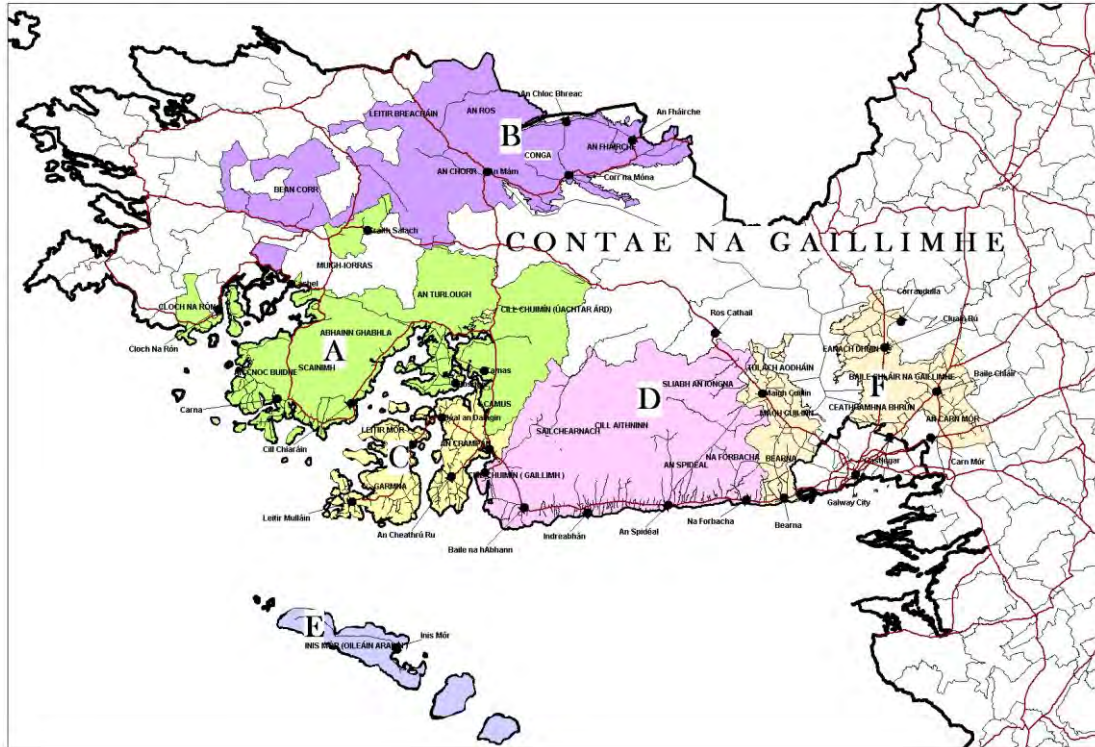


Gaeltacht Local Area Plan

2008 – 2018



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GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Plan

Gaeltacht Na Gaillimhe is the most populous of the Country's Gaeltacht areas. It stretches from Balle Chláir, which is east of the city to Cloch na Rón in west Conamara, a distance of approx 100km, and from Oileáin Árainn northwards to the Mayo border.

It includes some townlands within Galway City which are not included in this plan – See Map No. 1.1. **The country's Gaeltacht was defined by a government appointed commission in the fledgling Free State of 1926, and its boundaries were re-drawn in 1956, taking in a total of 154 district electoral divisions nationwide, 35 of which are in County Galway.** It was selected as being the area where Irish was the community language spoken by 80% of the people living there.

The economic circumstances of the west of Ireland have resulted in endemic emigration, leaving fragmented and declining communities through successive decades until the turn around in the economy during the Celtic Tiger years. Despite the various state fiscal schemes, the dedicated work of Údarás na Gaeltachta, the County Councils infrastructural development programme, the localized input of the Comhar Chumainn and the strong voluntary movements, the population has declined in the areas where the language and culture are best preserved.

Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, permits the preparation of a Local Area Plan for a Gaeltacht, and requires consultation with Údarás na Gaeltachta if such a plan is undertaken.

A Local Area plan must be consistent with the Core Strategy and the objectives of the County Development Plan and may contain details of community facilities and amenities, and standards for the design of developments and structures. The Planning Authority must also consult with specified Statutory Authorities, local residents and interested parties in the plan area.

This plan consists of a written statement and appendices which contain maps and development control guidelines and standards. A fundamental challenge therefore to the statutory authorities and to the local communities is to halt the decline in population and agree on a programme of infrastructural development and service delivery which will encourage the younger generation to remain in their native area, out of choice, and develop its economy in a way that is language and culture friendly. There is also the need for service providers to carry out business in the Irish Language. The County Council has undertaken this provision in the case of the local office in An Cheathrú Rua.

SECTION TWO: PLAN CONTENT

2.1 Plan Content

2.1.1 Geography

The majority of the Gaeltacht is located in the Conamara area west of the City and Lough Corrib with a residential settlement which is predominantly along the southern coastline but which has a significant presence in north Conamara.

The rolling landscape near the southern coast is composed of thin soil of low fertility overlying granite rock. Northwards from the Residential Coastal Strip lies a great area of Atlantic Blanket Bog which is a significant portion of a globally scarce resource. This in turn bridges the gap to the mountainous Quartzite landscape of north Conamara where the agricultural landuse is shared between afforestation and sheep farming.

The Galway/Oughterard section of the N59 route divides the granite and quartzite intrusions of the west from the great sedimentary limestone plain of east Galway. The eastern section of the Gaeltacht, particularly the electoral divisions east of the City has good quality agricultural soil overlying the bedrock, and is in constant demand for urban generated residential development.

Oileáin Árainn have large areas of bare karst limestone, which are extensions of the neighbouring Burren, and which are candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC). The cultivated portions have thin overlays of soil which have been developed by generations of husbandry.

2.1.2 Environmental Designations

Extensive areas of Conamara have been designated Natural Heritage Areas under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. While other areas are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including all candidate sites, and are protected under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC). The Gaeltacht also has Special Protection Areas (SPAs), that are designated and protected under the EU Birds (Directive 79/409/EEC) and Habitats Directives. The EU directives have been transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997. The precautionary principle applies, in that development can only take place if there are no reasonable alternatives or that the project is demonstrably in the public interest.

Landscape sensitivity ratings have been designated to all parts of the County, as set out in the County Development Plan. Control of development in the various landscape types is in accordance with Development Management Control Standards and Guidelines of the Plan.

2.1.3 The Marine

The coastal waters have sustained and nurtured the coastal communities over the generations. From the basic provision of food in earlier times, particularly in times of famine, and the harvesting of seaweed for soil provision and fertility, the sea resources have been developed to be a significant factor in the economic development of the Gaeltacht.

Aquaculture has provided substantial employment in the area despite the fluctuating international markets. Seaweed products have claimed their own niche in the health and cosmetic industries. Aramara Teo of Cill Chiaráin have been producing seaweed products for decades. Shellfish



harvesting has become part of the branded gourmet food industry, but requires careful husbandry to ensure preservation of the stock.

The Marine Research Department of NUIG and the Marine Institute have pioneered international research into the cultivation of the Marine environment and have significantly informed EU Maritime Policy and also the Seventh Framework Programme of European Funding for Research. Their continuing work is a key to unlocking the potential of the largest and least developed natural resource, a major part of which adjoins the Gaeltacht Community.

Ros an Mhíl is one of the National Fishery Harbours under development and has a recognized EU status. The coastline is served by a multiplicity of quays, slipways and landing points, all of which have a role in the local **community's** relationship with the sea. There are also extensive soft areas of coastline that contain beaches and dunes which are important local amenities and tourism resources.

A Coastal Zone Management Strategy is necessary to optimize its potential, avoid conflicting and inappropriate uses, and have regard to the challenge of climate change.

2.1.4 Industry

Údarás na Gaeltachta have been primarily responsible for industrial development in the Gaeltacht since its inception in 1980. It has constructed a number of industrial sites to cater for the manufacturing industry and the modern media. It has also provided and promoted a wide range of services to support community development. In line with national trends, manufacturing has been in gradual decline and resources have been concentrated on conservation of established businesses rather than undertaking new projects. Particular emphasis is now to be given to language and culture-based enterprises and services, and allied community development.

Apart from Údarás supported industries a significant number of people from Gaeltacht areas close to **Galway City are employed in the City's industrial estates and in the construction industry.**

The installation of Broadband Telecommunications is fundamental to the provision of learning opportunities and e-commerce which are on a par with other parts of the county. It helps to lessen the effects of peripherality, provides a more level economic playing pitch and affords a modern life style to those who wish to commit themselves to living in the Gaeltacht.

2.1.5 Tourism

The Gaeltacht has a unique tourism product in that it links a rich language and culture with scenic landscapes and an unpolluted underdeveloped marine environment. Oileáin Árann has the more rarified product of being an island community at the western fringe of Europe, with its own language, and with a landscape that is sparse in its vegetation, dramatic in its scenery and rich in its archaeology.

Gaelsaoire, the tourism division of Údarás na Gaeltachta estimated that approx 30 million euros was generated in tourism revenue in the Galway Gaeltacht in 2000*. Inis Mór hosts more than 100,000 visitors per year, the majority of whom are day trippers on ferries from Ros an Mhíl and Galway City.

* Gaelsaoire Strategic Marketing Plan, November 2002.



Galway City and County Tourism Committee, in its framework document*, advocates a strategy of increasing the length of stay per visitor from an average of three nights to the national average of seven nights. This has to be balanced against the capacity of any location or venue to cater for visitor loading without diminishing its ethos or environment. The document also promotes an increased level of bilingual signage throughout the County and the provision of marketing support for language and cultural centers.

