

9th June 2022

Senior Planner,
Planning Department,
Galway County Council
Áras an Chontae,
Prospect Hill,
Galway.

Re: Adopted Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) acknowledges the adoption of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 (the Plan) by the members of Galway County Council on 9th May 2022.

The Office also acknowledges receipt of your notice letter dated 16th May 2022, further to section 31(AM)(6) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act).

The Office has reviewed the adopted Plan, and notes the decision of the planning authority not to comply, in whole or in part, with a number of the recommendations included in its submission on the draft Plan and the majority of the recommendations made in its submission at material alterations stage.

Where the recommendations of the Office were not complied with, the Office gave careful consideration to the reasons of elected members and, with the exception of certain specific matters, accepted that these reasons addressed the matters raised by the Office.

However, in relation to recommendations of the Office concerning: additional residential land use zoning objectives in An Cheathrú Rua, Oranmore, Oughterard, Clifden, Headford and Woodlawn; additional employment zonings in Headford and Maigh Cuilinn; the introduction of policy objective WW9 to introduce a 100m separation distance for all new wastewater treatment plants in An Cheathrú Rua; and additional provisions inserted in section 7.5.10 (Sludge Management) and associated policy objectives WW1 and WW2, the Office has made a recommendation to the Minister in respect of a proposed

draft direction in accordance with the legislative requirements set out in section 31(AM) of the Act.

The Office's recommendation to the Minister of a proposed draft direction and notice letter pursuant to section 31(AM), will be made available on the [Office's website](#), together with this [letter](#).

As you will be aware, the matter is now to be determined by the Minister under section 31 of the Act.

With the exception of the specific matters raised in the 31AM(8) notice, the Office welcomes the making of a Plan to provide for much needed housing, infrastructure, employment and amenities over the plan period in a manner that is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In particular, the Office fully acknowledges the scale of work involved in amalgamating a large number of settlement plans into the county development plan and the challenges in responding to new national and regional policy in the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

The Plan provides a positive framework for the spatial development of the county through the prioritisation of the main towns and key villages in the Metropolitan Area, having regard to the settlement framework of the RSES and the Galway MASP and, generally, the National Strategic Objective for compact growth.

Further, the Office commends the planning authority for establishing formal mechanisms for engagement with Galway City Council to ensure collaboration and coordination in respect of planning and transportation matters.

The Plan also includes an appropriate renewable energy strategy for the county which will be important in terms of meeting the national targets for renewable energy set out in the government's *Climate Action Plan 2021*.

With the exception of the specific issues detailed in the section 38AM(8) notice, the Office is generally satisfied with the manner in which its recommendations and observations have been addressed during the Plan preparation process.

In conclusion, the Office generally welcomes the adoption of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028, and looks forward to continued positive engagement with the planning authority into the future.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "AM O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a diagonal slash at the end of the name.

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations
