travel and encouraging sustainable travel choices.
- 5.7.10 Option 3 also incorporates selected measures from the Do Minimum (Safety), Option 1 (Road-Based) and Option 2 (Sustainable Transport-Based) categories that provide the greatest benefit for each individual Travel Corridor.

5.8 Option Comparison & Assessment

- 5.8.1 An options assessment matrix has been developed for the purposes of comparing and appraising different approaches and measures. The matrix is based on the five key objectives set out in the NPF's Common Assessment Framework (CAF). These are:

- Economic Objectives;
- Safety Objectives;
- Environmental Objectives;
- Integration Objectives; and
- Social Inclusion / Accessibility Objectives.

- 5.8.2 Within each objective, two sub-objectives have been defined which are aligned with the aims and wider policy objectives of the County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- 5.8.3 Options have been assessed on a qualitative scale using the following categories:
- **Strong Positive:** the measures within the options would contribute significantly to the aims of the objective in question;
 - **Slight Positive:** the measures within the options would make a small contribution toward the aims of the objective in question;
 - **Neutral:** the measures within the options would not affect the stated objective in a material manner;
 - **Slight Negative:** the measures within the options would conflict to a small degree with the aims of the objective in question; and
 - **Strong Negative:** the measures within the options would conflict significantly with the aims of the objective in question.
- 5.8.4 Use of this scale allows for the comparison of options both in individual corridors and between different corridors, so that the relative 'strength' of option packages can be compared.
- 5.8.5 It also allows for an assessment of 'cumulative' expected impacts and benefits across the county for policies and interventions for different modes. This has enabled identification of any additions or modifications within the modal strategies (**Sections 7 to 10**) to enhance their effectiveness and the linkages between corridor preferred strategies.
- 5.8.6 The assessment also considers how well each of the option packages responds to the corridor-specific challenges which have been identified through assessment of the baseline transport information and policy review.
- 5.8.7 An example CAF appraisal table is presented in **Table 9**, this covers Travel Corridor 3 (Athenry to Ballinasloe), further detail of which is set out in **Section 6**.

Table 9. Example Option Assessment Matrix

CAF THEME	OBJECTIVE	DO MIN	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
Economic	Support for economic activity / trips	Slight Positive	Slight Positive	Slight Positive	Strong Positive
	Alignment with County economic policies	Neutral	Slight Positive	Strong Positive	Strong Positive
Safety	Addresses known existing safety issues	Slight Positive	Neutral	Slight Positive	Slight Positive
	Addresses vulnerable network users	Slight Positive	Neutral	Slight Positive	Slight Positive

CAF THEME	OBJECTIVE	DO MIN	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
Environmental	Impacts to vehicle emissions	Neutral	Slight Negative	Slight Positive	Slight Positive
	Physical impacts to sensitive environments	Neutral	Slight Negative	Neutral	Slight Negative
Other	Support to existing and planned growth	Slight Positive	Slight Positive	Strong Positive	Strong Positive
	Support for integration between modes / trip linking	Neutral	Neutral	Slight Positive	Slight Positive
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Impacts to those with disabilities	Neutral	Neutral	Slight Positive	Slight Positive
	Effects on access to travel choices	Neutral	Neutral	Strong Positive	Strong Positive

6. CORRIDOR ASSESSMENTS

6.1 Overview

- 6.1.1 This section of the GCTPS provides a summary of the assessments and appraisals that have been undertaken for the thirteen Travel Corridors detailed in **Section 5**. Assessments have been informed by the policy review and baseline data analysis work detailed in **Sections 3 and 4**, with the resultant measures identified and appraised utilised to develop the modal-specific strategies detailed in **Sections 7 to 10**.
- 6.1.2 Standalone Technical Notes have been prepared for each Travel Corridor, providing a greater level of detail for the context, issues and options for each corridor. These are contained at **Appendix C** for information and:
- Summarise the Travel Corridor and discuss its relationship with the wider road and public transport network;
 - Present a summary of identified congestion hotspots, collision clusters, vehicle flows and demand;
 - Detail key national, regional and local policy context relevant to the Travel Corridor;
 - Outline identified issues and constraints which aim to be addressed through the optioneering process;
 - Identify measures to improve the efficiency of travel via the Travel Corridor with a focus on promoting sustainable mode shift and reducing congestion;
 - Outline the qualitative appraisal used to sift the longlist of identified measures; and
 - Summarise recommended options and measures for the Travel Corridor.

6.2 Town-Based Measures

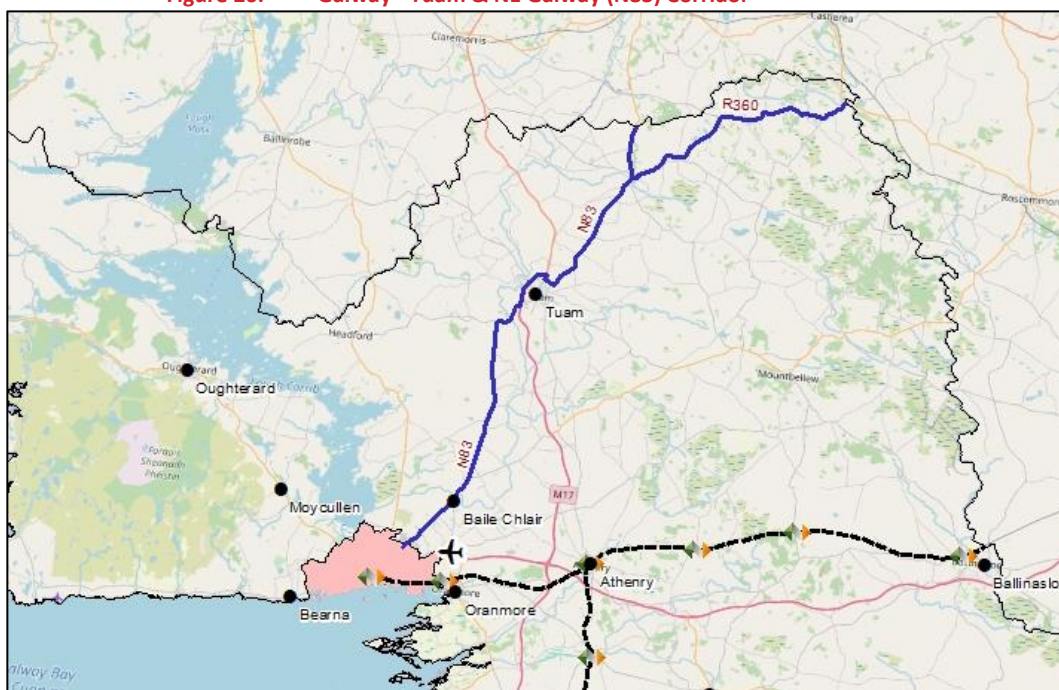
- 6.2.1 It is noted that, in addition to corridor-specific measures that look to address identified issues, a number of town-specific interventions have been developed. In a number of cases, such interventions are relevant to multiple corridors, and so are not detailed as part of the Corridor Assessments within this section.
- 6.2.2 For example, the introduction of an integrated multi-modal transport hub in Tuam would provide direct benefit for the following Travel Corridors:
- **Corridor 1:** Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83);
 - **Corridor 5:** North - South (M17 / N17); and
 - **Corridor 6:** Ballinasloe - Tuam (R332 / R358).
- 6.2.3 **Section 11** provides a further level of detail regarding measures that are specific and relevant to individual towns.

6.3 Corridor 1: Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83)

Overview

- 6.3.1 The Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 26**, links Galway City with the key town of Tuam and the northeastern areas of the county, continuing to the border with Roscommon. It incorporates the N83 alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.3.2 Prior to the opening of the M17 motorway in September 2017, the section of N83 between Galway City and Tuam was classified as the N17.
- 6.3.3 The Travel Corridor is a radial route from Galway City. It generally comprises of a wide single carriageway in both directions, with some stretches dualled. Bus lanes are provided on the north and southbound approaches to Baile Chláir. The carriageway width narrows through Baile Chláir and to the north of Tuam.
- 6.3.4 A frequent bus service operates between Tuam and Galway City during peak hours to serve commuter demand, with 26% of trips originating in Tuam and ending in Galway City made by public transport.
- 6.3.5 The Travel Corridor is identified as a high demand corridor, with a high proportion of trips to Galway City in the morning peak from Tuam and the neighbouring rural zone. Growth forecasts indicate an 11% increase in demand of trips originating within the county using this corridor.

Figure 26. Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.3.6 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in [Figure 27](#).

Figure 27. Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Issues Identified



- 6.3.7 Five traffic collision clusters have been identified on the Travel Corridor. These have incorporated five fatal, five serious and 31 minor incidents. In the event that further collision patterns should emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures will require additional prioritisation.
- 6.3.8 Congestion hotspots exist, particularly on approaches to Galway City in the standard network morning peak. These include at the junction with the R381, towards Parkmore and the junction with the N6, at intersections of the N83 and M17 at the Tuam Bypass, and on approaches to and within Dunmore.
- 6.3.9 There is a need to respond to growth within Tuam, and additional demand for trips towards Galway City in the morning peak.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.3.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at [Appendix C](#).

Option Appraisal

- 6.3.11 The assessment of options for the Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Travel Corridor has indicated that there are multiple ways for the County to address expected changes in travel patterns and demand for travel associated with the growth detailed in the County Development Plan.

6.3.12 Options focused on road transport and sustainable measures have been examined; however, given the variety of trip types which are facilitated by the Travel Corridor and the need to balance local development with the status of this corridor within the national road network, the appraisal process has confirmed a combined approach to be the most likely to succeed in delivering against identified issues and wider policy objectives.

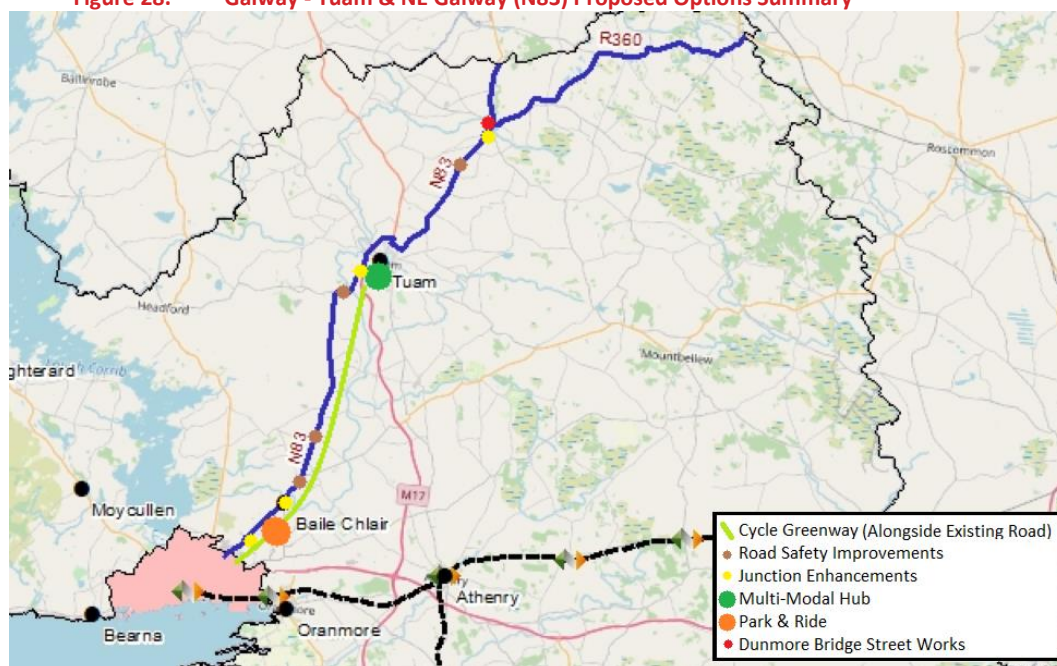
Proposed Options

6.3.13 Options proposed for the Travel Corridor are outlined in **Table 10** and **Figure 28**. These include a multi-modal hub in Tuam, potential junction improvements to facilitate efficient use of the road network, safety-led improvements to existing road and transport infrastructure, creation of, and additions to, cycle Greenway facilities on and adjacent to the N83, and support for a Park & Ride facility proposed through the Galway Transport Strategy.

Table 10. Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Multi-Modal Hub in Tuam	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety); potential to increase visitors within Tuam, increase retail spend and increase dwell times.
Potential Junction Improvements (incl. facilitating improvements for public transport, pedestrian / cyclist movement whilst managing vehicle capacity, bus priority, junction upgrades)	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor. Improvement works at Bridge Street in Dunmore to reduce general vehicle flows through Dunmore and enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
Cycle Greenway Facilities on / adjacent to N83	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; benefits to bus journey times (through the removal of cyclists from bus lanes which can reduce bus speeds and increase delay).
Support for Park & Ride Facility	Reduced congestion upon approach and within Galway City by reduction of private vehicle trips improving journey times.

Figure 28. Galway - Tuam & NE Galway (N83) Proposed Options Summary

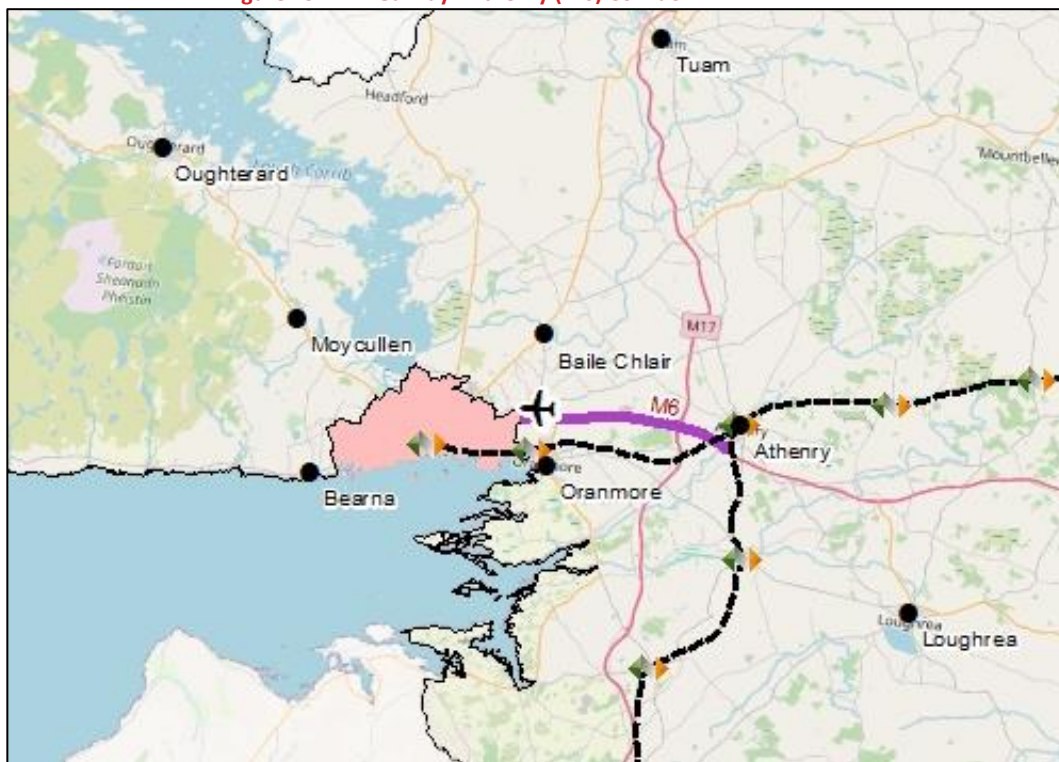


6.4 Corridor 2: Galway - Athenry (M6)

Overview

- 6.4.1 The Galway - Athenry (M6) Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 29**, incorporates the section of the M6 motorway running between Galway City and Athenry, alongside connecting routes and public transport services. It is a national strategic route, starting at the Coolagh Roundabout and running eastwards for approximately 12km to the junction with the M17/M18.
- 6.4.2 The M6 and N6 consist of two lanes plus a hard shoulder in each direction. Due to its classification as a motorway, there are no facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, with bus stops not directly located on the route.
- 6.4.3 Frequent rail services operate between Athenry, Oranmore and Galway City during peak hours and throughout the day serving commuter demand, with 21% of trips originating in Athenry and ending in Galway City made by public transport.
- 6.4.4 The Galway - Athenry (M6) Travel Corridor is a high demand corridor, with a large proportion of trips made to Galway City in the morning peak from Athenry and neighbouring rural zones. Trips starting in Athenry and finishing in Galway City are expected to grow by approximately 15% by all modes.

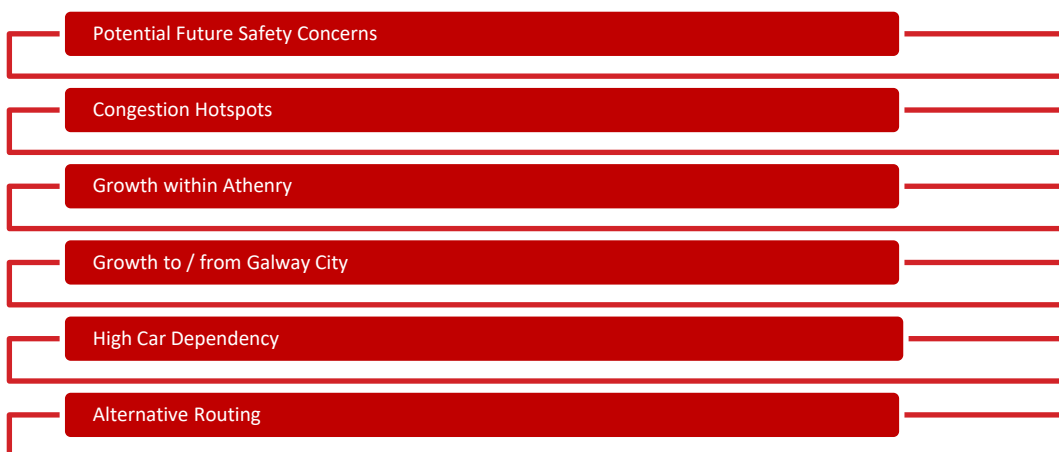
Figure 29. Galway - Athenry (M6) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.4.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 30**.

Figure 30. Galway - Athenry (M6) Issues Identified



- 6.4.6 No accident clusters have been identified along the Travel Corridor. However, should projected growth to/from Athenry result in an increase in collisions this will be monitored and safety measures will be prioritised along this corridor.
- 6.4.7 Congestion can occur at the westbound approach to the Coolagh Roundabout as well as on approaches to the M6 from Athenry via the R348 and R347.

6.4.8 There is a need to respond to additional demand forecast through a growth in trips towards Galway City in the morning peak, including an increase in journeys to Oranmore, as well as growth within Athenry.

6.4.9 Despite relatively efficient public transport connections, convenience of private vehicle travel, limited congestion and availability of parking within Galway City results in a challenge to encourage substantial shifts towards sustainable modes for longer commuter journeys.

Longlist of Measures

6.4.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at [Appendix C](#).

Option Appraisal

6.4.11 There are a number of ways in which the Council can potentially address projected changes in travel patterns and demand associated with forecast growth in use of the Galway - Athenry (M6) Travel Corridor.

6.4.12 It is considered that the variety of trip types facilitated by the Travel Corridor, alongside the need to balance development with the status of the M6 as part of the national road network, result in a combined approach being optimal for delivering against identified issues and wider policy objectives.

Proposed Options

6.4.13 A summary of proposed measures for the Galway - Athenry (M6) Travel Corridor is provided in [Table 11](#) and [Figure 31](#) below.

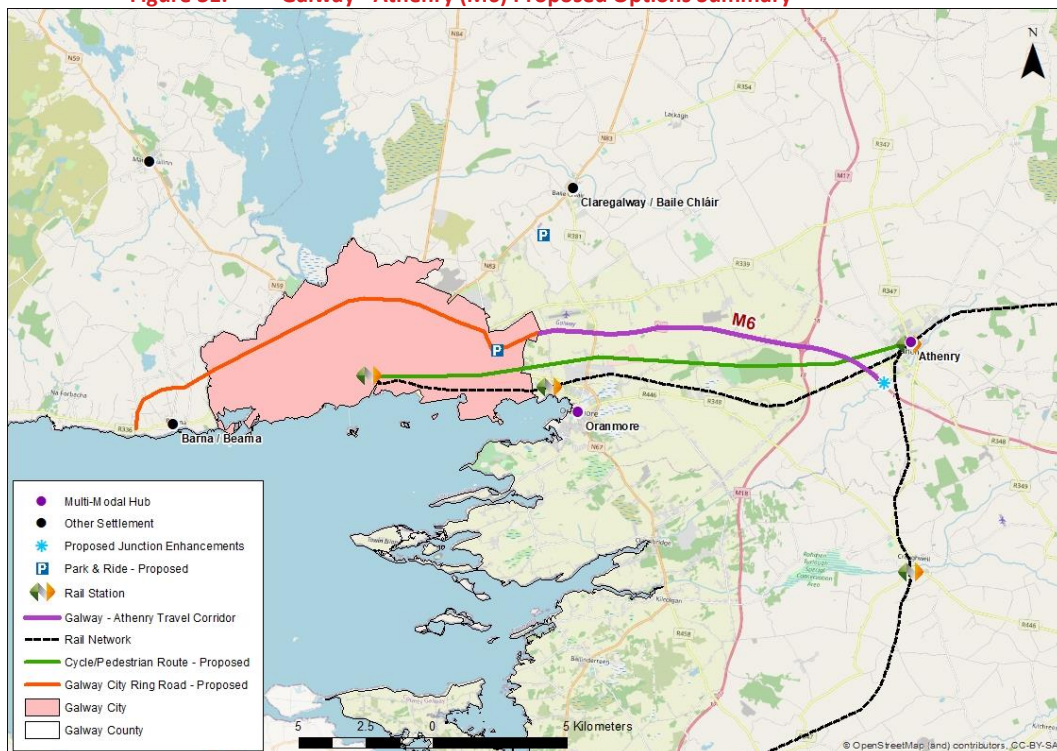
Table 11. Galway-Athenry (M6) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Multi-modal hub at Athenry and Oranmore	Required to increase attractiveness of public transport use and allow for integrated interchange between modes.
Cycle Greenway between Galway and Athenry (extends to Athlone)	Improved connectivity for cyclists and wider rural settlements alongside safety improvements through provision of off-road cycle greenway.
Park and Ride at Ardaun	Reduced congestion upon approach and within Galway City by reduction of private vehicle trips improving journey times.
Galway City Ring Road	Reduce congestion on approach and through Galway City by traffic diversion around the City improving journey times.

