



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

# Draft Gort Local Area Plan

## 2025 - 2031

January 2025

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***Gort is a Self-Sustaining, vibrant, and socially inclusive town with a focus on protecting and enhancing its historical core, natural environment, supporting an educated workforce, and providing a range of supporting services/facilities/amenities. This plan will be delivered through a managed and phase development strategy of appropriately zoned and serviced lands to achieve balanced and sustainable growth for Gort and the immediate environment that it serves.***

## 1.0 Introduction

The Gort Local Area Plan (heretofore referred to as the ‘Gort LAP’) is a land use plan and overall strategy for the development of Gort over the period 2025-2031. The Plan shall have effect 6 weeks from the date of adoption by the Loughrea Municipal District Members (consisting of the Local Electoral Areas of Loughrea and Gort – Kinvara) and shall cease to have effect at the expiration of 6 years from that date. The successful implementation of the Plan will have a positive impact on Gort, ensuring it develops in a sustainable manner, and will also complement the implementation of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (GCDP).

The content of this LAP has been prepared having regard to National, Regional and Local policies and guidance documents, including Ministerial Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)<sup>1</sup> and prescribed EU requirements regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), an Appropriate Assessment/Natura Impact Report (AA/NIR) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

### Document Structure

There are three key components of this Local Area Plan, which are outlined below:

- **Section 1:** This section contains the *Written Statement* for the LAP, which includes a zoning matrix table, the development strategy for the life of the Plan and a suite of policy objectives.
- **Section 2:** This section contains the *Land Use Zoning, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Maps, Strategic Environmental Assessment, and Stage II Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement)*.
- **Section 3:** This section contains the *Local Transport Plan (LTP)*.

### 1.1 Strategic Context

The *Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy* in Chapter 2 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (GCDP) identifies Gort as a *Self-Sustaining Town* and sets out the population and housing allocation targets for the town. This LAP will provide the development strategy framework, consisting of clear, realistic and implementable planning policy objectives for population and housing to be delivered within the lifetime of the plan. In addition, this LAP will actively support economic growth including tourism, education services, and community-related development.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of preparing this LAP the Planning and Development Act 2023 had not commenced.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out a clear strategy for sustainable development that is closely aligned with sustainable transportation principles.

Environmental Reports, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) have informed the preparation of this LAP.

### 1.1.1 Strategic Aims

The Local Area Plan will continue to support Gort in its vital role as an economic driver in south County Galway. The town shall fulfil its role as a *Self-Sustaining Town* and provide sustainable compact growth with access to high quality local services and critical infrastructure.

The following strategic aims will assist in delivering the strategic vision for Gort:

- Promote Gort as a *Self-Sustaining Town* as set out in the GCDP 2022 – 2028 and continue to support a sustainable level of population growth as established in the Core Strategy up to 2028 and beyond.
- Support the delivery of residential units on appropriately zoned land targeted in the Housing Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of the GCDP 2022 – 2028, encouraging sequential and compact growth in the town.
- Promote the reuse of existing buildings for residential use, where appropriate, having regard to the receiving environment, access to services, capacity of public infrastructure, and the delivery of a high quality of residential amenity.
- The strategic location of Gort shall be harnessed to enhance the economic and employment potential of the town, by creating sustainable employment opportunities, supported by investment on appropriately zoned lands.
- Maintain a strong and vibrant town centre that sustains the ability to attract new businesses, which meets the retail and service needs of the town and surrounding areas.
- Support the principle of the Gort Inse Guaire Town Centre First Plan (September 2023) which seeks to deliver holistic sustainable regeneration for the current and future needs of the local community through engagement with local business owners, community representatives, and stakeholders.
- Encourage and foster appropriate tourism opportunities that capitalise on Gort's tourist potential and better promote itself as a traditional Irish market town, with strong links to its natural, cultural and architectural heritage.
- Provide suitable recreation facilities, amenities and support services that shall promote an inclusive and cohesive local environment and serve the needs of the whole community.



- Support the redevelopment of underutilised buildings within the town centre to accommodate multi-functional community and cultural spaces, to facilitate the growth of remote-working, cultural, creative and community sectors in the town centre.
- Protect and enhance the heritage and character of Gort, including the natural assets, environment, built heritage, public realm, local character, and amenity for the benefit of current and future generations.
- Actively encourage sustainable mobility, including walking and cycling, in accordance with the aspirations of the LTP and support the continued provision of investment in public transport and active travel infrastructure.

## 1.2 Planning Context – National, Regional and Local

The development strategy and planning policy objectives outlined in this Local Area Plan must align with the objectives set out in national, regional and local planning policy including, the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES), and the GCDP 2022-2028. When interpreting the development strategy detailed in this plan, due consideration must be given to these plans.



Figure 1: Spatial Plan Hierarchy

### 1.2.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework, 2018 (NPF) is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the county to the year 2040.

The NPF sits at the highest tier of planning in Ireland and all regional, county, and local policy should be consistent with the National Policy Objectives contained within. The NPF recognises the important role towns like Gort fulfil as local drivers for their surrounding areas through accommodating local housing and employment growth. The NPF also appreciates that the natural and built heritage of a town can add distinctiveness and create a ‘sense of place’ which is an important factor in attracting foreign direct investment and individual talent to Ireland.

As set out Appendix 2 of the NPF, the resident workforce total is 1,212 in Gort, with total number of jobs stated as 1,127. This equates to a job ratio of 0.93, which is just below the average for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area. A primary focus of the NPF is to deliver an increased level of population, jobs and activity within existing urban areas, rather than solely relying on the development of greenfield sites. In order to support sustainable growth within our settlements, an imaginative approach to planning for the future is required. It is the intention of Galway County Council to encourage the delivery of high quality architecturally bespoke development which creates a sense of place, that can attract more people and generate new employment opportunities within the existing footprint of towns such as Gort.

### 1.2.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 – 2032 (RSES) is the 12-year Strategic Plan and Investment Framework, aiming to shape the future development of the Northern and Western Region. The Strategy outlines several ambitions that discuss each priority and show how they work in tandem as illustrated in figure 2.



Figure 2: RSES Growth Ambitions Illustration

The RSES contains Regional Policy Objectives (RPO) which have informed the preparation of this LAP. The strategy outlines the regional policy for development within the North-West. A number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPO) guide the growth of settlements like Gort, such as RPO 3.2 which seeks to deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements with a population of at least 1,500 within the existing built-up footprints of settlements as defined by the CSO. RPO 3.13 which aims to support the role of smaller and medium-sized towns, which demonstrate a role in terms of service provision and employment for their catchments within the economic function of the County.

### 1.2.3 Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

In the GCDP 2022-2028 Gort is identified as a *Self-Sustaining Town*, which is characterised as having high levels of population growth with a limited employment base, meaning that the town is reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and requires targeted “catch-up” investment to become more sustaining.

The Core Strategy in *Chapter 2 - Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy* of the GCDP sets out clear population and housing projections for Gort to 2028 which are presented in Table 1 below. The Core Strategy allocates a population increase of 800 persons in Gort over the plan period, and projects that an additional 460 residential units will be required to support this growth. In accordance with regional policy requirements RPO 3.2, circa 138 (30%) of the new residential units are to be delivered on infill / brownfield sites. In addition to supporting sustainable residential development in the town, the GCDP supports the expansion of the employment base in Gort. Table 1 sets out the Core Strategy.

Settlement Typology	CSO 2016	Core Strategy Allocation	Residential Units to be Delivered on Greenfield Sites	Residential Units to be Delivered on Brownfield/Infill Sites	Density	Quantum of Greenfield Land Required for Residential Development
Self-Sustaining Town	2,994	800	322	138	25	12.9

Table 1: GCDP 2022-2028 Core Strategy

### 1.2.4 Gort Local Transport Plan

The key purpose of the Gort Local Transport Plan is to guide the future transport and mobility needs of Gort, considering the transport demand arising from existing and projected development within the settlement area and surrounding rural hinterland.

The LTP considers policy and guidance at National, Regional and Local level, which has been used to inform the plan's development. The Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) makes

several recommendations that, collectively, will improve and alter travel patterns within the County and the LTP conforms to the policy objectives of both the GCTPS and the GCDP 2022–2028.

The LTP builds upon the policy objectives in the GCTPS and the GCDP to set out a clear framework of local measures to encourage and support a modal shift for internal journeys away from private car usage. It also aims to promote connectivity to public transport connections through a multi-modal hub allowing seamless connections and last mile journeys. A key objective of the LTP is to improve the active travel network within Gort, to encourage people to walk and cycle in a safe environment. The LTP also considers improvements to support the key corridor movements from Gort identified within the GCTPS including connections to Galway and Loughrea.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.2.5 Gort Town Centre First Plan

The *Gort Inse Guaire Town Centre First Plan 2023* identifies key proposals for the Town Centre that will allow it to function as a viable, vibrant and attractive location for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community. A summary of the key themes and proposals outlined in the plan are listed below.

<b>Theme 01</b>	<b>Reanimating Heritage</b>
01 – Conservation Management Plan for Cavalry Stables and barracks	
02 – Update and Enhance Heritage Trail	
<b>Theme 02</b>	<b>Revitalising Culture and the Arts</b>
01 – The Town Hall Performance Space	
02 – Art & Creativity in the Town Centre	
03 – Literary Links: Developing connections to Lady Gregory & Yeats	
04 – Outdoor Performance Space	
<b>Theme 03</b>	<b>Social Inclusion, community spirit &amp; well-being</b>
01 – The convent: multi-purpose remote working, innovation, cultural & community center	
02 – Multi-sports facility including new pitches, boxing facilities, tennis and basketball courts	
<b>Theme 04</b>	<b>Connectivity</b>
01 – Improving sustainable transport connectivity (walking, cycling and public transport)	
02 – Lady Gregory roundabout   Swans Sculpture	
03 – Wayfinding & signage strategy	
<b>Theme 05</b>	<b>Re-purposing vacant &amp; derelict buildings</b>
01 - Improving the use and presentation of vacant and derelict buildings	
<b>Theme 06</b>	<b>Vibrant local economy</b>
01 – Gort Smart Town	
02 – Building frontage improvement	
<b>Theme 07</b>	<b>Sustainable urban living</b>

<sup>2</sup> The detail associated with new transport or green infrastructure projects referred to in this Plan, including locations and associated mapping, that are not already permitted or provided for by existing plans / programmes / etc. is non-binding and indicative. Such new projects shall be subject to feasibility assessment, taking into account the environmental constraints and the objectives of the Plan relating to sustainable mobility. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken for such projects where appropriate (as outlined in the Galway County Development Plan Policy Objective PRP 2). Proposed interventions will be required to demonstrate that they are consistent with all relevant legislative requirements.

01 – Town Park and skate park	
02 – Potential Future Development: Land off Courtney’s Lane	
03 - Potential Future Development: Land by the station	
04 – Potential Future Development: Town Centre Backlands	
<b>Theme 08</b>	<b>Attracting Visitors</b>
01 – Improved tourist facilities	
02 - Programme for festivals and events	
03 – Greenway readiness	
04 – Improved connectivity to Coole Park	
<b>Theme 09</b>	<b>Natural environment and biodiversity</b>
01 – Town greening and biodiversity enhancement	
02 – Enhanced and extended Gort river Walk	
<b>Theme 10</b>	<b>Re-imaging public spaces</b>
01 – Canon Quinn Park	
02 – Public realm enhancement	

Galway County Council recognises the importance for a consistent approach to the future development of Gort and has fully considered the Town Centre First Plan in preparing the LAP.

### 1.3 Climate Change

Climate change and its associated challenges has been covered throughout the GCDP 2022-2028 as an embedded theme. Chapter 14 *Climate Change, Energy and Renewable Resource* details the nature and extent of climate change and how it impacts people’s lives, society and the broader economy. In line with the provisions of the GCDP 2022-2028, this LAP seeks to deliver well planned communities, where sustainable modes of transport are utilised in the first instance when travelling to local facilities such as education, work, and commercial activity.

The development of local renewable and low carbon energy resources will be encouraged in Gort through retrofitting and as part of new development proposals in accordance with the Galway County Council Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES) and proper planning and sustainable development. Incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) for surface water management will also be utilised where possible. In certain instances, innovative (SuDS) solutions can be used to enhance local biodiversity within streets and open spaces.

The Gort LAP is subject to a Stage 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The Stage 2 Flood Risk Assessment undertaken accords with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009. These Guidelines recommend that a precautionary approach to climate change is adopted due to the level of uncertainty involved in the potential effects and this approach has been followed in the preparation of the LAP and the undertaking of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

## 1.4 Universal Access

The GCDP 2022-2028 recognises that creating healthy communities, based on the principles of sustainable design and accessibility is a key component to ensuring a high quality of life for all residents in County Galway. This is addressed in *Chapter 3 Placemaking, Regeneration and Urban Living* and *Chapter 11 Community Development and Social Infrastructure* of the GDCP. With regard to the principles and policy objectives set out in these chapters, it is the intention of this plan to facilitate the growth of Gort as a sustainable place, which supports the creation of a well-balanced, integrated and functioning community, where universal design and access are key considerations at all stages of development in the town.

Policy Objective GSST 13 seeks to promote Universal Design and ensure that all public buildings, public open spaces, recreational and amenity areas are accessible for all people. This will ensure that due consideration is given to the needs of those with impaired mobility or disabled persons as required by the Disability Act 2005 (as amended).

## 1.5 Profile of Gort

Gort is situated in the south of Galway, approximately 38km from Galway City and approximately 64km north of Limerick City. Gort is strategically located along the M18 motorway, with immediate access to the network at the west of the town. The motorway has significantly reduced travel time from Gort to Galway, Limerick and Shannon Airport. The town also benefits from a railway station which provides services to Galway and Limerick, and the Expressway 51 bus service also runs daily connections between the two cities.

Figure 3 below provides a snapshot of the socio-economic profile of Gort. (It should be noted that the current population figures and population projections in this Local Area Plan are based on the 2016 Census figures).





## Gort Socio-Economic Profile Census 2022

### Population



Based on the 2022 census the population of Gort is 2,870. This is a slight decrease from the 2016 figures due to changes to the CSO boundary for Gort

### Large Mid-Life Demographic



Gort has a large mid-life population with 41% of people in the 30-44 age cohort. The population of people under the age of 14 is also high at 21%.

