

22<sup>nd</sup> December 2025

Senior Planner,  
Planning Department,  
City Hall,  
College Road,  
Galway,  
H91X4K8.

**Re: Proposed Variation No. 2 to the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029**

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing the Proposed Variation No. 2 (proposed Variation) to the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (County Development Plan).

As Galway City Council (Planning Authority) is aware, a key function of the Office of the Planning Regulator (Office) is the assessment of statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. The Office has evaluated and assessed the proposed Variation under the provisions of sections 31AM(1) and 31AM(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (Act) and this submission has been prepared accordingly.

Recommendations issued by the Office relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions, of the national or regional policy framework and/or of the policy of Government, as set out in the Ministerial guidelines under section 28. As such, planning authorities are requested to implement or address any recommendation(s) made by the Office in order to ensure consistency with the relevant policy and legislative provisions.

Observations take the form of a request for further information, justification on a particular matter, or clarification regarding particular provisions of a plan on issues that are required to ensure alignment with policy and legislative provisions. Planning authorities are advised by the Office to action an observation.

A submission also can include advice on matters that the Office considers would contribute positively to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Planning authorities are requested by the Office to give full consideration to the advice contained in a submission.

On adoption of the plan, the Office will consider whether the plan has been made in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the Office and whether the plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and development of the area concerned.

## Overview

Arising from a Ministerial Direction issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 under section 31 of the Act, the Office notes that Planning Authority is proposing, through the proposed Variation, to amend the zoning status of the resultant unzoned lands in order to provide a level of certainty with respect to the future development of these lands.

The proposed Variation comprises 13 individual sites as set out in table 1 of the proposed Variation report where the proposed zoning is to Agriculture (A) in the case of nine sites and to Agriculture High Amenity (G) in the case of four sites, where the related zoning objective in the case of the former is:

*to provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the rural character' and in the case of the latter is 'to provide for the development of agriculture and protect areas of visual importance and/or areas of high amenity.*

Having reviewed the proposed Variation, the Office is of the view that the proposed zoning amendments do not raise any concerns in relation to consistency with the legislative and policy requirements and with respect to the subject lands, accord with the Ministerial Direction as issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023.

## Summary

The Office's evaluation and assessment of the proposed Variation concludes that no recommendations or observations are warranted. The Office looks forward to continued positive engagement with your authority regarding the implementation of the City Development Plan.

Your authority is however required to notify the Office within **five working days** of the decision of the planning authority in relation to the proposed Variation.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the Office in the context of your authority's responses to the above, which we would be happy to facilitate. Contact can be initiated through [plans@opr.ie](mailto:plans@opr.ie).

Is mise le meas,

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "AM O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Anne Marie O'Connor**

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations

Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015