Review of congestion hotspots

Alleviate congestion to and from Athenry to access the M6.

Figure 31. Galway - Athenry (M6) Proposed Options Summary



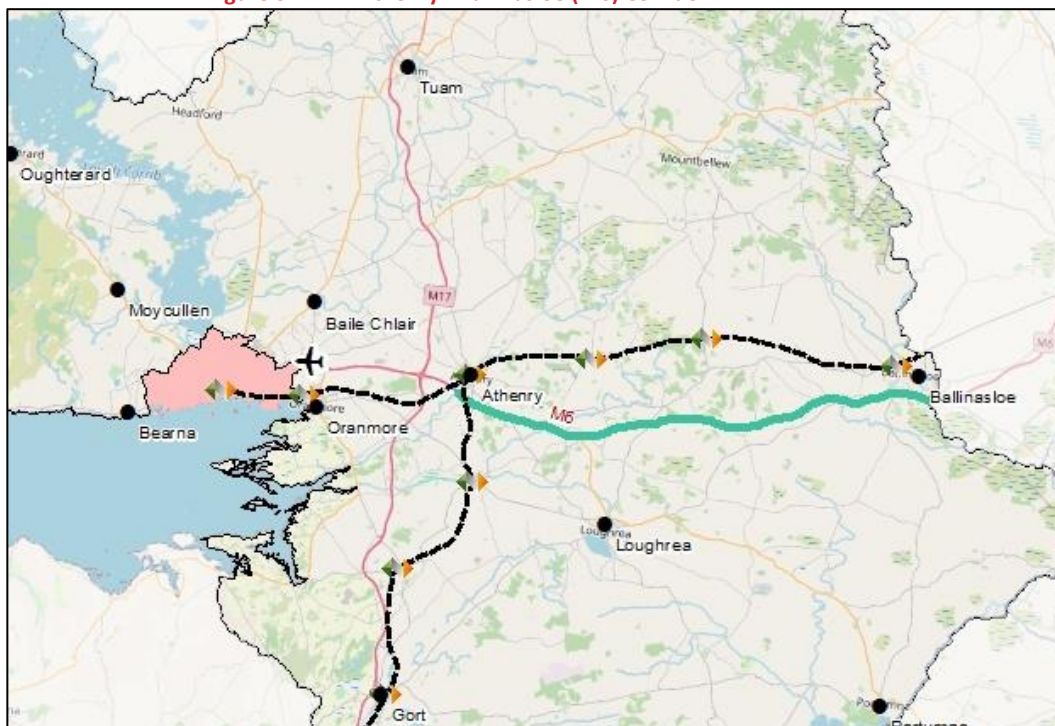
Open Street Map with SYSTRA Annotations

6.5 Corridor 3: Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6)

Overview

- 6.5.1 The Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 32**, links the towns of Athenry and Ballinasloe, continuing eastwards towards Dublin and westwards towards Galway City. It incorporates the section of the M6 running between Athenry and Ballinasloe, alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.5.2 The Travel Corridor is a national strategic route crossing the county in an west to east direction. The section of M6 that forms part of the Travel Corridor starts at its western end at Junction 18 and runs eastwards for approximately 45km to the Galway / Roscommon border.
- 6.5.3 A frequent service provides rail connectivity between Ballinasloe and Athenry to Oranmore and Galway City during peak hours and throughout the day; this accommodates a proportion of commuter travel demand.
- 6.5.4 The Travel Corridor is considered a high demand corridor, as confirmed through TII Traffic Flow and NTA Model data. Growth of between 10% and 15% in the number of trips using this corridor is forecast.

Figure 32. Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.5.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 33**.

Figure 33. Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Issues Identified



- 6.5.6 Whilst no collision clusters have been identified on the M6 itself, it is important that should future patterns emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures are prioritised.
- 6.5.7 Localised congestion can occur at the westbound exit at Junction 16 of the M16, for traffic routing onto the N65 southwards towards Loughrea.
- 6.5.8 There is a need to respond to growth within Ballinasloe, growth in trips to and from Ballinasloe from surrounding rural areas, and forecast growth in trips to and from Galway City from the eastern end of the Travel Corridor.

- 6.5.9 Despite comparatively good public transport connections compared to other parts of the county, convenience of private vehicle travel and limited congestion can result in challenges in promoting and encouraging mode shift towards sustainable choices.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.5.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at [Appendix C](#).

Option Appraisal

- 6.5.11 The assessment of options for the Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Travel Corridor has identified multiple ways for the Council to address expected changes in travel patterns and demand for travel associated with the growth detailed in the County Development Plan.
- 6.5.12 The variety of trip types facilitated by the Travel Corridor and the need to balance local development with the status of this corridor within the national road network point to a combined approach as being the most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives.

Proposed Options

- 6.5.13 A summary of the proposed options for the Travel Corridor is shown in [Table 12](#) and [Figure 34](#).

Table 12. Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Multi-Modal Hub in Athenry and Ballinasloe	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety); potential to increase visitors within Athenry and Ballinasloe.
Support Rail Dualling (between Ballinasloe, Athenry & Galway City)	Increased service frequency and journey times, enhanced public transport offer along the Travel Corridor.
Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor.
Galway City Ring Road	Whilst not within the Travel Corridor itself, has potential to benefit vehicle flow and bus journey times, reducing journey times for trips utilising the M6 between Athenry and Ballinasloe for travel to and from Galway City and improving the draw of travel by public transport.
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl.	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable

pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)

road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.

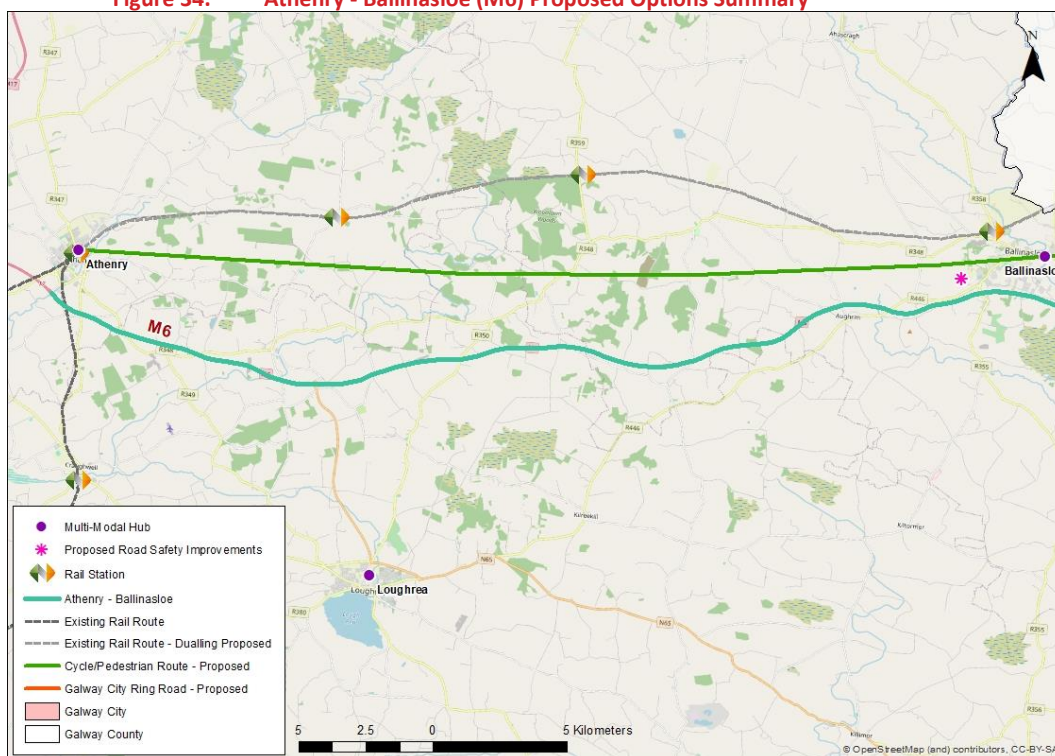
National Cycle Route between Dublin, Ballinasloe, Galway City and Clifden

Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; benefits to bus journey times (through the removal of cyclists from bus lanes which can reduce bus speeds and increase delay).

Support for Park & Ride Provision (e.g. near M6 / N6 junction at Ardaun)

Reduced congestion upon approach and within Galway City by reduction of private vehicle trips improving journey times, wider benefits to Travel Corridor.

Figure 34. Athenry - Ballinasloe (M6) Proposed Options Summary



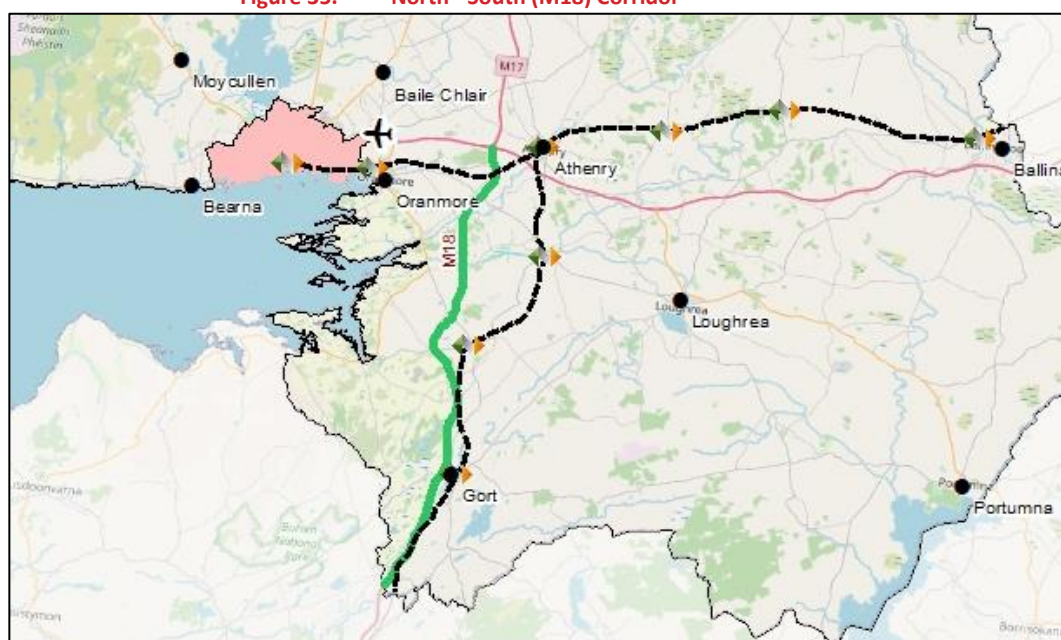
6.6 Corridor 4: North - South (M18)

Overview

- 6.6.1 The North - South (M18) Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 35**, links the key towns of Athenry to the north with Gort before continuing south to the border with County Clare. It incorporates the M18 motorway alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.6.2 It is a national strategic route crossing Galway County in an north to south direction. The section of M18 that forms part of the Travel Corridor starts at its northern end at Junction 18 (M6/M17) and runs southwards for approximately 40km to the Galway / Clare border, to the south of Gort.

- 6.6.3 The M18 motorway consists of two lanes plus a hard shoulder in each direction. As the entire Travel Corridor route is classified as a motorway, there are no facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, whilst bus stops are not directly located on the route.
- 6.6.4 A frequent service provides rail connectivity between Gort and Athenry with onward connectivity available Oranmore and Galway City during peak hours and throughout the day; this accommodates a proportion of commuter travel demand.
- 6.6.5 The North - South (M18) Travel Corridor is a high demand route, with a noticeable morning peak pattern of trips made from the rural areas along the corridor (model sector M18 / N67) to Gort and to Galway City. There is a high demand for public transport for trips starting in Gort and finishing in Galway City, with the model forecasting one quarter of trips to be made by public transport. The future year assessment has confirmed an overall forecast growth in trips of 4% via the Travel Corridor.

Figure 35. North - South (M18) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.6.6 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in [Figure 36](#).

Figure 36. North - South (M18) Issues Identified



- 6.6.7 A traffic collision cluster has been identified in the vicinity of the Travel Corridor, on the R458 immediately north of Junction 16 of the M18. Whilst no collision clusters have been identified on the M18 itself, should future patterns emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures should be prioritised.
- 6.6.8 Congestion is not a significant issue on the Travel Corridor. However, localised congestion can occur at the northbound off-slip at Junction 16 (Gort) of the M18.
- 6.6.9 The GCTPS is required to respond to growth within Gort, as well as growth in trips to and from surrounding rural areas and those towards Galway City and surrounding area in peak hours.
- 6.6.10 Despite comparatively good public transport connections on the Travel Corridor, including the Galway to Limerick rail link and a range of local and regional bus services, convenience of private vehicle travel and limited congestion can result in challenges in promoting and encouraging mode shift towards sustainable choices.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.6.11 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.6.12 The assessment of options for the North - South (M18) Travel Corridor has indicated that there are potentially multiple ways to address the anticipated changes in travel patterns and demand for travel which are associated with growth detailed in the County Development Plan.
- 6.6.13 The variety of trip types which are facilitated by the Travel Corridor and the need to balance local development with the status of this corridor within the national road

network point to a combined approach as being the most likely to succeed in delivering against both the issues identified within the Travel Corridor and wider policy objectives.

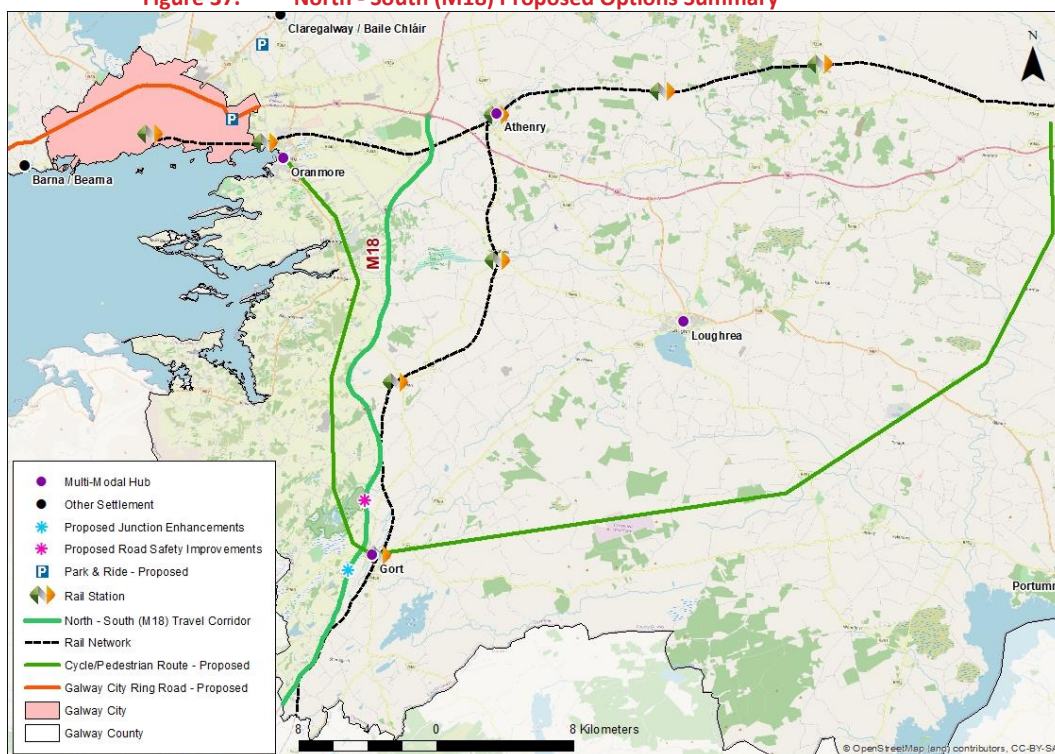
Proposed Options

6.6.14 A summary of the proposed options for the Travel Corridor is shown in [Figure 37](#) and [Table 13](#).

Table 13. North - South (M18) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Multi-Modal Hub in Athenry and Gort	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety); potential to increase visitors within Athenry and Gort.
Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor.
Support Western Rail Corridor Proposals	Support improvement of rail facilities and services serving Gort, including any future expansion of the Western Rail Corridor northwards from Athenry, to encourage modal shift and provide enhanced public transport connectivity.
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
Galway to Athlone Cycle Greenway & Supporting Routes	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; wider benefits to bus journey times; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development.
Increased accessibility to Athenry	Enhance existing direct connections to Galway City to the west, Gort and Limerick to the south, towards Dublin to the east and future services northward to Tuam and Roscommon.

Figure 37. North - South (M18) Proposed Options Summary

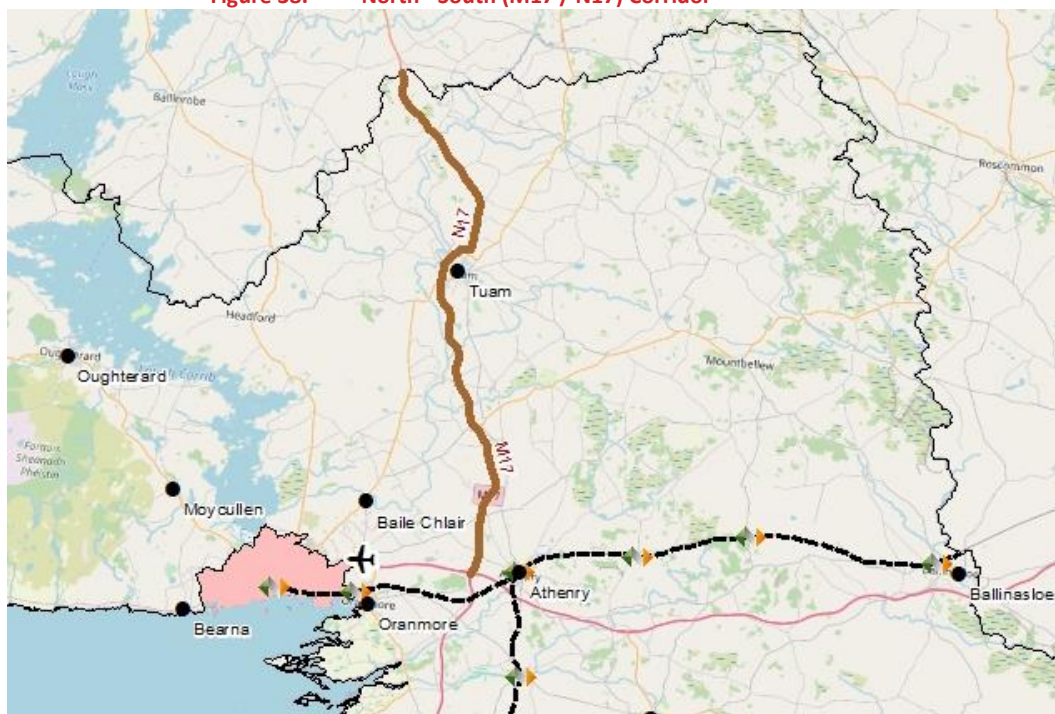


6.7 Corridor 5: North - South (M17 / N17)

Overview

- 6.7.1 The M17 and N17 sections of the North – South Travel Corridor, identified in **Figure 38**, link the towns of Athenry and Tuam and the northern areas of the county, before continuing into County Mayo. The Travel Corridor incorporates the M17 motorway and the N17 national route alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.7.2 The M17 starts at the junction with the M6 motorway and runs northwards for approximately 25km, to the roundabout junction with the N83 at the Tuam bypass. This section consists of two lanes plus a hard shoulder in each direction. As this section is classified as a motorway, there are no facilities for cyclists and pedestrians and bus stops are not directly located on the route.
- 6.7.3 The N17 section starts at the junction with the N83 and runs northwards for approximately 21km towards the border with Mayo. Two lanes in each direction are provided on the Tuam bypass, with a wide single carriageway provided for the remainder of the route. The carriageway width narrows through the built up area of Milltown.
- 6.7.4 The Travel Corridor is considered to be a moderate demand route. Growth forecasts indicate an average 13% increase in demand of trips originating within the county using this corridor.

Figure 38. North - South (M17 / N17) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.7.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 39**.

Figure 39. North - South (M17 / N17) Issues Identified



- 6.7.6 One location with notable outstanding safety issues has been identified, around the junctions of the N17, N83 and Milltown Road, to the north of Tuam. Increased demand within the corridor means there is potential for safety concerns to arise during the lifetime of the GCTPS. Areas of concern should be monitored via implementation of the GCTPS and any impacts addressed as part of the development of other associated measures.
- 6.7.7 The safe and efficient operation of the Travel Corridor should be maintained to support continued through-movement by people and freight from the areas to the north of the county (including Roscommon, Mayo and Sligo) and connections to the east-west routes between Galway City, the county boundary and Dublin.

- 6.7.8 Growth from Athenry and surrounding rural areas is anticipated to be accommodated principally through private vehicle use; whilst some growth of this type is inevitable, the GCTPS seeks to identify where other mode choices can be made more attractive and workable in practice.
- 6.7.9 There is a need to respond to growth within Tuam, alongside growth in travel associated with recent and planned development within and around Athenry.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.7.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in Section 5. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at [Appendix C](#).

Option Appraisal

- 6.7.11 The assessment of options for the Travel Corridor has indicated that there are potentially multiple ways for the Council to address the expected changes in travel patterns and demand for travel associated with the growth detailed in the County Development Plan.
- 6.7.12 Whilst options focused on road transport and sustainable measures have been examined, it is considered that the variety of trip types which are facilitated by the M17 / N17 Travel Corridor and the need to balance local development with the status of this corridor within the national road network point to a combined approach as being the most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives.