### Commuting Patterns



The most popular mode for travel in Gort is by car. 55% percent of the population age 5 years and over commute travel to work, school, or college by car. This is followed by walking at 16%.

### Employment Rate



Gort has a low level of unemployment with figures at only 7% in 2022. This is lower than the national average which is 8%.

### Employment by Sector



The highest employment by sector is Professional Services, with 22% of the workforce employed in this field. This is followed by Manufacturing and Commerce & Trade sectors which employ 17% of the workforce respectively

### Education Attainment



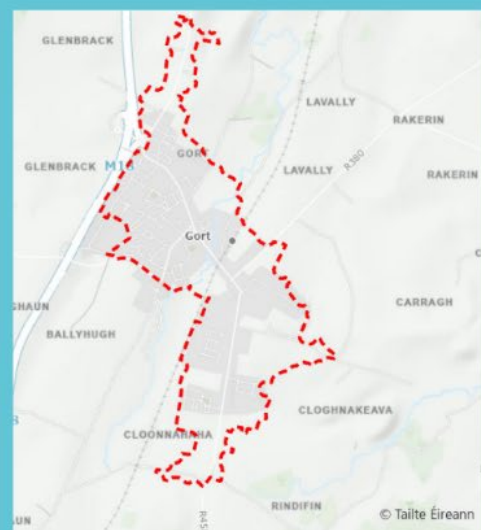
35% of population age 15 years and over with third level educational attainment

### CSO Boundary 2016 to 2022

The 2022 Census created new urban geography called Built Up Areas (BUAs) for urban areas. Due to the definition of of BUAs it is not possible to directly compare the 2016 Census.



CSO Boundary 2016



CSO Boundary 2022

Figure 3: Socio- Economic Profile for Gort - Census 2022

## 1.6 SCOT Analysis for Gort LAP

The proper planning and sustainable development of Gort encompasses a wide range of considerations and challenges. This LAP seeks to balance the competing needs of the local community, landowners and the environment, whilst promoting the role of Gort as a Self-Sustaining Town established within the settlement hierarchy in the GCDP. Some of the plan’s key considerations and issues are set out in the SCOT analysis in Figure 4.

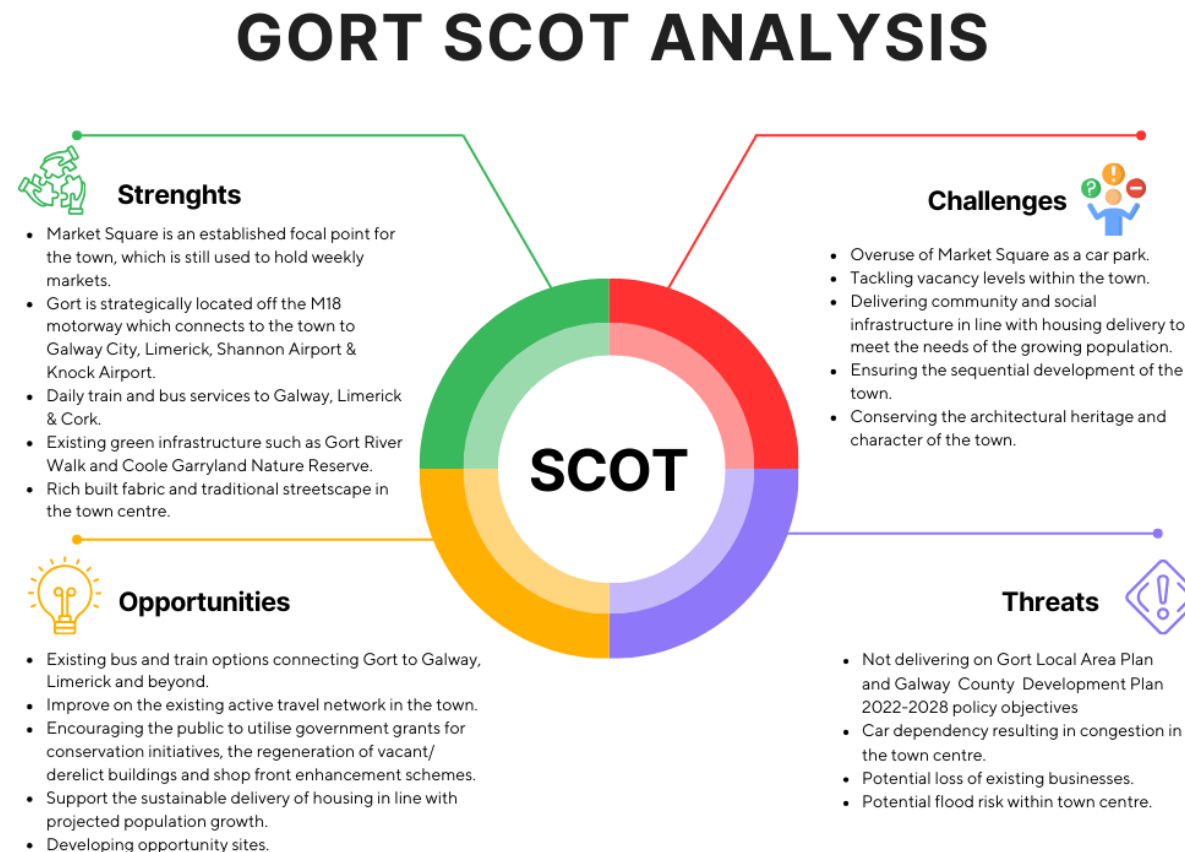


Figure 4: Gort SCOT Analysis



## 1.7 Land Use Zones

The following table exhibits the land use zoning proposed within the settlement of Gort:

Zoning	Policy Objective	Description
<b>Residential Existing</b>	To protect and improve the residential amenities of existing residential areas.	To provide for house improvements, alterations, and extensions of residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenities.
<b>Residential Phase 1</b>	To protect, provide and improve residential amenity areas within the lifetime of this plan.	To facilitate the provision of high-quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures to meet household needs and promote balanced communities.
<b>Residential Phase 2</b>	To protect, provide and improve residential amenity areas.	To facilitate the provision of high-quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. Phase 2 residential is generally not developable during the lifetime of this plan, subject to the provisions below. (*Single House developments for family members on family-owned lands: *Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area; *Where it is apparent that R-Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered in a phased manner on some residential (Phase 2 lands).
<b>Residential Infill</b>	To protect and improve the residential amenities of existing residential areas.	To provide small scale residential development on appropriate infill sites in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development and principles of good design.
<b>Town Centre</b>	To encourage and support a range of appropriate uses in the town centre that will assist in the regeneration and reuse of vacant and under-utilised buildings and land and will re-energise the town	To develop and consolidate the existing town centre to improve its vibrancy and vitality with the densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments, ensuring a mix of commercial, recreation and civic uses.

	centre, subject to a high standard of development being achieved.	
<b>Commercial/Mixed-Use</b>	To provide for the development of commercial and complementary mixed uses on suitable lands that can provide focal points for the provision of services to surrounding neighbourhoods/areas and opportunities for commercial enterprises, retail developments and employment creation and which do not undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre.	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate opportunities for developing new high-quality commercial/mixed-use developments in a good-quality physical environment.
<b>Business and Enterprise</b>	To provide for the development of business and enterprise.	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate opportunities for developing new high-quality business and enterprise developments in a good-quality physical environment.
<b>Business and Technology</b>	To provide for the development of business and technology.	To facilitate the further development and improvement of new and existing employment areas/ manufacturing opportunities and to facilitate the development of new high-quality business and technology developments in a good quality physical environment.
<b>Industrial</b>	Promote the sustainable development of industrial and industrial-related uses, including manufacturing, processing of materials, warehousing, and distribution on suitable lands, with adequate services and facilities and a high level of access to the major road networks and public transport facilities.	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate opportunities for developing new high-quality industrial developments in a good-quality physical environment.
<b>Community Facilities</b>	To provide civic, community and educational facilities.	To facilitate the development of the necessary community, health, religious, educational, social and civic infrastructure.
<b>Tourism</b>	To promote and encourage cultural, historical and tourism	To facilitate the development and improvement of tourism facilities that exist in

	potential for Gort as a <i>Self-Sustaining Town</i> .	Gort. Encourage new tourism development and investment where appropriate.
<b>Public Utility</b>	To maintain lands providing service infrastructure.	To allow lands to be designated for public utilities such as wastewater treatment plants.
<b>Open Space/Recreation and Amenity</b>	To protect and enhance existing open space and provide recreational and amenity space.	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing active open spaces, formal exercise areas, sports grounds, and playing fields.
<b>Agriculture</b>	To promote the development of agriculture and agriculture-related uses in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.	To facilitate the further development of agriculture and facilitate opportunities for farm diversification with agriculture-related uses.
<b>Transport Infrastructure</b>	Facilitate the provision and maintenance of essential transportation infrastructure.	To allow for the reservation of lands to facilitate public roads, footpaths, harbours, canals, cycleways, bus stops and landscaping together with any necessarily associated works, as appropriate.

Table 2: Land Use Policy Objectives

1.7.1 Land Use Matrix Table

Land Uses												
Commercial and Industrial Uses	C1	C2	R	I	BT	BE	T	CF	*OS	A	PU	TI
Amusement	O	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
ATM	P	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	N	N	N	N
Bank/Building Society	P	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Bar/Restaurant	P	O	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
B&B (Bed & Breakfast) <sup>1</sup>	O	O	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N	N	O	N	N	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N
Betting Office	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Boarding Kennel	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N
CaféP <sup>2</sup>	P	P	O	O <sup>2</sup>	N	O <sup>2</sup>	P	O <sup>2</sup>	N	N	N	N
Caravan Park – Holiday	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
Cash & Carry	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Casual Trading	O	O	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
Cinema	P	O	N	N	N	N	O	O	N	N	N	N
Conference Centre	P	P	N	N	O	P	O	O	N	N	N	N
Data-Centres/Web-Hosting Centres€	P	P	N	O	P	P	N	N	N	N	N	N
Drive-through Restaurant	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Enterprise Centre	O	O	N	O	O	P	N	N	N	N	N	N
Extractive Industry	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N
Garden Centre	O	P	N	N	N	O	N	N	O*	N	N	N
GP & Medical Related Services	P	P	O	N	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
Guesthouse <sup>1</sup>	P	O	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N	N	P	N	N	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N
Hair Dressing Salon/Personal/Grooming	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Home-based Economic Activity <sup>1</sup>	O	O	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N	N	N	N	N	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N
Hostel	P	O	O	N	N	N	P	O	N	N	N	N
Hotel	P	O	O	N	N	N	P	N	N	N	N	N
Household Fuel Depot	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Industrial	N	N	N	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Logistic, Storage & Distribution Units	N	O	N	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Media Recording & General Media Associated Uses	O	O	O	O	O	P	N	N	N	N	N	N
Motor Sales Showroom	O	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Night-club	O	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
Office (<100m <sup>2</sup> )	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N
Office (100m <sup>2</sup> to 1000m <sup>2</sup> )	O	P	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Office Park (>1000m <sup>2</sup> )	N	O	N	O	P	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Petrol Station	O	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Professional /Other Services	P	P	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Restaurant <sup>2</sup>	P	O	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N	N	N
Science & Technology Based Business	O	O	N	P	P	P	N	N	N	N	N	N
Scrap Yard	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Service Garage	O	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Shop – Comparison	P	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Shop – Convenience	P	P	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
Shops – Large Scale Convenience/ Comparison Centre	P	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Small Scale Manufacturing	N	N	N	P	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Storage Depot	N	N	N	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Commercial and Industrial Uses	C1	C2	R	I	BT	BE	T	CF	*OS	A	PU	TI
Take-away	O	O	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N
Transport Depot	N	N	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N	O	N

Land Uses												
Veterinary Surgery	O	O	O	O	N	O	N	N	N	O	N	N
Warehousing (incl. wholesale)	N	N	N	P	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Warehousing (Retail/Non-Food <700m <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>3</sup>	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Warehousing (Retail/Non-Food/Bulky Household Goods 700m <sup>2</sup> – 5,000m <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>3</sup>	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>Residential Uses</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>BT</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>CF</b>	<b>*OS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PU</b>	<b>TI</b>
Apartments <sup>1</sup>	P	O	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Halting Site	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	O	N	O	N	N
Residential (excluding Apartments) <sup>1</sup>	O	O	P <sup>1</sup>	N	N	N	N	N	N	O <sup>1</sup>	N	N
Retirement Home/Nursing Home/Sheltered Housing	O	O	P	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Short-term Holiday Accommodation	O	O	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N	N	N
<b>Public, Community and Institution Uses</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>BT</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>CF</b>	<b>*OS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PU</b>	<b>TI</b>
Buildings for the Health, Safety & Welfare of the Public	P	P	O	N	O	O	O	O*	N	N	O	N
Cemetery	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	P	O*	P	N	N
Childcare Facilities (Crèche/Nursery)	P	P	O	O	O	O	N	P	N	N	N	N
Club House & Associated Facilities	O	N	O	N	N	N	O	P	O*	O	N	N
Community Facility	P	O	O	N	N	O	O	P	O*	O	N	N
Crematorium	N	N	O	O	N	O	N	O	O	O	N	N
Cultural/Recreational Building	P	O	O	N	N	O	P	P	O*	N	N	N
Education – Primary/Secondary	O	O	O	O	N	O	N	P	O*	O	N	N
Education – Other Education/Training	P	O	O	O	O	O	N	P	O	O	N	N
Funeral Home	P	P	O	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
Leisure	P	O	O	N	N	O	O	P	O*	O	N	N
Library	P	P	O	N	N	N	O	P	N	N	N	N
Place of Public Worship	O	O	O	N	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
<b>Open Space, Recreation and Amenity Uses</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>BT</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>CF</b>	<b>*OS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PU</b>	<b>TI</b>
Golf Course	N	N	N	N	N	N	P	N	O*	O	N	N
Recreational/Cultural Activities	O	O	O	O	N	O	P	P	O*	O	N	N
<b>Agricultural Uses</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>BT</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>CF</b>	<b>*OS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PU</b>	<b>TI</b>
Abattoir	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N
Agricultural Building	O	N	O	O	N	O	N	O	O	P	N	N
Mart/Co-op	O	N	N	P	N	P	N	N	N	P	N	N
<b>General/Services and Infrastructure Uses</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>BT</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>CF</b>	<b>*OS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PU</b>	<b>TI</b>
Advertisements – Freestanding	O	O	N	O	O	O	N	O	N	N	O	O
Car Park	P	N	O	P	O	O	O	O	N	N	N	O
Recycling/Bring Bank Facilities	O	O	O	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	O	N
Refuse Landfill	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N	N
Utilities & Public Service Installations	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O*	O	P	O
Small-scale, Domestic Wind/Renewable Energy	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O*	O	O	N