The Strategic Plan for Waterbased Tourism in Galway* promotes the revival of South Conamara fisheries, linking angling tourists with other visitors who have particular interests in outdoor pursuits such as walking, canoeing, pony trekking, eco-tours etc.

Ceantar na n-Oileán has been designated by the Department of the Marine as the location for the development of marine leisure activities. A flagship project would include a marina, hotel accommodation, including health treatment facilities and a cultural centre with a comprehensive upgrading of local infrastructure.

There is a perceived lack of a strong tourism destination in the Conamara Gaeltacht which possesses the range of facilities to retain visitors, including family groups over a period of days. A comprehensive development based on the natural amenities of Ceantar na n-Oileán, and driven by a combination of public authorities and private interests would transform the economy of the area and help to retain its young population.

2.2 Infrastructure

2.2.1 Roads

The Gaeltacht is served by the various categories of roads from National, Primary, National Secondary, to Regional and Local Roads.

The N17 national primary route and the N84 national secondary route go through that section of the Gaeltacht which is east of the City. There is no national primary route in Conamara, the N59 national secondary route which connects Galway to Clifden to the County Mayo Boundary at Leenane, being the only national route west of the Corrib. It goes through a short section of Gaeltacht near Maigh Cuilinn and An Sraith Salach (Recess).

The principal transportation routes serving the Conamara Gaeltacht are the regional routes numbered 336, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345 and the local county road network. There is an ongoing multi-annual programme of improvement and maintenance of the several road categories, supported by various sources of funding. The National Roads Authority (NRA) funds the improvement and maintenance of the national route network.

Costs relating to the improvement and maintenance of regional and county roads are borne by the annual block grant from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG), and county rate revenue. Specific improvement works to roads and other public infrastructure in the Gaeltacht are funded by An Roinn Gnothaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltactha to an agreed annual programme.

* Developing Sustainable Tourism in Galway 2003-2012.

* Waterbased Tourism, A Strategic Vision for Galway, April 2002.



Good road conditions are necessary for the social and economic benefits of the community they serve. The poor condition of many of the Conamara roads, and the cost of road improvement works in difficult ground conditions, present a constant challenge to achieving road standards which are conducive to the rural regeneration of this dispersed area, and to the development of its cultural, marine and tourism resources.

The Regional spinal routes are as important to the Conamara Gaeltacht as the national routes are to the other areas of the County. They require substantial additional investment so as to provide a standard of service adequate for modern volumes of commercial and private traffic in a scattered rural area which has no rail service and a low level of bus transport.

The R336 from Galway City west to Casla with a spur to An Cheathrú Rua serves a large population and is a key tourist route through the County, and is deficient in terms of carrying capacity and safety. It fulfills the incompatible rolls of being a major economic conduit, a commuter route to the City and a community road which is flanked by narrow footpaths connecting the numerous villages alongside. It leads to the congested suburbs of the City, making any connection with intercity rail services or access to National Primary routes unduly time consuming and unsustainable.

It points out the necessity of advancing proposals for a new R336 connecting to the Galway City Outer Bypass as being in the best interests of the social and economic development of the South Conamara Gaeltacht.

2.2.2 Housing

Private housing development requires planning permission under Section 32 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. Such development must have regard to the policies and objectives of the relevant County Development Plan.

The larger Gaeltacht towns and villages near Galway City have experienced significant pressure for development i.e. Baile Chláir, Bearna, Maigh Cuilinn, and An Spidéal. Their population has grown by 50 per cent approx between 1996 and 2006. The new housing in these towns/villages is generally of estate type design and layout with a mix of densities.

Baile Chláir and Maigh Cuilinn villages have had local area plans adopted by Galway County Council. A local area plan for Bearna has been adopted and specific village plans for An Spidéal and An Cheathrú Rua are included as a subsection of this local area plan for Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe.

A number of smaller settlements have been designated for modest and measured growth in the County Development Plan, so as to consolidate the existing villages and their services in a sustainable manner. The settlement framework policy provides for an appropriate growth rate **which will maintain the village's character and** ethos, help to consolidate local communities and allow for a rural lifestyle in a more sustainable form than rural ribbonisation.

The County Council's own social and affordable housing Capital Programme is agreed by the elected members of the Council in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning Act. It also must be in compliance with the policies and objectives of the County Plan.

The Planning Department has provided guidelines for the siting and construction of (a) Single Rural houses and (b) Group Houses **in "cluster" format. It has also implemented a pre-**

application consultation procedure to better inform applicants of the key factors which will determine the assessment of development proposals throughout the county.

2.2.3 Water Services

The Water Services Department of the County Council draws up and implements a programme of water supply and waste water treatment provision and maintenance for the County. The **improvement programme is set out in an "Assessment of Needs" document and in a three year roll-on investment schedule** which indicates priorities and allocates investment based on three principal criteria:

- Public health considerations
- Environmental impact
- Constraints on development potential

2.3 Demography/Population

The figures from the 2011 Census of Population shows a total of 33,608 persons living in the electoral districts of Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe in the County functional area. This represents a strong growth of 2,860 additional persons or an increase of 9.3% between 2006 and 2011.

The figures reveal a 5.8% increase in population in the Clifden rural area which is a significant reversal of the trend of the previous inter censal period. The Oughterard Gaeltacht area grew by over 5%.

The Gaeltacht Electoral Districts which are included in Galway Rural Area grew by 11% which is on a par with the previous intercensal period.

It's not unreasonable to conclude that the emigration of past generations has been succeeded by a contemporary migration towards the employment opportunities and services of the City and its hinterland. If this trend were to continue there would be an inevitable loss of the younger generation whose energy and commitment are necessary to sustain the community and its culture in the times ahead.



SECTION THREE: STRATEGY

3.1 Introduction

The Irish Language is the definable characteristic of the Gaeltacht community. It is the verbal expression of the **people's communication** and has survived through the generations in oral and written form. It has been carried world wide by the Irish Diaspora and survives in community groups abroad as their mode of conversation and as a badge of their nationality.

Like many minority languages it is under threat as a community language by the predominant international languages and popular cultures. It faces its greatest challenge in this era of almost instant worldwide communication even though it is available on demand itself on the World Wide Web.

The other strands of Gaeltacht culture, such as music, dance, storytelling, drama, sports and festival celebrations, while some continue to thrive, are also under threat, if the population of the more remote Gaeltacht areas continue to decline.

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended requires that a Development Plan **involving a Gaeltacht must include an objective to protect "the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, including the promotion of Irish as a community language". This is incorporated in the Galway County Development Plan and is the keystone of this Local Area Plan.** It is therefore necessary to set out the fundamental goals which will drive the strategies, policies and objectives of this local area plan.

3.1.1 Goals

- That Muintir na Gaeltachta can continue to exist and thrive as a distinctive cultural community with access to quality infrastructure and sustainable jobs and services.
- That the indigenous resources of the Gaeltacht be developed in a way that will benefit all of the community and have respect for the natural environment.
- That districts which have suffered population decline be assisted in encouraging new permanent residential growth.
- That the unique community of Oileáin Árann be assisted in preserving their island culture, having regard to the disadvantage of their location and to the challenge of mass tourism.
- That statutory and voluntary bodies be supported in serving the community in an inclusive and holistic manner.

3.2 Typology

While it is not in the remit of the Planning Authority to enact or advise on any alterations to the Gaeltacht boundary, the plan must have regard to the significant social, cultural and infrastructural differences within the Galway Gaeltacht. It is therefore a fundamental strategy of the plan to recognize various districts of the Gaeltacht as having substantial variations in Irish language use, level of population and infrastructural provision, and to form a vision of development for the various districts together with policies and objectives which will support their social, economic and cultural sustainability.



An exercise on typology based on:

- The demography of the area
- Tuarascáil (Coimisiún na Gaeltachta 2002)
- Taighde Donncha Ó h-Éalaithe (aighneacht do Phlean an Chontae)
- Typology of Urban and Rural Areas (Jim Walsh, Adrian Kavanagh NUIM)

Indicates the following districts:

- Iorras Aithreach/Camas/Ros Muc
- Dúiche Sheoigheach/Conamara Thuaidh
- Ceantar na nOileán/An Cheathrú Rua/Ros Muc
- Cois Fharráige
- Oileáin Árann
- Imeall na Cathrach/An Eachréidh

Section 5 of the Plan deals with the districts as outlined above and develops the policies and objectives which are locally relevant but compliant with those of the County Development Plan.

3.3 Strategic Development Principles

In order to guide the policies and objectives it is necessary to set out strategic development principles relating to the principal development sectors.

3.3.1 Community and Culture

- Community involvement in establishing a long term vision for the district.
- Support for community organizations in energizing local people and in delivering services to them in a socially inclusive manner.
- Encourage the re-population of districts which have experienced population decline. New residents should predominantly be prepared to integrate with the Irish speaking culture. Exceptions should relate to aspirants to permanent residency who can deliver relevant social, or employment skills to the community.
- A presumption against City generated residential development which is unrelated to Irish language and culture in the districts where Irish is the predominant community language.
- Irish language and culture to be central to the overall development of the area.
- The refusal of any development proposal which would adversely affect the Irish Language of the community and to encourage and support various initiatives, including building initiatives, that will promote employment in the area, the repopulation of the area and the development of the Irish language and of the Gaeltacht community as is the stated aim of this Article.