Proposed Options

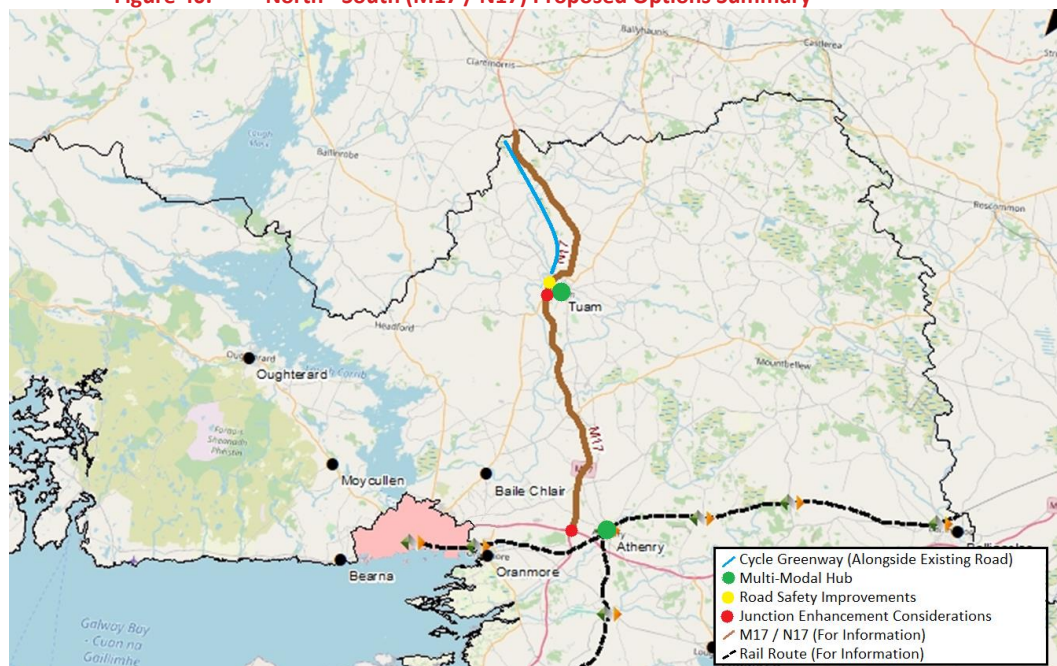
- 6.7.13 [Figure 40](#) and [Table 14](#) detail measures proposed for the Travel Corridor. These include development of a multi-modal hub in Tuam, enhancements to transport infrastructure around Athenry station, monitoring the strategic network via TII, and potential safety-led improvements to existing road infrastructure.

Table 14. North - South (M17 / N17) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Multi-Modal Hub in Athenry and Tuam	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety); potential to increase visitors within Athenry and Tuam.
Bus Stop Improvements (with NTA)	Promote improvements to bus stops and facilities, and recommend locations of new bus stops to bridge gaps in network to enhance public transport connectivity and accessibility, particularly in Athenry, and in the vicinity of the N17 to the north of Tuam.

Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor.
Support Western Rail Corridor Proposals	Support improvement of rail facilities and services serving Gort, including any future expansion of the Western Rail Corridor northwards from Athenry, to encourage modal shift and provide enhanced public transport connectivity.
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
New Cycle Routes (e.g. feasibility of Greenway on / close to N17 north of Tuam)	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; wider benefits to bus journey times; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development; enhance linkages with local quietways to increase access to Tuam itself.
Increased accessibility to Athenry	Enhance existing direct connections to Galway City to the west, Gort and Limerick to the south, towards Dublin to the east and future services northward to Tuam and Roscommon.

Figure 40. North - South (M17 / N17) Proposed Options Summary

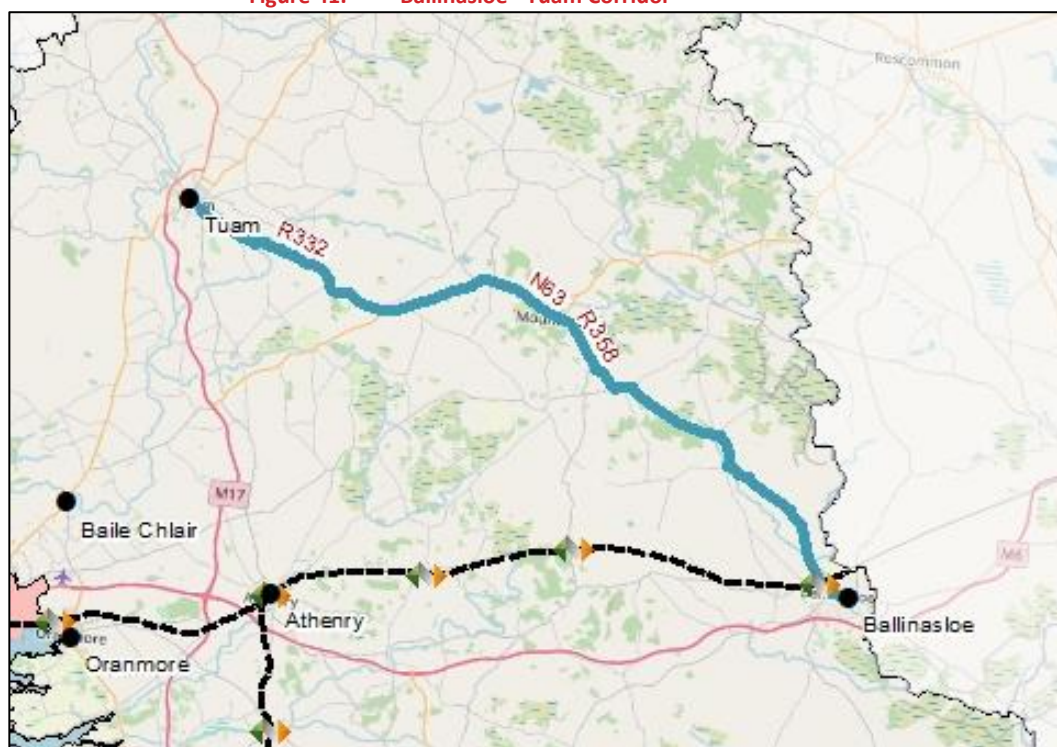


6.8 Corridor 6: Ballinasloe - Tuam (R332 / R358)

Overview

- 6.8.1 The Ballinasloe - Tuam Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 41**, links the Key towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam, located in the north and east of the county respectively. It incorporates the R358 (Ballinasloe to Mountbellew), N83 (Mountbellew to Briarfield) and R332 (Briarfield to Tuam), alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.8.2 The N63 generally comprises a wide single carriageway in both directions. It is noted that the carriageway width narrows through Mountbellew. The R358 and R332 carriageways are generally narrow in width, with tight corners present which restrict vehicle speeds.
- 6.8.3 No bus routes serve the Travel Corridor in full, although services call at Moylough and Mountbellew on the N63, as part of routes between Galway City and Roscommon/Longford. Demand responsive travel is available within the Ballinasloe and Tuam areas, between Ballinasloe and Caltra as well as Tuam and Abbeyknockmoy offering opportunities for connections onto timetabled routes towards Galway City.
- 6.8.4 The Ballinasloe - Tuam Travel Corridor is a minor demand corridor, with the highest proportion of trips made from either Ballinasloe or Tuam to the adjoining rural sector in the morning peak. Growth forecasts indicate a 20% increase in demand of trips, albeit from a relatively low base, originating within the county using this corridor.

Figure 41. Ballinasloe - Tuam Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.8.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 42**.

Figure 42. Ballinasloe - Tuam Issues Identified



- 6.8.6 One accident cluster has been identified within the Travel Corridor, on the N63 in Moylough, which incorporates two serious and 14 minor incidents. Five of the minor incidents involved a car colliding with a pedestrian.
- 6.8.7 Congestion hotspots have been identified in peak hours. These include on the N63 through Moylough, at the R358/R348 junction in Ballinasloe, the westbound approach of the R358 and N63 junction in Mountbellew, and the westbound approach of the R332 and R347 junction in Tuam.
- 6.8.8 There is a need to respond to growth within Tuam and within Ballinasloe, as well as to support regional connections to help improve connectivity.
- 6.8.9 It is noted that there is a high car dependency for journeys made via the Travel Corridor, as well as internal trips within both Ballinasloe and Tuam. Public transport options are limited within no direct bus services between the two key towns. Given low levels of demand, service viability is considered a constraint.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.8.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.8.11 Option appraisal for the Travel Corridor has identified a range of ways in which the Council can address identified issues and meet demand for travel associated with growth detailed in the County Development Plan.
- 6.8.12 A combined approach is considered the most favourable for this Travel Corridor; however, it is recommend that any proposed interventions consider a sustainable transport hierarchy, with improvements to junctions focusing on active travel modes as a priority, followed by road-based interventions to alleviate congestion.

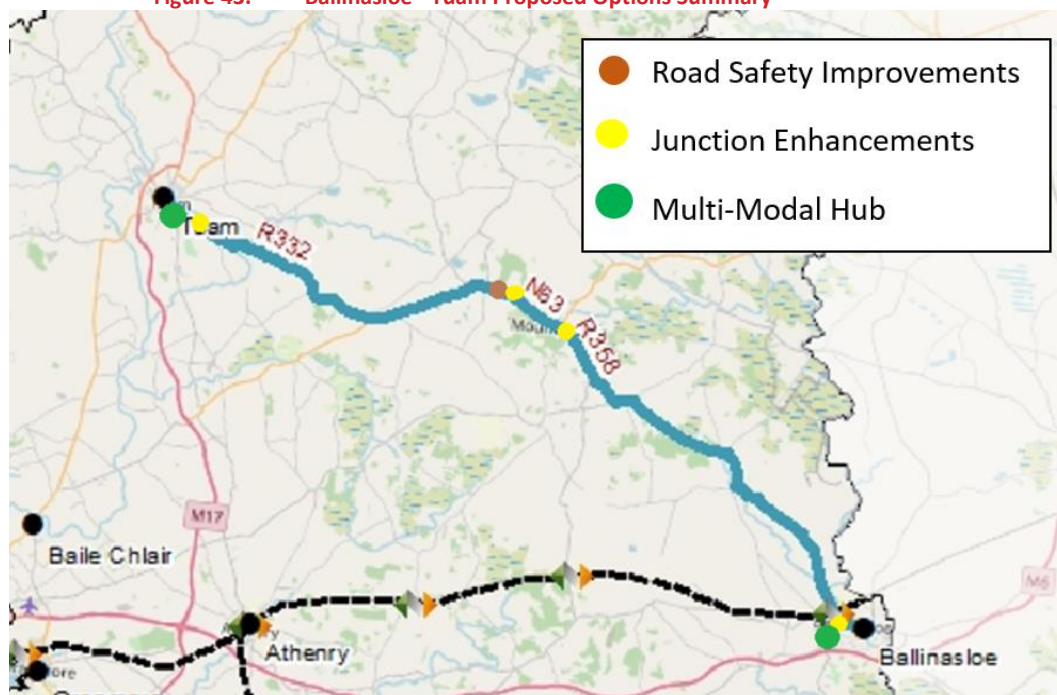
Proposed Options

6.8.13 A summary of proposed measures for the Ballinasloe – Tuam (R332/R358) Travel Corridor is provided in Table 15 and Figure 43 below.

Table 15. Ballinasloe -Tuam (R332/R358)) Proposed Measures and Forecast Benefit

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Multi-modal hub at Ballinasloe and Tuam	Required to increase attractiveness of public transport use, particularly for commuter journeys to Galway City and allow for integrated interchange between modes.
Road Safety Improvements	Improved safety for vulnerable road users, particularly through Moylough where a cluster of accidents has been recorded.
Junction enhancements	Reduced congestion at identified congestion hotspots, having positive impacts on journey times.

Figure 43. Ballinasloe - Tuam Proposed Options Summary



6.9 Corridor 7: Galway - Clifden (N59)

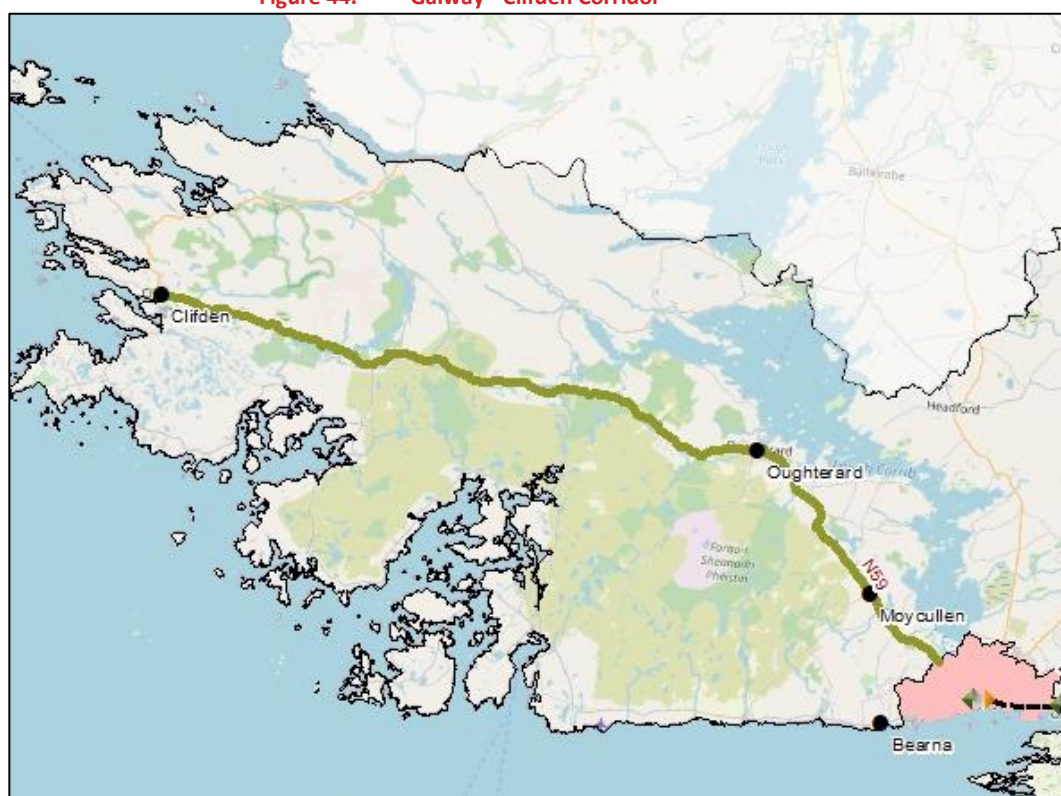
Overview

- 6.9.1 The Galway - Clifden (N59) Travel Corridor, detailed in Figure 44, links Galway City with the town of Clifden and the northwestern areas of the county. It incorporates the N59 alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.9.2 The Travel Corridor is a radial route from Galway City, running approximately 75km to Clifden, passing through the towns of Maigh Cuilinn and Oughterard approximately 10km and 25km north west of Galway City respectively. The N59 generally comprises of a single carriageway

in both directions. The carriageway width narrows through Maigh Cuilinn and Oughterard, where the route crosses the Owenriff river via a particularly narrow bridge.

- 6.9.3 A shared cycle and pedestrian route is provided adjacent to parts of the N59; however, there is no such provision in other areas, such as in the sections near Ballinafad, Maam Cross and Sraith Salach.
- 6.9.4 Bus services between Galway City and Clifden operated by Citylink and Bus Eireann provide the majority of services that route via the N59. Demand responsive travel is available one day per week between Clifden and Cashel (via the R341), Oughterard and Maigh Cuilinn (N59 via Roscahill), and Oughterard and Shannapheasteen.
- 6.9.5 The Travel Corridor is considered a moderate demand corridor, as confirmed through TII traffic flow and NTA model data. A high number of trips made to Galway City in the morning peak from the N59 model sector that encompasses Maigh Cuilinn and Oughterard have been identified. Growth forecasts indicate an approximate 10% to 15% growth in trips via this Travel Corridor.

Figure 44. Galway - Clifden Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.9.6 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 45**.

Figure 45. Galway - Clifden Issues Identified



- 6.9.7 A number of collision clusters have been identified on the Travel Corridor, including at the junctions with the R336 at Maam Cross and with the R344. Additional clusters have been identified on sections of the N59 that do not fall within the Travel Corridor, including between Clifden and Leenaun, west and northeast of Letterfrack, west of Moyard, north of Leenaun and at the County Galway / Mayo border.
- 6.9.8 Extensive congestion is not a significant issue on the Travel Corridor. However, localised congestion can occur at a number of locations, these include through Oughterard, at the junction with the R336 in Maam Cross, and on the eastbound approach to the N59's junction with the R341 junction in Clifden. Congestion has also been identified on approaches to the Browne Roundabout and Thomas Hynes Road / Upper Newcastle junction in Galway City, which fall outside GCC's area of control.
- 6.9.9 There is a need to respond to residential growth within Clifden and employment growth within Galway City and its environs, and the associated increased demand in trips made via the Travel Corridor. Growth in leisure and tourism-related trips via the N59 is an additional important consideration. It is recognised that the introduction of the Galway City Ring Road will enhance journey times and provide increased attractiveness for trips made to the west of the county, including via the N59.
- 6.9.10 There is a high car dependency for journeys made via the Travel Corridor, as well as internal trips within Clifden and other smaller towns in the corridor's vicinity. Public transport options are limited, and low levels of demand constrain service viability.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.9.11 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.9.12 The assessment of options has indicated that there are potentially multiple ways in which the Council could address expected changes in travel patterns and demand within the West Coast

(R336) Travel Corridor. A combined approach is identified through the appraisal process as that most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives. However, improving safety and reducing incidences of collisions and resultant injury sits at the heart of all measures put forward.

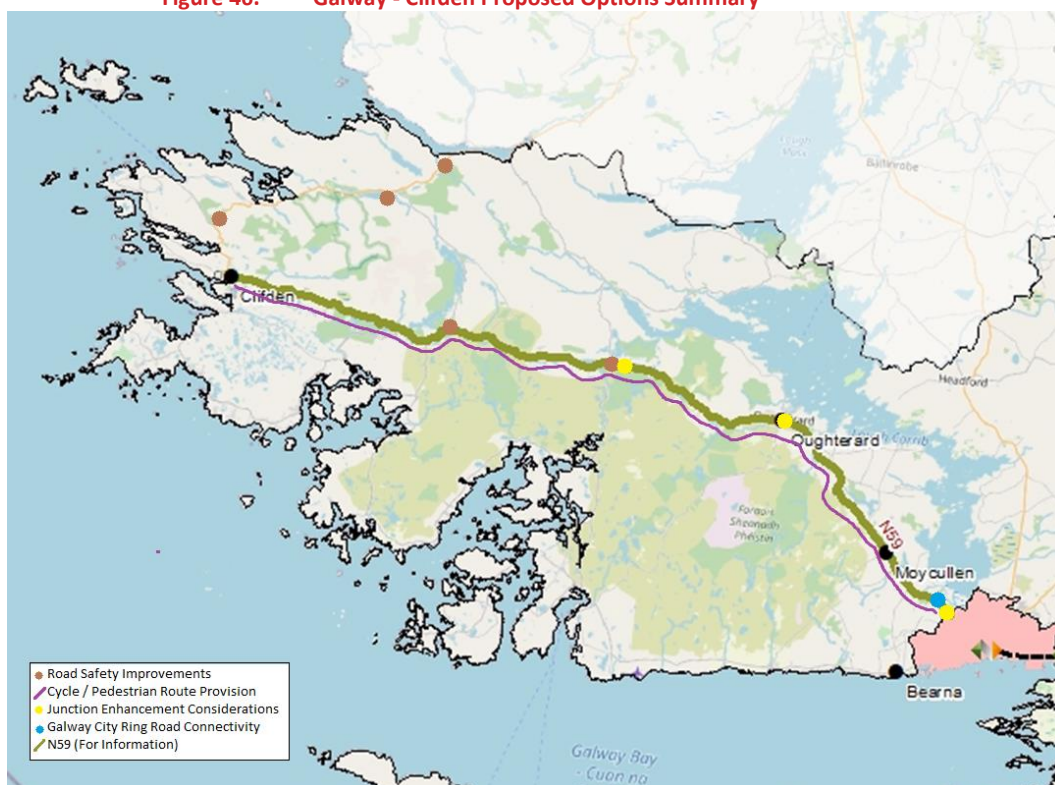
Proposed Options

6.9.13 A summary of the proposed options for the Galway - Clifden Travel Corridor is shown in [Table 16](#) and [Figure 46](#).

Table 16. Galway - Clifden Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns and collision hotspots within and slightly beyond the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions. Wider benefits can include reduced congestion and improved journey times.
New Cycle / Pedestrian Routes	Improved connectivity and safety for cyclists; reduce road user risk through segregated provision; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development in appropriate locations; cater for seasonal tourist trip demand.
Galway City Ring Road	Reduce congestion on approach and through Galway City by traffic diversion around the City improving journey times; enhance accessibility to west of Galway City; reduced journey times.
Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor. Reduce instances of localised congestion through Oughterard, at the junction with the R336 in Maam Cross, on the eastbound approach to the N59's junction with the R341 junction in Clifden, and on approaches to the Browne Roundabout and Thomas Hynes Road / Upper Newcastle junction in Galway City.