**Table 3: Land Use Zoning Matrix**

**Notes on Land Use Classes in Land Use Zoning Matrix:**

The land use classes referred to in the land-use zoning matrix have been defined as follows:

1. **Permitted in Principle (P)** – A use that is classified as *Permitted in Principle* is one that the Local Authority accepts in theory in the relevant zone, subject to compliance with the relevant policy

objectives, standards, and requirements set out in this plan and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

2. **Open for Consideration (O)** – A use that is classified as *Open for Consideration* is one that the Local Authority may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policy objectives for the zone, will not conflict with permitted uses and conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, including the policy objectives, set out in this plan.
3. **Not Normally Permitted (N)** – A use classified as *Not Normally Permitted* is one that, except in exceptional circumstances, will not be permitted by the Local Authority. This may be due to its perceived effect on existing and permitted uses, its incompatibility with the policy objectives, standards and requirements contained in this plan or the fact that it may be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

1. <b>Zone C1</b>	Town Centre
2. <b>Zone C2</b>	Commercial/Mixed Use
3. <b>Zone R</b>	Residential
4. <b>Zone I</b>	Industrial
5. <b>Zone BT</b>	Business & Technology
6. <b>Zone BE</b>	Business & Enterprise
7. <b>Zone CF</b>	Community Facilities
8. <b>Zone T</b>	Tourism
9. <b>Zone OS</b>	Open Space/Recreation & Amenity
10. <b>Zone A</b>	Agriculture
11. <b>Zone PU</b>	Public Utility
12. <b>Zone TI</b>	Transport Infrastructure

#### General Notes on Land Use Zoning Matrix

1. **Residential Phasing (1)**– These uses will be considered subject to Policy Objective GSST 6 as appropriate.
2. **Café (2)** – This use will be considered where it is ancillary to an overall compatible development to serve the needs of the immediate area.
3. **Warehousing (3)** – The development or subdivision of stores into less than 700m<sup>2</sup> shall not normally be permitted in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations under the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 (or any updated/superseding document).

#### General Notes on Land Use Zoning Classes

1. **Data Centre** – May be defined as a facility with information technology equipment installed and operated, as well as storing and distributing electronic data.
2. **Zone R: Residential** –
  - **Phase 1** is phased for residential development within the lifetime of this Plan; and
  - **Phase 2** is generally not developable during the lifetime of this Plan, subject to the provisions and exceptions set out under Policy Objective GSST 6.
3. All Proposals for development must comply with The Planning System & Flood Risk Guidelines (2009) (or updated).

Uses for lands along the Gort River (\*\*\*zoned “TI Transport Infrastructure”) shall be limited in areas at elevated risk of flooding, as per the Flood Risk Management Guidelines, as follows;

- In Flood Zone A, uses shall be limited to water compatible uses;
- In Flood Zone B, uses shall be limited to less vulnerable and water compatible uses (as per the Flood Risk Management Guidelines).

### 1.7.2 Land Use Management

Table 4 below lists the quantum of land zonings within the Gort LAP area.

Land Use Zoning		Total Area Zoned (HA)
<b>Residential Phase 1</b>		12.8
<b>Residential Phase 2</b>		28.6
<b>Residential Infill</b>		2
<b>Town Centre</b>		14.7
<b>Mixed-Use/Commercial</b>		6.6
<b>Business and Enterprise</b>		2.2
<b>Business and Technology</b>		5.1
<b>Industrial</b>		20
<b>Tourism</b>		2.8
<b>Community Facilities</b>		21.9
<b>Open Space/Recreational Amenity</b>		55.2
<b>Agriculture</b>		12.7
<b>Public Utilities</b>		1.2

Table 4: Quantum of each Land Use Zoning

### 1.7.3 Development Management Guidelines

#### **DM Guideline 1 Minimum Finished Floor Levels (FFL's)**

In areas of limited flood depth, the specification of the threshold and floor levels of new structures shall be raised above expected flood levels to reduce the risk of flood losses to a building, by raising floor heights within the building structure using a suspended floor arrangement or raised internal concrete platforms.

When designing an extension or modification to an existing building, an appropriate flood risk reduction measure shall be specified to ensure the threshold levels into the building are above the design flood level. However, care must also be taken to ensure access for all is provided in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

Where threshold levels cannot be raised to the street for the streetscape, conservation or other reasons, the design shall specify a mixing of uses vertically in buildings - with less vulnerable uses located at ground floor level, along with other measures for dealing with residual flood risk.

### **Surface Water Drainage and Flooding**

#### **DM Standard 2: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS): *Nature based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas Best Practice Interim Guidance Document.***

The discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers is not permitted. All new developments (including amendments/extensions to existing developments) will be required to incorporate 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' (SuDS) as part of the development/design proposals. SuDS are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and enhance biodiversity and amenity. The systems should aim to mimic the natural drainage of the application site to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of existing waterways.

SuDS include devices such as swales, permeable pavements, filter drains, storage ponds, constructed wetlands, soakaways, and green roofs. In some exceptional cases, and at the discretion of the Council, where it is demonstrated that SuDS devices are not feasible, approval may be given to install underground attenuation tanks or enlarged pipes in conjunction with other devices to achieve the required water quality. Such alternative measures will only be considered as a last resort. Proposals for surface water attenuation systems should include maintenance proposals and procedures. Development proposals will be required to be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment that addresses run-off rate, run-off quality and its impact on the existing habitat and water quality. This approach using SuDS offers a total solution to rainwater management and is applicable in urban and rural situations. Current best practice guidance on SuDS is available from the Guidance Documents produced by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH). Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas Best Practice Interim Guidance Document.

*Refer also to DM Standard 67 Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) of the GCDP 2022 – 2028.*

### **DM Standard 3: Flooding**

#### **Flood Zones and Appropriate Uses**

The table below indicates the types of land uses that are appropriate in each of the Flood Zones identified within the Plan area, in accordance with the 2009 Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Departmental Circular PL2/2014 (or any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance).

Where developments/land uses are proposed that are inappropriate to the Flood Zone, then a Development Management Justification Test and site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required per The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (and as updated).



Flood Zones	Overall probability	Planning Implications for land uses		
		Highly Vulnerable Development	Less Vulnerable Development	Water Compatible Development
Flood Zone A	Highest	Inappropriate – if proposed, then a Justification Test and detailed Flood Risk Assessment are required	Inappropriate – if proposed, then a Justification Test and detailed Flood Risk Assessment are required	Appropriate – screen for flood risk
Flood zone B	Moderate	Inappropriate – if proposed, then a Justification Test and detailed Flood Risk Assessment are required	Inappropriate due to climate change – if proposed, then a Justification Test and detailed Flood Risk Assessment are required	Appropriate – screen for flood risk
Flood Zone C	Lowest	Appropriate - detailed Flood Risk Assessment may be required	Appropriate - detailed Flood Risk Assessment may be required	Appropriate – screen for flood risk

Table 5: Flood Zones Planning Implications

Note (refer to Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 and 'SFRA for the Gort LAP 2025 – 2031' for additional detail):

- Highly Vulnerable Development - Houses, schools, hospitals, residential institutions, emergency services, essential infrastructure, etc.
- Less Vulnerable Development - Economic uses (retail, leisure, warehousing, commercial, industrial, non-residential institutions, etc.), land and buildings used for agriculture or forestry, local transport infrastructure, etc.
- Water Compatible Development - Docks, marinas, wharves, water-based recreation, and tourism (excluding sleeping accommodation), amenity open space, sports and recreation, flood control infrastructure, etc.

Refer also to DM Standard 68 Flooding in the GCDP 2022 – 2028.

## 2.0 Gort Spatial Planning Context

### 2.1 Residential Development

It is a key aim for Galway County Council to actively encourage and support residential development that fosters high quality and sustainable designs, to create an attractive and safe environment that meets the needs of both the residents and the local community.

The principles of quality and sustainability must be foremost in all future residential development in the plan area, including private, social, voluntary, and special needs housing proposals, and to provide accommodation for the needs of the Travelling Community under Galway County Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 (or any updated/superseding document).

This LAP guides the location of new residential development with a phasing framework for residentially zoned lands, which ensures compliance with the Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and the Housing Need and Demand Assessment in the GCDP 2022-2028.

The residential phasing scheme comprises two residential land use zoning types: Residential Phase 1 and Residential Phase 2. Residential Phase 1 lands have been identified for immediate development within the lifetime of the plan. These lands have been zoned with regard to a number of different factors including promoting sequential development (the identification of undeveloped lands closest to the town centre and existing established area; connections to infrastructure including, proximity to public water and wastewater infrastructure, road access, public lighting and footpath connectivity to town centre; access to existing and planned services; and the avoidance of flood risk and environmentally sensitive areas.

Residential Phase 2 lands are lands that have been identified for development in the future and generally will not be developable within the lifetime of this plan. These lands have been zoned following the same approach as the identification of Phase 1 lands, however, access to one or more of the infrastructure connections listed above is not available or is unsatisfactory and/or the lands are further from the town centre compared to the Phase 1 lands.

### 2.2 Residential Infill

The NPF targets a significant proportion of future urban development on infill/brownfield sites within the built footprint of existing urban areas. National Policy Objective (NPO) 3a seeks to deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally within the built-up footprint of existing settlements. The GCDP 2022-2028, seeks to encourage development within the existing built-up footprint of settlements, where appropriate, including on infill sites which is supported by policy objective *UL1 Infill Sites*. The lands zoned Residential Infill in this LAP consist of gap sites which can accommodate limited development.

The focus of residential development is on a co-ordinated and sequential development approach. The plan supports the development of residential infill sites both in the town centre and in the existing residential areas around Gort. It is a policy objective (GSST 7) to promote sustainable intensification through developing underutilised sites in prime locations.

### 2.3 Economic and Enterprise Development

This LAP will promote Gort as a destination for business, growing the economy to a scale appropriate to its strategic location capitalising on its enhanced connectivity and role as a *Self-Sustaining Town*, whilst ensuring existing businesses are supported in their continued growth in a planned and cohesive manner.

Lands have been appropriately zoned to support economic and employment development within the town over the plan period. There are a number of industrial developments within the town, on the Grove Road to the north and on the Tubber Road and Ennis Road to the southeast, which support a range of diverse activities from manufacturers to wholesalers. The Gort IDA Business Park to the west of the town centre is an excellent opportunity for Business & Technology type development. The Plan has identified undeveloped lands zoned Business and Enterprise located east of the Town Centre. It is anticipated these lands within close proximity to the town centre will facilitate new employment opportunities to assist in the realisation of Gort's economic ambition.

It is the intention of this plan to support the advancement of employment developments in tandem with residential development to 2031. It is anticipated that this approach will facilitate sustainable living whereby employment is accessible to residential areas by sustainable modes of transport, reducing sole reliance on private vehicles.

Local jobs account for almost 97% of the total residential workforce, as shown in Table 6 below. This LAP will continue to support local employment and investment.

Settlement Hierarchy	Settlement	Population 2016	Resident Workers	Local Jobs	% of Galway County Jobs	Jobs: Resident Workers – Current / Target
Self-Sustaining Town	Gort	2,994	1,212	1,127	2.6 %	0.93

Table 6: Local Jobs to Resident Workers Ratio Gort (Extracted from GCDP 2022-2028)

### 2.4 Community Facilities

Gort offers its residents a range of community facilities and services, which include primary and secondary school, creches, GPs, a nursing home, a Garda station, a community centre, a post office, a credit union service, a public library, playground, sporting facilities, open space and a church. As a result, the town is well supplied by community facilities. Gort's projected population expansion will necessitate sustained investment in community services and amenities. This will be supported throughout the duration of the plan.

Healthy balanced communities are dependent on having access to high quality open spaces as well as being able to access opportunities for sports and recreation. In addition to the amenities listed above, the Gort Community Centre, provides a high-quality recreational/sporting space to facilitate existing

and future residents. Additional sports facilities within the town include Gort rugby pitches and the Gort Golf Course.

Within Gort, there is a concentration of educational facilities. Gort Further Education and Training Centre, Gort Community School, Gaelscoil na bhFilí are clustered on Ennis Road. The town has several childcare facilities within the settlement boundary.

## 2.5 Built and Natural Heritage

Archaeological, architectural and heritage assets within Gort contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Built heritage is a significant asset of the town with numerous sites and monuments identified for preservation.

Gort's principal significance lies in the combination of its street pattern, plot sizes, architectural coherence, distinctive landmark buildings or groups and its countryside setting. Many of the buildings in the historic core span the late 18th to late 19th centuries and share many characteristics. Gort's rich archaeological heritage provides evidence of early settlement in the area.

The town centre is largely arranged along two wide intersecting roads which intersect at Market Square. The river and its banks, surviving military buildings, traditional shopfronts and narrow lanes entered through carriage arches are distinctive and important features. Stone walls are another significant feature of the area, particularly those around Slipper Street and Barrack Street. The retention of the character of the historic core in Gort is recognised as being a major attraction to the town. For a town of its size, Gort contains a significant number of buildings of national or regional significance.

Gort town centre has a designated Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). An ACA is a place, area, group of structures or townscape which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest. The Gort ACA seeks to protect the special character of the historic core. The designation of the historic town centre core as an ACA and the associated management of both individual buildings and the public realm in the area will continue to enhance the quality of the local environment. In addition to the ACA, there are a number of Protected Structures within the town, these structures are included in the Record of Protected Structures in Appendix 6 of the GCDP 2022 – 2028.

This LAP recognises the value of built heritage in Gort and expresses the commitment to the protection and enhancement of the town's heritage. This will be done through measures contained in planning legislation, the implementation of appropriate conservation policy objectives, sensitive land use policy objectives, good urban design principles and development management standards.