3.3.2 Roads and Transport

- The key road routes to be significantly improved in a multi-annual investment programme, facilitate the development of a new dual carriageway/single carriageway as a strategic route from Galway to Ros an Mhíl Harbour and continue on to Scriob. This new road will be maintained at the same high standard between Scriob and Galway – Map No. 5.D.1.
- The importance of Galway City Outer Bypass to the social and economic advantage of the Gaeltacht to be stressed in advancing its development.



- Progress the Maigh Cuillin By-Pass project.
- Support the establishment of an Integrated Transportation Coordinating group with a view to developing, monitoring and modifying an integrated approach to transport planning.
- Protect and support the airport at Baile na h-Abhainn and the ferryport at Ros an Mhíl as important transport modes.
- Develop, extend and maintain walking and cycling routes.
- Progress the Wild Atlantic Way Tourist route through the county.

3.3.3 Water and Waste Services

- A water supply adequate in quantity and quality for domestic and industrial purposes is necessary for the social and economic well being of the community.
- Water supply services to be protected from pollution.
- Domestic, commercial and industrial effluents to be treated before final discharge, so as not to cause pollution to surface or ground waters.
- The principle of reduce, re-use and re-cycle to apply to the collection and disposal of solid waste material.
- The provisions of the Kyoto Protocol as applied to Ireland to apply to gaseous emissions.

3.3.4 Residential Development

- A housing supply to meet the varied needs of the community is necessary for an acceptable standard of living. It must be provided in a sustainable manner, so as to have regard for the provisions of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan, the natural environment and established settlement patterns.
- House design should reflect indigenous traditions or be a contemporary interpretation of local styles, using modern materials and technology. Regard to **be had to the County Council's** design guidelines:
 - a) For Single Rural Houses
 - b) For Clustered Housing Design
- Social housing to be provided in a manner that avoids social segregation.
- The provision of community facilities including childcare and care of the elderly to keep pace with the growth of local communities.

3.3.5 The Environment

- The quality of the environment is central to the concept of sustainable development.
- All development should have regard to the natural and built environment in which it takes place, in particular to EU, National and County Development Plan designations.
- Conserve biodiversity and ecological integrity in accordance with the National Heritage Plan and the National Biodiversity Plan.
- Have regard to the quality of the Environment as part of the economic resource of the region.

3.3.6 Economic Development

- **Údarás na Gaeltachta's** role as the **prime instigator** and facilitator of Community Development be supported and facilitated.
- Support to be given to the development of the regions indigenous resources and to the employment opportunities arising therefrom.
- Industrial and commercial sites should be located close to the principal transportation routes while having regard to conservation of the environment and road safety.

- Particular consideration to be given to the economic development of the areas of the Gaeltacht which have suffered population decline and which lack job opportunities.
- The broadcast, print media and the co-operative movements to be supported in their roles as educators, informants and job generators.
- The role of NUIG in marine research and socio-linguistic studies be promoted and expanded.

3.3.7 Compliance with Western Regional Guidelines and County Development Plan

While the foregoing strategy goes on in Section 5 to deal with the development needs of the chosen subdivisions it is necessary to stress the constraining context of the Western Regional Planning Guidelines and the County Development Plan. The County Development Plan itself has been modified to take into account the regional guidelines and the strategies, policies and objectives of this plan must derive from and be compliant with the said documents.

A Core Strategy is required under the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) to ensure that the development objectives of Development Plans/Local Area Plans are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020* and with the *Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022* as adopted on the 19th October 2010. The Regional Planning Guidelines prescribe that an additional 15,760 persons will be living in the County (not including Galway City) by 2016.

The Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy in the *Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015* set out the additional population allocations for County Galway and the various tiers in the settlement hierarchy up to 2015, having regard to the population growth targets set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines. This includes the various towns, villages and smaller settlements within the Gaeltacht area.

A key component of the Local Area Plan is to ensure that it aligns with the Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy in the Galway County Development Plan. The Core Strategy indicates that An Cheathrú Rua has been assigned a population growth target of 105 persons by 2015 with a housing land requirement of 3.36ha, or 5.03ha with 50% over-zoning, in order to accommodate residential development over the Plan period. An Spidéal has been assigned a population growth target of 25 persons by 2015 with a housing land requirement of 0.79ha, or 1.19ha with 50% over-zoning, in order to accommodate residential development over the Plan period. The Core Strategy notes that there was 37.99ha of undeveloped residential zoned land in the An Cheathrú Rua plan area and 60.3ha in the An Spidéal plan area. The amended Local Area Plan has considered various development, zoning and phasing options so as to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy and to ensure that suitable lands are brought forward for development during the Plan period.

3.4 Strategic Development Policy and Objectives

3.4.1 Strategic Development Policy

- P.S.D. 1** Support and facilitate the sustainable development of the Gaeltacht Plan Area in a manner that maintains and enhances the quality of life of local communities, promotes opportunities for economic development, social integration and

sustainable transport options, protects the cultural, built and natural heritage and environment and complies with relevant statutory requirements.

3.4.2 Strategic Development Objectives

The Strategic Development Objectives are as follows:

O.S.D. 1 Orderly and Sequential Development of Towns, Villages and Smaller Settlements

Support the orderly and sequential development of towns, villages and smaller settlements within the Plan Area, focusing on the consolidation and continued vitality and viability of the town/ village/settlement centres and the protection and enhancement of the existing landscape setting, character, heritage and unique identity of the settlements.

O.S.D. 2 Consistency with Core Strategy

Ensure that developments permitted within the Plan Area are consistent with the zoned land allocations in the Core Strategy and associated provisions in the Galway County Development Plan.

O.S.D. 3 Natura 2000 Network and Habitats Directive Assessment

Protect European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) 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 subsequent or updated 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, screening for appropriate assessment, and a Habitats Directive Assessment where necessary, that:

1. The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
2. The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (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 Natura 2000; or
3. The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (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 Natura 2000.

O.S.D. 4 Development Management Standards and Guidelines

Ensure that the general development management standards and guidelines set out in the Galway County Development Plan are applied as appropriate in the Plan Area. In addition, any specific development management guidelines set out in this Local Area Plan shall also be applied, as appropriate, to development proposals in the Plan Area.

O.S.D. 5 Service Led Development

Ensure that urban developments are preceded by sufficient capacity in the public waste water and potable water infrastructure and that developments in rural areas are accompanied by adequate infrastructure and services in accordance with applicable standards and requirements.

O.S.D. 6 Residential Development Phasing

Direct residential development into appropriately zoned and serviced areas in accordance with the phased development framework set out in Section 6 and 7 and shown on **Map 6.1 – Carraroe Land Use Zoning** and **Map 7.1 – Spiddal Land Use Zoning**

O.S.D. 7 Flood Risk Management and Assessment

Ensure that proposals for new developments located within identified or potential flood risk areas, or which may exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere, are assessed in accordance with the provisions of the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document) and the relevant policies, objectives and guidelines in this Plan.



SECTION FOUR: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Environmental Considerations

The Galway Gaeltacht has unique environmental characteristics which merit protection, while allowing consideration of developments which are necessary to sustain the community.

The Characteristics range from the island culture of Aran to Conamara with its mix of lowland Atlantic bog, unpolluted coastline and quartzite mountain ranges, and eastwards to the limestone plains of An Eachréidh which is a regionally important aquifer in the catchment of Lough Corrib.

Archaeology

The Gaeltacht has a very rich archaeological heritage ranging from ancient field systems to **megalithic tombs, standing stones to ringforts and children's burial grounds to clochans**. This rich archaeological legacy helps to provide an understanding of past societies that inhabited the Gaeltacht through an examination of the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment.

The archaeological heritage of the Gaeltacht is protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930- 2004. Often this archaeological resource is listed as either a monument or site. An archaeological 'monument' refers to man-made structures or to natural features altered by man. However, there are many monuments where there is no visible evidence. They may survive mainly below ground, in which case they are often refer to as 'sites'.

This environment is in a continual state of change, being affected by climate and human intervention.

In order to minimize the effects of development on the aquatic, terrestrial and atmospheric environment of the Gaeltacht, the following policies will apply.

The village plans for An Spidéal and An Cheathrú Rua will also contain specific environmental policies.

4.2 Environmental Policies

Water Quality

- P.W. 1** Support the Western and Shannon River Basin District (RBD) Projects and their Management Plans.
- P.W. 2** Co-operate with the Inland Fisheries Ireland in protecting the fishing resource of the area.
- P.W. 3** Incorporate the recommendations of the Flood Risk Assessment undertaken for the settlements and the incorporation of the findings of the PFRA as carried out by the OPW and any subsequent studies/ reports on same.



P.W. 4 Ensure that new developments have waste water treatment systems which comply with EPA guidance documents.

P.W. 5 Encourage owners of old septic tank systems to upgrade waste water treatment to EPA Standards

P.W. 6 Support sustainable drainage systems for surface waters by providing permeable surfaces where possible, and attenuating field drainage where rapid flow from paved surfaces is involved.

Soil

P.S. 1 Construction work should be carried out with least feasible disturbance of soil. Soil storage to be at a safe distance from water courses.

P.S. 2 Development should be avoided if possible on sites with vulnerable soil characteristics or soils which contain sensitive habitats.

P.S. 3 Protect fen and other wetland areas from the direct impact of development and infilling, or from indirect effects such as a change in water regime.

P.S. 4 Identify areas which are under threat from coastal erosion/climate change and undertake programmes of protection and conservation.

Biodiversity/Flora and Fauna

P.B. 1 Project planning and design should primarily aim to avoid ecological damage to protected or sensitive habitats. Mitigatory and compensatory measures should only be employed where avoidance is impractical.