Figure 46. Galway - Clifden Proposed Options Summary



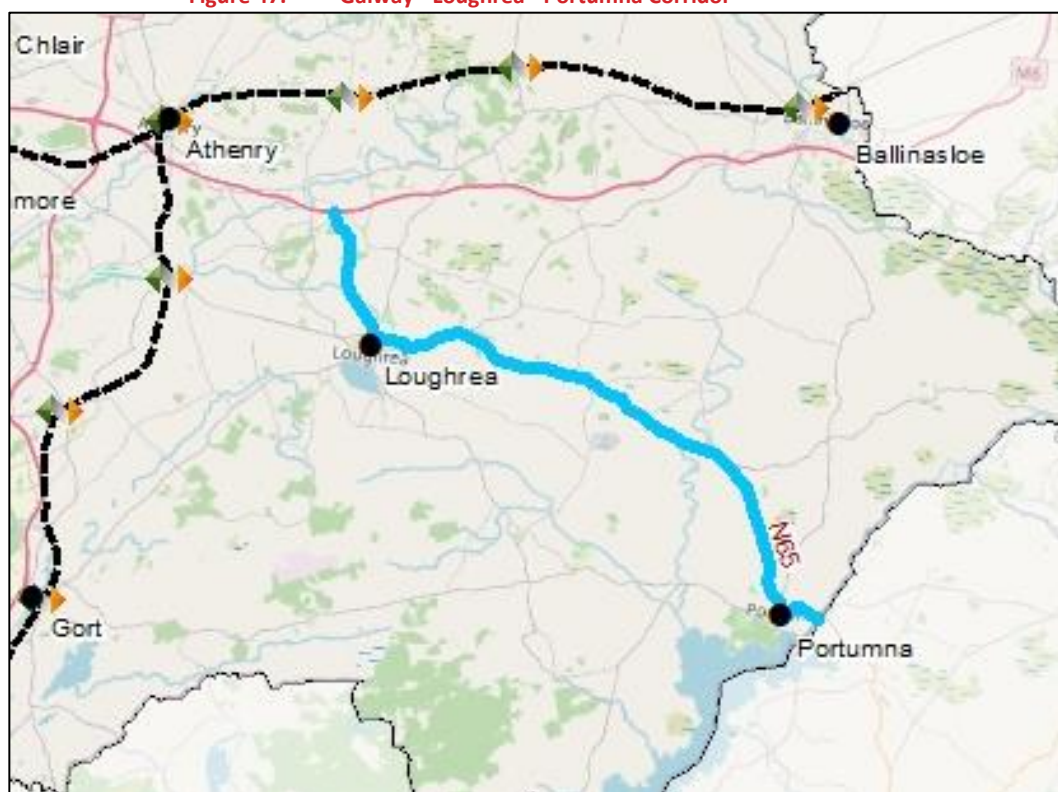
6.10 Corridor 8: Galway - Loughrea - Portumna (N65)

Overview

- 6.10.1 The Galway - Loughrea - Portumna Travel Corridor, shown in Figure 47, links Galway City with the towns of Loughrea and Portumna, as well as the southeastern areas of the county, before continuing towards the border with County Tipperary. It incorporates the N65 alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.10.2 The most direct route to the N65 from Galway City is via the M6 motorway, which is considered in detail within standalone Travel Corridor assessments for Galway City to Athenry (Corridor 2) and to Ballinasloe (Corridor 3).
- 6.10.3 The Travel Corridor is a radial route from Galway City. The N65, connecting Loughrea and Portumna to the M6 motorway is generally formed of a wide single carriageway in both directions. The carriageway width narrows in places to the east of its junction with the R446 and through the built up area of Killimor.
- 6.10.4 There is limited provision for cyclists and pedestrians for the majority of the N65, with the exception of on the approach to and through areas including Killimor and Portumna.
- 6.10.5 There is limited direct bus connectivity between Loughrea and Portumna; however, a number of buses route via the northern section of the N65 to and from Loughrea. These include interurban services between Galway and Dublin and commuter-based services between Loughrea and Galway City. Rail services do not serve Loughrea or Portumna or other locations within the vicinity of the Travel Corridor.

- 6.10.6 The Travel Corridor is considered a low demand corridor, as confirmed through limitedly-available TII Traffic Flow and NTA Model data. Growth is forecast in the number of trips made via this corridor.

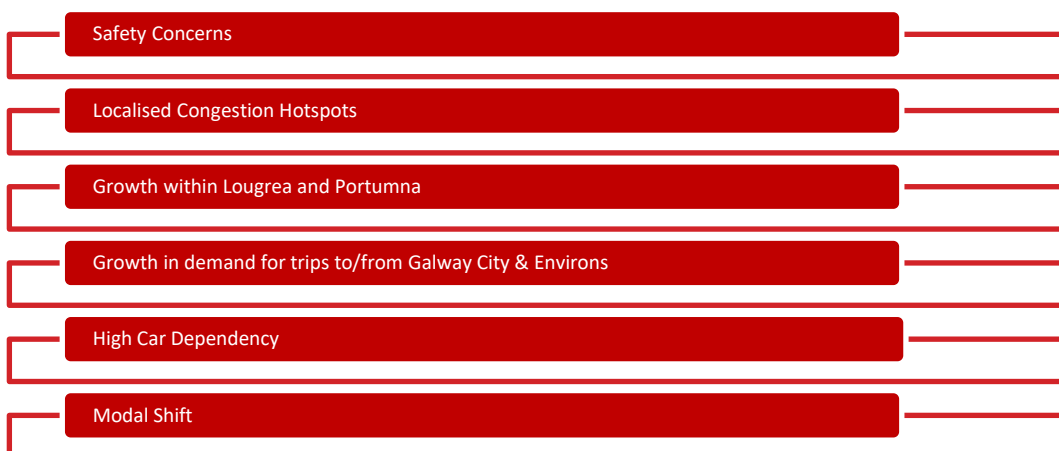
Figure 47. Galway - Loughrea - Portumna Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.10.7 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in Figure 48.

Figure 48. Galway - Loughrea - Portumna Issues Identified



- 6.10.8 Traffic collision clusters have been identified on the N65, in the vicinity of the junction with the R446 and on approach to and within Portumna. These clusters incorporate four fatal

incidents, alongside two serious and nine minor. A number of collisions involved vehicle drivers hitting a pedestrian.

- 6.10.9 Congestion is not a significant issue on the Travel Corridor. However, localised congestion can occur through the built up areas of Killimor and Portumna, as well as within the centres of Loughrea and Portumna in both morning and afternoon peak hours.
- 6.10.10 There is a need to respond to growth within Loughrea and Portumna alongside growth in trips to and from both towns from surrounding rural areas and additional demand for trips towards Galway City and surrounding areas in peak hours.
- 6.10.11 Convenience of private vehicle travel, limited public transport service frequency, a lack of significant vehicular congestion and availability of parking can result in challenges in promoting and encouraging mode shift towards sustainable choices. This is a particular issue within the Travel Corridor where bus connectivity is limited and rail services do not serve Loughrea or Portumna.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.10.12 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.10.13 The assessment of options has indicated that there are potentially multiple ways in which the Council could address expected changes in travel patterns and demand within the Travel Corridor. A combined approach is identified through the appraisal process as that most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives.

Proposed Options

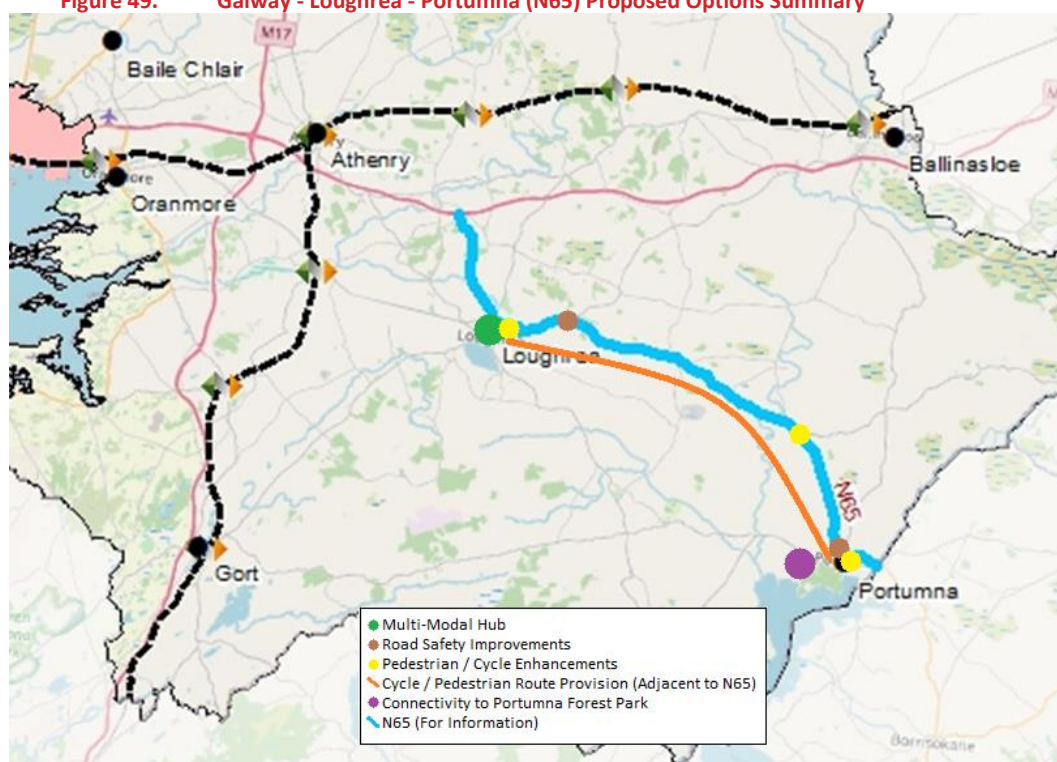
- 6.10.14 A summary of the proposed options for the Galway - Loughrea - Portumna Travel Corridor is shown in **Table 17** and **Figure 49**.

Table 17. Galway - Loughrea - Portumna (N65) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor.

	Reduce instances of congestion on Killmor and Portumna
Multi-Modal Hub in Loughrea	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety); potential to increase visitors within Loughrea.
Bus Stop Improvements (with NTA)	Promote improvements to bus stops and facilities, and recommend locations of new bus stops to bridge gaps in network to enhance public transport connectivity and accessibility.
Provision of New Cycle Routes (e.g. feasibility of Greenway between Loughrea and Portumna, serving intermediate locations; connectivity to Portumna Forest Park)	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; wider benefits to bus journey times; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development; enhance linkages with local trail routes (e.g. Portumna Forest Park).

Figure 49. Galway - Loughrea - Portumna (N65) Proposed Options Summary



6.11 Corridor 9: Galway - Roscommon (N63)

Overview

- 6.11.1 The Galway - Roscommon Travel Corridor, shown in Figure 50, links Galway City with the north eastern areas of Galway County before continuing towards the town of Roscommon, in

County Roscommon. It incorporates the R354 and N63 routes alongside connecting routes and public transport services.

- 6.11.2 The R354 and N63 routes are generally comprised of wide single carriageways in both directions. The carriageway width narrows through the built up area of Mountbellew. A continuous paved footway is provided alongside the section of route between Abbeyknockmoy and Annagh Cross.
- 6.11.3 The Galway City to Roscommon route operated by Bus4u provides the majority of bus services using the N63. One service runs westbound in the morning peak hour. Other services on the N63 are relatively infrequent. No rail services currently operate within the Travel Corridor.
- 6.11.4 The Travel Corridor is a route subject to moderate demand, with a high proportion of trips being made from the rural sector straddling the N63 to Galway City in the morning peak period. Roscommon draws a moderate proportion of trips from the rural sector, using the N63.
- 6.11.5 The future year assessment has confirmed no noticeable overall growth in trips via the Travel Corridor, in terms of trips originating in Galway City, Roscommon, Mountbellew and Moylough. Trips starting in Tuam and finishing in Galway City are expected to grow by approximately 30% by all modes.

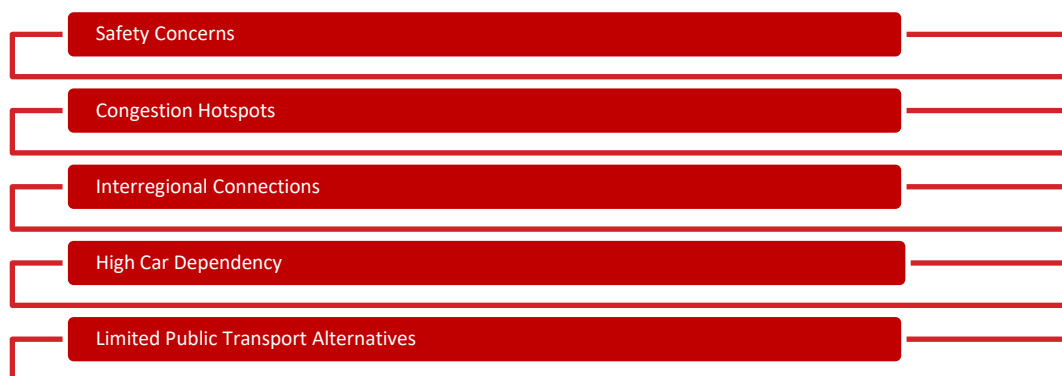
Figure 50. Galway - Roscommon Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.11.6 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in [Figure 51](#).

Figure 51. Galway - Roscommon Issues Identified



- 6.11.7 One accident cluster has been identified along this Travel Corridor, located on the N63 in Moylough, which incorporates two serious and 14 minor incidents. Five of the minor incidents involved a car colliding with a pedestrian. The village of Moylough does not include any pedestrian crossing facilities across the N63.
- 6.11.8 Congestion hotspots have been reviewed and it is noted that congestion can occur on the eastbound section of the N63 route through the town of Mountbellew alongside the main town centre surface level car park.
- 6.11.9 The Travel Corridor provides an important interregional connection between Galway city and Roscommon, which is a key destination within neighbouring County Roscommon. The travel corridor serves a high number of rural settlements and offers a key road link across the eastern side of the County. Whilst demand is not anticipated to significantly increase along this route, it plays a key role in connecting rural settlements and this importance will be outlined within the GCTPS in line with the identification of this as a key route within the CDP.
- 6.11.10 There is high car dependency within the Travel Corridor, with limited service frequency for timetabled bus routes.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.11.11 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.
- 6.11.12 The assessment of options for the Galway - Roscommon Travel Corridor has indicated that there are potentially multiple ways for the County to address the expected changes in travel patterns and demand for travel which are associated with the growth detailed in the County Development Plan (2022-2028).
- 6.11.13 It is recommended that a combined approach should form the strategy for the Galway - Roscommon Travel Corridor, reaping the benefits of both physical measures and softer demand management measures.

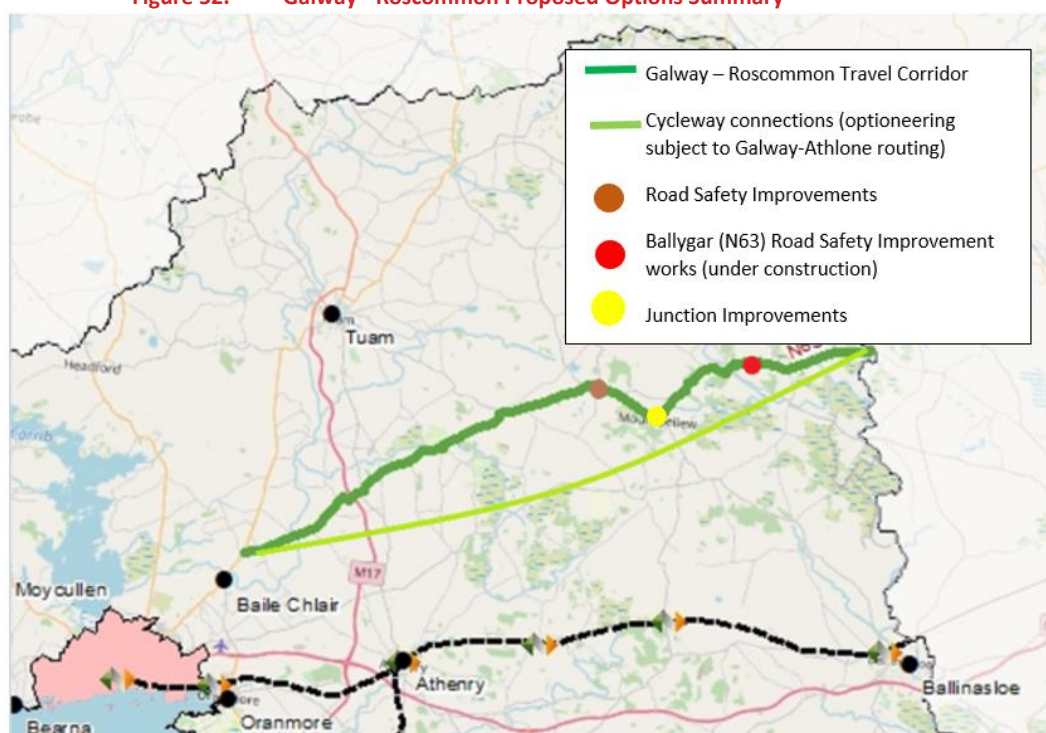
Proposed Options

6.11.14 A summary of proposed measures for the Galway-Roscommon (N63) Travel Corridor is provided in Table 18 and Figure 52 below.

Table 18. Galway – Roscommon (N63) Proposed Measures and Forecast Benefit

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Cycleway Connections to Galway to Athlone Greenway	Improved connectivity for rural settlements to proposed east to west (Galway-Athlone) Greenway connections.
Road Safety Improvements	Improved safety for vulnerable road users, particularly through Moylough where a cluster of accidents has been recorded.
Junction enhancements	Reduced congestion at identified congestion hotspots such as through Mountbellew, having positive impacts on journey times.
Ballygar (N63) Road Safety Improvements	Resurfacing and pedestrian crossing improvements to improve conditions for vulnerable road users.

Figure 52. Galway - Roscommon Proposed Options Summary

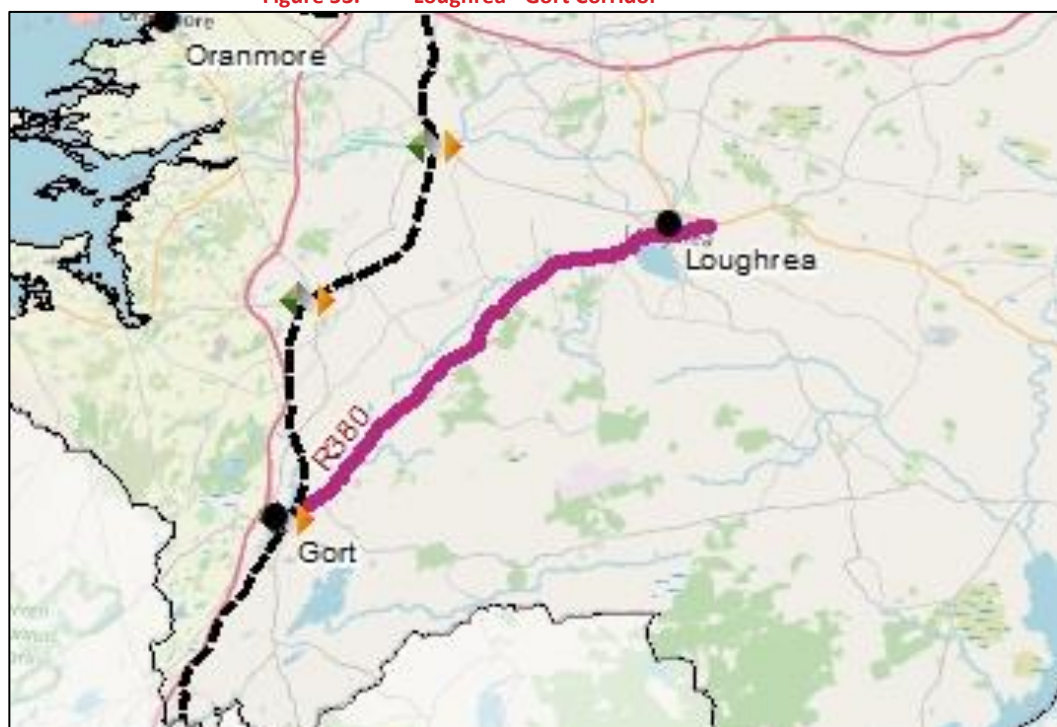


6.12 Corridor 10: Loughrea - Gort (R380)

Overview

- 6.12.1 The Loughrea - Gort Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 53**, links Loughrea with Gort. It incorporates the R380 alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.12.2 The Travel Corridor via the R380 is a minor regional route. The R380 is generally formed of a single carriageway in both directions. Footways are not provided on either side of the R380 for the majority of its length. The towns of Loughrea and Gort are located approximately 25km apart.
- 6.12.3 Limited opportunities for public transport use exist on the Travel Corridor; however, Gort is served by rail services between Galway City and Limerick. One bus service connects Loughrea and Gort, with two eastbound and two westbound services operating on weekdays. No services run at weekends.
- 6.12.4 The Travel Corridor is considered a low demand corridor, as confirmed through TII Traffic Flow and NTA Model data. Growth is forecast in the number of trips made via this corridor, with increases averaging between 3% and 32% depending on origin and destination.

Figure 53. Loughrea - Gort Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.12.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 54**.

Figure 54. Loughrea - Gort Issues Identified



- 6.12.6 A traffic collision cluster has been identified on the R380 on the western outskirts of Loughrea. It is important that should future patterns emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures are prioritised.
- 6.12.7 Whilst congestion is not a significant issue on the Travel Corridor, localised congestion can occur at the westbound approach to the junction with the R458 in Gort and on the eastbound approach into Loughrea and the junction with the R446.
- 6.12.8 There is a need to respond to growth within Loughrea and Gort, growth in trips to and from both towns from surrounding rural areas and growth in trips towards Galway City and surrounding area in peak hours.
- 6.12.9 Convenience of private vehicle travel, limited public transport service frequency, a lack of significant vehicular congestion and availability of parking can result in challenges in promoting and encouraging mode shift towards sustainable choices. This is a particular issue within the Travel Corridor where bus connectivity is limited and rail services do not serve Loughrea.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.12.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.12.11 The assessment of options for the Loughrea - Gort Travel Corridor has confirmed multiple ways for the County to address the expected changes in travel patterns and demand. The appraisal process has identified a combined approach as being the most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives.

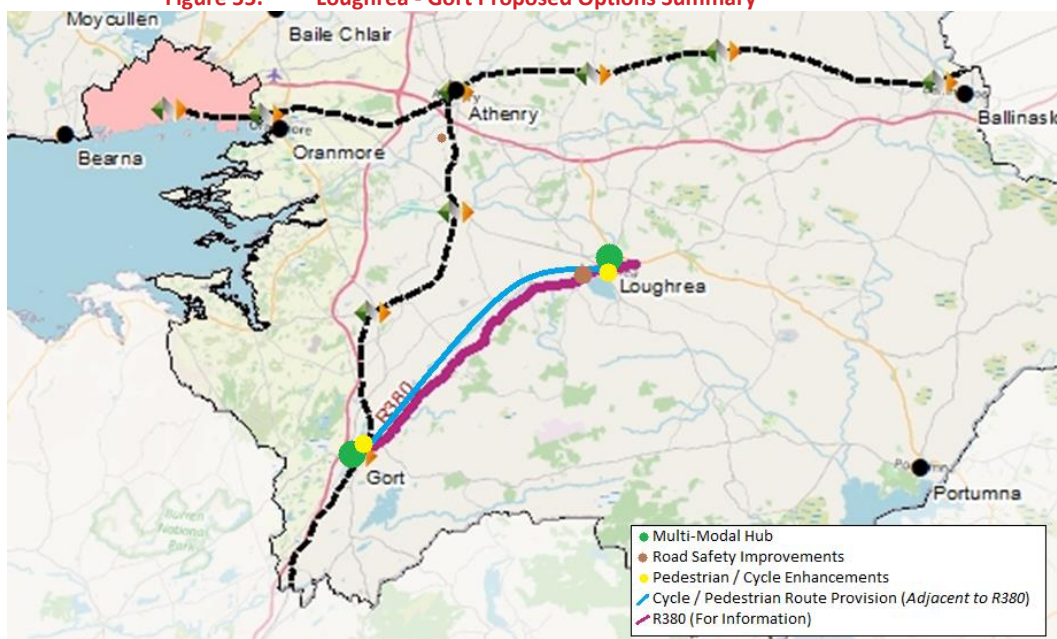
Proposed Options

- 6.12.12 Proposed options for the Travel Corridor are shown in **Figure 55** and detailed in **Table 19**.