## 2.6 Tourism

Tourism can play a key role as an economic driver for Gort, through the promotion of historic and amenity assets. With its surrounding historical and natural heritage, as well as its highly accessible location by road and rail, the town is in an admirable position to expand its tourism potential and create locally based employment possibilities. (Tourism amenity infrastructure development in Gort

will also contribute to improving the quality of life of its residents by assisting in the redevelopment of the town centre). The presence of two hotels in the town provides a high level of tourism carrying capacity.

Gort and the surrounding hinterland has a variety of attractions. The River Walk in the town provides a 3km looped walk. Surrounding the town, natural amenities include Coole Park with its natural reserve and walking trails and Burren National Park in County Clare. Historical and cultural amenities comprise Thoor Ballylee (which holds many events, notably the Poetry Prize in honour of the poet W.B. Yeats), Lough Cutra Castle, Kilmacduagh Monastic Settlement, Kilartan Gregory Museum and Millennium Park. A tourist office is open in the Market Square of the town during the summer season.

## 2.7 Agricultural

Gort is an important market town, with a weekly market still operating at the Square. The large rural hinterland is well served by the Co-operative Mart and agricultural wholesalers in the town. These are important enterprises within Gort which serve the surrounding agricultural areas. Agriculture continues to be a substantial source of income through both direct and indirect employment. The Gort LAP will continue to support this sector.

## 2.8 Transportation and Movement – Local Transport Plan

The Galway County Transport Planning Study 2022 (GCTPS) forms part of the (GCDP). It considers the relationship between travel demand to and from Galway City, by residents and visitors to Galway County and the associated impacts on travel choice and use of the transport networks within the County Area. The GCTPS has examined 13 no. key transport corridors in the County, two of which are relevant to this LAP; North – South (M17), and Loughrea – Gort (R380). Chapter 6 *Transport and Movement* of the (GCDP) sets out a series of Policy Objectives that support the County's sustainable transport priorities in the coming years.

A key tenet of the NPF is the delivery of improved sustainable mobility in our towns and villages. This accords with Ireland's Climate Change mitigation plan, whereby a concerted effort is made to move away from polluting and carbon-intensive systems to new, cleaner technologies. It is considered there should be a greater emphasis placed on active travel and public transport infrastructure.

The LTP aims to improve the integration between land use and transport planning. This will be delivered in tandem with sustainable compact growth in the plan area through appropriate means such as the development of lands in the existing built-up footprint of the town. Walking and cycling networks are being continuously reviewed and improved within the town. These modes of travel will be encouraged in the first instance, followed by public transport, which complies with the requirements of RPO 6.26 of the RSES. The LTP also has regard to RPO 6.27, RPO 6.28, RPO 6.29, RPO 6.30, RPO 6.31 and RPO 6.32 of the RSES with regards to the preparation of LTPs, the management of space in town centres, promotion of walking, cycling and public transport, the permeability of new development areas, and investing in transport networks and services that are socially inclusive.

The emerging Gort LTP (included in Section 3) is aimed at providing a functional and active travel network in the town and its surroundings. The LTP has been prepared in collaboration with the

National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and will run concurrently with this Plan. The LTP presents an evidence-based assessment of the town, which takes into consideration the current spatial characteristics, land use, and transport conditions. The LTP provides a suite of options for various modes of travel to serve forecasted travel demand based on population and employment growth projections in Gort.

Figure 5 illustrates the Emerging Preferred Strategy for Gort. Through site visits, and a review of existing conditions and relevant policies and plans, a long-list of proposed measures were identified to support the future transport needs of Gort. These options were passed through a detail options assessment process to determine the package of measures that would form the draft Gort LTP for consultation. The full set of draft strategy measures were assessed against the study objectives using identified Key Performance Indicators.

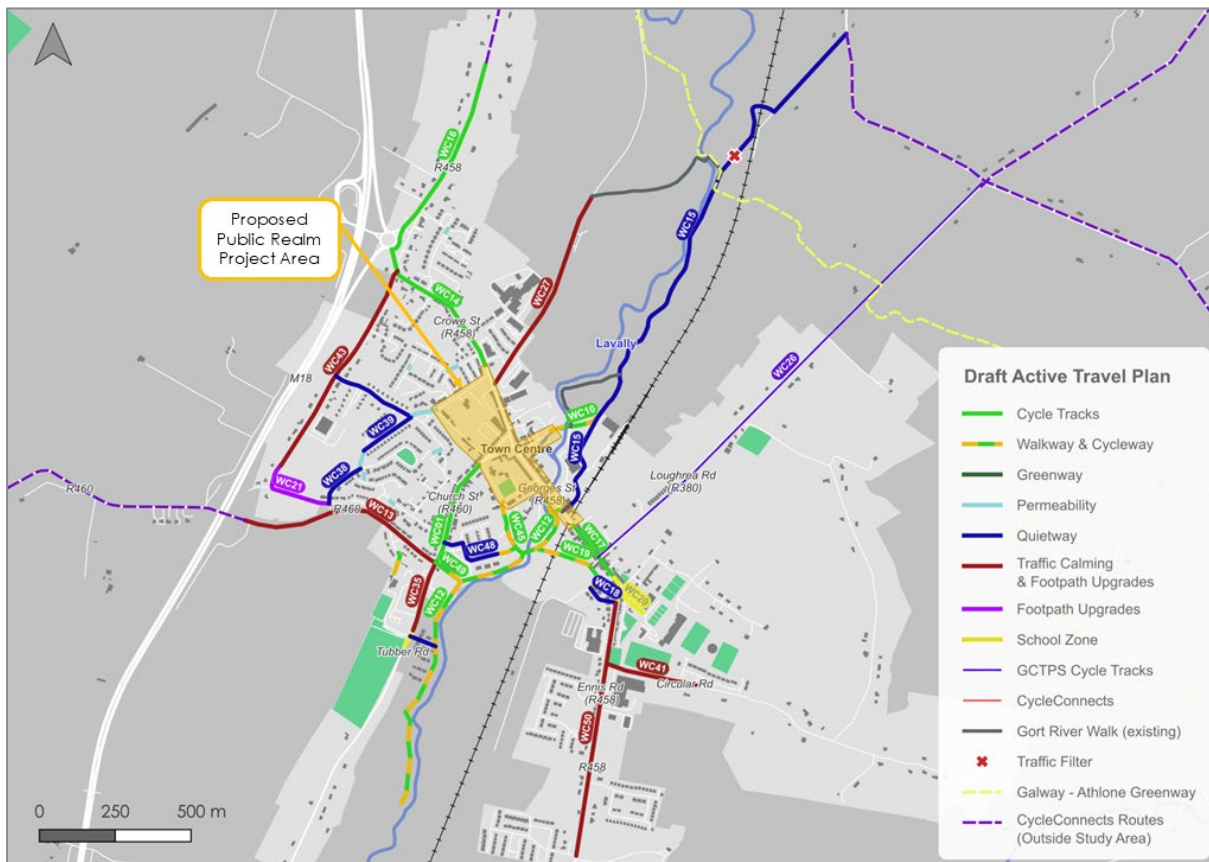


Figure 5: Draft LTP Emerging Preferred Strategy for Gort

The proposed measures in the Draft LTP focus on enhancing sustainable transport modes and encourage a modal shift away from car trips. The delivery of a safe, integrated walk and cycle network will improve accessibility across Gort, encouraging an increase in sustainable travel. Several measures have focused on improving safety for access to local schools, supporting active travel and improving the health and wellbeing of children within the town. The draft LTP supports upgrades to existing public transport services and facilities, including improved frequencies of trains and buses to Galway and Ennis and improved public transport waiting environments. It also includes a range of supporting measures to complement the transport network improvements and support modal shift. These measures include the roll out of cycle parking and a range of behavioural change measures including mobility management plans.

## 2.9 Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment

Galway County Council has had regard to Uisce Éireann's (formerly Irish Water) strategic plans in preparing this LAP. The *Draft Water Services Strategic Plan 2050 (WSSP 2050)* is Uisce Éireann's forthcoming long-term strategic plan setting out the strategic direction and objectives over a 25-year period.

The National Water Resource Plan (NWRP) is the first such plan for the entire water supply in Ireland. As Phase 2 of this plan, Uisce Éireann published the *Regional Water Resources Plan – North West (2023)* which represents one of four regional plans.

Galway County Council recognises that the delivery of infrastructure and utilities in a sustainable manner are critical to the future development of the county. Any development proposals within the settlement of Gort should liaise with Uisce Éireann in respect of water supply and wastewater infrastructure required as set out in Chapter 7 of the GCDP.

## 2.10 Flood Risk Management

Chapter 14 Climate Change, Energy and Renewable Resource from the GCDP 2022 – 2028 sets out the Strategic Aims and key Policy Objectives pertaining to Flood Risk Management in County Galway.

A Stage 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Gort LAP has been undertaken and forms Section 2 of this plan. The findings of the SFRA have informed the zoning and policy objectives of the settlement.

Any forthcoming proposals must comply with *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* and its accompanying Technical Appendices Document 2009 (including any updated/superseding documents), in addition to the flood risk management policies contained in the GCDP and this plan.

## 3.0 Opportunity Sites

Galway County Council has identified 4 no. underutilised sites within Gort that have the potential for redevelopment. These sites offer the opportunity to drive the delivery of quality housing, services, and employment opportunities in tandem with supporting social infrastructure.

Galway County Council will encourage and support the appropriate and sustainable development or redevelopment of these sites.

Proposals for development within each of the opportunity sites shall be required to demonstrate compliance with the provisions of this plan relating to sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure, including Policy Objective GSST 61 "Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)" and the "Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Surface Water Guidance and Strategy" outlined under Section 3.5 of the SFRA



**Opportunity Site 1 – Town Centre Georges Street & Loughrea Road**

**Area:** 2.75 hectares

**Zoning:** The site is zoned Town Centre.

**Current Land-Use:** Commercial/residential units fronting onto Georges Street with some vacant units. Greenfield lands to the north.

**Opportunity:** It is an objective to create a vibrant and integrated interface between residential and town centre zoned lands. The design of this space shall demonstrate strong active travel opportunities with a well-considered and welcoming streetscape, with particular regard to best practice placemaking. Any forthcoming proposals shall engage with stakeholders as appropriate. Proposals shall explore opportunities for dual aspect redevelopment onto Main Street.

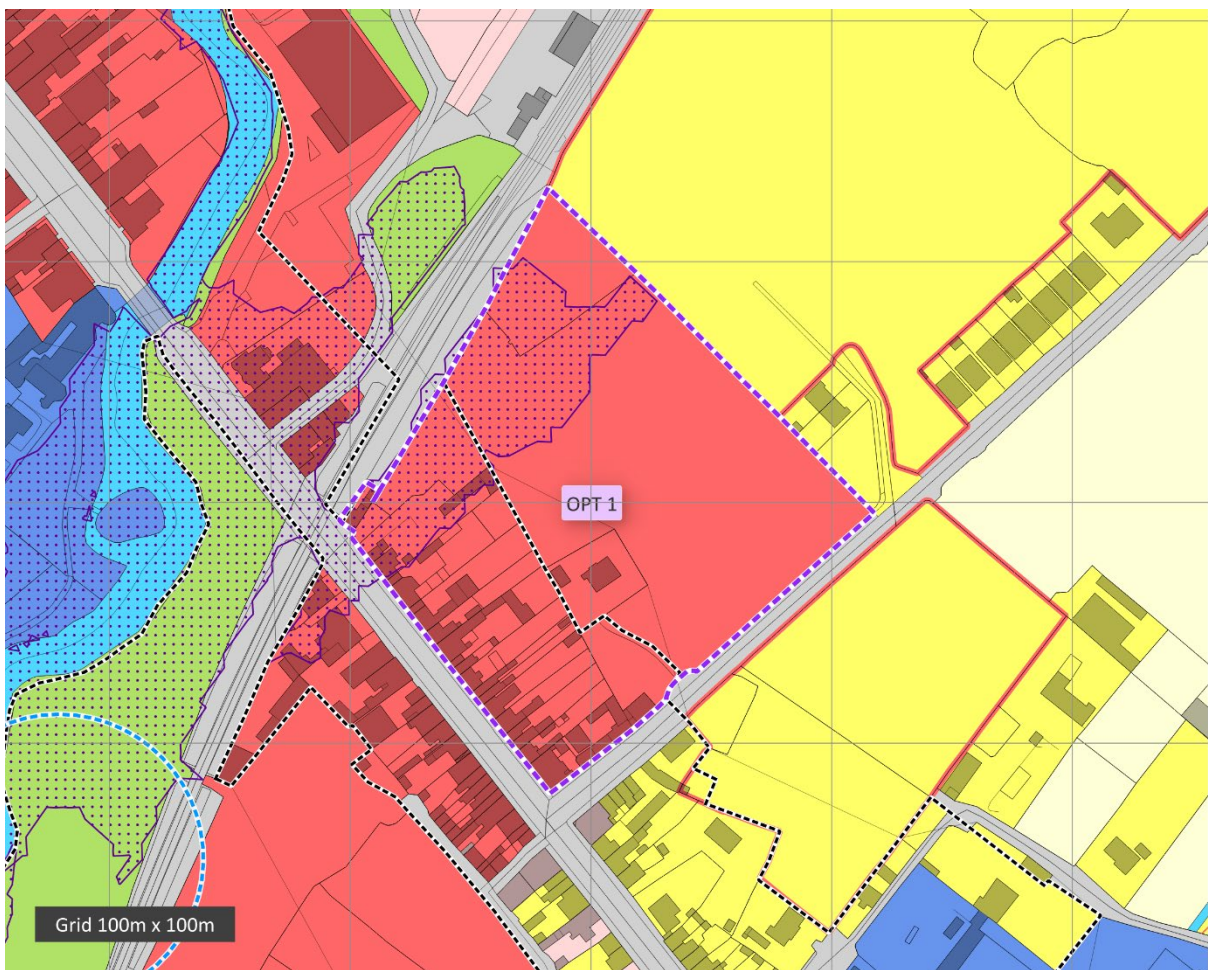


Figure 6: Opportunity Site 1



**Opportunity Site 2 – The Barracks**

**Area:** 0.6 hectares

**Zoning:** The site is zoned Town Centre.

**Current Land-Use:** Former military barracks

**Opportunity:** It is an objective to encourage development that balances the historical character of Gort whilst providing for the revitalisation of uses that contribute to the functional needs of residents and businesses. Any proposals shall contribute to the viability of Gort Town Centre.