P.B. 2 Extensive developments on green field sites should include habitat conservation and creation measures. Planning conditions to this effect may be attached to Planning Permissions.

P.B. 3 Development proposals will be examined in the light of the biodiversity plan for the County which is being prepared.

P.B. 4 Development proposals should have regard to the importance of preserving linkages between areas of high and low biodiversity value, and of maintaining and providing corridors which allow movement of species through development areas.

P.B. 5 Conserve and protect any new areas or sites that are designated in the lifetime of this plan and to take cognisance of any revisions and adjustments to designated sites as furnished by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

P.B. 6 All sites with nature conservation designations to be included and shown on the relevant maps in the LAP.

P.B. 7 Protect sites which are undesignated but are deemed to be ecologically sensitive.

P.B. 8 To protect rivers, streams, lakes, coastal waters and their associated wetlands both as functioning ecosystems and as ecological corridors and networks.



- P.B. 9** Conserve, protect and enhance sites with nature conservation designations through the proper implementation of relevant wildlife legislation, through consultation with NPWS and through the appropriate and timely referral of planning applications and waste permit applications to all prescribed bodies.
- P.B. 10** Seek to minimise the potential for indirect and cumulative effects, on coastal and marine areas.
- P.B. 11** Implement Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and to subject any plan or development proposal likely to directly or indirectly (or in combination with other plans or projects) impact Natura 2000 or European sites (SACs or SPAs), to an appropriate assessment in order to inform decision making.
- P.B. 12** Seek to integrate wildlife and biodiversity considerations into all areas of the **Council's roles and responsibilities**, and into all its works and operations in so far as they relate to this Plan.
- P.B. 13** All relevant applications, which are located in close proximity to a watercourse, will include measures to reduce and prevent pollution to a watercourse, both during construction and after completion of the scheme.
- P.B. 14** All works in relation to marine development and maintenance of piers, harbours, slipways, landing places and associated facilities will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of any **European designated site as defined by the site's conservation objectives**.
- P.B. 15** All works in relation to road improvement will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of **any European designated site as defined by the site's conservation objectives**. Where new routes are to be developed they will be subject to route selection.
- P.B. 16** Proposed walking and tourist routes will be subject to a route selection process, which will take cognisance of site-specific circumstances including consideration of ecological sensitivity. Routes will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of any European designated **site as defined by the site's conservation objectives**.
- P.B. 17** Protect water bodies and watercourses within the Plan Area from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include a 10 metre protection buffer from rivers within the Plan Area, measured from the near river bank. Promote the sustainable management and uses of water bodies and avoid culverting or realignment of these features.
- P.B. 18** Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing surface water drainage system in the Plan Area, 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.

P.B. 19 The development of renewable energy and its associated infrastructure will avoid negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites and new plans and projects adhere to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in consultation with the NPWS.

P.B. 20 The Council shall undertake its functions, including the consideration of applications for development, in compliance with the relevant requirements of, inter alia:

- Shellfish Area Pollution Reduction Programmes;
- Management Plans for Freshwater Pearl Mussel;
- The Bathing Water Directive as amended; and
- Discharge licenses issued by the EPA.

Cultural Heritage

P.C.H. 1 Protect and promote the Irish language as the primary cultural expression of the community.

P.C.H. 2 Recognise the linkage between the Gaeltacht Community and its fishing and maritime heritage. Facilitate the economic development of mariculture within its environmental capacity.

P.C.H. 3 Support local festivals based on musical and sporting traditions.

P.C.H. 4 Support the preservation and conservation of monuments and places which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).

P.C.H. 5 Secure the preservation of the structures which are listed on the RPS for County Galway.

P.C.H. 6 Promote the appreciation of buildings and places which because of their intrinsic quality and style or because of their historical significance are of local importance.

Population and Human Health

P.P.H. 1 In the case of significant road realignment or new routes, best practice guidance, in accordance with the guidelines of the National Roads Authority (NRA) should be followed. There should also be consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG)

P.P.H. 2 In the case of significant road realignment, electricity network lines or windfarm development, the impact of the disposal of surplus material and the abstraction of material from quarries or sand pits shall be fully addressed.

P.P.H. 3 Proposals for development of electricity lines and windfarms should involve a constraints study/ecological assessment, a visual impact study and consultation with the NPWS.

P.P.H. 4 Applications for Planning Permission should indicate the availability of a waste collection service in the locality.

Landscape

P.L. 1 Have regard to the unique quality and characteristics of the landscape and protect views which are listed for preservation in the County Development Plan as well as views across landscape and seascape which are undeveloped to date.

P.L. 2 Preserve where possible the natural diversity of landscape in the Gaeltacht, together with its cultural features such as archaeological monuments, stonewalls, hedgerows, woodlands, field patterns, roadways and buildings of significance.

P.L. 3 Development proposals should include assimilation measures including landscaping which is in keeping with indigenous flora and local landscape features.

Flood Risk Management

P.F.R.M. 1 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 *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). Galway County Council will also take account of the *Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans (CFRAMs)*, *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)* and *County Galway Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2012* and any recommendations and outputs arising from same that relate to or impact on the Plan Area.

4.3 Environmental Objectives

The Environmental Objectives are as follows:

Heritage and Environment

O.H.E. 1 Natura 2000 Network and Habitats Directive Assessment

Protect European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) 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 subsequent or updated 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, screening for appropriate assessment, and a Habitats Directive Assessment where necessary, that:

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

2. The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (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 Natura 2000; or
3. The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (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 Natura 2000.

O.H.E. 2 Protected Habitats and Species

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. This includes the protection of bats and their roosts, and the maintenance of woodland, hedgerows, treelines, ecological networks and corridors that serve as feeding areas, flight paths and commuting routes for bats.

O.H.E. 3 Natural Heritage Areas

Protect Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs in accordance with the requirements of the *Wildlife Act 1976*, the *Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000* and the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended). Where a proposed development within the Plan Area may give rise to likely significant effects on any NHA or proposed NHA, an Environmental Impact Assessment or Ecological Impact Assessment may be required.

O.H.E. 4 Impact Assessment

Ensure full compliance with the requirements of the EU *Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)*, *SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)* and *EIA Directive (2011/92/EU)*, and associated legislation/ regulations, including the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011)*, *European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004-2011*, the *Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2011* and the *European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989-2011* (or any updated/superseding legislation). Planning applications for proposed developments within the Plan Area that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment and/or any designated site may need to be accompanied by one of more of the following: an Environmental Impact Statement, an Ecological Impact Assessment Report, a Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Report or

a Natura Impact Statement, as appropriate. Ensure that Natura Impact Statements and any other environmental or ecological impact assessments submitted in support of proposals for development are carried out in accordance with best practice methodologies and contain all necessary baseline assessments.

O.H.E. 5 Biodiversity and Ecological Networks

Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the Plan Area, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive:

- a) Seek to retain and/or incorporate these natural features into developments, in order to avoid ecological fragmentation and maintain ecological corridors and stepping stones.
- b) Protect and enhance the water quality and ecology of rivers and streams, and their function as ecological corridors, by maintaining the existing banks and channel and ensuring that new developments are set back at least 10m from the top of the bank of the stream.
- c) Ensure greater biodiversity through the appropriate planting of native trees, shrubs and hedgerows indigenous to the area and of Irish provenance in public and private areas and in new developments.

O.H.E. 6 Water Resources

Protect the water resources in the Plan Area, including lakes, rivers, streams, springs, surface water and groundwater quality, in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU *Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC)*, the *European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003* (as amended), the *Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015* and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (and any updated/superseding documents). Support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development in the Plan Area.

O.H.E. 7 Trees, Parkland/Woodland and Hedgerows

Protect important tree clusters and hedgerows in the Plan Area and ensure that development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands. Seek to retain natural boundaries, including stonewalls, hedgerows and tree boundaries, wherever possible and replace with a boundary type similar to the existing boundary where removal is unavoidable.

O.H.E. 8 Geological and Geo-morphological Systems

Protect and conserve geological and geomorphological systems, sites and features from inappropriate development that would detract from their heritage value and interpretation and ensure that any plan or project affecting karst formations are adequately assessed with regard to their potential geophysical, hydrological or ecological impacts on the environment.



O.H.E. 9 Control of Invasive and Alien Invasive Species

Seek to prevent the spread of invasive and alien invasive species and promote measures to achieve this objective. Require a landscaping plan to be produced for developments near waterbodies and ensure that such plans do not include alien invasive species.

O.H.E. 10 Consultation with Environmental Authorities

Ensure that all development proposals are screened to determine whether they are likely to have a significant direct, indirect or cumulative effect on any European site in view of its conservation objectives and, where significant effects are likely or uncertain, there will be a requirement to prepare and submit a Natura Impact Statement, including prior consultation with the relevant environmental authorities.

Flood Risk Management

O.F.R.M. 1 Ensure the implementation of the DEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document) in relation to flood risk management within the Plan Area. This will include the following:

- a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated on **Map 6.5** and **Map 7.4**, including fluvial, coastal/tidal, pluvial and groundwater flooding, and any other flood risk areas that may be identified during the period of the Plan or in relation to a planning application.
- 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 *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) Where certain measures proposed to mitigate or manage the risk of flooding associated with new developments are likely to result in significant effects to the environment or European sites downstream, such measures will undergo environmental assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment, as appropriate.

O.F.R.M. 2 Where the probability of flooding from rivers is low (less than 0.1%, Flood Zone C), the developer should satisfy him or herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed.