Table 19. Loughrea - Gort Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Safety-Led Improvements on R380 & Surrounding Routes (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
Multi-Modal Hub in Loughrea and Gort	Encourage modal shift; reduce vehicle congestion; improve overall public realm; facilitate easy access between transport modes; secondary benefits to cyclists (e.g. improved safety); potential to increase visitors within Loughrea and Gort.
Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor, e.g. at junction with R458 in Gort and with R446
Public Transport Infrastructure Improvements (e.g. Bus Stop Improvements in Centres of Loughrea & Gort), in conjunction with NTA	Promote improvements to bus stops and facilities, and recommend locations of new bus stops to bridge gaps in network to enhance public transport connectivity and accessibility.
Local Walking / Cycling Routes in Gort & Loughrea; Dedicated Pedestrian / Cycle Routes on R380	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; wider benefits to bus journey times; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development; enhance linkages with local rural routes.

Figure 55. Loughrea - Gort Proposed Options Summary

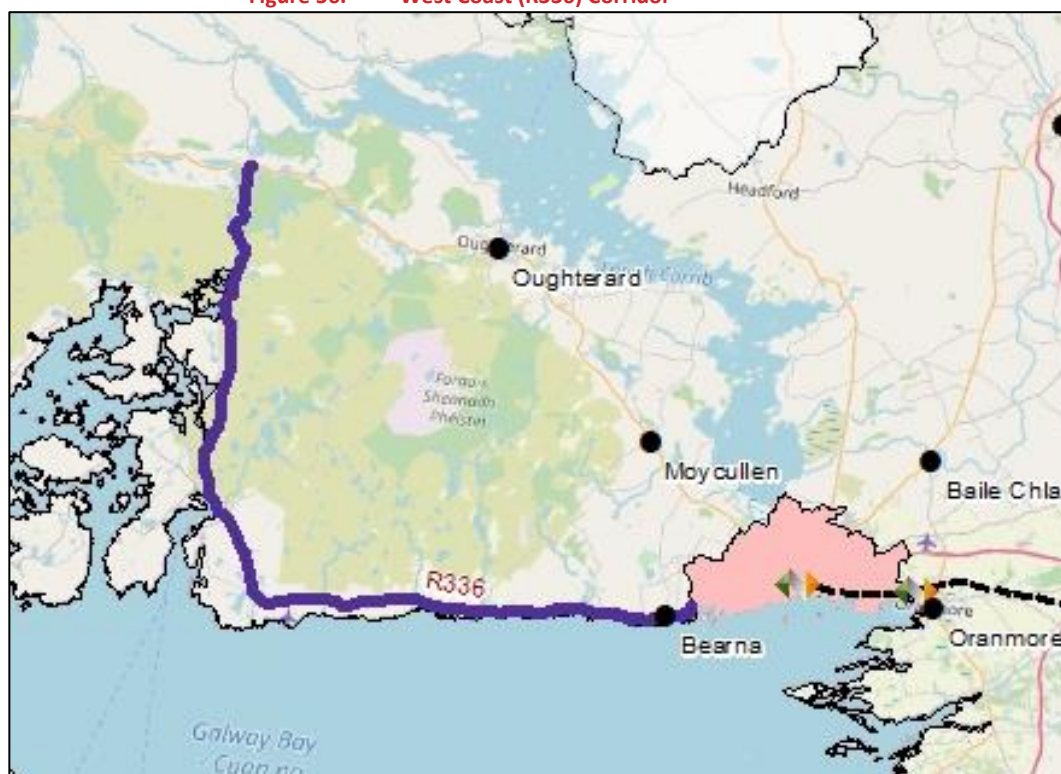


6.13 Corridor 11: West Coast (R336)

Overview

- 6.13.1 The West Coast (R336) Travel Corridor, shown in Figure 56, links Galway City with the coastal areas to the west. It incorporates the R336 road, alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.13.2 The R336 is a radial route from Galway City, running parallel along the coastline to the west of the city and then north where it connects to the N59. The N59 provides onwards connectivity to Galway City eastwards and Clifden westwards, and forms Travel Corridor 7. The R336 route generally comprises of a single carriageway in both directions. The village of Bearna is located approximately 7km from the centre of Galway City along the R336.
- 6.13.3 Public transport opportunities are limited via the R336. Bus Eireann provides 13 services a day routing via the R336 between Galway City and Carraroe, with up to four services extended to or starting at starting at Lettermullen. All services call at Bearna.

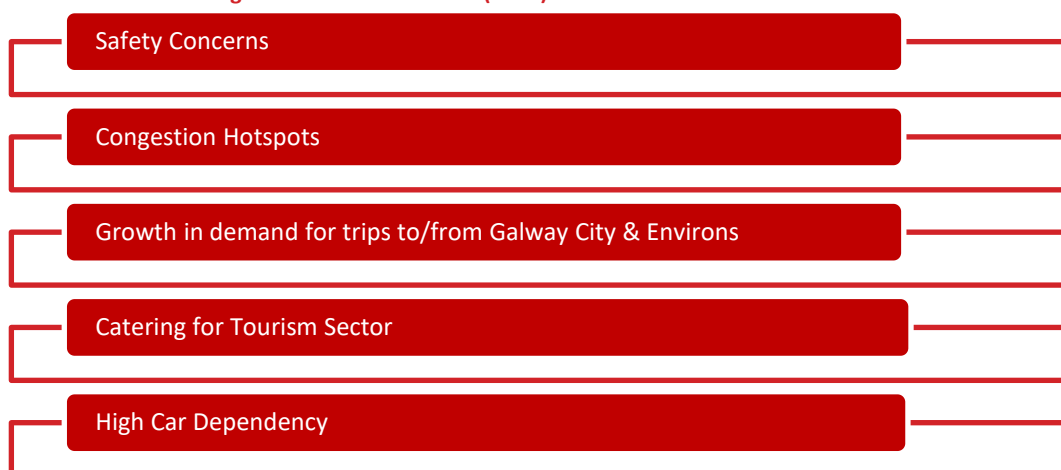
Figure 56. West Coast (R336) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.13.4 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in **Figure 57**.

Figure 57. West Coast (R336) Issues Identified



- 6.13.5 Two traffic collision clusters have been identified on the Travel Corridor on the R336, at Tearmann Eanna and near Rossaveel. Five fatal accidents and four minor accidents have been recorded in these locations. All fatal collisions involved pedestrians being hit by a vehicle (four being cars and one a motorcycle).

- 6.13.6 It is important that should future patterns emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures are prioritised.
- 6.13.7 Whilst congestion is not a significant issue on the Travel Corridor, localised congestion can occur on the R336 through Bearna in both directions, and when travelling eastbound through the outskirts of Galway City via the R336 (Knocknacarra).
- 6.13.8 There is a need to respond to employment growth within Galway City and its environs, and the associated potential increased demand in trips made via the Travel Corridor. Growth in leisure and tourism-related trips via the R336, including onward trips to Óileáin Árann, is an additional important consideration.
- 6.13.9 The introduction of the Galway City Ring Road will enhance journey times and provide increased attractiveness for trips made to the west of the county, including via the R336.
- 6.13.10 There is a high car dependency for journeys made via the Travel Corridor, as well as internal trips within small towns in the corridor's vicinity. Public transport options are limited, and low levels of demand constrain service viability.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.13.11 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.13.12 The assessment of options has indicated that there are potentially multiple ways in which the Council could address expected changes in travel patterns and demand within the West Coast (R336) Travel Corridor. A combined approach is identified through the appraisal process as that most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives. For this Travel Corridor in particular, improving safety and reducing incidences of collisions and resultant injury sits at the centre of all measures.

Proposed Options

- 6.13.13 Proposed options for the West Coast (R336) Travel Corridor are summarised in **Figure 58** and detailed in **Table 20**. These have been developed to primarily provide improvements to road safety.

Table 20. West Coast (R336) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (Potential Measures include pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming)	Address identified safety concerns and collision hotspots within the Travel Corridor, including at Tearmann Eanna and near Rossaveel. Improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.

	Wider benefits can include reduced congestion and improved journey times.
New Cycle / Pedestrian Routes (incl. consideration towards routing of National Cycle Route between Galway City and Clifden and connecting rural routes)	Improved connectivity and safety for cyclists; reduce road user risk through segregated provision; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; encourage cycling uptake; contribute to rural development in appropriate locations; cater for seasonal tourist trip demand via coastal routes.
Galway City Ring Road	Reduce congestion on approach and through Galway City by traffic diversion around the City improving journey times; enhance accessibility to west of Galway City; reduced journey times.
Potential Junction Improvements / Managing Demand	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of safety, congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor. Reduce instances of identified localised congestion.

Figure 58. West Coast (R336) Proposed Options Summary



6.14 Corridor 12: Galway North Radial (N84)

Overview

- 6.14.1 The Galway - Headford (N84) Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 59**, is a radial route linking Galway City with the town of Headford and the northern areas of the county, before continuing into County Mayo. It incorporates the N84 alongside connecting routes and public transport services.

- 6.14.2 The N84 generally comprises a wide single carriageway in both directions, with the carriageway width narrowing through the built up area of Headford and for some stretches between Headford and the border with County Mayo. Headford is located approximately 24km from Galway City.
- 6.14.3 Commuter-based interurban services between Galway City and Headford operated by Burkesbus and Bus Eireann, alongside local routes with limited service frequencies, provide the majority of services that route via the N84. Two services run southbound between Headford and Galway in the morning peak hour of 07:00-08:00.
- 6.14.4 The Travel Corridor is considered to be a moderate demand corridor, with a high proportion of trips being made to Galway City in the morning peak period, from the rural sector that straddles the N84 within Galway County. Growth of approximately 10% in the number of trips made from the N84 model sector to Galway City using the Travel Corridor is forecast.

Figure 59. Galway North Radial (N84) Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.14.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in Figure 60.

Figure 60. Galway North Radial (N84) Issues Identified



- 6.14.6 A number of datasets have been examined at a high-level to confirm locations of congestion disruption during the standard network morning peak hour. This has confirmed congestion can occur at the southbound approach to roundabout connecting the N6 and N84, and on all approaches to the Headford signalised crossroads junction.
- 6.14.7 One accident cluster has been identified along the Travel Corridor, within Headford area. This incorporates one fatal, two serious and one minor incidents. It is important that should future patterns emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures are prioritised.
- 6.14.8 There is a need to respond to growth within Headford, growth in trips to and from surrounding rural areas, and forecast growth in trips to and from Galway City using the Travel Corridor.
- 6.14.9 The N84 would interchange with the proposed Galway City Ring Road at a new junction between Ballinfoyle and Ballindoooley, approximately 2km north of the roundabout that connects the N84 with the N6, providing a direct highway connection to the M6 route to the east.
- 6.14.10 A lack of high quality public transport connections compared to other parts of the county, convenience of private vehicle travel and limited congestion can result in challenges in promoting and encouraging mode shift towards sustainable choices.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.14.11 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at [Appendix C](#).

Option Appraisal

- 6.14.12 The assessment of options for Galway North Radial (N84) Travel Corridor has identified multiple ways for the Council to address expected changes in travel patterns and demand for travel associated with the growth detailed in the County Development Plan.
- 6.14.13 The need to balance local development with the status of this corridor within the national road network point to a combined approach as being the most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor's identified issues and the wider policy objectives.

Proposed Options

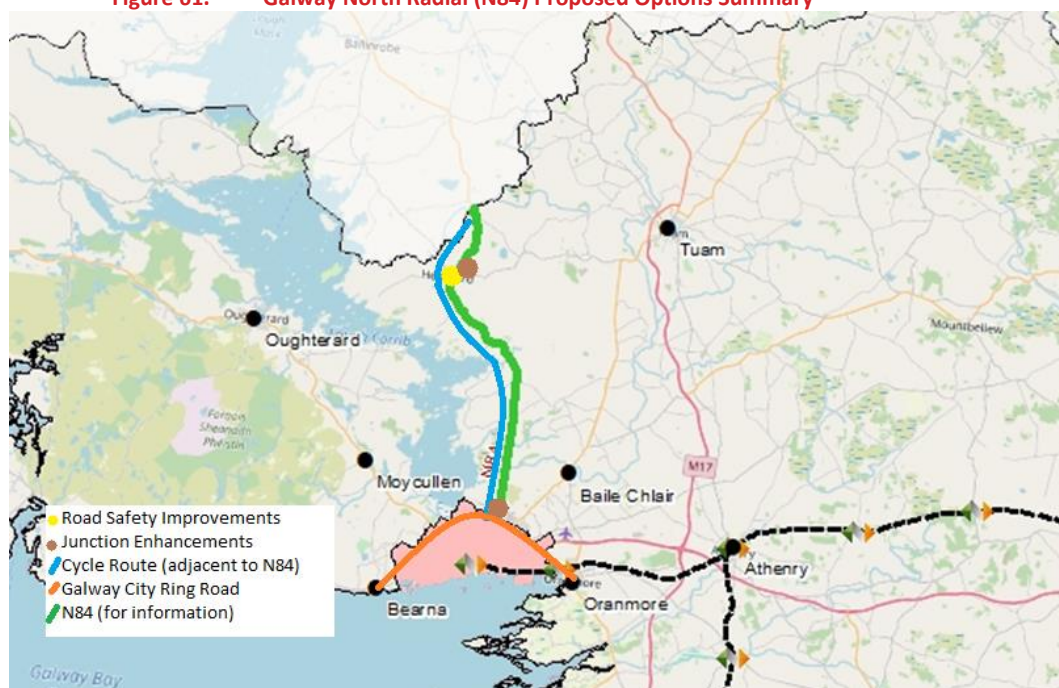
- 6.14.14 A summary of the proposed options for the Travel Corridor is shown in [Table 21](#) and [Figure 61](#).

Table 21. Galway North Radial (N84) Proposed Measures & Forecast Benefits

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Potential Junction Improvements (incl. facilitating improvements for public transport, pedestrian / cyclist movement whilst managing	Improvement to conditions for vehicular based travel, with resultant benefits in terms of congestion and delay; manage demand throughout the Travel Corridor. Enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.

vehicle capacity, bus priority, junction upgrades)	
Safety-Led Improvements to Road & Transport Infrastructure (incl. pedestrian / cycle safety measures, changes to traffic speeds, enhanced signage, traffic calming measures)	Address identified safety concerns within the Travel Corridor, around N17 / N84 / Milltown Road junctions; improve road user safety, including vulnerable road users; reduce frequency and severity of traffic collisions.
Cycle Greenway Facilities on / adjacent to N84	Improved connectivity for cyclists; enhanced safety for cyclists and other road users; benefits to bus journey times (through the removal of cyclists from general traffic routes which can reduce bus speeds and increase delay).

Figure 61. Galway North Radial (N84) Proposed Options Summary



6.15 Corridor 13: Galway – Oranmore & SW (N67)

Overview

- 6.15.1 The Galway - Oranmore & SW Galway (N67) Travel Corridor, shown in **Figure 62**, links Galway City with the key town of Oranmore and the south western areas of the county, before continuing into Clare County. It incorporates the N67 alongside connecting routes and public transport services.
- 6.15.2 The Travel Corridor is a radial route from Galway City. The route generally comprises of a wide single carriageway in both directions, with the section between the N6/N67 Roundabout and Oranmore dualled.

- 6.15.3 The travel corridor is well served by relatively high frequency bus services, particularly between Galway City and Oranmore, reflecting the high commuter demand along this corridor. Longer distance bus services are also provided to Cork and Dublin, with stops in key destinations along this route. Additionally, Iarnród Éireann rail services currently operate parallel to the Galway City – Oranmore section of the Transport Corridor.
- 6.15.4 Oranmore is identified as a key area for growth along the Travel Corridor, which is approximately 11km south east of the centre of Galway City.

Figure 62. Galway – Oranmore and SW Corridor



Identification of Issues

- 6.15.5 A series of issues have been identified through the baseline technical and information gathering exercises, summarised in Figure 63.

Figure 63. Galway – Oranmore and SW Issues Identified



- 6.15.6 A traffic collision cluster has been identified on the N67 through the village of Clarinbridge, approximately 5km south of Oranmore. It is important that should future patterns emerge, including an increase in collisions associated with projected growth in use of the Travel Corridor, safety measures are prioritised.
- 6.15.7 Localised congestion hotspots are distributed along the N67 between Oranmore and the County border at a number of towns and villages along the route including Kilcolgan, Ballinderreen and Kinvara.
- 6.15.8 There is a need to respond to growth within Oranmore and growth in trips towards Galway City and surrounding area in peak hours. Whilst the public transport provision is relatively frequent along the northern section of the corridor, there is a need to promote the uptake of public transport, improve connectivity with active modes and wider rural settlements.
- 6.15.9 Convenience of private vehicle travel, a lack of significant vehicular congestion and availability of parking can result in challenges in promoting and encouraging mode shift towards sustainable choices.

Longlist of Measures

- 6.15.10 A range of schemes, interventions and measures have been identified for the Travel Corridor; these have been segregated into four standalone options as detailed in **Section 5**. Full details of the longlist of measures developed is provided within the corridor-specific Technical Note contained at **Appendix C**.

Option Appraisal

- 6.15.11 The assessment of options for the Galway – Oranmore and SW Travel Corridor has confirmed multiple ways for the County to address the expected changes in travel patterns and demand. The appraisal process has identified a combined approach as being the most likely to succeed in delivering against both the corridor’s identified issues and the wider policy objectives.

Proposed Options

- 6.15.12 A summary of proposed measures for the Galway-Oranmore and SW (N67) Travel Corridor is provided in **Table 22** and **Figure 64**.

Table 22. Galway – Oranmore & SW (N67) Proposed Measures and Forecast Benefit

PROPOSED MEASURES	FORECAST BENEFIT
Cycle Greenway along N67, including connections to Galway-Athlone cycle route.	Improved connectivity for cyclists between Oranmore and Galway City and rural settlements along the Travel Corridor to proposed east to west (Galway-Athlone) Greenway connections.
Multi-Modal hub at Oranmore	Required to increase attractiveness of public transport use and allow for integrated interchange between modes.
Park and Ride at Ardaun	Reduced congestion upon approach and within Galway City by reduction of private vehicle trips improving journey times.

Road Safety Improvements	Improved safety for vulnerable road users, particularly through Clarinbridge where a cluster of accidents has been recorded.
Junction enhancements	Reduced congestion at localised congestion hotspots at identified congestion hotspots including Kilcolgan, Ballinderreen and Kinvara having positive impacts on journey times.

Figure 64. Galway – Oranmore & SW (N67) Proposed Options Summary



7. WALKING & CYCLING STRATEGY

7.1 Objectives of the Walking & Cycling Strategy

- 7.1.1 The importance of walking and cycling as a fundamental part of a comprehensive and effective transport strategy is recognised and supported through current policies at both the national and regional level. At the individual level, the potential “barriers” to use of these modes are generally lower than for motorised transport, and their status as “active” modes of travel means that people choosing to walk and cycle accrue not only direct benefits to themselves in terms of both physical activity and enjoyment, but also contribute toward a number of wider benefits to their local communities.
- 7.1.2 Pedestrians and cyclists are ideally placed to support local amenities and businesses, and to provide activity and natural surveillance which in turn benefit the public realm and other public spaces.
- 7.1.3 The CDP supports the application of relevant 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.
- 7.1.4 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; this will be achieved through both the delivery of new development in appropriate locations, and enhancements to existing walking and cycling networks through the approach set out in this section of the GCTPS.
- 7.1.5 Chapter 6 (Transport and Movement) of the CDP identifies a series of policy objectives directly relating to Walking and Cycling. Each of these objectives has been derived from analysis of local and regional transport information and future movement predictions as set out previously in this report; the application of strategy measures to achieve each of these objectives is described below.
- **Policy Objective WC1 – Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure:** To require the design of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards set out in the National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.
- 7.1.6 The Council will require these principles and standards to be applied on all works carried out on County Road, and will liaise with TII and NTA with regard to connections to other parts of the road network. Special consideration will be given to the design of new or improved infrastructure for local footpaths, or in areas of importance for habitat conservation or other landscape designations.
- **Policy Objective WC2 – Bicycle Parking:** To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities within the public realm of the town and villages throughout the County.

7.1.7 Provision of secure cycle parking will form a key element of the work around the proposed Transport Hubs (for Ballinasloe, Tuam and Athenry); the positioning and design of these facilities will be approached in a manner to make cycle use as convenient as possible, and to act visually as an enhancement to the public realm).

- **Policy Objective WC3 – Sustainable Transport Movement:** To require sustainable transport movement to be given priority at the earliest design stage of development proposals, to ensure accessibility by all modes of transport and all sections of society and promote the provision of parking space for bicycles in development schemes.

7.1.8 The Council will support this objective by working to identify potential for public realm schemes and those being brought forward as part of development proposals to interact and support one another, so that true “end to end” provision for local trips is achieved at the earliest opportunity. The planning application system will be used to underpin the importance of high quality design for these elements in all development proposals.

- **Policy Objective WC4 – Modern Network of Walking and Cycling Infrastructure:** To continue to work and engage with the National Transport Authority, the Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport and other agencies in developing a modern network of walking and cycling infrastructure in the County.

7.1.9 The corridor strategies have identified a series of regional and national walking and cycling route proposals which are expected to be brought forward by the NTA during the period of the County Development Plan. The Council will work to enable not only the delivery of these routes themselves, but also to represent local needs in terms of route selection. The County will also specifically address the creation or improvement of local connections to these strategic walking and cycling networks, in order to maximise benefits for Galway residents.

- **Policy Objective WC5 – Traffic Free Cycle Routes:** To provide, where possible, traffic free pedestrian and cyclist routes particularly where such routes would provide a more direct, safer, and more attractive alternative to the car.

7.1.10 Consideration will be given to the provision of traffic-free routes as part of new development, or where redevelopment of sites provides opportunities to re-route vehicular movement and create lightly trafficked or car-free routes. The wider principle of providing for active travel modes first and with priority over vehicular access will be applied to all relevant proposals on the public road network (as per objective WC4).