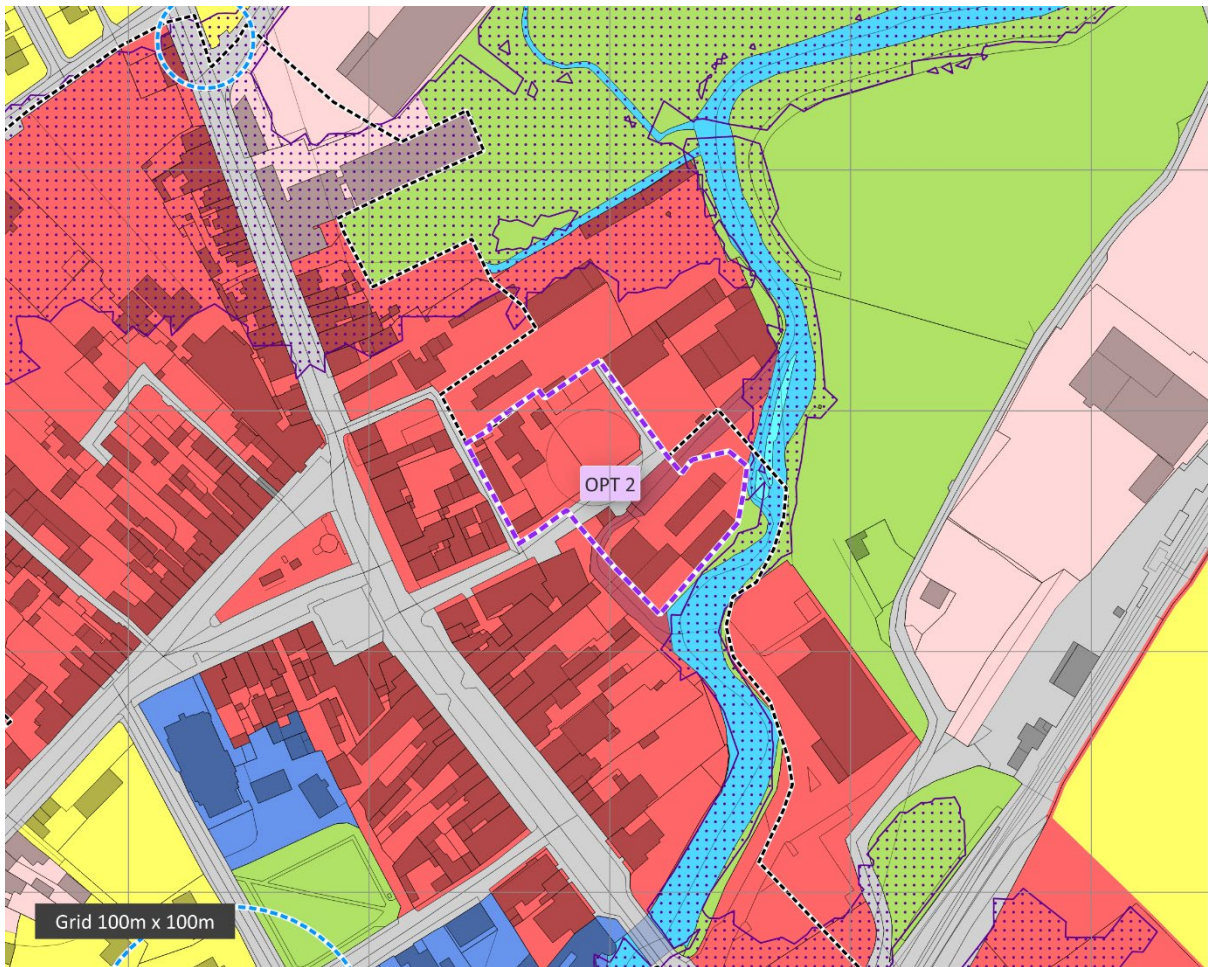


Figure 7: Opportunity Site 2

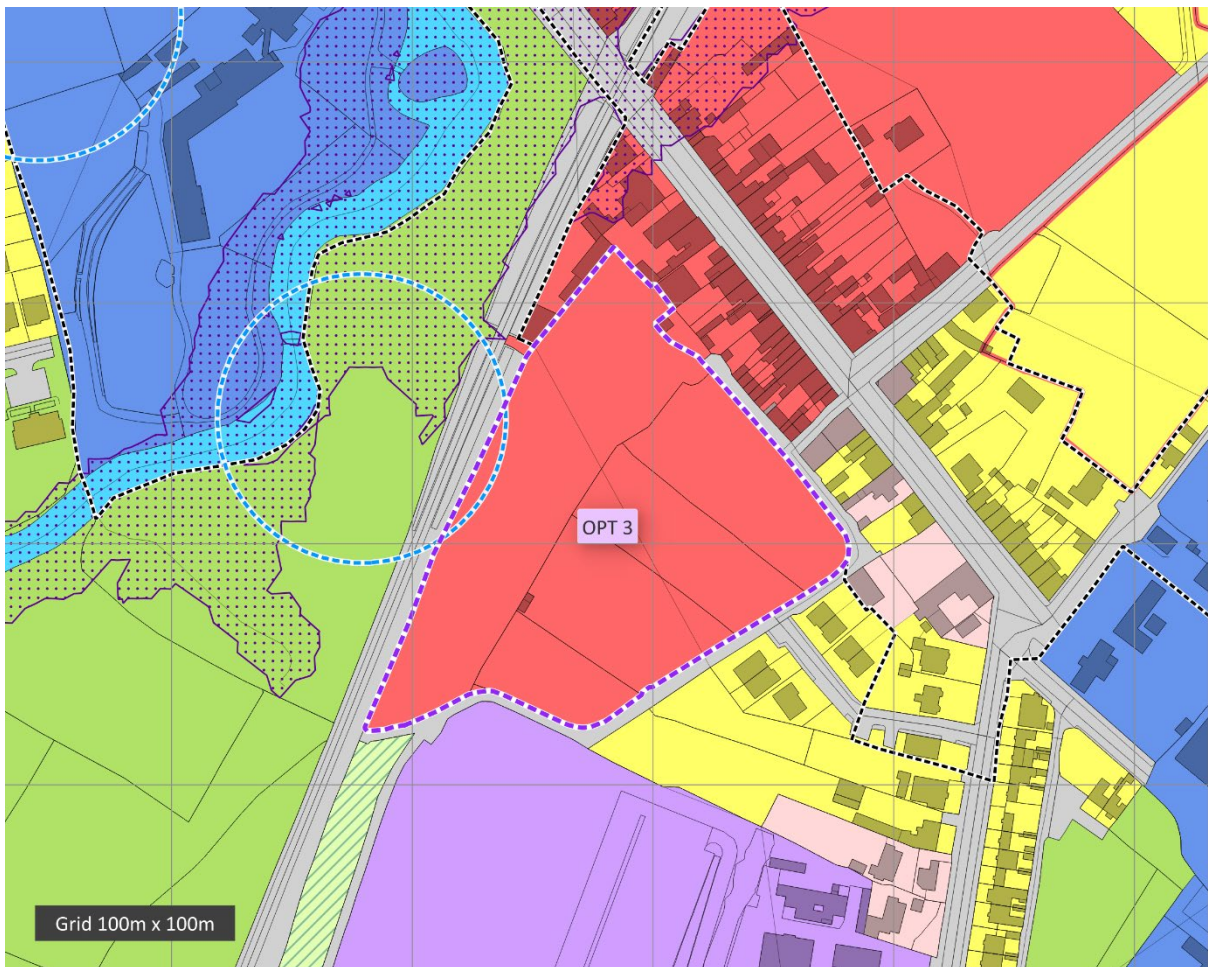
**Opportunity Site 3 – Courtney’s Lane**

**Area:** 2.12ha

**Zoning:** Town Centre

**Current Land-Use:** Greenfield Site

**Opportunity:** It is an objective to bring forward a sustainable, plan-led solution to integrate these undeveloped backlands as part of the town centre, with a mix of commercial and residential units.



**Figure 8: Opportunity Site 3**



**Opportunity Site 4 – Community Lands**

**Area:** 2.42 hectares

**Zoning:** Community Facilities

**Current Land Use:** Former religious and educational uses.

**Opportunity:** It is an objective to support the redevelopment and consolidation of important historical buildings and lands in the heart of Gort Town Centre to provide for social, cultural and community needs.

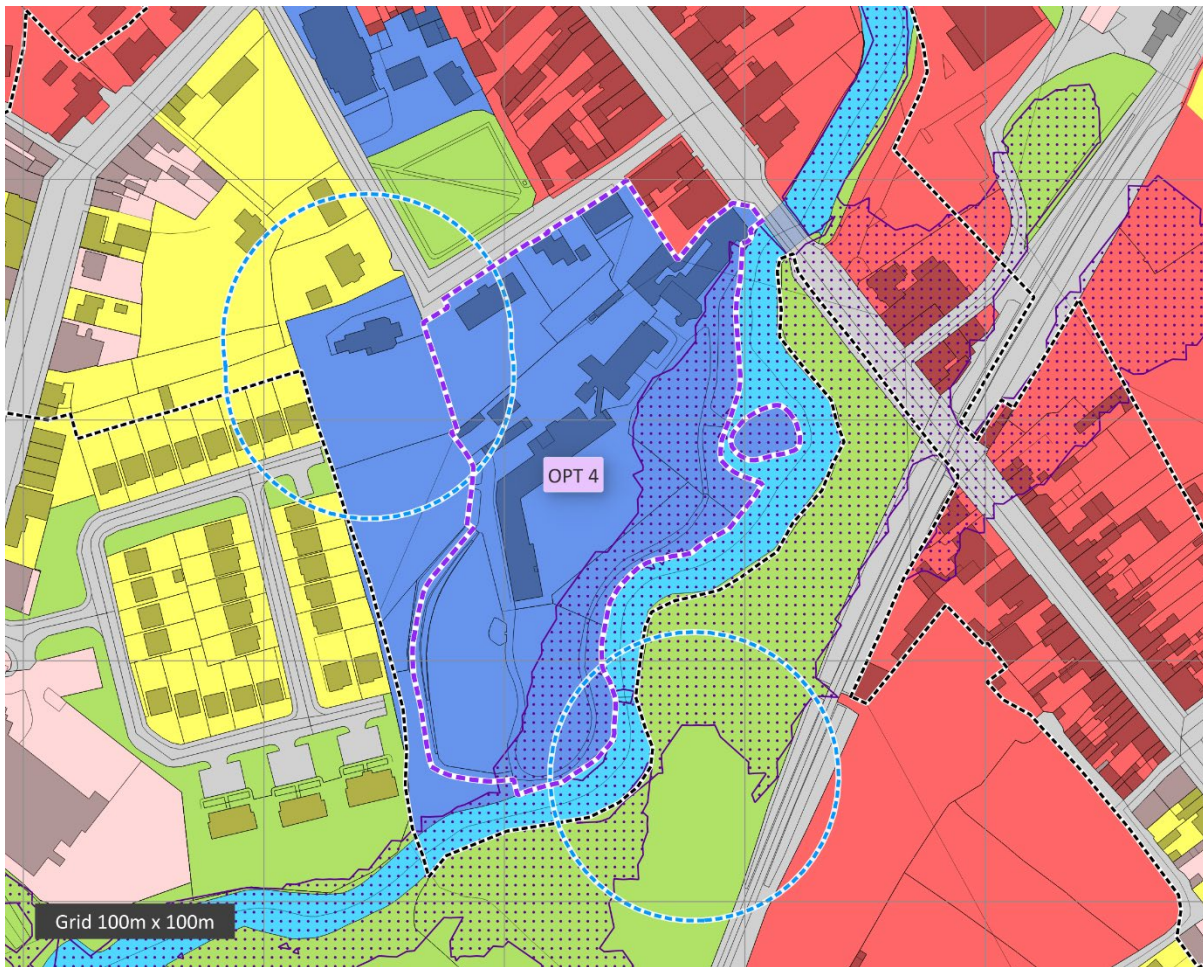


Figure 9: Opportunity Site 4

## 4.0 Policy Objectives

### **GSST 1 Consistency with Core Strategy**

Galway County Council will ensure that developments permitted within the settlement of Gort are consistent with the zoned land allocations in the Core Strategy and associated provisions of the *Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028*.

### **GSST 2 Service - Led Development**

Development under the plan shall be preceded by sufficient capacity in the public wastewater infrastructure and potable water infrastructure. Potential developers shall make a Pre-Connection Enquiry to Uisce Éireann in order to establish the feasibility of a connection to the public network.

### **GSST 3 Environmental Assessment**

To require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP.

### **GSST 4 Compact Growth**

Galway County Council shall support the delivery of new homes within the existing built-up footprint of Gort, by sites such as infill or opportunity sites in the settlement and prioritising underutilised land in preference to greenfield sites.

### **GSST 5 Opportunity Sites**

To encourage and support the appropriate and sustainable development or redevelopment of lands identified as development opportunity sites within the Land Use Zoning Map. See Section 3.0 in respect of individual sites.

### **GSST 6 Residential Development Phasing**

Support the development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the plan, subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements, and reserve the lands designated as Residential (Phase 2) for the longer-term growth needs of Gort. Residential (Phase 2) lands are generally not developable for housing within the lifetime of this plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority, subject to a suitable evidence-based case being for the proposal:

- a) Single house developments for local family members on family-owned lands, subject to a 7-year occupancy clause.
- b) Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, residential amenities, the existing pattern of development in the area and the policy objectives in the plan.
- c) Where it is apparent that Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed for residential purposes within the plan period, residential development may be considered in

limited cases in a phased manner on suitable Residential (Phase 2) lands, in exceptional circumstances;

- Development on Residential (Phase 2) lands will normally only be considered where 50% of the lands in Residential (Phase 1) are committed to the development
- Residential developments on Residential (Phase 2) lands will be subject to compliance with the Core Strategy, the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, connectivity, including infrastructure and public footpath and lighting to the town centre, the sequential approach, avoidance of leap-frog developments, and subject to meeting normal planning, environmental, access and servicing requirements. The development will only be permitted where a substantiated evidence-based case has been made to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and the development will not prejudice the future use of the lands for the longer-term growth needs of each settlement.