O.F.R.M. 3 In the case of lands transected by the outer boundary of Indicative Flood Zone A or B, where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority

that the outer boundary does not reflect local topographical and/or flood path conditions, the Planning Authority may consider the extension of a zone that is outside the indicative flood zone area into this area subject to the submission of a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and Justification Test as appropriate and the developer satisfying the Planning Authority and him or herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.



SECTION FIVE: THE DISTRICTS

5.1 District A: Iorras Aithneach/Camas/Ros Muc

This is the District of South West Conamara from Doire Iorraís westwards through Cill Chiaráin, Carna, Glinsce, Bun na hAbhann, Caiseal and Inis Ní. This plan also includes the Electoral Divisions of An Turlach (Ros Muc), Camas and Cill Chuimín with Iorras Aithneach, since the combined district is probably the most dispersed and disadvantaged section of the Gaeltacht – See Map 5.A.1.

The Electoral Divisions comprising District A are as follows:

Camas	Abhainn Ghabhla
Cill Chuimín	Scainimh
Turlach	An Cnoc Buí
Maíros	Cloch na Rón

Like most of the Conamara Gaeltacht this is a coastal community, with an economy and lifestyle which is based on the fishing industry both off-shore and on-shore (Gliomaigh Oisrí etc.). This is supplemented by a diverse range of activities including, conventional industry, service employment, na coláistí samhraidh, third level outreach education/marine research from OEG and a modest level of tourism. Much of the activity is instigated and supported by Údarás na Gaeltachta. Table 5.1 gives some indicators of the demography of the District – derived from census publications.

Table 5.1

	Population				Change in Pop. as %		% Daily Irish Speakers**
	1996	2002	2006	2011	1996-2002	2002-2011	
Camas	395	388	367	358	-1.8	-7.73	90.9
Cill Chuimín	129	118	122	162	-8.5	+37.3	84.4
An Turlach	545	477	552	545	-12.5	+14.2	85.7
*Maíros	152	134	143	141	-11.8	+5.2	
Abhainn Ghabhla	334	341	314	301	+2.1	-11.7	75.2
Scainimh	667	648	619	684	-2.8	+5.5	92.2
An Cnoc Buí	906	831	801	853	-8.3	+2.6	81.4
*Cloch na Rón	102	87	94	102	-14.7	+17.2	

* In the case of Maíros and Cloch na Rón the Gaeltacht section is only a subdivision of the ED, the bulk of the population live in the non-Gaeltacht section.

** 2006 figures only available for % Daily Irish Speakers.

5.1.1 Community Facilities

(i). Education



There are eleven primary and two post primary schools serving the district.

Colaistí Samhraidh: Coláiste Chamais
Coláiste Sheosaimh, Carna/Cill Chiaráin
VTOS: An Chrannóg, Ros Muc
Triú Leibhéil: Áras Shorcha Ní Ghuairim, Carna
OEG Marine Research Station, Carna
OEG Atmospheric Research Station, Más

(ii). Industry

Údarás na Gaeltachta owns sites at Carna and Cill Chiaráin.

Na Comharcumainn: Comharcumann Chonamara Thiar Teo
Cill Chiaráin
Comharcumann Sliogéisc Chonamara Teo
Coill Sáile.

There is one hotel and a small number of registered guesthouses serving this extensive area of 34,000 hectares, leading to a conclusion that there is extensive scope for expanding cultural tourism and its associated accommodation.

(iii). Infrastructure

a) Water Services

Galway County Council has drawn up an Assessment of Needs which guides the investment programme for short term and medium term improvement schemes throughout the County. The following schemes have recently been completed:

- Carna/Cill Chiaráin Regional Water Supply Scheme.
- Cloch na Rón Water Supply Scheme.

b) Marine Works

A multi-annual development programme is also in train for piers, harbours, slipways, landing places, etc. A major part of the funding comes from An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta with substantial support from County Council funds.

Works have been completed in recent times on Céibh Chill Chiaráin, Dún Mánusa Ros Muc, Céibh Dhabhrois Máiros.

c) Bus Éireann

Bus Éireann runs a daily Monday to Saturday service from Máiros to Cathair na Gaillimhe.

d) Social and Affordable Housing

There is no Capital housing programme in operation for the County at present. Special Needs houses will be considered on a case by case basis.

5.1.2 Residential Settlement

The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan includes the following villages as small settlements in the rural area: Carna, Cill Chiaráin, Glinsce, Sraith Salach, Ros Muc. Development at an appropriate level and in keeping with the overall Core Strategy, will be considered in the

villages in order to support their existing services and help to augment them and to sustain their existing population and that of the rural area they serve. The Rural Housing Policies that apply are set out in Section 5.3 of the County Development Plan.

5.1.2.1 Residential Qualification

All of the district is located outside the area covered by the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS), and is predominantly suffering from a declining population. It also contains extensive areas under EU conservation protection – candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) – see Map 5.A.2 – and it has high landscape ratings in the County Development Plan – see Map No. 5.A.3.

Gaeltacht Residential Qualification

Section (a): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Areas within the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999) excluding those areas in Section(c) below

A Language Enurement Clause (%LEC) will be applied on a portion of residential units in developments of two or more units. The proportion of homes to which a Language Enurement Clause applies will be a minimum of 80% (rounded up) or to the proportion of persons using the Irish Language on a daily basis, in accordance with the latest published Census whichever is the greater. The balance may be allocated to applicants who qualify under the Language Enurement Clause provisions.

The Language Enurement Clause will be for duration of 15 years from the date of first occupancy of the unit.

The remainder may be made available to applicants who qualify within the following qualifying categories of persons:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating
- Employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Permitted developments will have a Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of 7 years duration, from the date of first occupancy of the unit, attached, or may also qualify under the Language Enurement Clause.

Section (b): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib which are outside the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999)

The position of the Irish Language in the areas outside the GTPS boundary, which is predominantly contained within the Clár area, will be protected by restricting the qualification to buy houses in housing developments of two or more houses to the following categories:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.

- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Successful developments will be subject to the Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of duration 7 years.

- Irish Speakers

Permitted developments will be subjected to a 15 year Language Enurement Clause.

Section (c): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Local Area Plan Boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir.

Within the Local Area Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir a Language Enurement Clause will be applied to 20% of the units in residential developments of two or more units and will be of 15 years duration.

Section (d): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas inside the GTPS east and west of the Corrib.

In determining whether an application is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the *"Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005"* shall be considered. The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home. Applicants, whose original family home is located on the coastal strip west of An Spidéal, will be permitted to move closer to the City but not more than 8km from the original family home.

or

(c) Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop. Employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need.

or

(d) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved abroad and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area.

or

(e) Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.



A General Enurement Clause of 7 years duration will apply to eligible applicants who qualify under the above criteria.

Section (e) Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib inside and outside the GTPS.

In addition consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to **speak Irish in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate** their ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural, arts, heritage and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht Communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1, 2 and 3. It will also extend to Class 4 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category.

Applicants living within the development Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna, An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal seeking permission outside the plan boundaries shall not be regarded as urban generated and shall be considered if they can establish housing need as defined by the County Development Plan.

It seems evident that if the principle of sustainability is to apply to the population of this region, and, as a consequence to Irish as a community language, a pragmatic approach must be taken to permitting development which will not adversely affect the language but which will be **considered in landscape sensitivity class 3 as being "substantiated" in view of a hitherto** decreasing population.

Consideration might also be given to a modicum of tourism accommodation in this area.

A regeneration of population might also be aided if a number of land banks, strategically placed round the district, were purchased by the coherent effort of Roinn G.P.T.G., Udarás and Comhairle Chontae, were serviced, and made available at affordable prices to housing need applicants.

5.1.3 Community Objectives

The public consultation process, which included a workshop at Cill Chiaráin gave rise to a list of objectives for the area. This plan supports them as being reasonable and attainable. It supports in particular An Plean Gníomhaíochta 2005-2010 prepared by Udarás na Gaeltachta. All projects that are developed through the implementation of these objectives will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of any European designated **site as defined by the site's conservation objectives.**

The Community Objectives are as follows:

Roads and Transportation

- Roads improvement programme to continue annually.
- Parking provision and shelter for bus stops at Carna and Cill Chiaráin.
- Traffic calming provision to be implemented adjacent to schools, in particular at Leitir Mucú.
- Improve public bus service.

Infrastructure



- Provision of 110kv electrical supply.
- Development of a Marina and allied serviced building at Cill Chiaráin.
- Provision of broadband service.
- Construction of Fire Station at Carna/Cill Chiaráin.
- Public toilets required at Cill Chiaráin quay.
- Provision of **"Call Centre" in old "Nivectron" building**.
- Improvement of refuse collection system.

Community Facilities

- Provide playing field facilities at Cill Chiaráin.
- Provide **children's** playground facilities at Camas, Ros Muc, Cill Chiaráin and Carna.
- Provision of centrally located indoor sports building.
- Development of cultural centre in the district.
- Provision of community centre at Camas with capacity for childcare, elderly care and clinic facilities.
- Local service provision from Galway County Council.
- Development of blue flag beaches.

Culture and Heritage

- Organization of classes for the teaching of Irish to people who wish to learn the language.
- Support local festivals.
- Preserve and protect the natural beauty of the area for future generations.
- Develop the work of NUIG at Áras Shorcha Ní Ghuairim.

Housing

- Local people to be allowed to build for family members on family lands.
- Realistic boundaries to be drawn up for settlement centres.
- Recognition that Camas is an essentially rural area and any housing developments should reflect this ambience.
- Provsion of a small scheme of social/affordable housing in Camas.