7.2 Greenways / Blueways

7.2.1 As set out in the Transport chapter of the CDP, 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.

7.2.2 The Council also acknowledges the economic benefits which arise from greenways particularly from a tourism perspective. While certain areas of the county already benefit from a strong tourism sector, it is considered that there is significant potential for

increased tourism numbers across the county and the addition of greenway and blueway infrastructure can provide a catalyst to increase tourism activity and provide a platform for further growth in this area; there is also strong potential for such provision to accrue additional benefits to local residents and act as a further incentive for leisure walking and cycling activities.

7.2.3 The Council will continue to support and facilitate the provision of greenways where appropriate within the county, and an objective is therefore included within the CDP to this effect as follows:

- **Policy Objective GW1 - Greenways:** The Council will 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 ie (Clifden to Oughterard, Galway to Oughterard).

Policy Objective GBW 2 - Future Development of Network of Greenways: To support the delivery of sustainable strategic greenway/blueways and projects in the county in accordance with the Strategy for Future Development of National and Regional Greenways.

7.2.4 The Council will seek to support these objective both through direct application of funding as this becomes available, and through negotiations and discussion with the developers of major sites in proximity to current or planned Greenway and Blueway networks.

8. PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY

8.1 Overview

- 8.1.1 This section of the report describes the measures which will be pursued and supported in order to increase the reach and uptake of public transport modes within Galway County. The strategy includes measures focused on specific public transport modes, and associated measures to promote and improve integration with other public transport services, active travel, and more sustainable forms of private vehicular travel.

8.2 The Role of Public Transport in Galway

- 8.2.1 The Council actively supports the provision of public transport throughout the county, both through direct involvement with the identification of service needs and joint working with relevant providers and other bodies. The National Transport Authority (NTA) are responsible for the provision of public transport and the Council will continue to liaise and co-operate with the NTA to ensure the enhancement of existing infrastructure and development of new public transport infrastructure takes place, particularly with regards to supporting areas of planned growth to embed public transport use from the earliest stages.
- 8.2.2 The strategy supports the improvement and expansion of public transport services, particularly to serve areas of new or more compact development. This is intended to ensure that there is greater sustainable modes of transport available to the county's population and also aims to ensure issues with respect to exclusion within more remote areas of the county are minimised.
- 8.2.3 The Council also supports the promotion of universal design in the delivery of all modes of public transport/infrastructure to ensure the more vulnerable in our society are not disadvantaged and can actively partake of public transport; this extends to public transport vehicles, stop and station design, and routes of access to and from public transport stops and stations.
- 8.2.4 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.
- 8.2.5 Policy objectives have therefore been defined in connection with general public transport principles and provision as follows:
- **Policy Objective PT 1 – Sustainable Modes of Transport:** To encourage a modal shift from use of the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.2.6 The County will seek to apply the measures set out in the preferred corridor options to directly influence and guide the creation of “new” trips (associated with new or expanded development of housing, employment and other land uses), such that sustainable modes

are not only available but made attractive in terms of journey time and convenience. Where this occurs, it is anticipated that the increased visibility and uptake of public transport services will encourage other residents and visitors / commuters to Galway County to make use of services in turn. A key element of this strategy is the recognition that it is very unlikely for existing residents and visitors to alter all of their trip choices; however, by way of example, a change which results in a person previously commuting to work five days a week by car to one who uses the car three days a week and PT on the other two will, when expanded across the working population, result in a significant and positive change to the demands placed on the road network.

8.2.7 This policy objective also has direct links to the wider changes in working arrangements which have been seen in effect as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the connected policy objectives within the County Development Plan which will support an increase in local and “home” working.

- **Policy Objective 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 and the expansion of public transport infrastructure and services in the County.

8.2.8 Galway County Council will seek to pursue the development and implementation of improvements to public transport infrastructure as described within the preferred corridor strategy options, with priority given to the “hub” concepts at Tuam, Ballinasloe and Athenry. In parallel to this, the County will engage with smaller local communities and operators of public and private bus services to identify locations where small-scale infrastructure improvements (such as bus stops and shelters, seating, and localised physical constraints to bus access) would facilitate a greater uptake of existing services, and/or support the extension or expansion of routes.

8.2.9 The Council will additionally seek to support both initiatives which help to improve co-ordination between different types of public transport (i.e. bus, coach and rail) and those which improve access via “first and last mile” connections, primarily those made to stops and transport hubs on foot and by cycle.

8.3 Bus Services

8.3.1 As has been set out in the transport baseline section of the GCTPS, 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 with major destinations including Galway City, nearby regional airports and other centres of scale nationally.

8.3.2 The Council recognises the importance of these services to the respective communities and will continue to facilitate their improvement, primarily through provision and upgrading of infrastructure, and continued provision of bespoke services to rural communities, including demand-responsive transport (see **Section 8.4** below).

8.3.3 Consolidation of growth in potential bus markets, associated with planned new development and the spatial policy objectives in the CDP, is expected to support and

broaden the customer base for both public and private bus services in the future. As is set out at Chapter 6 of the CDP, the plan will thus support the NTA and public and private operators in improving and extending bus services and infrastructure throughout the County.

8.3.4 Policy objectives have therefore been defined in connection with provision of bus services as follows:

- **Policy Objective PT3 – County Bus Services:** To support the National Transport Authority (NTA) and other stakeholders and community groups in improving bus service infrastructure.

8.3.5 The Council will liaise regularly with NTA and other relevant stakeholders during the lifetime of the CDP, and will respond to relevant consultations on proposed improvements, including advocating for smaller communities within the County in relation to service frequency and coverage.

8.4 Public Transport in Rural Areas

8.4.1 The Council considers the provision of public transport in rural areas to be of particular importance having regard to the rural nature of large parts of the county and the number of small urban settlements located throughout the county. It is recognised that there will be ongoing challenges in providing regular services to multiple rural areas with low population density based on a “traditional” model of public transport provision, however it is considered essential that rural isolation is reduced and that those without access to private vehicles are not cut off from vital services and the wider interactions with their communities.

8.4.2 In County Galway the NTA provides rural transport services through the Local Link Rural Transport Programme with over 80 services a week including demand responsive and door to door services. These models of service are considered to represent the most effective method of addressing rural social exclusion while also assisting in the integration of rural transport services with other public transport services. The provision of rural transport is supported through a defined policy objective as follows:

- **Policy Objective PT4 – 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.

8.4.3 During the lifetime of the CDP, the Council will seek to maintain existing service levels through the Local Link programme, and will support initiatives which extend “on demand” and “hail and ride” services in rural locations. This will include support for methods of extending access to these services through telephone and internet-based booking systems.

8.5 Park & Ride Facilities

8.5.1 The Council actively supports the provision of various forms of Park & 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.

Consultation with existing stakeholders has indicated that there is a willingness to see Park & Ride facilities expanded as a method of tackling long-standing areas of congestion on the road network, in a manner which accommodates the reality for many Galway County residents of a continuing need to use car travel for work, education and other purposes; these efforts are specifically intended to complement those associated with encouraging increased use of public transport wherever possible.

- 8.5.2 The Council supports the enhancement of and provision of capacity with regard to park and ride where feasible. The Council are also supportive of additional park and ride facilities which can be provided either through rail or other sustainable transport modes such as bus services at appropriate locations throughout the county, or car sharing facilities which could be utilised by commuters who car pool. The support for these measures is expressed through policy objective PT5:

- **Policy Objective PT 5 – Park and Ride:** To work with the National Transport Authority (NTA), Iarnród Éireann, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and any other stakeholders in identifying suitable locations for and the development of Park and Ride facilities in the County.

- 8.5.3 The Council will seek to work in partnership with NTA, TII and other stakeholders to appraise additional potential sites for Park & Ride provision as they become known and available; wherever possible, the Council will support sites which are capable of becoming self-sustaining over the medium and long term, and where any additional capacity which may be released on the road network as a result of reductions in general traffic via transfer to Park and Ride services can be used to improve access for sustainable modes and/or to address and improve safety.

8.6 Rail Services

- 8.6.1 The county is well served from the south and from the east via the Galway - 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 which 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.

- 8.6.2 Policy objectives have therefore been defined for each of these areas of the rail network and are discussed further below.

- 8.6.3 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) area and the wider north western region. The Council will continue to engage with Iarnród Éireann in seeking to improve rail services and infrastructure at appropriate locations in the County.

- **Policy Objective PT6 – Galway to Athlone Rail Line:** To secure in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann improved rail infrastructure and services between Galway and Athlone which includes a dual railway track and additional improvement works to ensure to ensure enhanced capacity and frequency of service.

8.6.4 As has been demonstrated through the corridor studies, the provision of enhanced service frequency on the Galway to Athlone corridor will serve a key role in encouraging the use of rail services to access both Galway City and the MASP area. It is currently anticipated that proposed development to be delivered within the period of the CDP can be accommodated via measures utilising existing road and rail infrastructure; however, over the longer term, the proposed growth within the MASP areas will require this “re-balancing” of demand by mode in order to achieve the desired densities of development. It is therefore considered to be important that the CDP and this Transport Strategy provide a clear and consistent approach to the provision of these rail enhancements, and that all action possible is undertaken to advance the schemes within this plan period.

- **Policy Objective PT7 – 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 in the event that the Government decides to proceed with this project following the review of the All Ireland Rail Review outcome.

8.6.5 The provision of electrification is considered by the Council to be a necessary activity over the longer term to allow for the benefits associated with electrified train infrastructure to be realised. These include greater reliability, fewer carbon emissions, and improved perception of rail travel as an attractive travel choice for a variety of purposes.

9. ROAD NETWORK STRATEGY

9.1 Overview

- 9.1.1 This section of the transport strategy sets out how the road networks within the County will be managed and maintained during the lifetime of the CDP. The strategy covers the County's role in relation to the national and regional road networks principally managed by TII, and the local road networks which are managed by the County's roads team.
- 9.1.2 It is recognised that maintaining the efficient and safe operation of the road network is pivotal to the success of the other modal strategies, as well as allowing new development to come forward. Making best use of existing road capacity is given a corresponding high priority, with additional road capacity targeted either where it can enhance provision for sustainable modes or where there is a strong strategic case for more general capacity enhancement.

9.2 Existing & Previously Proposed Road Projects

- 9.2.1 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. Connectivity both within the County itself and to adjacent Counties and key destinations further afield is heavily dependent on the provision of safe and efficient road network access.
- 9.2.2 There are a number of motorways 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 of the county. At a more local level there are a number of regional and local roads which provide connectivity between or town and villages and their wider rural hinterlands.
- 9.2.3 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.
- 9.2.4 The Council will continue to support extensions and improvements to existing roads infrastructure within the County with the priority projects listed with [Tables 23 to 25](#) as follows:

Table 23. National Road Projects

NATIONAL ROADS	
N6	Galway City Ring Road
N59	Clifden to Oughterard (N59 Clifden to Maam Cross and N59 Oughterard to Maam Cross) Ongoing
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
N65	Kilmeen to Portumna
N84	N84 Galway to County Boundary Scheme
N18	Carrowmoneash northwards towards the interchange with the M6

9.2.5 Other improvement projects associated with the routes identified above are as follows:

Critical Town Bypasses

- N59 Maigh Cuilinn By-pass (ongoing); and
- N17 Baile Chláir By-pass.

Other Roads

- R336 Bearnna-Scrib via Ros an Mhil;
- Athenry Relief Road;
- Tuam Inner Relief Road;
- Kinvara Inner Relief Road; and
- Link from the Parkmore Industrial Estate to the R339.

Table 24. Existing Public Car Parks

PUBLIC CAR PARKS
Gort Car Park

Headford Car Park
Kinvara Car Park
Oranmore Car Park
Oughterard Bus Parking

Table 25. Major National & Local Cycle Networks

NATIONAL & LOCAL CYCLE NETWORKS
Athlone to Galway
Galway to Clifden

- 9.2.6 A series of further local road projects are currently in development or being prepared for implementation within the CDP period (2022 to 2028); it is noted that these projects include initiatives targeted at specific modes as well as more general road network upgrades. The strategy supports the delivery of the following projects which are proposed within this timeframe as follows:

Table 26. Regional & Local Projects Proposed for 2022-2028

ROUTES	WORKS TO BE UNDERTAKEN
R336, R446	Network improvement works, strengthening overlay and improvements
N59 from Galway City to the Mayo boundary	N59 from Galway City to the Mayo boundary
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, N17, N59, N84 and linkage to the Western Rail Corridor.	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, works to these networks.

- 9.2.7 The above are supported through Policy Objectives PRP 1 and PRP 2:

- **Policy Objective PRP1 - 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.

- **Policy Objective PRP 2 - Corridor and Route Selection Process:** Policies 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 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.

- 9.2.8 The strategy additionally includes specific policy objectives relating to the National and local road networks, which are designed to address various matters including road safety, the strategic function of roads for both personal movement and freight, and the impacts of through-movement of traffic through settlements within the County. These objectives are described below along with how they will be supported through the measures set out in the relevant corridor strategies.

9.3 National Roads

- 9.3.1 Ireland's inter-urban motorway and dual carriageway networks provide vital, strategic transport links between our major cities, markets, ports and airports. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) are a state agency who are responsible for the provision of the National Road network and the Council will continue to work with TII to ensure the enhancement of existing infrastructure and development of new infrastructure, where this is consistent with wider sustainable transport and development policies.

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

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

- 9.3.3 In addition to the above schemes the N59 Oughterard – Maam Cross – Clifden is included as a Scheme in Planning/Design/Construction in the National Development Plan. The Oughterard – Maam Cross section has received planning permission and construction works have commenced. Delivery of these schemes will safeguard the movement of strategic traffic within and across the County.

Galway City Ring Road

- 9.3.4 The delivery of the N6 Galway City Ring Road (GCRR) is considered to be 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 worsen and inevitably impact on the overall function and success of the Galway MASP. 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).

- 9.3.5 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 all transport modes. The N6 around Galway forms part of the TEN-T comprehensive network in Ireland and is governed by EU regulations associated with such designation. This means that the proposed 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.
- 9.3.6 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 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern Western Region 2020-2032 and the National Planning Framework 2040 which include goals to tackle transportation infrastructure deficits.
- 9.3.7 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 roads, to ensure 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.

National Roads Policy Objectives

- **Policy Objective NR1 – Protection of Strategic Roads:** To protect the strategic transport function of national roads, 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.
- 9.3.8 The CDP policy objectives relating to the location of new development, and the assessment of transport impacts of development, are designed to ensure that the spatial planning guidelines are applied to the specifics of scheme proposals which will be brought forward during the CDP period. In particular, the location of new development in places where sustainable transport options can be delivered to a high standard and represent a "first choice" for travel needs will ensure that strategic capacity is not absorbed unnecessarily by private vehicle travel. The means by which this will be achieved for specific journey types within identified travel corridors is described within the corridor option assessments set out previously in this GCTPS document.
- **Policy Objective NR2 – Key Roads Infrastructure Developmnts:** To support the delivery of the Galway City Ring Road (N6), the Maigh Cuilinn Bypass N59 and the–Maam Cross – Clifden (N59) Schemes.
- 9.3.9 The Council will engage fully with Galway City Council and TII in relation to the development and implementation of these schemes. The Council will additionally consider how improvements to connecting parts of the local road network and other transport

infrastructure and services will interact with these improvements, and seek to maximise benefits arising from the combination of schemes wherever possible.

- **Policy Objective NR3 – 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.

9.3.10 In addition to requiring the production of TTAs, the Council will direct developers and their teams to consult with appropriate officers within TII, NTA and other bodies where their proposed schemes can reasonably be expected to result in impacts to the networks managed by these parties.

9.4 Non-National Roads

9.4.1 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.

Table 27. Restricted Regional Roads

	DESCRIPTION	DESIGNATION
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	Ballinalsoe – Portumna	R355
8	Ballinalsoe – 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

- **Policy Objective NNR1 – 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.

9.4.2 The Council will seek to control the provision of new access points and increase in the use of existing access points to the listed restricted regional roads.

9.4.3 The methods for proposed development to contribute toward this objective are described in relation to a number of other transport policy objectives; in essence, development which would result in an increase in traffic on any of the listed Restricted Regional Roads will be required to demonstrate that all viable actions related to provision for sustainable transport measures have been integrated into the development proposal (including the use of a mobility management plan where relevant). The scoping of the TTA and other documentation to support such proposals should specifically address the assessment methodology for qualifying roads.

- **Policy Objective NNR2 – Safeguard Regional and Local Roads:** To safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of the County's regional and local road network.

9.4.4 The Council will work with the relevant authorities to identify locations on the regional and local road network where actions to improve safety may be required; a number of these locations have been identified as part of the corridor studies through analysis of accident records. The strategy also recognises that, with increases in both active travel and vehicular movement associated with growth, monitoring and further actions may be necessary over the lifetime of the CDP to address any emerging safety issues. This is considered particularly relevant to encouraging the increased use of active travel modes, as concerns over safety are frequently cited as discouraging these journeys, particularly for younger and vulnerable people.

9.4.5 The modal strategies set out in this GCTPS will guide the selection of future projects to be included in any future updated works programme, with particular priority given to works which enhance the safety or efficiency of the networks for all users.

- **Policy Objective NNR3 – Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets:** Implement the recommendations of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2019) in relation to urban streets and roads within the 50/60 kph zone.

9.4.6 This objective is considered to be directly relevant to the implementation of planned development within the MASP; the principles and contents of DMURS may also be relevant in areas where more concentrated development is planned. Care will be taken to align the use of DMURS with the existing characteristics of settlements.

- **Policy Objective NNR 4 – Traffic Management in Town Centres:** Seek 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.

9.4.7 It is recognised that high concentrations of through-traffic movement, particularly during network peak hours, can be detrimental to the uptake of sustainable modes for local journeys;

in pursuing this objective, the Council will seek to balance a reduction in this type of through-movement with a recognition that settlements may also benefit from the effects of “pass-by” and “linked” trips, for example where persons travelling to and from work are able to stop and visit local shops and other services as part of their longer journey.

- **Policy Objective NNR5 – 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.

9.4.8 The safe movement of children and young people to and from places of education will continue to be given a high degree of priority when proposed improvements or changes to the transport networks are considered. Section 10 provides some further consideration of how education and school travel can be facilitated, in a manner which supports maximum use of sustainable travel options, but also recognises the needs of those living in more rural areas of the County.

- **Policy Objective NNR6 – Traffic and Transport Assessments (TTAs) and Road Safety Audits (RSAs):** 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.

9.4.9 This policy objective will ensure that the transportation needs associated with residents and other users of new developments are taken account of, and addressed in a manner which is compatible with both this GCTPS and the wider CDP. In reviewing submitted TTAs, the Council will consider the extent to which the development proposals contribute toward the achievement of all relevant transport policy objectives.

- **Policy Objective NNR7 – Mobility Management Plans:** To require mobility management plans to be submitted with applications for trip intensive developments.

9.4.10 The use of mobility management plans will provide a mechanism for the benefits of higher concentrations of travel demand to be captured, both in terms of providing new and upgraded infrastructure and generating an increased customer base for public transport services. The mobility management plans will also demonstrate how necessary access for vehicles (including servicing vehicles) will be provided, in a manner which does not negatively affect provision for sustainable modes.

- **Policy Objective NNR8 – Car Parking:** Provide/improve parking facilities in towns and villages as development and traffic demand. The requirements for car parking shall be in accordance with the standards and guidelines as set out within Chapter 15 (Development Management Standards and Guidelines) of the County Development Plan under Guidelines for Transportation, Roads, Parking, Loading and Storage.

9.4.11 Car parking policy and its effects on the travel choices made by residents of Galway County (as well as regular visitors from elsewhere) is considered further within section 10 of the GCTPS. The strategy will seek to direct new public car parking provision to locations where it

can serve those who have a physical need to travel by car, and those for whom other transport choices are limited. Car parking associated with new development will be managed via County policy to reflect the provision and availability of sustainable travel modes; the “Compact Growth” strategy which will be delivered via the wider CDP should ensure that development is directed to locations where excellent sustainable transport options are or will be made available.

10. SUPPORTING MEASURES

10.1 Demand Management Principles

- 10.1.1 The Galway County Transport and Planning Strategy has been constructed around the principles established through national and regional policy that the transport impacts associated with growth and development should be managed to achieve a number of different aims. Central to this is the principle that growth and development should actively support and encourage the use of sustainable transport modes, and that whilst some additional use of private vehicular transport will by necessity be required, the road networks should seek to accommodate this demand through measures which make best use of existing infrastructure. Measures which work together to achieve these outcomes are collectively referred to as “demand management” measures, and whilst these can also be classified as “supporting” elements which are delivered alongside the main modal strategies, their importance in maximising the benefits and effectiveness of the mode strategies is considerable. This section of the GCTPS therefore sets out how a number of these measures will be implemented as part of the delivery of the modal strategies, and in partnership with relevant bodies and organisations.

10.2 Transport Mode Integration & Trip Linking

- 10.2.1 The County Development Plan establishes the locations where new development will be delivered during the plan period, and how this development will integrate with and support existing communities. Transport has a key role to play in this process of integration, by providing opportunities to enhance connectivity between residents, employment and services, providing new customers for public transport services, and generally allowing people within the County to “link” different purposes within their daily travel routines. Accordingly, the GCTPS will support the delivery of development in accordance with the principle of “compact growth” which will increase access to employment, services and community facilities in a sustainable manner, facilitating easier connections between sustainable modes of transport and ensuring that vehicular access is maintained where necessary to support those with limited mobility, or essential delivery and servicing activities.

10.3 Parking Standards & Parking Controls

- 10.3.1 It is recognised that the availability of car parking in different settings has a strong impact upon the relative attractiveness of travel by private vehicles; this in turn has a direct impact on the efficient and safe operation of the road networks. The GCTPS therefore seeks to support the provision of appropriate levels of car parking within new developments which are compatible with the over-arching objectives relating to the wider road and other transport networks.
- 10.3.2 The parking standards which are proposed within the County Development Plan have been designed to work alongside the modal strategies and other supporting measures in order to achieve the CDP’s objectives for growth, in a manner which is both sustainable and fair to both existing and new residents and visitors (including those travelling for employment and

education). The parking standards will in turn be supported through appropriate use of on-street parking controls, and careful location and capacity of public car parks, with attention also given to parking for cycles and motorcycles as part of this provision.

- 10.3.3 Particular attention will be given to the provision of well-located and secure cycle parking in all major developments, and in local centres.