### **GSST 7 Residential Infill Development**

Within the Settlement Boundary, small scale limited infill housing development will be considered in appropriate sites. These infill sites shall have regard to the existing character of the street, respecting the existing building line, scale, proportions, layout, heights and materials of surrounding developments. (A proposed site must have a safe means of access and egress and comply with development management standards for new dwellings).

### **GSST 8 Sequential Development**

Endeavour to promote the orderly and phased development of residential development in accordance with the principles of the sequential approach as set out in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024 (or as updated). This shall include a positive presumption in favour of the sequential development of suitably serviced Residential Phase 1 lands emanating outwards from the town core and/or sequential extensions to the existing residential fabric of suitably serviced Residential Phase 1 lands within the LAP boundary, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and the current County Development Plan.

### **GSST 9 Town Centre**

- 1) It is a policy objective of Galway County Council that Gort Town Centre will remain the primary focus for the location of new retail and commercial development. The Planning Authority will ensure that the location of future retail development is consistent with the key policy principles and order of priority as set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities: Retail Planning 2012 (and any updated/superseded document) and will require Retail Impact Assessments, including details of the sequential approach and Design Statements for retail developments in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines.
- 2) This plan will also promote the development of commercial and complementary mixed uses, on suitable lands that can provide a focal point for the provision of services to the town and opportunities for commercial enterprises, retail developments and employment creation

- 3) The plan will protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre by ensuring that it remains the primary retail, commercial and mixed use centre of Gort and prohibit a proliferation of any individual use or other uses, which in the opinion of the Planning Authority do not contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

#### **GSST 10 Proliferation of Individual Uses**

Protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre by ensuring that it remains the primary retail, commercial and mixed-use centre in the town and prohibit the proliferation of any individual use that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, does not contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

#### **GSST 11 Gort Inse Guaire Town Centre First Plan**

Galway County Council shall support the implementation of the Gort Inse Guaire Town Centre First Plan, subject to meeting all other relevant planning policy requirements.

#### **GSST 12 Shop Front Design**

To promote and retain the existing character and appearance of town centre shopfronts, preserving original features where appropriate in accordance with policy objectives set out in the Galway County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and the Galway County Council Shopfront Design Guide 2022-2028.

#### **GSST 13 Social Inclusion and Universal Design and Access**

- a) It is the Policy Objective of Galway County Council to support the principles of social inclusion and universal design and access, to ensure that all individuals have access to goods, services and buildings to assist them to participate in and contribute to all aspects of a vibrant life within Gort.
- b) Ensure that housing developments, community facilities, public spaces, public roads, public footpaths and transport services give due consideration to the needs of disabled or mobility impaired people and the requirements of the Disability Act 2005, the Council's Disability Action Plan 2007-2015 (and any updates to this document), the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) and National Disability Authority (NDA) advice notes titled Access: Improving the Accessibility to Historic Buildings and Places 2011 (and any subsequent reviews/updates to these documents).

#### **GSST 14 Community Facilities**

Promote the sustainable development of community facilities on suitable lands with a high level of access to the local community, including education, community, civic, public institutional, recreational, cultural and other complementary uses as appropriate.

### **GSST 15 Educational Facilities in Gort**

Facilitate the provision of the primary, secondary, third level, vocational, outreach, research, adult and further educational facilities, lifelong learning facilities and digital capacity for distance learning to meet the needs of Gort. Multi-use facilities which can accommodate both educational and childcare facilities are to be encouraged.

### **GSST 16 Business and Technology**

Promote the development of Business and Technology uses in Gort on suitably zoned lands, strengthening its designation as *Self-Sustaining Town* to provide additional jobs and economic development at this strategic location.

### **GST 17 Business and Enterprise**

Galway County council shall support the delivery of Business and Enterprise uses in the plan area at suitable locations with adequate services and facilities and with a high level of access to the major road network and public transport facilities. This would facilitate the provision of further employment opportunities in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

### **GSST 18 Industrial**

Promote the sustainable development of industrial and industrial related uses, including manufacturing, processing of materials, warehousing and distribution on suitable lands, with adequate services and facilities and a high level of access to the major road networks and public transport facilities. Adequate boundary treatments and/or screening will be required to ensure high quality interfaces with public spaces and any adjoining residential areas or other sensitive land uses, as appropriate.

### **GSST 19 Open Space, Recreation and Amenity**

Promote the sustainable management, use and/or development, as appropriate, of open space/recreation and amenity lands. This will include;

- Development of open spaces and recreational activities, in accordance with best practice and on suitable lands with adequate access to the local community;
- Existing open space, sport and recreational facilities should be retained unless it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of Galway County Council that these uses are surplus to requirements of the local community or are to be replaced by an equivalent or better provision;
- Appropriate management and use of any flood risk areas within the OS zone to avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate, the risk and potential impact of flooding;
- Support the protection of habitats and species listed in the annexes to and/or covered by the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), and species that are protected under the Wildlife Acts, 1976-2000, and stepping stones or ecological corridors in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive
- Tourism



- Encourage and assist the development of the tourist potential within Gort in a manner that protects the architectural, archaeological and cultural significance of the town and its environs in a sustainable manner.

#### **GSST 20 New Playground/Recreational Area**

It is policy objective of Galway County Council to support and encourage the development of new playgrounds/recreational areas in Gort.

#### **GSST 21 Tourism**

Galway County Council shall encourage and foster appropriate tourism opportunities that capitalise on Gort's tourist potential and better promote itself as a traditional Irish market town, with strong links to its natural, cultural and architectural heritage.

*Any proposals shall be required to comply with environmental considerations and the relevant DM Standards.*

#### **GSST 22 The River Walk**

Protect and enhance walkways along the Cannahowna/Gort River including the Kinincha and Pound Road in a sustainable manner where possible. Regard should be had to the protection of Otters and Otter breeding sites and resting places along the river walk.

*Any proposals shall be required to comply with environmental considerations and the relevant DM Standards.*

#### **GSST 23 Agriculture**

To promote the development of agriculture and agriculture-related uses in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development. There will be a general presumption against residential development on Agricultural zoned lands, located within the plan boundary except for single house developments for family members on farm family-owned lands.

#### **GSST 24 Public Utilities**

Facilitate the provision and maintenance of essential public utility infrastructure, together with the necessary ancillary facilities and uses, as appropriate. Development proposals in the vicinity of public utilities infrastructure will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

#### **GSST 25 Constrained Land Use**

To facilitate the appropriate management and sustainable use of land within Flood Zones A and B.

New development in these areas will generally be limited (apart from where the Plan-level Justification Test outlined in the accompanying SFRA has been passed or where the uses comprise minor developments in existing developed areas, as outlined in Section 5.28 of the Guidelines as



amended by Circular PL 2/2014) to water-compatible uses in Flood Zone A, and less vulnerable or water compatible uses in Flood Zone B, and a detailed site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required in these areas.

This limitation shall take primacy over any other provision relating to land use zoning objectives.

The Plan-level Justification Test has been passed for all the lands zoned Town Centre overlapping within Flood Zone A or B.

#### **GSST 26 Active Land Management in Gort**

To promote, support, and facilitate the re-use of under-utilised or vacant lands, or lands identified for regeneration, through a co-ordinated approach to active land management between the Council and stakeholders.

#### **GSST 27 Social and Affordable Housing**

Promote the provision of social and affordable housing, in accordance with the Council's Housing Strategy, Housing Need Demand Assessment and Government policy as outlined in the DHLGH Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland 2021.

Require that a minimum of 20% of all new eligible residential sites (save where required to be in accordance with Housing Circular 28/2021), are set aside for the development of new social and affordable housing units, unless addressed through suitable alternative arrangements by agreement with the Planning Authority, in accordance with the Galway County Council Housing Strategy and Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and any subsequent amendments to the Part V provision to reflect Government policy.

#### **GSST 28 Housing for Older persons - Housing for People with Special Needs**

Facilitate, as appropriate, development of housing for older persons, people with disabilities and people with special needs in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

#### **GSST 29 Other Residential Development**

There shall be a general presumption in favour of the development of nursing/care homes and retirement accommodation/facilities and community/day care centres on residential zoned lands, community facility zoned lands or adjacent to the established town centre or as suitable re-use for protected structures or other buildings (e.g. institutional or educational buildings) that would have limited re-development potential given their size and architectural character, subject to normal planning, environmental, access and servicing requirements.

#### **GSST 30 Traveller Accommodation**

Support the provision of adequate accommodation facilities for the Traveller Community in accordance with the *Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 - 2024 for County Galway* (or any updated/superseding document).

### **GSST 31 Water Supply and Water Conservation**

Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with a suitable quantity and quality of drinking water supply, promote water conservation to reduce the overall level of water loss in the public supply and require that new domestic developments provide for water supply metering in accordance with their connection agreement with Uisce Éireann.

### **GSST 32 High Quality and Contextually Sensitive Design**

Ensure that new developments are responsive to their site context and in keeping with the character, heritage, amenities, environment and landscape of the area. New development proposals will be required to complement the existing character of the area in terms of scale, height, massing, building line, urban grain and definition and through high quality design proposals for buildings/structures/shop fronts, the use of high quality, appropriate materials and the provision of appropriate signage, lighting, landscaping proposals and other such details.

### **GSST 33 Public Spaces and Streets**

Promote the development of high-quality public spaces consisting of streets, squares, parks and amenities connected by a network of pedestrian and cycling routes. Public spaces should have a high standard of design and street furniture that will create a coherent character for the area. This would include appropriately designed and located park benches, bus shelters, bicycle storage facilities, refuse bins, signage, street sculpture, etc. but should avoid the over-proliferation of different elements and/or cluttering of public spaces.

### **GSST 34 Spatial Definition and Animation**

Ensure that new developments are designed to provide spatial definition and animation to public spaces and streets through the use of appropriate building lines and built forms, responsive building frontages and passive surveillance and high-quality streetscapes and/or landscaping edges to enclose and address public spaces. Perimeter block typologies provide a useful approach in generating good spatial definition, adequate enclosure and a high-quality public realm and the creation of focal points, such as landmark buildings and gateways, also help to improve spatial definition and legibility and will be encouraged in appropriate locations.

### **GSST 35 Green Infrastructure**

Galway County Council shall promote the benefit of open spaces and implement the integration of green infrastructure/networks (e.g., interconnected network of green spaces (including aquatic ecosystems) and other physical features on land) into new development and regeneration proposals in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

### **GSST 36 Street-Oriented Development and Responsive Frontages**

Promote street-oriented development along the urban street network within the built areas of the town and the approach routes to the town. This will include improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport as appropriate and the promotion of high-quality buildings or landscaping edges

to these routes. Buildings and spaces should be designed to provide a human scale along street frontages with the use of appropriate building heights and responsive ground floor treatments. Intensive, fine-grained developments will generally be encouraged to provide a diversity of building forms and public spaces.

### **GSST 37 Views and Prospects**

Preserve the protected views and scenic routes as detailed in Maps 8.3 and 8.4 in the GCDP 2022-2028 from development that in the view of the Planning Authority would negatively impact on said protected views and scenic routes. This shall be balanced against the need to develop key infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the plan.

### **GSST 38 Design Statements**

Significant proposals will be required to submit Design Statements which will be determined by scale and impact the latter of which will vary depending on the development location and the pertinent sensitivities. The design statement must demonstrate the suitability of the proposed design solution to the site context in accordance with the relevant urban design criteria. They should include a detailed explanation with illustrations where necessary the design principles and design concept. This should refer to the development layout, landscape, scale and mix, details of materials should also be included. The statement should show how the development will contribute to the process of placemaking. Particular reference should also include;

- A site analysis;
- A concept plan or masterplan as deemed appropriate;
- A statement demonstrating the 12 urban design criteria set out in the Sustainable Residential Guidelines for Planning Authorities;
- Quality Audit addressing street design as outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets;
- Reference to the contribution of the development of the quality of public realm surrounding the development;
- Demonstrate compliance with the Policy Objectives set out in this LAP and the GCDP.

A degree of flexibility will apply to the requirements of Design Statements and other DM standards. Gort has its own set of circumstances which require flexible tailored design solutions where a proposal accords with specific planning standards and requirements.

### **GSST 39 Architectural Heritage**

Ensure the protection and conservation of the architectural heritage in the plan area, in particular by implementing the relevant legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and policy guidance contained within the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004/2011 and the published DAHG & NDA advice series titled Access: Improving the Accessibility of Historic Buildings and Places 2011 (or any superseding document). Policy Objective AH 2 – Protected Structures (Refer to the Current Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028). Ensure the protection and sympathetic enhancement of structures included in the Record of

Protected Structures (RPS) that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest, together with the integrity of their character and setting.

#### **GSST 40 Architectural Conservation Areas**

Protect, conserve and enhance the essential character of the Gort Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) through the appropriate management and control of the design, location and layout of new development, respecting surviving historic plots and street patterns, alterations or extensions to existing structures, and/or modifications to the character or setting of the Architectural Conservation Areas. The identification of areas of special interest within the plan boundary may be considered during the lifetime of the plan.

#### **GSST 41 Development/Works relating to Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Area**

Ensure that any development, modifications, alterations, or extensions materially affecting the character of a Protected Structure, or a structure adjoining a Protected Structure or structure within or adjacent to an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), is sited and designed appropriately and is not detrimental to the character or setting of the Protected Structure or the ACA. This will include the following:

- a) Works materially affecting the character of a Protected Structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an ACA will require planning permission.
- b) Any works/development carried out to a Protected Structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an ACA shall be in accordance with best conservation practice and use sustainable and appropriate materials.
- c) Prohibit development proposals, either in whole or in part, for the demolition of Protected Structures or structures within an Architectural Conservation Area, which contributes to the special character of the area, save for in exceptional circumstances.

#### **GSST 42 Zones of Archaeological Notification**

Ensure that all planning applications for development (including proposed services and infrastructural schemes such as electricity, sewerage, telecommunications and water schemes) within or in close proximity (30m) to the Zones of Archaeological Notification established for Gort Town as defined in Map 2 or at or in relation to other recorded archaeological sites and monuments (i.e. within the areas indicated on the SMR Database/Historic Environment Viewer – [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)) or in proximity to any National Monuments, including the historic town walls (both upstanding and sub-surface remains), shall take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological assessments and possible mitigation measures.