Employment

- Support NUIG projects at Maínis, An Más and Carna.
- Continue to develop the fish processing facilities.
- Support the employment potential of Arramara Teo., Cill Chiaráin.
- Develop tourism facilities such as walking routes and pontoon development at Más quay as a take-off point for Mac Dara Island.



District B: Duiche Sheoigheach

This District comprises most of North Conamara, stretching from Cong to Leenane and northwards from the N59 National Secondary Road to the County Mayo border. It is mountainous County, dominated by the Maamturk range, but including two of the great wild fishing lakes of western Europe in Lough Corrib and the southern portion of Lough Mask.

It contains the following Electoral Divisions:

- Binn an Choire
- An Uilinn
- An Chorr
- An Fhairche
- An Ros
- Conga
- Leitir Breacáin

See Map No. 5.B.1.

The upland areas are candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) where development is restricted, and the remainder of the District has landscape sensitivity ratings of 4 and 5 as designated in the County Development Plan – See Maps no. 5.B.2. and 5.B.3. The population density of 5 persons per square kilometer is the lowest of any region in the county whose average population density is 24 persons per square kilometer (census 2002).

The economy of the area is a mix of hill sheep farming, tourism, with the emphasis on angling tourism, forestry and timber products and manufacturing industry on sites at Corr na Móna, An Fhairche, An Chloch Breac and Conga. There is also significant commuting to jobs in Galway City and a number of professional services available within the district. Comharcumann Dhúiche Sheoigheach is a driving force in many community enterprises.

Hill sheep farming has been a mainstay in the agriculture of this district for generations, but concerns about overgrazing and soil erosion, together with the changes in the CAP, giving rise to single farm payment schemes, have brought changes.

The Department of Agriculture and food in its publication “The Challenge of Change” states that sheep production continues to be an important farm enterprise with an extensive geographical spread, but that it is facing an open trading environment. Its success will depend on increased productivity coupled with improved breeding and quality.

Teagasc in a Research Report 2004 found, in a study which was carried out in the District, that there had been a recovery in vegetation on their hill sheep farm between 1995 and 2004. This would seem to show an optimism that this indigenous resource can continue to provide a livelihood for the rural families of Duiche Sheoigheach into the foreseeable future.

Approximately 30 per cent of the angling tourists came west, evidence of a substantial contribution to the economy of the area, despite a drop off of numbers in recent years. The upper Lough Corrib and lower Lough Mask are precious resources both in an environmental context and as an income generator and this plan seeks to protect this resource and supports the work of the Western Regional Fisheries Board in its conservation and development work.

Table 5.2 gives some indicators of the demography of the district as derived from Census 1996, 2002 and 2006.



Table 5.2

	Population				Change in Pop. as %		% Daily Irish Speakers* *
	1996	2002	2006	2011	1996-2002	2002-2011	
*Binn an Choire	124	120	130	139	-3.2	+15.8	14.6
An Uilinn	153	99	99	103	-35.3	+4	31.7
An Chorr	191	159	162	155	-16.8	-2.5	30.4
An Fhairche	1008	916	1001	1098	-9.1	+19.9	19.7
An Ros	113	111	104	94	-1.8	-15.3	61.0
Conga	536	512	573	561	-4.5	+9.6	40.8
*Leitir Beacáin	34	31	25	35	-8.8	+12.9	7.4

* In the case of Binn an Choire and Leitir Beacáin not all of the electoral divisions are in the Gaeltacht. This is reflected in the low levels of spoken Irish.

** 2006 figures only available

- The table indicates a halt to the trend of declining population in most of the EDs but a continuing drop in two of the least populous EDs.
- The daily use of Irish is generally lower than that along the south coast and well below the 80% requirement when the Gaeltacht boundaries were decided. In two of the EDs it is less than the County average.

5.1.1 Community Facilities

(i). Education

There are six primary schools and one post primary school (Corr na Móna) serving the district.

Petersburg outdoor education centre, which is under the direction of the County Galway Vocational Educational Committee, conducts a variety of courses in outdoor recreational activities which are eminently suited to the locations. It also has study programmes on geology, botany, archaeology, ecology etc.

(ii). Industry

There are three industrial sites in the district:

- Corr na Móna
- An Fhairche
- An Chloch Bhreac

These are supported by Údaras na Gaeltachta and it is the policy of this plan also to support the industries on those sites and to give due consideration to any service industries in the district on which they may rely.

The district also contains Ashford Castle Hotel which is the only five star hotel in County Galway outside Galway City boundary, and which is one of the flagship hotels in rural Ireland.

(iii) Infrastructure



a) Water Services

Galway County Council has drawn up an Assessment of Needs which guides the investment programme for short term and medium term improvement schemes throughout the County. The following schemes have been undertaken recently:

- An Fhairche/Corr na Móna water supply scheme – completed.
- An Fhairche Sewerage Scheme – completed.

b) Social and Affordable Housing

There is no Capital housing programme in operation for the County at present. Special Needs houses will be considered on a case by case basis.

5.2.2 Residential Settlement

The County Development Plan designated the following villages as small settlements:

- An Fhairce
- Corr na Móna
- Mám
- An Teach Dóite

Development at an appropriate scale is encouraged in these villages in order to support their existing services and help to augment them, and so sustain their existing population and that of the rural area they serve.

Rural Housing Policies as set out in the county Development Plan shall apply in the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan.

5.2.2.1 Residential Qualification

All of the district is located outside the area covered by the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS). While the population density is low the population, although it dropped between 1996 and 2002, has recovered to the extent that it exceeds the population of 1986. The district has extensive areas of cSAC and is in the highest landscape sensitivity classes of 4 and 5 making it difficult to qualify for residential planning permission.

Gaeltacht Residential Qualification

Section (a): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Areas within the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999) excluding those areas in Section(c) below

A Language Enurement Clause (%LEC) will be applied on a portion of residential units in developments of two or more units. The proportion of homes to which a Language Enurement Clause applies will be a minimum of 80% (rounded up) or to the proportion of persons using the Irish Language on a daily basis, in accordance with the latest published Census whichever is the greater. The balance may be allocated to applicants who qualify under the Language Enurement Clause provisions.

The Language Enurement Clause will be for duration of 15 years from the date of first occupancy of the unit.

The remainder may be made available to applicants who qualify within the following qualifying categories of persons:



- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Permitted developments will have a Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of 7 years duration, from the date of first occupancy of the unit, attached, or may also qualify under the Language Enurement Clause.

Section (b): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib which are outside the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999)

The position of the Irish Language in the areas outside the GTPS boundary, which is predominantly contained within the Clár area, will be protected by restricting the qualification to buy houses in housing developments of two or more houses to the following categories:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Successful developments will be subject to the Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of duration 7 years.

- Irish Speakers

Permitted developments will be subjected to a 15 year Language Enurement Clause.

Section (c): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Local Area Plan Boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir

Within the Local Area Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir a Language Enurement Clause will be applied to 20% of the units in residential developments of two or more units and will be of 15 years duration.

Section (d): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas inside the GTPS east and west of the Corrib

In determining whether an application is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the *"Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005"* shall be considered. The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the



area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home. Applicants, whose original family home is located on the coastal strip west of An Spidéil, will be permitted to move closer to the City but not more than 8km from the original family home.

or

(c) Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop. Employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need.

or

(d) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved abroad and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area.

or

(e) Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.

A General Enurement Clause of 7 years duration will apply to eligible applicants who qualify under the above criteria.

Section (e): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib inside and outside the GTPS

In addition consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to **speak Irish in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate** their ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural, arts, heritage and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht Communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1, 2 and 3. It will also extend to Class 4 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category.

Applicants living within the development Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna , An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal seeking permission outside the plan boundaries shall not be regarded as urban generated and shall be considered if they can establish housing need as defined by the County Development Plan.

5.2.3 Community Objectives

The public consultation process, which included a workshop at ECC Teo, Corr na Móna, gave rise to a list of objectives for the area. This plan supports them as being reasonable and attainable. All projects that are developed through the implementation of these objectives will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of any European **designated site as defined by the site's conservation objectives.**

The community objectives are as follows:

Housing

- Support for the provision of local family housing needs on family lands.
- Support for families from outside the district who speak Irish to reside permanently in the district.
- Revise the settlement framework of the County Development Plan to suit the requirement of this part of Conamara.
- Allow local people to refurbish old abandoned houses without the necessity of establishing "housing need". **Consideration should also be given to the provision of holiday homes as family supplemental income.**

Infrastructure

- Provision of sewerage scheme for Corr Na Móna.
- Continual development of Údarás Industrial Sites.
- Identify, develop specific projects for electricity generation from wind turbines and water power.
- Udarás and Galway County Council to combine and provide broadband service.
- Provisions of public lighting adjacent to schools.
- Development of car park/viewing area at Ardán.

Roads and Transportation

- Improvement of main route connection to Galway, via Conga/Headford and An Mám/Oughterard.
- Improve local minor roads, in particular Ardán/An Fhairche.
- Reduction of speed limits on local roads.
- Provide footpath at Corr Na Móna bridge.
- Road signage to be in Irish.
- Roadside walls which were left unfinished, to be completed.

Community Facilities

- Provision of multi-purpose community building, with sports hall, theatre, library, care facilities, café.
- Encourage provision of services such as nursing home, bank, funeral parlour and a local County Council office with an Irish speaking service.
- Development of open area, amenity area on Lough Corrib lake shore.