10.4 Electric Vehicles & Low-Carbon Technologies

- 10.4.1 There is an expectation that there will be a significant increase in the uptake and use of electric vehicles and other low-carbon technologies during the period of the County Development Plan. The GCTPS will seek to support this increase through the provision of parking and charging infrastructure, where it is feasible to do so; it is recognised that this should include electric cycles and scooters alongside private cars.
- 10.4.2 Galway County Council will work alongside TII and the NTA with regard to supporting provision for longer-distance travel via electric vehicles, including provision for hybrid public transport and freight.

10.5 Park & Stride

- 10.5.1 The GCTPS supports the provision of “park and stride” facilities where there is a need to improve access to services and community facilities where some travel by car is necessary, but where there are opportunities to locate associated car parking away from constrained or sensitive locations. It is considered that this type of facility has a particular role to play in increasing access to local centres and education facilities from surrounding rural areas; park and stride facilities also reduce the impacts of inappropriate on-street parking and encourage a degree of increased physical activity. The implementation of Park and Stride facilities will be explored further as part of the development of the Local Transport Plans for Ballinasloe and Tuam, and lessons learned from these activities will be applied to proposals and opportunities identified elsewhere in the County.

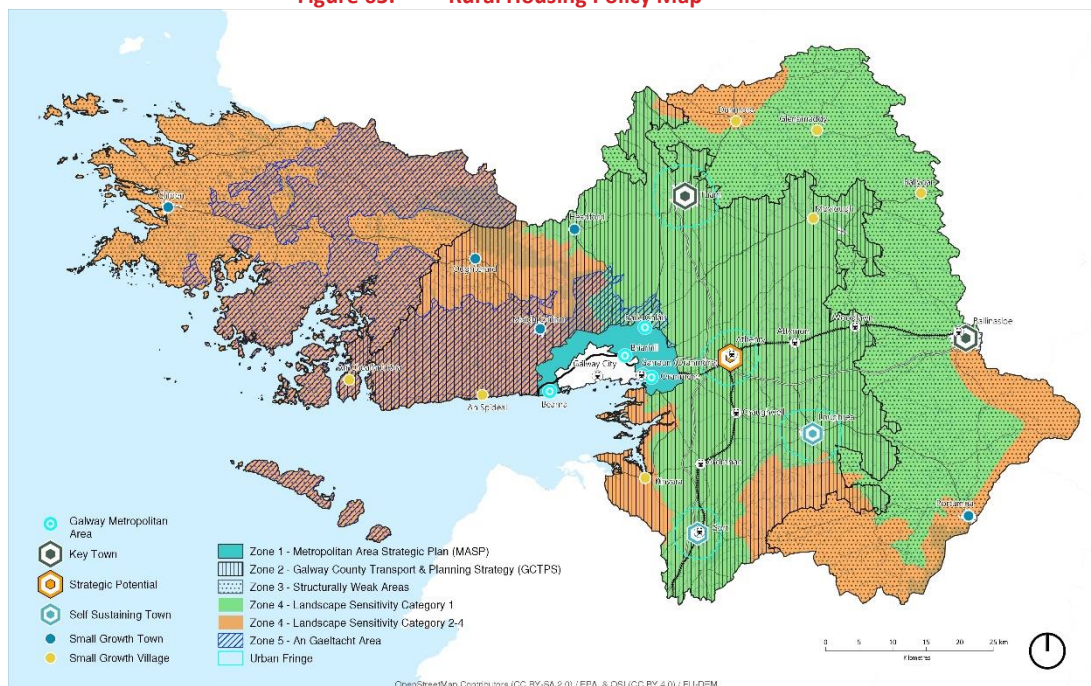
10.6 Park & Ride

- 10.6.1 The provision of Park and Ride facilities to serve different corridors and settlements has been explored as part of the corridor option development work reported in previous sections of this GCTPS. The GCTPS therefore supports the development of Park and Ride facilities in locations where there is expected to be sufficient demand to enable a facility to become self-supporting, and where the connecting bus services are able to deliver a consistent journey time for P&R users which circumvents or otherwise avoids significant congestion hotspots. The development of P&R proposals which will impact on travel demand into Galway city centre will be undertaken in close consultation with Galway City Council; in turn, Galway County Council will remain engaged with the City Council with regard to the further development of P&R sites which are described in (and supported by) the Galway Transport Strategy.

10.7 Rural Housing Protection Zones & Rural Transport Services

- 10.7.1 The development of housing within rural areas of the County has historically been managed through the application of policies designed to recognise the strengths and challenges for those who live and work within the rural parts of Galway County.
- 10.7.2 **Figure 65** below shows how the different geographical areas of the County are defined, for the purposes of applying rural policies.

Figure 65. Rural Housing Policy Map



- 10.7.3 The area which is marked as “Zone 2 – GCTPS area” on the above map represents the main “commuting” area within the County for Galway City – residents living in settlements within this area are considered to have access to Galway City by one or more modes which represents an attractive option for those seeking employment. As such, it is considered that locations within this geographical area are likely to consequently be attractive for new development, and/or to attract an increase in the residential population. (It is noted that this area also include the MASP area marked as “Zone 1” on Figure 65).
- 10.7.4 Previous evidence of this pattern of population distribution is found within the 2011-2016 population change data extracted from 2016 Census information; mapping showing both the percentage and “actual” change in population numbers within the GCTPS area is shown at **Figures 66 and 67**.

Figure 66. Population Change 2011 – 2016 (Percentage)

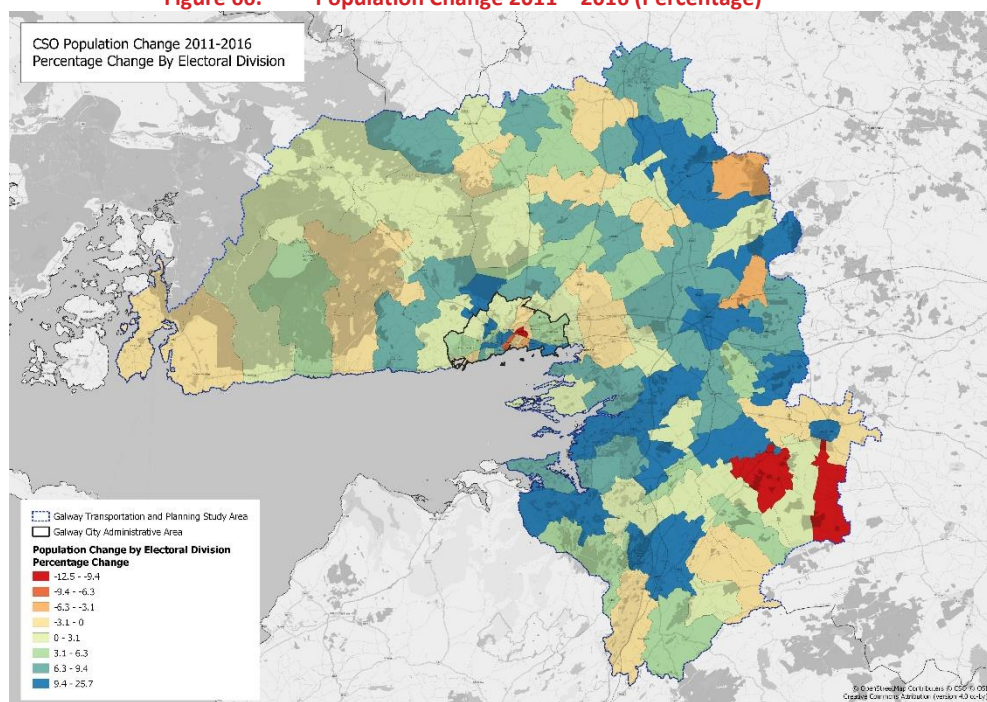
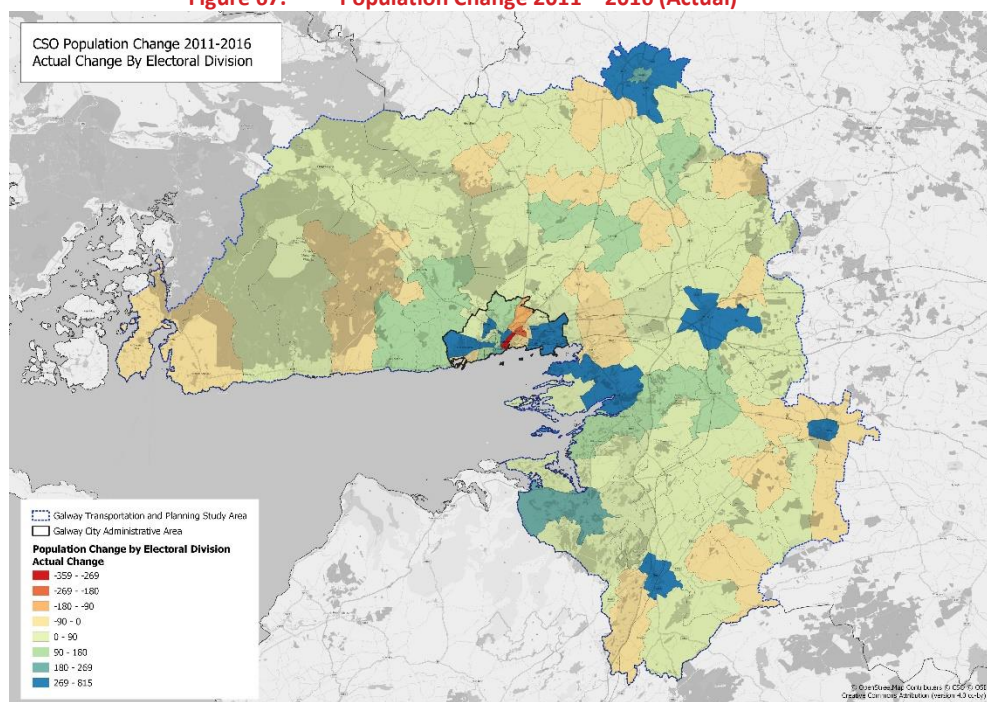


Figure 67. Population Change 2011 – 2016 (Actual)



10.7.5 Comparing the percentage changes with the “actual” change data indicates that, as would be expected, the highest concentrations of growth within this period were focused around larger existing settlements. However, the pattern of change within the rural areas outside of these settlements is mixed, with relatively large areas of the County within the GCTPS area experiencing modest growth in population.

- 10.7.6 It is understood that this pattern of change has largely continued since 2016. This means that, taken cumulatively, the growth in rural areas within the GCTPS area has led to increased movement on both the local and regional road networks, primarily associated with movement to and from Galway City and other larger settlements within Galway County; this is evidenced by the model data examined within Section 5 of this document.
- 10.7.7 With regards specifically to the provision of transport for rural areas, the Council will continue to support initiatives such as the “Local Link” rural bus services, and improvements to local walking and cycling infrastructure. In accordance with the wider development policies of the CDP, areas which are denoted as “structurally weak” within the rural housing policy areas will be supported in terms of improvements to serve existing local communities; this will be done in a manner which does not directly encourage significant new housing development. In addition, proposed housing and other development within the GCTPS area (but outside of the identified settlements as shown on the rural housing policy map) will be considered in terms of its potential impacts on key movement corridors; related policies (such as parking provision) will be applied to manage the cumulative impacts of this type of development.

10.8 Intelligent Transport Systems and “Mobility as a Service”

- 10.8.1 The GCTPS supports the use of technology solutions to provide enhanced access to travel and transport information; it is recognised that there are a number of web-based and application services providing data on traffic levels, walking and cycling routes, and general journey planning. Galway County Council will work with always City Council, TII and the NTA to ensure that the source data for these services is as up-to-date as possible.
- 10.8.2 Galway County Council will be supportive of initiatives which may be brought forward by public and private bus and coach operators, and Iarnród Éireann, to increase access to public transport information (and in particular “real time” service information).
- 10.8.3 The emergence of new business models around the concept of “mobility as a service” is expected to have an increasing influence on travel choices over the period of the County Development Plan. These services could potentially have a role in increasing access to transport for those in more rural areas, however it is considered that due to the lower densities of population, the commercial “attractiveness” of these travel needs will be less than for more concentrated centres of population, and thus the provision of rural transport is likely to remain a major activity for the County and their partners for the foreseeable future.

10.9 School Travel

- 10.9.1 Travel to and from schools and other places of education forms a substantial element of travel demand in the AM and early PM peak periods. Additionally, travel “habits” acquired by pupils and students are recognised as having an impact on their subsequent attitudes to travel as adults, and the opportunity to travel to and from school by active modes provides a significant element of beneficial activity for those involved.
- 10.9.2 In addition to the measures set out in the modal strategies, the GCTPS will therefore support and encourage initiatives by schools to increase travel by pupils, students and staff via active and sustainable modes. New developments will be required to demonstrate how children and young people will be able to access local school and other education facilities; the County will

also support schemes which seek to reduce the prevalence of vehicle movements and on-street vehicle parking in close proximity to these facilities.

10.10 Workplace Travel

- 10.10.1 Travel to and from places of work takes a wide variety of forms within Galway County, reflecting the diversity of economic activity undertaken by residents. The influence of Galway City on travel patterns is recognised as being highly significant, and the corridor assessments have directly addressed these impacts in developing the corresponding corridor strategies.
- 10.10.2 The locations of proposed significant new employment uses and development (as set out in the County Development Plan) have in part been determined through assessment of how these locations would be accessed, with preference given to locations where both the transport networks and the type and density of development proposed will be capable of supporting significant numbers of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport. The GCTPS will further support the realisation of these benefits through support for developments where active and sustainable travel choices are promoted, and access via private car travel is managed and controlled.
- 10.10.3 Further, the County Council will actively encourage measures taken by existing major employment sites to improve access by sustainable and active modes, particularly with regard to any proposals to upgrade or refresh existing sites for renewed employment use.

10.11 Tourism & Leisure

- 10.11.1 The promotion of tourism and the expansion of leisure activities which take advantage of County Galway's wealth of natural attractions and environments forms a key part of both the County Development Plan and the RSES. It is recognised, however, that the impacts of transport activity associated with tourism and leisure can accrue unevenly across communities within the County, and that growth in these activities must be accommodated in a manner which does not degrade or harm either local communities or the environments where these activities take place.
- 10.11.2 The GCTPS therefore seeks to support the expansion of sustainable transport options to serve leisure and tourist demand; it is considered that there is particular potential for cycling to play a substantial role in improving access to both settlements and their surrounding countryside. The seasonal impacts of tourist traffic will also be considered in relation to both the general operation and safety of the road networks.

11. TRANSPORT STRATEGY – AREA SUMMARIES

11.1 Purpose of Area Summaries

- 11.1.1 This section provides an overview of key destinations within Galway County, which have played an important role in influencing the development of the GCTPS. The identified locations and areas have been a key consideration when developing transport measures to support growth across the County as well as promoting sustainable mode shift.
- 11.1.2 The key destinations below summarise the influence of the area on the wider County, outline the forecast growth and provide an overview of identified physical measures to meet the objectives identified for each of the mode strategies in the preceding chapters.

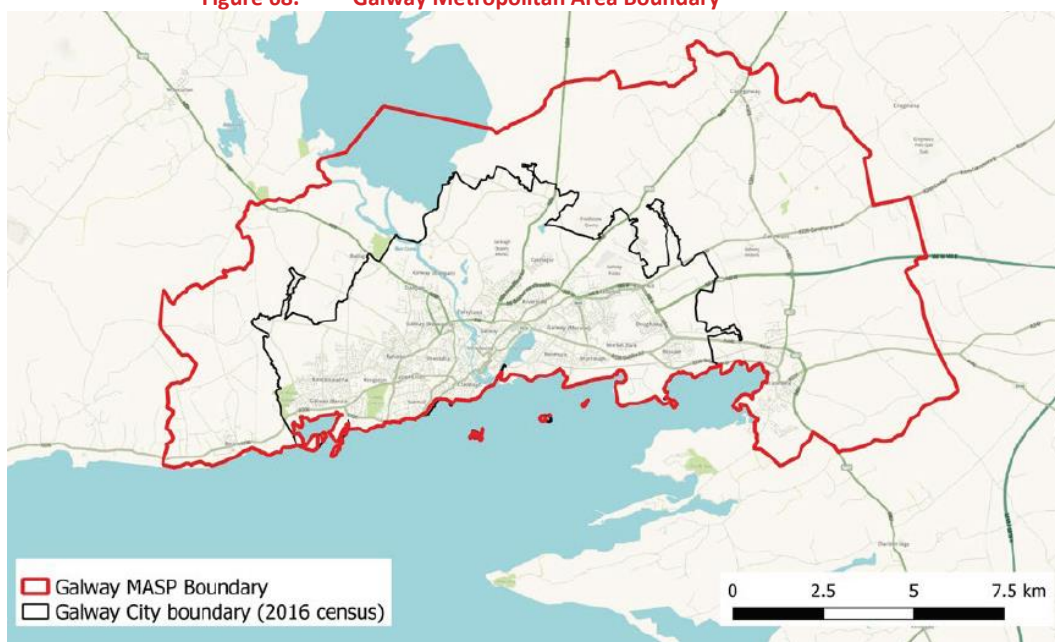
11.2 National & Regional Connectivity

- 11.2.1 Whilst the predominant aim of the measures identified has been to support growth within Galway County, it should be noted that a number of the measures will also facilitate travel through the County, to and from other counties via improvements to the motorways, and the North to South and East to West Travel Corridors linking with Galway City which includes proposed improvements for road, rail and long-distance cycling.
- 11.2.2 It is an objective of the GCTPS to facilitate the development of high quality and inclusive walking and cycling networks across the County. Consequently in terms of long-distance cycling, a number of the area summaries reference the proposed Galway to Athlone National Cycleway Scheme, which will form part of the Galway to Dublin Cycleway. This scheme is currently undergoing public consultation (February 2021), and a series of route proposals have been considered which are subject to optioneering. The route selection will impact on which areas are directly connected to the National scheme, which some options routing to the north of the M6 and some to the south. Given the recognised importance of this east to west connection, the GCTPS will ensure that connectivity to the Galway to Athlone cycleway is promoted for all key destinations outlined below. This will ensure wide reaching benefits are secured irrespective of the overall routing strategy.

11.3 Metropolitan Area (MASP)

- 11.3.1 The Galway Metropolitan Area (MASP) as defined by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2020-2032), encompasses Galway City and surrounding parts of the county as shown in [Figure 68](#). The boundary of the MASP extends beyond Bearna to the west, Baile Chláir to the north and Oranmore to the east.

Figure 68. Galway Metropolitan Area Boundary



NWRA RSES, Figure 19

- 11.3.2 The region is significantly influenced by Galway City, with a high proportion of commuters to Galway City and therefore radial Travel Corridors from Galway to key destinations have considered measures to support commuter journeys, focusing on reduced reliance of private vehicle and greater uptake of sustainable travel alternatives.
- 11.3.3 The population of the Metropolitan Area is projected to grow by 27,500 to 2026 and by a further 14,500 to 2031, with the population of the city and suburbs accommodating 23,000 to 2026 and a further 12,000 to 2031. Within Galway County, residential growth areas are identified in Bearna to the west, Oranmore to the east and Baile Chláir to the northeast, with industrial / technology growth identified in Oranmore and around the former Galway Airport lands. The transport measures identified along key Corridors have therefore taken these significant growth areas into account during optioneering. Further detail on identified measures in relation to key areas is summarised in the area strategies below.
- 11.3.4 A key transport measure for the MASP will be the introduction of the Galway City Ring Road, which is currently at Phase 4 (Environmental Impact Assessment/ Statutory Processes) of the National Roads Authority 2010 Project Management Guidelines. The City Ring Road scheme will provide connections between east and west Galway County, minimising the need to travel through the city. Whilst predominately a road based scheme, implementation will have positive impacts on congestion improving journey times for buses along key routes into Galway City.

11.4 Ballinasloe

- 11.4.1 The Key Town of Ballinasloe plays an important role as a commercial and industrial hub for the east side of Galway County. The RSES (2020) identifies Ballinasloe as 'an anchor for employment in east Galway' with potential for increased tourism activity. It is well connected via multiple transport modes, with the M6 east to west corridor running adjacent to the south

of the town, offering strategic connections between Galway City and Dublin as well as the Iarnród Éireann rail services operating parallel to this route.

11.4.2 Internal trips within Ballinasloe are forecast to increase by 10% between 2022-2028 (WRM linear analysis detailed in **Section 5.6**), reflecting forecast population growth within and in vicinity of the Town. A relative high majority of internal trips are made by private vehicle (67%) and the proposed measures seek encourage shorter journeys to be made by walking and cycling creating a vibrant, active, liveable neighbourhood centre.

11.4.3 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Ballinasloe include:

- Athenry -Ballinasloe (M6) Travel Corridor;
- Ballinasloe – Tuam Travel Corridor.

11.4.4 The following measures included at **Table 28** have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Ballinasloe, favouring sustainable mode shift and promotion in uptake of active travel. It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at **Appendix C**.

Table 28. Proposed Physical Measures – Ballinasloe

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Public Transport	Dual Railing (Ballinasloe to Galway)
Multi-Modal	Ballinasloe Multi-Modal Hub
Active Travel	Galway – Athlone Cycleway

Ballinasloe Local Transport Plan

11.4.5 The Ballinasloe Local Transport Plan will seek to promote sustainable transport as a means of supporting internal growth within the town as well as encouraging connectivity to/from the surrounding rural areas to promote a thriving and attractive place to live and work. Promotion of a multi-modal hub within the Town Strategy, will be key to encourage active modes for first and last mile trips, allowing for seamless connections onto onwards public transport journeys via rail or bus, as well as facilitate a favourable environment for walking and cycling for shorter journeys within the town and from nearby settlements. These measures will look to create a vibrant town which favours walking and cycling over private vehicle for internal trips.

11.4.6 The delivery of the Galway to Athlone cycleway will support the Town Strategy through increased leisure cycle tourism through Ballinasloe and enhance connectivity between rural destinations along this key east to west route, having positive impacts on local businesses and growth opportunities.

11.4.7 The Local Transport Plan will provide a framework for delivery of the key transport measures identified as part of Travel Corridor optioneering.