#### **GSST 43 Archaeology and Infrastructure Schemes**

It is a policy objective of the planning authority to have regard to archaeological heritage when considering proposed service schemes (including electricity, sewerage, telecommunications, and water supply) and proposed roadwork (both realignments and new roads) located in close proximity to Recorded Monuments and Places and their known archaeological monuments.

#### **GSST 44 Local Transport Plan**

Support the implementation of the Local Transport Plan as set out in Section 3 in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

#### **GSST 45 Transportation Infrastructure**

Facilitate the provision and maintenance of essential transportation infrastructure. This shall include the reservation of lands to facilitate public roads, footpaths, cycle ways, bus stops and landscaping together with any necessary associated works, as appropriate.

#### **GSST 46 Sustainable Transportation**

Facilitate any Smarter Travel initiatives that will improve sustainable transportation within the plan area and facilitate sustainable transportation options including public transportation, rail freight, electric vehicles rentals, car clubs, public bike schemes, cycle parking as appropriate.

#### **GSST 47 Pedestrian and Cycle Network**

Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian and cycling environment and network so that it is safe and accessible to all, through the provision of the necessary infrastructure. New development shall promote and prioritise walking and cycling, shall be permeable, adequately linked and connected to neighbouring areas, the town centre, recreational, educational, residential and employment destinations and shall adhere to the principles contained within the national policy document Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and NTA document Permeability: Best Practice Guide.

#### **GSST 48 Pedestrian Crossings**

Facilitate the provision of pedestrian crossings adjacent to schools and at other appropriate locations within the plan area.

#### **GSST 49 Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audits (RSA)**

Require all significant development proposals to be accompanied by a Road Safety Audit and Traffic & Transport Assessment carried out by suitably competent consultants, which are assessed in association with their cumulative impact with neighbouring developments on the road network, in accordance with the requirements contained within the TII's *Traffic & Transport Assessment Guidelines (PE-PDV-02045) 2014* (including any updated/superseding document) and 'Road Safety Audit' (GE-STY-01024) December 2017.

#### **GSST 50 Preservation of Routes, Road Upgrades and Infrastructure Provision**

Prohibit development on lands which are reserved for proposed road/street corridors and associated buffers and where development would affect a route, line, level or layout of any proposed new roadway or any junction required between a proposed and existing road.

### **GSST 51 Reservation of Access Points**

Reserve access points for future development and the development of backlands that may be identified for reservation by the Planning Authority during the plan period, to ensure adequate vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access to backlands, in order to facilitate efficient development of these lands and to ensure connectivity and accessibility to lands with limited road frontage.

### **GSST 52 Road Junction Improvements**

Continue to carry out road junction improvements where improvements to traffic flow and safety can be achieved, subject to normal planning and environment considerations.

### **GSST 53 Climate Change**

Support and encourage sustainable compact growth and settlement patterns, integrated land use and low carbon transportation, and maximise opportunities through development location, form, layout and design to secure climate resilience and reduce carbon emissions.

### **GSST 54 Climate Change and Local Renewable Energy Sources**

Support and facilitate the implementation of European, National and Regional objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage) and having regard to the Climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

### **GSST 55 European Sites**

Protect European Sites including Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) that form part of the Natura 2000 network. In accordance with the requirements in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011) (and any subsequent amendments or updated legislation) and having due regard to the guidance in the Appropriate Assessment Guidelines 2010 (and any updated/superseding guidance). A plan or project (e.g., proposed development) within the plan area will only be authorised after the competent authority (Galway County Council) has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and an Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:

1.The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any European Sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects);

Or

2.The plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites (that does not host a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions, and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of European Sites;



Or

3. The plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites (that hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of European Sites.

#### **GSST 56 Trees, Parkland/Woodland and Hedgerows**

- a) Protect important trees, tree clusters and hedgerows in the plan area and ensure that development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands. Ensure that all planting schemes use suitable native variety of trees.
- b) Seek to retain natural boundaries, including stone walls, hedgerows and tree boundaries, wherever possible and replace with a boundary type similar to the existing boundary where removal is unavoidable. Discourage the felling of mature trees where possible. All works to be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Forestry Act, 1946 (as amended);
- c) Carry out a tree survey on important tree stands within the plan area by suitably qualified personnel (excluding Ash).

#### **GSST 57 Biodiversity & Ecological Networks**

Support the protection of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the Plan Area including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, natural springs, peatlands, wetlands, stonewalls, and other landscape features, where these form part of the ecological network. Seek to retain and/or incorporate these natural features into developments, to avoid ecological fragmentation and maintain ecological corridors.

#### **GSST 58 Flood Risk Management Guidelines**

It is the policy objective of Galway County Council to support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010) and the DEHLG/OPW publication The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009) (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance) and Department Circular PL2/2014 or any updated / superseding version.

#### **GSST 59 Flood Risk Management and Assessment**

It is a Policy Objective of the Council to comply with the requirements of the DoEHLG/OPW The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and its accompanying Technical Appendices Document 2009 (including any updated/superseding documents). This will include the following:

- a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the Guidelines;

- b) Development proposals in areas where there is an identified or potential risk of flooding or that could give rise to a risk of flooding elsewhere will be required to carry out a Site- Specific Flood Risk Assessment, and justification test where appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any superseding document); Any flood risk assessment should include an assessment of the potential impacts of climate change, such as an increase in the extent or probability of flooding, and any associated measures necessary to address these impacts;
- c) Development that would be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding or that would cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations shall not normally be permitted;
- d) Galway County Council shall work with other bodies and organisations, as appropriate, to help protect critical infrastructure, including water and wastewater, within the County, from risk of flooding.

### **GSST 60 Principles of Flood Risk Management Guidelines**

The Council shall implement the key principles of flood risk management set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines as follows:

- a) Avoid development that will be at risk of flooding or that will increase the flooding risk elsewhere, where possible;
- b) Substitute less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible; and,
- c) Mitigate and manage the risk, where avoidance and substitution are not possible.

Development should only be permitted in areas at risk of flooding when there are no alternative reasonable sites available in areas at lower risk that also meet the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development. Vulnerable development in areas which have the highest flood risk should be avoided and/or only considered in exceptional circumstances (through a prescribed Justification Test) if adequate land or sites are not available in areas which have lower flood risk.

### **GSST 61 Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)**

Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing surface water drainage system in Gort. Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in all new developments. Surface water runoff from development sites will be limited to pre-development levels and planning applications for new developments will be required to provide details of surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems proposals. To maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water, the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers is not permitted. Refer also to Section 3.5 of the accompanying SFRA, "Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Surface Water Guidance and Strategy".

### **GSST 62 Protection of Waterbodies and Watercourses**

Protect waterbodies and watercourses within the County from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in the riverine, wetland and coastal areas as appropriate.

To contribute towards protection and improvement of the status of surface and ground waters in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.

Applications for development under the Plan must demonstrate that the proposed development would not adversely affect a water body's ability to meet its objectives under the Water Framework Directive, individually as a result of the proposed development or cumulatively, in combination with other developments.

### **GSST 63 Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Applications and CFRAMS**

Protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any superseding document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standards 2 and 3. Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all planning applications in areas at elevated risk of flooding, even for developments appropriate to the particular flood zone. The detail of these site-specific FRAs will depend on the level of risk and scale of development. A detailed site-specific FRA should quantify the risks, the effects of selected mitigation and the management of any residual risks. The Council shall have regard to the results of any CFRAM Studies in the assessment of planning applications. Where a development/land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, then the development proposal will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test in addition to the site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. In Flood Zone C, where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1%, Flood Zone C), site-specific Flood Risk Assessment may be required, and the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed.

### **GSST 64 Flood Risk Assessment and Climate Change**

Flood Risk Assessment in Gort shall provide information on the implications of climate change with regards to flood risk in relevant locations. The Flood Risk Management – Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan 2019 (or any superseding document) shall be consulted with to this effect.

### **GSST 65 River Basin Management Plan and Protection of Waters**

Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the National River Basin Management Plan or any other plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this Local Area Plan. Development shall only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface water, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated wetlands. Galway County Council will support the protection and, where appropriate, the restoration of all water bodies in order to reach good status and will seek to prevent deterioration in the status of all water bodies.

### **GSST 66 Flood Vulnerable Zones**

It is a policy objective of the Council to ensure that applications pertaining to existing developments in flood vulnerable zones provide details of structural and non-structural risk management measures to include, but not be limited to specifications of the following – floor levels, internal layout, flood

resilient construction, flood resistant construction, emergency response planning, access and egress during flood events.

#### **GSST 67 Flood Risk Management**

Ensure each flood risk management activity is examined to determine actions required to embed and provide for effective climate change adaptation as set out in the OPW Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Flood Risk Management applicable at the time.

#### **GSST 68 Waste Prevention, Reduction and Recycling**

Promote the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments, new development proposals shall be required to submit proposals demonstrating how this is to be achieved and shall seek to ensure on-site provision for waste storage and segregation (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection at all new domestic and non-domestic premises.

#### **GSST 69 Broadband & Telecommunications**

To facilitate the sustainable delivery of a high capacity and high-quality ICT infrastructure within the plan area, including telephony and broadband services, to the requirements of the relevant service providers and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

#### **GSST 70 Open Access Fibre Ducting**

Facilitate and promote the installation of underground shared telecommunications physical infrastructure, where practicable, in line with the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications documents including *'Recommendations for Open Access Fibre Ducting and Interior Cabling for New Residential Buildings 'Making Homes Fibre Ready', 2011*, Support and facilitate delivery of the National Broadband Plan and the *National Digital Strategy for Ireland 2013, 'Doing more with Digital – Phase 1 Digital Engagement'* and *Galway County Digital Strategy 2020 - 2023(including any updated/superseding documents)*.

**GSST 71 Electricity Supply** Support the provision of an adequate supply of electricity and gas to developments in the Plan Area, to the requirements of the relevant service provider.

#### **GSST 72 Renewable Energy**

Promote and facilitate the development of renewable sources of energy and associated infrastructure within the LAP area and encourage the integration of micro-renewable energy sources into the design and construction of new developments as appropriate.

#### **GSST 73 Development Management Standards, Guidelines and Other Provisions**

Ensure that all of the provisions and general development management standards and guidelines set out in this LAP and the current *Galway County Development Plan 2022 - 2028*, or any subsequent variation or review shall apply as appropriate in the plan area. Provisions from the County Development Plan identified as mitigation in the SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Report shall apply regardless of whether the County Development Plan expires and/or is reviewed.

**GSST 74 Implementation and Monitoring**

Monitor development for compliance with the policy objectives of the Core Strategy and adjust, where necessary, the approach taken to the consideration of development proposals to ensure effective alignment with the National, Regional and County policy objectives.

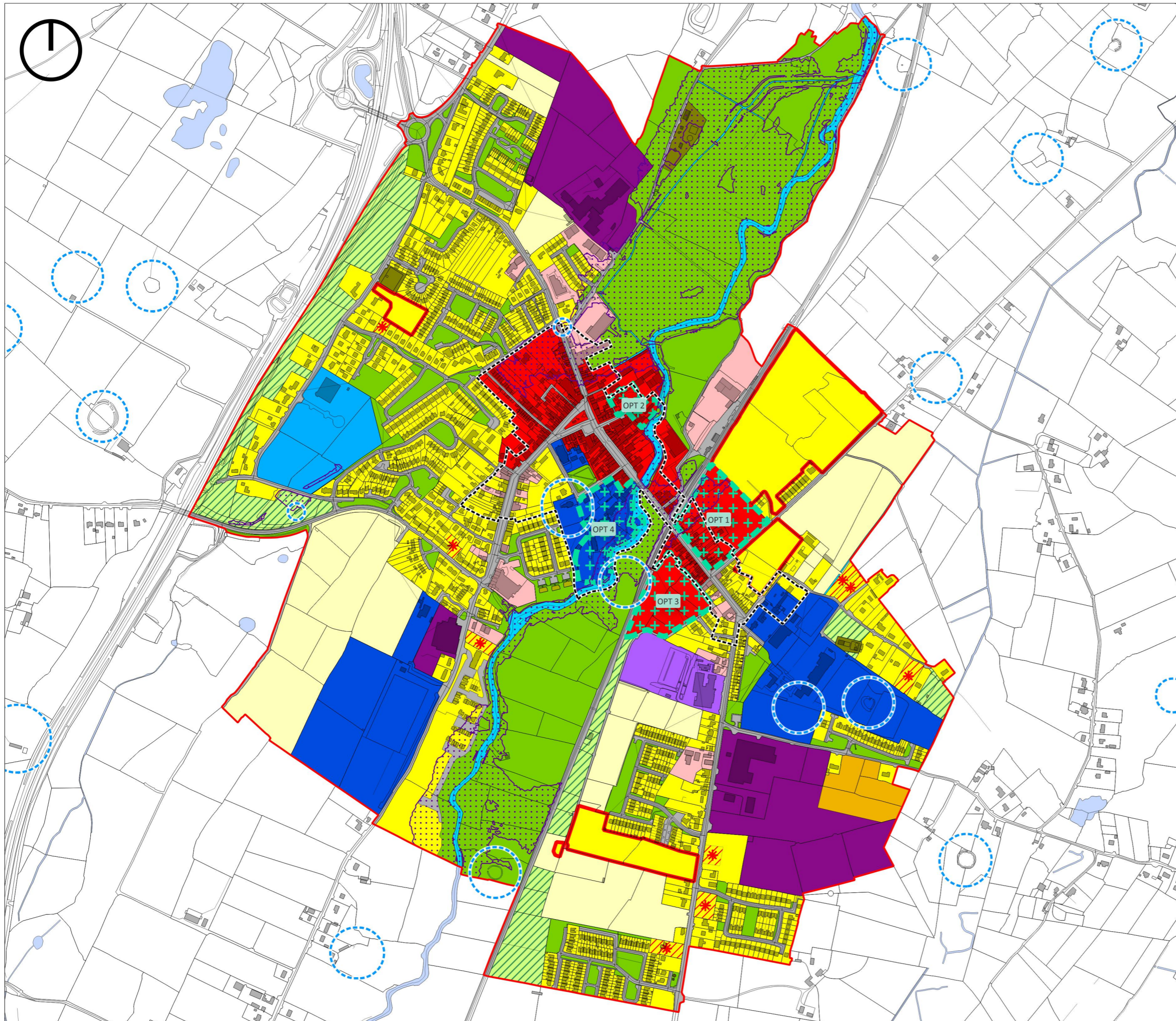


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# Draft Gort Local Area Plan 2025 - 2031