District C: Ceantar na nOileán/An Cromptán

This district includes the Electoral Divisions of Cromptán, Leitir Móir and Leitir Mealláin and contains the village of An Cheathrú Rua, which the County Development Plan designates as the service hub for southwest Conamara, whose role is to consolidate service provision and residential capacity for the Gaeltacht region. A village plan for An Cheathrú Rua is included in Section 6 of this Local Area Plan.

The District, apart from the Cromptán peninsula, is composed of an interlinked series of islands which have been home to various community groups but have been connected by bridges which were constructed by the Congested Districts Board a century ago. There are numerous other small islands in Ceantar na nOileán which are uninhabited. See Map 5.C.1.

The land is of poor agricultural quality with extensive outcropping of granite bedrock. Even the subsistence farming of the past has undergone change with the Common Agricultural Policy, and the fishing industry is suffering from an oversupply of farmed fish and a threat of overharvesting the shellfish stock. A study by An Teagasc in the Garmna ED revealed that only 3% of households depended on farm income, as the average farm size was 8.5 hectares. Most of the farms yielded significantly less than the average national industrial wage. Sixty per cent of the Garmna households were in receipt of some state subvention.

In common with much of west Conamara, emigration and migration depleted communities. There was a reduction of more than 30 per cent of the population of Ceantar na nOileán between 1946 and 1996 but, as Table 5.3(a) indicates, there has been a gradual turn around in more recent years. The Teagasc survey revealed that almost half of the workforce of Garmna travelled 30 miles or more to work on a daily basis, many of them to jobs in Galway City. Census 2002 showed, in the case of Cromptán, 9 per cent of workers travelled 30 miles or more and 31 per cent travelled 15 miles or more.

While almost all of the district is free from SAC designation, the surrounding coastal waters of Cill Chiaráin Bay and many of the smaller islands are designated cSAC. The landscape sensitivity ratings are generally 3 in Cromptán and 4 in Leitir Móir and Leitir Mealláin – See Maps 5.C.2 and 5.C.3. Table 5.3 gives some indicators of the Demography of the District as derived from Census 1996, 2002, 2006 and 2011.

Table 5.3

	Population				Change in Population as %		Daily Irish Speakers as %**
	1996	2002	2006	2011	1996-2002	2002-2011	
An Cromptán	2167	2266	2280	2505	+4.6	+10.5	88.2
Leitir Móir	811	812	874	908	+0.1	+11.8	88.9
Garmna	1320	1290	1302	1359	-2.3	+5.3	92.2

** 2006 Census figures only available.

The Table illustrates:

- The population decline has been halted since 2002 and in the case of Leitir Mór and An Cromptán, there has been significant increases.
- A satisfyingly high percentage of daily users of Irish giving optimism as to its continuance as the community language.

5.1.2 Community Facilities

(i). Education

There are nine primary schools and one secondary school (An Cheathrú Rua) serving the district.

The enrolment level has generally reflected the decline at primary school level and there is a danger of a reduction in the range of subjects if the trend continues. This would have serious implications for the retention of skill levels in the community and for the delivery of skills in the Irish Language.

Muintearas – is an organization instituted by Údarás na Gaeltachta with a view to developing educational opportunities for Gaeltacht people from primary level to third level by linking with NUI Maigh Nuad, Ollscoil Luimní and IT Gaillimh/Maigh Eo. It is recognized as a training institute by Fás and Comhairle Náisiúnta na gCáilíochtaí Gairmoideachais.

Colaistí Samhraidh – There are two Coláistí Samhraidh in the district.

- Coláiste na nOileán, Tír an Fhia/Trá Bháin
- Colaiste Spleodar, Leitir Mealláin

They can cater for up to 800 pupils in summer months.

Teagmháil na nÓg – This organization acts under the guidance of Coiste Gairmoideachais Chontae na Gaillimhe and is concerned with assisting young people who have left formal schooling early in developing employment skills.

Ollscoil na h-Éireann Gaillimh (OÉG) – OÉG runs third level outreach courses in Irish at Áras Mháirtín Uí Chadhain, An Cheathrú Rua.

(ii). Industry

- Údarás na Gaeltachta owns sites at An Cheathrú Rua, Tír an Fhia, Fuirnéis and Talamh Bán, Leitir Mealláin. A three year investment programme is being undertaken to improve facilities in Tír an Fhia.
- Roinn na Mara/Údarás na Gaeltachta estimate an annual income of approx 500,000 Euros to local fishermen of Ceantar na nOileán from shellfish harvesting.
- Salmon farming has been going through difficult times and a rationalization process has been undertaken to develop and manage it more efficiently.
- There would appear to be strong growth opportunities in the tourism business, having regard to the natural amenities of the area and the unique language/music culture. An Cheathrú Rua has a hotel and holiday cottages but the extensive area of Ceantar na nOileán has only two registered guest houses and two schemes of self catering cottages. With a tradition of keeping pupils from the Coláistí Samhraidh it should be possible to expand tourist accommodation in the short term. The district also has a nine hole golf course and good quality GAA facilities, and hosts a number of summer festivals. Údarás na Gaeltachta recently opened a new crèche in Tír An Fhia.

(iii). Infrastructure

a) Water Services

Galway County Council has drawn up an Assessment of Needs which guides the investment programme for short term and medium term improvement schemes throughout the County.

The following schemes are scheduled for commencement or progression during the lifetime of the plan

- Casla Regional Water Supply Scheme (also serving An Ceathru Rua)
- An Ceathrú Rua Sewerage Scheme (network upgrade complete – site identification work for a possible new Integrated Constructed Wetland treatment facility underway)

b) Marine Works

The multi annual development programme for marine on-shore structures is funded for the most part by An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta with substantial funding from Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe.

c) Social and Affordable Housing

There is no Capital housing programme in operation for the County at present. Special Needs houses will be considered on a case by case basis.

d) Bus Éireann

There is a daily service between Leitir Mealláin/Leitir Móir and Galway City, leaving Leitir Mealláin in the morning and returning from the City in the late afternoon.

e) Comhairle Ceantar na nOileán Teo agus Comhair Chuigéal Teo

These organizations are main players in the provision of facilities for the community and in representing the people of Ceantar na nOileán in their dealings with the statutory bodies. This plan supports their current three year programme of projects, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

5.3.2 Residential Settlement

The County Development Plan designates An Cheathrú Rua as a local service centre in the Core Strategy Settlement Strategy. Section 6 of this Local Area Plan consists of a village plan for An Cheathrú Rua with land use proposals and specific policies and objectives.

The County Plan also designates small settlements which in this district, includes:

- Casla (inside GTPS area)
- Leitir Móir (outside GTPS area)
- Leitir Mealláin (outside GTPS area)
- Béal an Daingin (outside GTPS area)

The Plan encourages development at an appropriate scale into these villages in order to support their existing services and sustain their population and that of the rural area which they serve.

Section 5.3 of the County Plan sets out the applicable rural housing policies.

5.3.2.1 Residential Qualification

The ED of Croomán is located within the GTPS area and has experienced modest population growth in the past ten years. Its landscape sensitivity rating is generally Class 3. The ED's of Leitir Móir and Garmna are outside the GTPS area and have a high landscape sensitivity rating of Class 4.

Gaeltacht Residential Qualification

Section (a): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Areas within the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999) excluding those areas in Section(c) below

A Language Enurement Clause (%LEC) will be applied on a portion of residential units in developments of two or more units. The proportion of homes to which a Language Enurement Clause applies will be a minimum of 80% (rounded up) or to the proportion of persons using the Irish Language on a daily basis, in accordance with the latest published Census whichever is the greater. The balance may be allocated to applicants who qualify under the Language Enurement Clause provisions.

The Language Enurement Clause will be for duration of 15 years from the date of first occupancy of the unit.

The remainder may be made available to applicants who qualify within the following qualifying categories of persons:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Permitted developments will have a Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of 7 years duration, from the date of first occupancy of the unit, attached, or may also qualify under the Language Enurement Clause.

Section (b): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib which are outside the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999)

The position of the Irish Language in the areas outside the GTPS boundary, which is predominantly contained within the Clár area, will be protected by restricting the qualification to buy houses in housing developments of two or more houses to the following categories:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Successful developments will be subject to the Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of duration 7 years.

- Irish Speakers



Permitted developments will be subjected to a 15 year Language Enurement Clause.

Section (c): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Local Area Plan Boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir

Within the Local Area Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir a Language Enurement Clause will be applied to 20% of the units in residential developments of two or more units and will be of 15 years duration.

Section (d): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas inside the GTPS east and west of the Corrib

In determining whether an application is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the *"Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005"* shall be considered. The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home. Applicants, whose original family home is located on the coastal strip west of An Spidéil, will be permitted to move closer to the City but not more than 8km from the original family home.

or

(c) Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop. Employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need.

or

(d) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved abroad and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area.

or

(e) Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.

A General Enurement Clause of 7 years duration will apply to eligible applicants who qualify under the above criteria.

Section (e): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib inside and outside the GTPS

In addition consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to **speak Irish in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate** their ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural, arts, heritage and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht Communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1, 2 and 3. It will also extend to Class 4 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category.

Applicants living within the development Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna , An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal seeking permission outside the plan boundaries shall not be regarded as urban generated and shall be considered if they can establish housing need as defined by the County Development Plan.

5.3.3 Community Objectives

The public consultation process involved workshops at An Cheathrú Rua and Tír an Fhia at which a list of objectives for the district were drawn up. This plan supports them as being reasonable and attainable. All projects that are developed through the implementation of these objectives will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of any European designated site as defined **by the site's conservation objectives.**

The community objectives are as follows:

Culture and Heritage

- Continued investment by the State in projects and facilities which are culture and language based.
- Provision of a cultural centre with community support facilities.
- Provision of comprehensive Irish Language service from Galway County Council with an emphasis on Planning and Development.
- Support for festivals and patrons.
- Protection for the beauty of the countryside as a fundamental principle.
- Proclamation **of the interconnection of the community language and the community's** relationship with the sea.