11.5 Tuam

- 11.5.1 The Key Town of Tuam as located in the north of Galway County, in a strategic location to offer excellent connections to Galway City and surrounding rural settlements. The RSES (2020) identifies Tuam as a destination for business and prioritises the town as a focus area for development in the northern area of Galway County.
- 11.5.2 Tuam is connected to the strategic road network via the N83, offering direct connections to Galway City and the M17, which offers important interregional connections. Whilst no rail routes serve Tuam, the town is relatively well served by a number of rural bus connections and well as commuter coaches to Galway City offering alternatives to the private vehicle.
- 11.5.3 Internal trips within Tuam are forecast to increase by 9% between 2022-2028 (WRM linear analysis detailed in **Section 5.6**), reflecting forecast population growth within and in vicinity of the Town. A relative high majority of internal trips are made by private vehicle (64%) and the proposed measures seek encourage shorter journeys to be made by walking and cycling creating a vibrant, active, liveable neighbourhood centre.
- 11.5.4 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Tuam include:
- Galway – Tuam (N83) Travel Corridor; and
 - Ballinasloe – Tuam Travel Corridor.
- 11.5.5 The following measures included at **Table 29** have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Tuam and the wider settlement area, favouring sustainable mode shift and promotion in uptake of active travel. It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at **Appendix C**.

Table 29. Proposed Physical Measures – Tuam

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Multi-Modal	Tuam Multi-Modal Hub
Active Travel	Galway – Tuam Cycleway

Tuam Local Transport Plan

- 11.5.6 The Tuam Local Transport Plan will seek to promote sustainable transport as a means of supporting internal growth within the town as well as encouraging connectivity to/from the surrounding rural areas to promote a thriving and attractive place to live and work. Tuam draws a high proportion of trips for commuter, leisure and schooling purposes from the neighbouring rural area and so facilitating sustainable connections will be a key aspect of the strategy. Promotion of a multi-modal hub within the Town Strategy, will be key to ensure the integration of the public transport interchange facilities within the town, ensure ease of permeability and connectivity to the bus network and improve overall public realm.

- 11.5.7 Through the Local Transport Plan the options for the multi-modal hub will be investigated, including incorporating bus stops and facilities, cycle parking and connections to key pedestrian routes to enable easy interchange between modes.
- 11.5.8 Opportunities for bus passengers, taxi users, pedestrians and cyclists to interchange seamlessly will greatly increase the opportunity to travel by sustainable modes to a variety of destinations. This would enhance accessibility to the bus network, provide better walking and cycling connections to central hub, an enhanced environment through the provision of shelters and landscaping and provide a well linked point of access to the bus network. This measure would benefit both the residents, commuters and visitor to Tuam, as well as serve the wider rural settlements.
- 11.5.9 Additionally, in conjunction with the TII, the Local Transport Plan will consider opportunities for improvements to public transport along the N83 corridor in vicinity of Tuam, such as bus priority through congested junctions, to support the objectives of the Local Transport Plan.
- 11.5.10 The Local Transport Plan will explore the feasibility of providing a greenway cycling route between Tuam to Galway, which will improve local connections and could have resultant impacts on leisure cycle tourism, having positive impacts on local businesses and growth opportunities. Routing options will ensure clear linkages with a proposed multi-modal hub to serve the town, alongside localised cycling improvement schemes within the town centre. These measures look to create a vibrant town which favours walking and cycling over private vehicle for internal trips.
- 11.5.11 The Local Transport Plan will provide a framework for delivery of the key transport measures identified as part of Travel Corridor optioneering.

11.6 Athenry

- 11.6.1 Athenry is located to the eastern side of Galway County and has strategic potential for growth and influence within the County. It is well connected in a central location of the County via multiple transport modes, with the M6 east to west corridor running adjacent to the north of the town, offering strategic connections between Galway City and Dublin as well as the Iarnród Éireann rail services operating parallel to this route.
- 11.6.2 Athenry station is located on the Galway to Dublin Rail Route and a key aspiration is to provide rail dualling between Galway and Athenry, offering improved journey times to allow more frequent non-stopping services along the line. This would significantly reduce commuter journey rail times and offer a more frequent, attractive service to commuters.
- 11.6.3 Internal trips within Athenry are forecast to increase by 8% between 2022-2028 (WRM linear analysis detailed in **Section 5.6**), reflecting forecast population growth within and in vicinity of the Town. A relative high majority of internal trips are made by private vehicle (60%) and the proposed measures seek to encourage shorter journeys to be made by walking and cycling creating a vibrant, active, liveable neighbourhood centre.
- 11.6.4 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Athenry include:

- Galway- Athenry (M6) Travel Corridor; and
- Athenry -Ballinasloe (M6) Travel Corridor.

11.6.5 The following measures included at [Table 30](#) have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Athenry and the wider settlement area, favouring sustainable mode shift and promotion in uptake of active travel. It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at [Appendix C](#).

Table 30. Proposed Physical Measures – Athenry

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Public Transport	Dual Railing (Athenry to Galway)
Multi-Modal	Athenry Multi-Modal Hub
Active Travel	Galway – Athlone Cycleway

11.7 Loughrea

11.7.1 Loughrea is a Self-Sustaining Town located in the eastern part of the county, which is connected via regional routes to the strategic road network. Loughrea is located approximately 35km travel distance from Galway City (via the N65 and M6) and so acts as a commuter town, as well as a destination in its own right. Loughrea is an important town and a driver of growth for the immediate and surrounding areas, Whilst not served by a rail line, public transport options are available via local bus services to nearby towns including Gort albeit they are relatively infrequent.

11.7.2 Internal trips within Loughrea are forecast to increase by 5% between 2022-2028 (WRM linear analysis detailed in [Section 5.6](#)), reflecting forecast population growth within and in vicinity of the Town. A relative high majority of internal trips are made by private vehicle (60%) and the proposed measures seek to encourage shorter journeys to be made by walking and cycling creating a vibrant, active, liveable neighbourhood centre.

11.7.3 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Loughrea include:

- Loughrea – Gort Travel Corridor; and
- Galway-Loughrea-Portumna Travel Corridor.

11.7.4 The following measures included at [Table 31](#) have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Loughrea and the wider settlement area, favouring sustainable mode shift, connectivity of public transport and promotion in uptake of active travel. It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at [Appendix C](#).

Table 31. Proposed Physical Measures – Loughrea

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Multi-Modal	Loughrea Multi-Modal Hub
Active Travel	Galway – Athlone Cycleway
Active Travel	Loughrea – Portumna Cycleway (adjacent to N65)

11.8 Gort

- 11.8.1 Gort is a Self- Sustaining Town located in the southern part of the County, approximately 2km from the border with County Clare. Gort is a considered an important town in its own right, with a high degree of self-sufficiency resulting in a reduced demand for travel..
- 11.8.2 Gort is well connected via the M18 strategic north to south road network, offering important interregional connections, as well as direct interchange with the M6 providing an east to west connection to Galway City, resulting in a high commuter draw to Galway City. Gort is additionally served by Iarnród Éireann rail services on the Galway City to Limerick line, allowing for interchange with the Galway- Dublin rail line at Athenry.
- 11.8.3 Internal trips within Gort are forecast to increase by 7% between 2022-2028 (WRM linear analysis detailed in **Section 5.6**), reflecting forecast population growth within and in vicinity of the Town. A relative high majority of internal trips are made by private vehicle (68%) and the proposed measures seek encourage shorter journeys to be made by walking and cycling creating a vibrant, active, liveable neighbourhood centre.
- 11.8.4 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Gort include:
- Loughrea – Gort Travel Corridor; and
 - North-South (M18) Travel Corridor.
- 11.8.5 The following measures included at **Table 32** have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Gort and the wider settlement area, favouring sustainable mode shift including improving transport interchange facilities and promotion in uptake of active travel. It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at **Appendix C**.

Table 32. Proposed Physical Measures – Gort

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Multi-Modal	Gort Multi-Modal Hub
Active Travel	Galway – Athlone Cycleway

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Active Travel	Galway - Loughrea Cycleway (adjacent to R380)

11.9 Portumna

11.9.1 Portumna is a Small Growth Town, located on the south eastern side of the County, within a 2km distance from the boundary with the adjacent County Tipperary via the N65. Portumna is considered an important town with key local services and employment potential.

11.9.2 Portumna is located along the N65 which offers an important strategic connections to the M6 in the north and inter-regional connections with the road network in the neighbouring County Tipperary. Portumna Forest Park is a key amenity attraction located to the west of the town centre and is recognised as having a potential for growth of tourist and leisure trips.

11.9.3 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Portumna include:

- Galway - Loughrea – Portumna Travel Corridor.

11.9.4 The following measures included at [Table 33](#) have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Portumna and the wider settlement area, favouring sustainable mode shift in particular the uptake of active travel enabling connectivity to nearby settlements and Portumna Forest Park. It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at [Appendix C](#).

Table 33. Proposed Physical Measures – Portumna

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Active Travel	Pedestrian & Cycle Connectivity to Portumna Forest Park
Active Travel	Loughrea – Portumna Cycleway (adjacent to N65)

11.10 Clifden

11.10.1 Clifden is a Small Growth Town (GCDP 2022-2028) having significant influence on the western side of the County located within the region of Conamara. It is located on the N59, which offers strategic connections to Galway City and interregional connections to neighbouring County Mayo to the north. Clifden forms part of the Wild Atlantic Way and is recognised as an important seasonal tourist destination. There is an aspiration to upgrade and improve infrastructure and visitor attractions that form part of the Wild Atlantic Way to cater for the forecast growth in visitor numbers by all modes, including cars, buses and cyclists (RSES, RPO 4.4).

11.10.2 Internal trips within Clifden are forecast to increase by 6% between 2022-2028 (WRM linear analysis detailed in **Section 5.6**), reflecting forecast population growth within and in vicinity of the Town. A relative high majority of internal trips are made by private vehicle (74%) and the proposed measures seek encourage shorter journeys to be made by walking and cycling creating a vibrant, active, liveable neighbourhood centre.

11.10.3 The Travel Corridors which link with or via Clifden include:

- Galway – Clifden (N59) Travel Corridor.

11.10.4 The following measures included at **Table 34** have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth within Clifden and the western side of the County, favouring sustainable mode shift in particular the uptake of active travel enabling connectivity to rural regions. Such measures targeted on the Galway – Clifden Travel Corridor would also provide benefit to the Small Growth Towns of Maigh Cuilinn and Oughterard that are served by the N59 (see below for further information).

11.10.5 It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at **Appendix C**.

Table 34. Proposed Physical Measures – Clifden

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Multi-Modal	Safety led improvements to road and transport infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycle safety measures.
Active Travel	New pedestrian and cycle routes, with improved connectivity for cyclists.

11.11 Headford

11.11.1 Headford is a Small Growth Town (GCDP 2022-2028) located approximately 24km from Galway City. It is located on the N59, which offers strategic connections to Galway City southwards and to the northern areas of the county and County Mayo northwards. Commuter-based interurban services between Galway City and Headford provide the majority of services that connect with the town, including two services that run southbound between Headford and Galway in the morning peak hour of 07:00-08:00.

11.11.2 The Travel Corridors which link to Headford include:

- Galway North Radial (N84) Travel Corridor.

11.11.3 The following measures have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth in and around Headford, and to respond to identified issues of road safety and congestion:

- Safety led improvements to road and transport infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycle safety measures;
- Potential junction improvements (including facilitating improvements for public transport, pedestrian and cyclist movement whilst managing vehicle capacity; and
- New pedestrian and cycle routes, with improved connectivity for cyclists.

11.11.4 It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at [Appendix C](#).

11.12 Maigh Cuillinn

11.12.1 Maigh Cuillinn is a Small Growth Town (GCDP 2022-2028) located approximately 11km from Galway City. It is located on the N59, which offers strategic connections to Galway City southwards and to the north-western areas northwards. Public transport services are provided via the inter-urban 419 route to Galway City, and the 923 route which serves Galway, Clifden and Letterfrack.

11.12.2 The Travel Corridors which link to Maigh Cuillinn include:

- Galway to Clifden (N59) Travel Corridor.

11.12.3 The following measures have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth in and around Maigh Cuillinn, and to respond to identified issues of road safety and congestion:

- Safety led improvements to road and transport infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycle safety measures;
- Potential junction improvements (including facilitating improvements for public transport, pedestrian and cyclist movement whilst managing vehicle capacity; and
- New pedestrian and cycle routes, with improved connectivity for cyclists.

11.12.4 It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at [Appendix C](#).

11.13 Oughterard

11.13.1 Oughterard is a Small Growth Town (GCDP 2022-2028) located approximately 25km from Galway City. It is located on the N59, which offers strategic connections to Galway City southwards and to the north-western areas of the county northwards. Public transport services are provided via the inter-urban 419 route to Galway City, and the 923 route which serves Galway, Clifden and Letterfrack.

11.13.2 The Travel Corridors which link to Oughterard include:

- Galway to Clifden (N59) Travel Corridor.

11.13.3 The following measures have been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments and are promoted to support growth in and around Oughterard, and to respond to identified issues of road safety and congestion:

- Safety led improvements to road and transport infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycle safety measures;
- Potential junction improvements (including facilitating improvements for public transport, pedestrian and cyclist movement whilst managing vehicle capacity; and
- New pedestrian and cycle routes, with improved connectivity for cyclists.

11.13.4 It is noted that additional safety led, congestion and demand management schemes have been identified as part of this corridor assessment with further details provided in the relevant Travel Corridor Technical Notes at [Appendix C](#).

11.14 Rural Areas (East of Galway City)

11.14.1 The rural areas to the East of Galway City are fairly dispersed across the County and benefit from an integrated network of strategic roads facilitating connections to local destinations, access to and from Galway City and interregional connections. During peak periods, the rural populations collectively generate a high number of trips for the purposes of schooling and commuting, often being undertaken via private vehicle due to limited access to public transport and alternative sustainable modes. The NTM data has found that whilst some areas of rural depopulation are expected to occur by 2039, the rural areas will broadly be subject to minor increases in trips, collectively contributing to the forecast growth for the county.

11.14.2 Rural areas tend to have very limited and disjointed connections to public transport within Galway County. Rural bus services are currently provided through the Transport For Ireland (TFI) Local Link programme, meeting the needs of communities outside larger settlement areas with a number of routes operating on a demand responsive basis in order to offer opportunities for connectivity with timetabled services along key demand corridors. The measures proposed as part of the GCTPS aim to facilitate improved connectivity and transport integration for rural populations, in line with NPF National Strategic Outcome 3 which prioritises strengthened rural economies and communities. The measures proposed include development of multi-modal transport hubs at key destinations across the county, as identified in the preceding area summaries. By developing excellent transport interchange facilities, the rural settlements surrounding these hubs will benefit by encouraging transfer onto sustainable onwards connections. The provision of high quality, secure cycle parking at these hubs will assist rural neighbouring areas to improve their travel options. Additionally, both north to south (Galway City to Tuam) and east to west (Galway City to Athlone) greenways are promoted as part of the GCTPS to improve connectivity for populations in vicinity of these cycling routes. A key objective will be to ensure that rural areas can be linked to these inter-regional routes which bring direct benefits to local residents and realise benefits for the tourist industry through leisure cycling.

11.14.3 In light of the dispersed nature of rural populations to the East of Galway City, improvements to Public Transport for these areas are focused on liaison with the NTA on the feasibility of improvements to door to door local bus services to improve reliability and frequency of operation to make the viable alternatives to the private vehicle. These sustainable transport focused measures are also supported by road-based measures, as identified within Section 6, to improve safety and alleviate congestion hotspots which will have a positive impact on trips to and from regional areas of the County.

11.14.4 The GCTPS aims to support the rural areas to feel better connected, benefit from county wide measures and promote sustainable mode shift where possible for local and longer distance trips.

11.15 Rural Areas (West of Galway City)

11.15.1 The rural areas to the West of Galway City play an important role for the tourism sector, with seasonal demand for travel including to Connemara National Park. The rural populations are fairly dispersed, with the only strategic road connections serving the area being via the N59 which routes via the towns of Maigh Cuilinn, Oughterard and Clifden. The coastal areas are served by the R336, R340 and R341 which offers important connections to the southern coast and provides a favourable coastal route for tourists. The western region of the county still has a large commuter draw for trips to Galway City, however due to journey times and the dispersed nature of rural populations, private vehicle is the dominant mode choice for commuter based journeys. Timetabled bus services along the western region of the county operate along the N59, with door to door services limited along the N59 and travelling south of this route to Cashel and Shannapheasteen and therefore a high proportion of the rural population would not be within catchment area of bus stops or door to door Local Link bus services and therefore have limited viable public transport options available.

11.15.2 In light of this, proposed measures have therefore focused on improving connectivity for rural populations. Firstly, the introduction of the Galway City Ring Road, which is currently at Phase 4 (Environmental Impact Assessment / Statutory Processes) of the National Roads Authority 2010 Project Management Guidelines, will be beneficial for the rural populations to the west of Galway City by reducing the need to travel through the City itself when travelling to the east of the County and would help alleviate congestion issues.

11.15.3 Additionally the GCTPS supports the examination of the feasibility of introducing a cycling greenway between Galway City and Clifden along the N59 route, this would assist with improving safety along the N59, enhance connectivity for rural populations along and within vicinity of the route as well as promote cycling tourism, with the tourist sector playing a significant role for the region. Additionally, a coastal cycling route alongside the R336 has been identified as part of the Travel Corridor assessments to further support growth of leisure cycling through the area and further enhance the cycling tourism offer.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1.1 SYSTRA Ltd (SYSTRA) has been commissioned by Galway County Council (the Council) to support the development of the Galway County Transport and Planning Strategy (GCTPS).
- 12.1.2 In developing the GCTPS, SYSTRA has considered the existing Transport infrastructure, services, and travel patterns associated with movement within and through the County, and has subsequently identified a range of measures and options suitable for the context of Galway County relating to the pedestrian, cycle, public transport and road networks. These measures have been designed to address key policy objectives relating to Transport and to support the wider implementation of policies relating to growth and the planning of new development during the period of the County Development Plan (CDP).
- 12.1.3 The GCTPS has informed the identification of key priorities for Transport provision during the period of the County Development Plan (2022 – 2028); these priorities and aspirations have subsequently been developed into a series of Policy Objectives which are described within Chapter 6 of the CDP. The GCTPS describes how these policy objectives will be achieved through the implementation of specific measures by the Council and other stakeholders, including the NTA and TII; supporting measures, including development and planning policies relating to the assessment of new developments, have also been assessed for this purpose.
- 12.1.4 In summary, the GCTPS supports the CDP objectives relating to Transport as follows:
- **Integrated Transport Planning:** Support for transition toward active, sustainable and low-carbon modes of transportation, and preparation of Local Transport Plans for the towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam.
 - **Walking & Cycling:** Provision of a modern walking and cycling network which gives such infrastructure high priority within street hierarchies, adheres to the design principles and requirements set out in the National Cycle Manual and DMURS, and which provides safe and secure cycle parking as part of new developments and public space regeneration projects.
 - **Electric Vehicles:** Support for the roll-out of charging infrastructure and other facilities to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles.
 - **Public Transport:** Support for enhanced public transport services, including provision of new and improved public transport infrastructure; advocacy for improvements to PT services; engagement with the NTA, TII and others with regard to provision for Park and Ride services, and support for the Galway to Athlone rail link and Western Rail Corridor schemes.
 - **National Roads:** Protection of the safe and efficient operation of the national road network, support for planned major upgrade schemes, and use of Traffic and Transport Assessments (TTAs) and Road Safety Audits (RSAs) to assess impacts of proposed development upon the national road network.
 - **Non-National Roads:** Safeguarding of capacity on restricted and non-restricted regional roads within the regional and local road networks; management of through-traffic within town and local centres; use of School Travel Plans and Mobility Management Plans to drive and encourage increased use of sustainable modes of travel to education and other significant development sites; and application of car parking standards and associated requirements as set out in Chapter 15 of the CDP.

SYSTRA provides advice on transport, to central, regional and local government, agencies, developers, operators and financiers.

A diverse group of results-oriented people, we are part of a strong team of professionals worldwide. Through client business planning, customer research and strategy development we create solutions that work for real people in the real world.

For more information visit www.systra.co.uk

Birmingham – Newhall Street

5th Floor, Lancaster House, Newhall St,
Birmingham, B3 1NQ
T: +44 (0)121 393 4841

Birmingham – Edmund Gardens

1 Edmund Gardens, 121 Edmund Street,
Birmingham B3 2HJ
T: +44 (0)121 393 4841

Dublin

2nd Floor, Riverview House, 21-23 City Quay
Dublin 2, Ireland
T: +353 (0) 1 566 2028

Edinburgh – Thistle Street

Prospect House, 5 Thistle Street, Edinburgh EH2 1DF
United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)131 460 1847

Glasgow – St Vincent St

Seventh Floor, 124 St Vincent Street
Glasgow G2 5HF United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)141 468 4205

Leeds

100 Wellington Street, Leeds, LS1 1BA
T: +44 (0)113 360 4842

Liverpool

5th Floor, Horton House, Exchange Flags, Liverpool,
United Kingdom, L2 3PF
T: +44 (0)151 607 2278

London

3rd Floor, 5 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7BA United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)20 3855 0079

Manchester – 16th Floor, City Tower

16th Floor, City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza
Manchester M1 4BT United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)161 504 5026

Newcastle

Floor B, South Corridor, Milburn House, Dean Street, Newcastle, NE1
1LE
United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)191 249 3816

Perth

13 Rose Terrace, Perth PH1 5HA
T: +44 (0)131 460 1847

Reading

Soane Point, 6-8 Market Place, Reading,
Berkshire, RG1 2EG
T: +44 (0)118 206 0220

Woking

Dukes Court, Duke Street
Woking, Surrey GU21 5BH United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)1483 357705

Other locations:

France:

Bordeaux, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Paris

Northern Europe:

Astana, Copenhagen, Kiev, London, Moscow, Riga, Wroclaw

Southern Europe & Mediterranean: Algiers, Baku, Bucharest,

Madrid, Rabat, Rome, Sofia, Tunis

Middle East:

Cairo, Dubai, Riyadh

Asia Pacific:

Bangkok, Beijing, Brisbane, Delhi, Hanoi, Hong Kong, Manila,
Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Shenzhen, Taipei

Africa:

Abidjan, Douala, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Libreville, Nairobi

Latin America:

Lima, Mexico, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, São Paulo

North America:

Little Falls, Los Angeles, Montreal, New-York, Philadelphia,
Washington

The SYSTRA logo is displayed in a large, bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are closely spaced, and the overall style is modern and professional.