January 2025  
Schedule of Maps

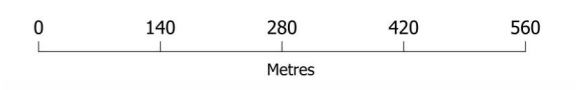




- Settlement Boundary
- R - Residential Existing
- R - Residential (Phase 1)
- R - Residential (Phase 2)
- Residential Infill
- C1 - Town Centre
- C2 - Commercial/Mixed Use
- BE - Business & Enterprise
- BT - Business & Technology
- I - Industrial
- CF - Community Facilities
- T - Tourism
- PU - Public Utility
- OS - Open Space/Recreation & Amenity
- A - Agriculture
- TI - Transport Infrastructure
- Water/Rivers/Streams
- Constrained Land Use
- Opportunity Site (Labelled - OPT #)
- Archaeological Zone of Notification
- Architectural Conservation Area

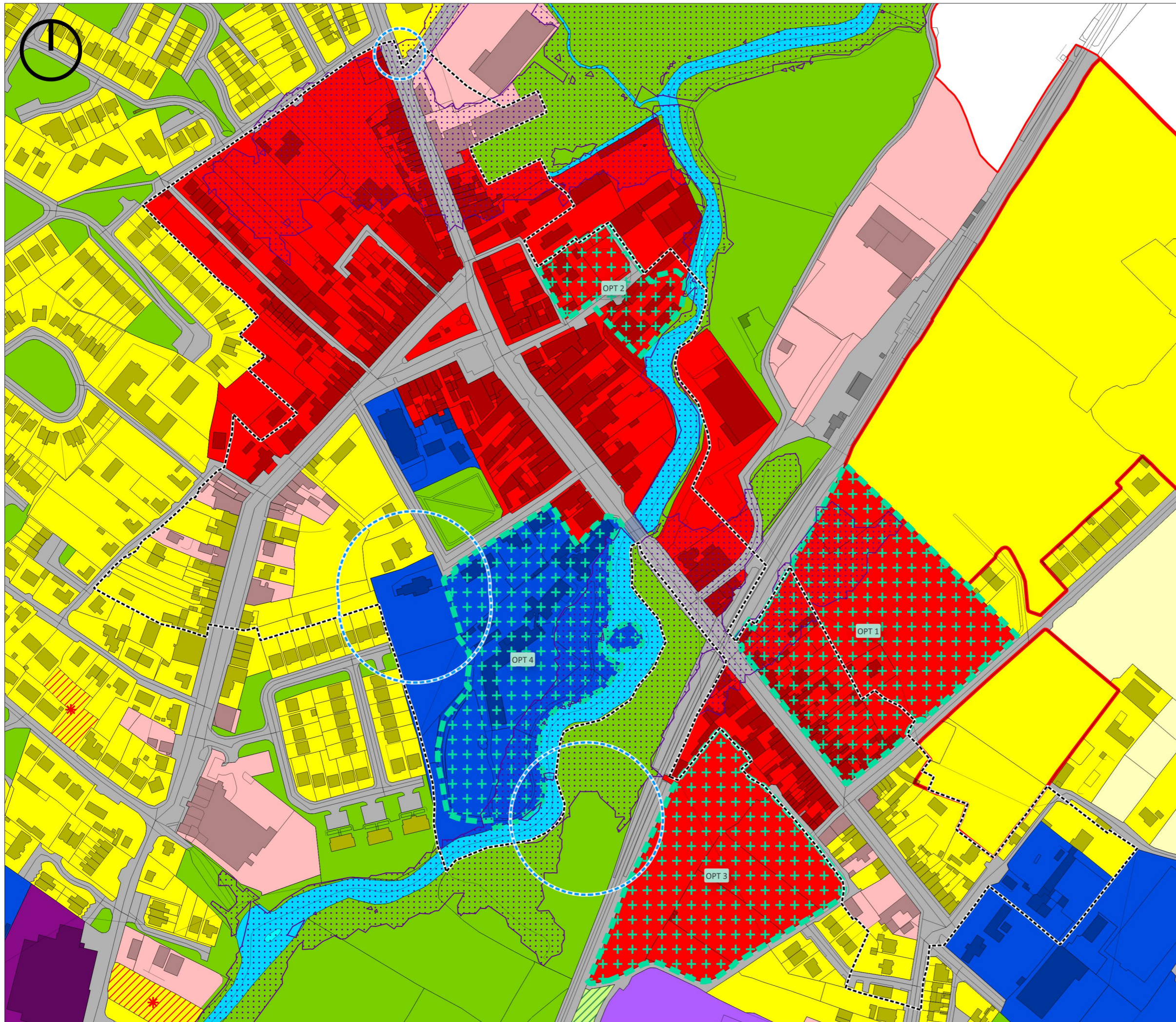
**Draft Gort Local Area Plan  
2025-2031**

**Map 1A Land Use Zoning Map**



Galway County Council 2025  
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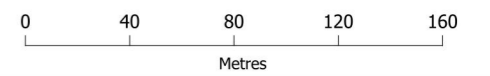




-  Settlement Boundary
-  R - Residential Existing
-  R - Residential (Phase 1)
-  R - Residential (Phase 2)
-  Residential Infill
-  C1 - Town Centre
-  C2 - Commercial/Mixed Use
-  I - Industrial
-  CF - Community Facilities
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-  Constrained Land Use
-  Opportunity Site (Labelled - OPT #)
-  Archaeological Zone of Notification
-  Architectural Conservation Area

**Draft Gort Local Area Plan  
2025-2031**

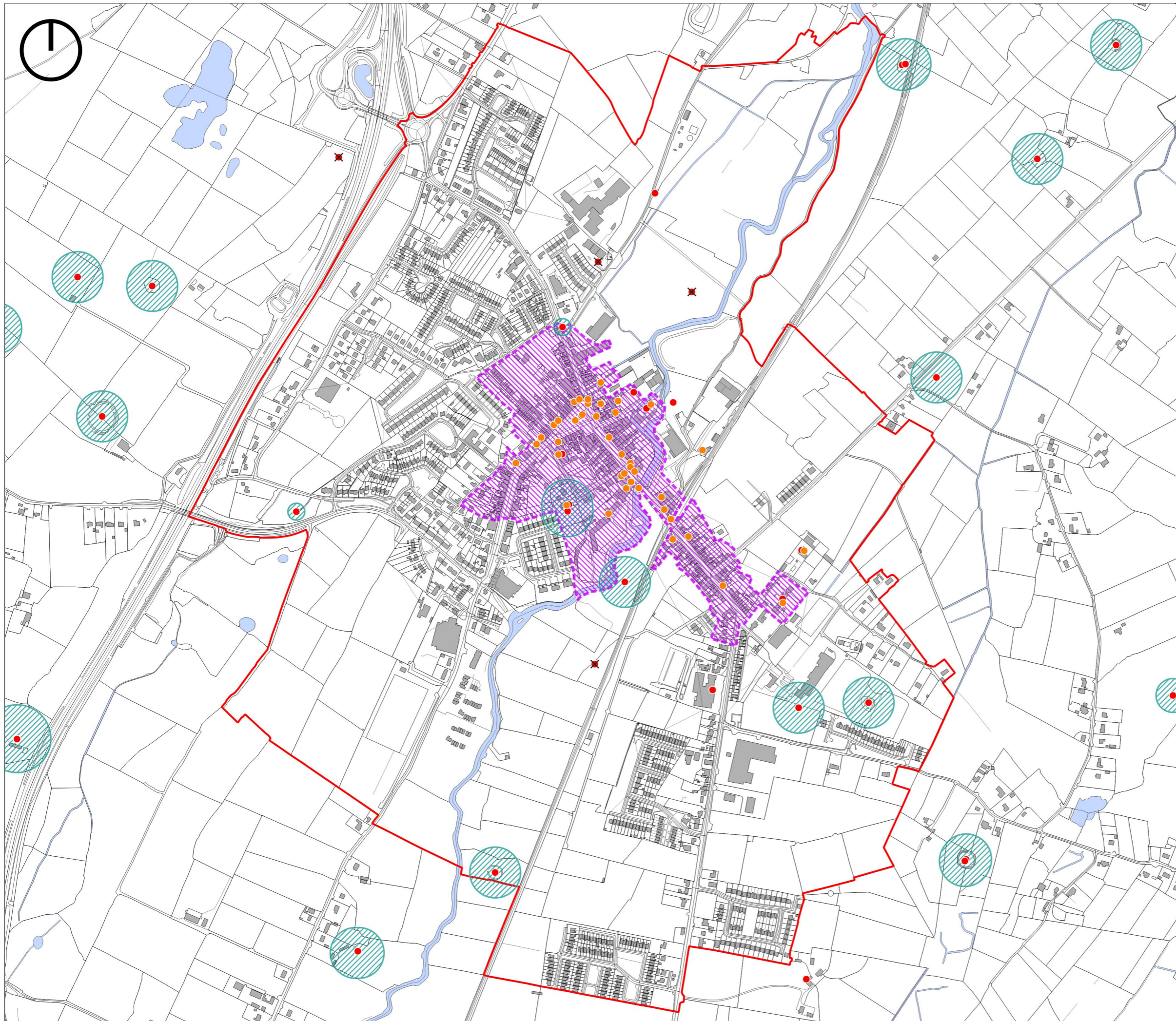
**Map 1B Land Use Zoning Map  
Town Centre**



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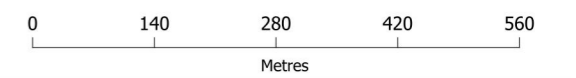




- Settlement Boundary
- Architectural Heritage**
- Architectural Conservation Area
- Protected Structure
- Archaeological Heritage**
- Recorded Monument
- ✕ Redundant Record
- Archaeological Zone of Notification

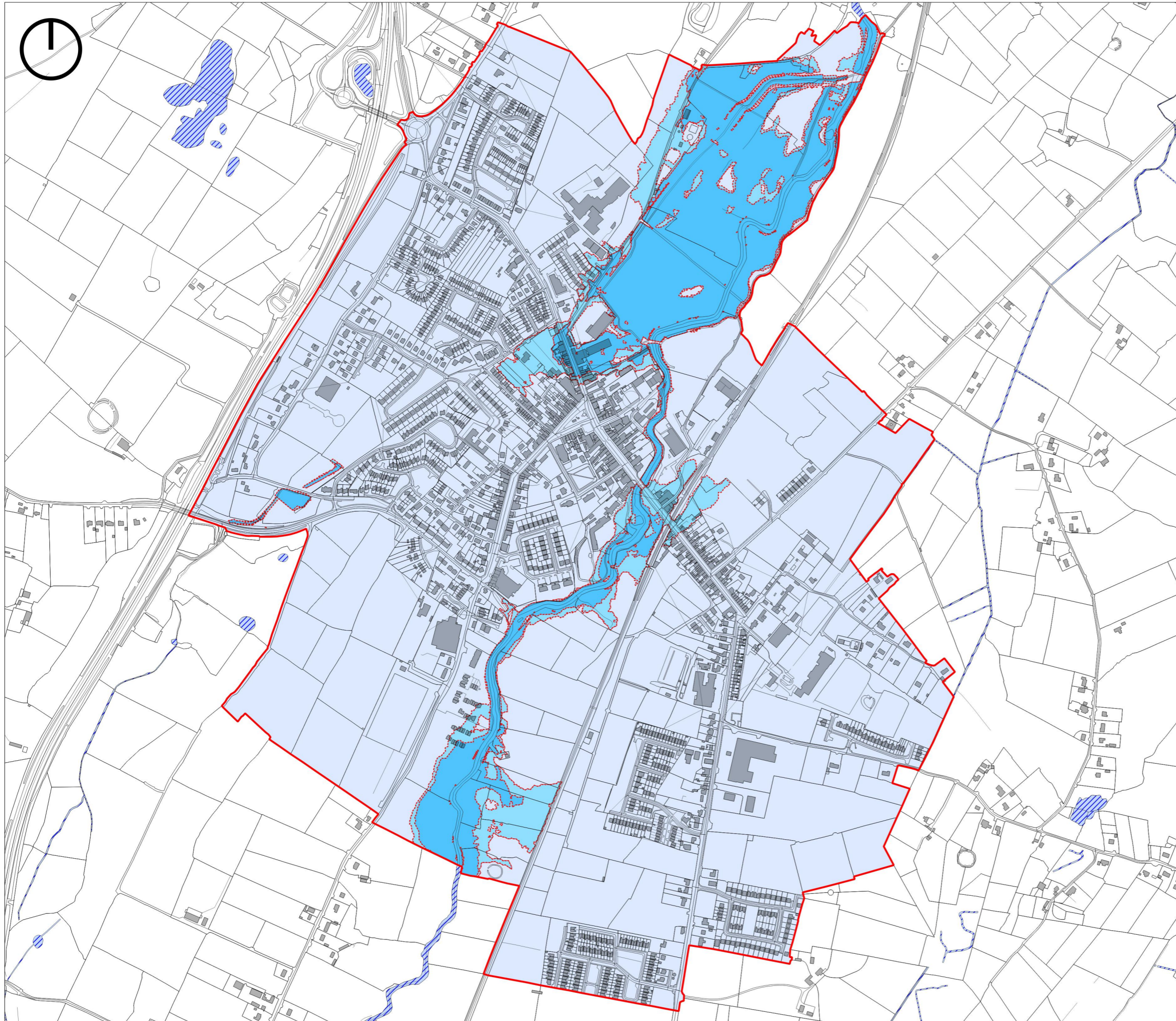
**Draft Gort Local Area Plan  
2025-2031**






**Map 2 Archaeological &  
Built Heritage**



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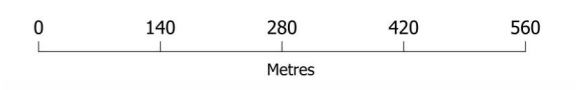




-  Settlement Boundary
-  Indicative Flood Zone A
-  Indicative Flood Zone B
-  Indicative Flood Zone C
-  Water Outside Plan Boundary

**Draft Gort Local Area Plan  
2025-2031**

**Map 3 Flood Risk Management**



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