Roads and Transportation

- The provision of new R336 route Galway - Casla.
- The bridges at Croisin and Srutháin to be widened.
- Continuation of the improvement of R343.
- The "causeway" to be widened.
- Pedestrian walkways to be provided on the outside of the bridges.
- Make provision for car parking at the various quays.
- Provide a swing bridge at Béal an Daingin/ Cuigéal.
- Continue minor road reconstruction programme.

Housing

- Avoid housing estate-type layouts in settlements. Small clusters of housing are more traditional.
- The various public agencies should combine to purchase a number of sites as land banks. These should be serviced and made available at affordable prices to local people with housing needs

- Some sheltered housing for elderly people to be developed, these to be supported and cared for by the local community.
- Social housing to be dispersed more widely.
- Holiday home development to be restricted.
- More comprehensive consultation required between local communities and the County Council prior to deciding local public housing provision.

Infrastructure

- Provision of new 110kv electricity line.
- Provision of broadband service.
- Improvement of re-cycling of waste.
- Blue flag status to be achieved for additional beaches.
- Development of additional wind turbines with consequent advantage to the local community in its electricity service.
- Development of walking routes, short distance and longer distance with suitable signage attached.
- Provision of **children's** playgrounds.

The Marine

- Provision of Marina at An Sruthán quay, and the assessment of the lands in the vicinity of the quay as to their potential for the recreation of the local community and for the tourism industry.
- Development and extension of Chalaídh Thaidhg.
- Development of Marine Heritage centre.
- Development of walking routes along the shoreline.
- Additional "**moorings**" to be provided on the quays for visiting boats.
- **The provisions of the "Water-Based Tourism" Report**, as it applies to the district, to be implemented.
- Support maricultural development under the aegis of Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Tourism/Agriculture

- Support the development of a modern hotel facility.
- Support full time restaurant facility.
- Improve the public bus service.
- **The feasibility of "Biomass" production in the district to be examined and any positive findings to be implemented.**
- Encourage organic farming and local branding in the community.



District D: Cois Fharráige

The Cois Fharráige district of Conamara stretches from the western fringe of Galway City westwards along the northern coast of Galway Bay to Baile na h-Abhann and Ros an Mhíl – See Map 5.D.1. It contains a population of over 7,000 people in a rectangular strip of land measuring 24 kilometers from east to west and 1.5 kilometers from the shores of Galway Bay northwards to the lowland Atlantic Blanket Bog with its candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) designation.

The land in general is undulating with a thin layer of low-fertility soil overlaying granite bedrock. Its field systems and stone wall boundaries derive from a Rundale system of land division and tenure that was driven by the Congested Districts Board from 1891 to 1923 and subsequently handed on to the Irish Land Commission.

An Spidéal being the only substantial village settlement, the 2,300 houses of the district are scattered in a manner which reflects the ownership pattern of small holdings. There are also a number of local clusters of housing which most likely shared ownership of neighbouring commonage or fished co-operatively along the coastline. The houses are generally oriented towards the sea and a significant proportion of them have been built in the past thirty years.

The R336 is the major transportation route which serves the South Conamara Area. It is fed by a large number of minor local roads which run north/south, linking the housing and lands to the main route and to the sea. The linkage with the sea is centuries old and is at the heart of local culture.

Up to the post medieval period much of the population was close to the seashore but the Blake Family Landlords forced their tenants northwards to the area which is now inhabited. The **community's** connection with the sea and its produce meant that **the potato famine of the 1840's** was not as deadly as in many other parts of rural Ireland. Nevertheless emigration seriously depleted the local population up until recent years.

The district has retained its rich native culture to date but has been subjected to development pressures emanating from the outward growth of Galway City. Restrictive development control measures have given a degree of cultural protection to rural areas but An Spidéal has been subject to development proposals which if permitted would seriously alter the distinctive community culture, and in particular the Irish language, which the Planning Authority is under legal remit to protect.

Recent revision of the County Development Plan set out residential settlement qualifications which are designed to protect the Irish language as the Community language. These are detailed later in this document.

For the purposes of this plan the district is composed of the following Electoral Districts (ED's):

- Cill Chuimin
- Sailearna
- Cill Aithnín
- An Spidéal
- Na Forbacha
- Sliabh an Aonáigh

A demographic profile derived from census 1996, 2002, 2006 and 2011 is indicated in Table 5.4 below.



Table 5.4

	Population				% Change in Pop.		% Daily Irish Spoken* *
	1996	2002	2006	2011	1996-2002	2002-2011	
Cill Chuimín	1273	1298	1304	1315	+2	+1.3	84.4
Sailearna	1148	1299	1362	1448	+13.2	+11.5	82.8
Cill Aithnín	840	831	963	1000	-1.1	+20.3	78.4
An Spidéal	1166	1253	1356	1450	+7.5	+15.7	68.0
Na Forbacha	1090	1272	1236	1312	+16.7	+3.1	39.3
Sliabh an Aonáigh	587	649	690	763	+10.6	+17.5	33.2

** 2006 Census figures only available.

The Table indicates:

- A steady increase in population in recent years.
- A strong commitment to the use of Irish as a community language, particularly from Na Forbacha westwards.

Overall the impression seems to be that of a community growing at a moderate rate, which is well educated, has access to employment and has preserved its Irish Language as a working language. There is an optimism about future prospects and community involvement in facilitating and guiding the development of the district.

5.1.3 Community Facilities

(i). Education

There are five primary schools and two post primary schools (Indreabhán and An Spidéal) serving the district.

Coláistí Samhraidh: Coláiste Chonnacht, An Spidéal
 Coláiste Uí Chadhain Teo, Na Mine
 Coláiste Chamais, Ros an Mhíl
 Coláiste Chamais, An Tulaigh
 Coláiste Lurgan

(ii). Industry

Údarás na Gaeltachta has developed industrial sites at Baile an tSagairt, Baile na hAbhann and Ros an Mhíl. In its Strategic Development Plan 2005-2010 it has acknowledged the difficulties posed by the decline in the manufacturing industries, but has embraced the challenge of creating employment in a range of sections including tourism, language/culture, marine resources, third level education and local community enterprise. It has a specific objective of developing a business park at An Spidéal/Indreabhán.



- The thrust of this plan is to support the developmental role of Údarás na Gaeltachta.

(iii). Services and Utilities

- There is a wide range of services available in the district. An Spidéal contains a variety of retail and personal services including a craft village and a media production park, but there are other local retail shops scattered along the R336 and a leading hotel at Na Forbacha.
- Ard Oifig an Údaráis and Ard Oifig Roinn na Gaeltachta are also located at Na Forbacha.
- The County Council has a branch library services at An Spidéal and a mobile service which visits Na Mine on a fortnightly basis.
- Bus Éireann runs six buses per day – Monday to Saturday serving Galway/Leitir Mealláin but passing through Cois Fharraige. There are two services on Sunday and an additional service Monday to Friday which serves Galway City/An Spidéal only.

(iv). Infrastructure

a) Water Services

Galway County Council has drawn up an Assessment of Needs which guides the investment programme for short term and medium term improvement schemes throughout the County.

- The preliminary report for An Spidéal Sewerage Scheme is being assessed
- A preliminary report is also due to be prepared for Na Forbacha Sewerage Scheme.

b) Marine Works

A multi-annual development programme is also in train for piers, harbours and other marine works. A major part of the funding comes from An Roinn Gnothaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta with substantial support from County Council funds.

Recently completed projects include:

- Improvement works to Cé an Lochán Bhig

Improvement works to Sean Cé, An Spidéal.

Ongoing improvement works at Ros an Mhíl harbour which is one of the principal fishing harbours in the country and has attained EU Status as such. It is also an important ferry passenger link with the Aran Islands and a significant tourism asset.

It is an objective of this plan to facilitate the upgrading and improvement of harbour facilities and those of the adjacent industrial estate and village as an important focal point in the economy of South Conamara.

Cois Fharraige contains two a blue flag beaches – at An Trá Mór, Indreabhán and at Trá na mBan, An Spidéal. There are numerous other small beaches along the coastline which are important as local amenities and which must be protected from sources of pollution and intrusive development.

c) Air Service

The airport at Indreabhán services all three of the Aran Islands. It has become an important link in the social and economic life of the Islands and lessens the disadvantage of peripherality which

is part of coastal Island communities. Aer Árainn runs a bus link between the City and the airport.

5.4.2 Residential Settlement

The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan designates An Spidéal as a Village (other) which provides a range of services at easy reach of its rural hinterland. Section 7 of this Local Area Plan consists of a village plan for An Spidéal with land use proposals and specific policies and objectives.

The County Plan also designates small settlements which, in Cois Fharráige, include:

- Na Forbacha
- An Cnoc
- Na Mine
- An Tulaigh/Baile na h-Abhann
- Ros an Mhil

Development will be considered in these villages in order to support their existing services, and help to augment them, and so sustain their existing population and that of the rural area which they serve.

Section 5.3 of the County Plan sets out the rural housing policies that apply.

5.4.2.1 Residential Qualification

All of the district is located inside the area covered by the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS) and has experienced modest population growth in the past ten years. Its inland section contains extensive Special Areas of Conservation – See Map 5.D.2. Its landscape sensitivity ratings are generally class 2 and class 3, but there are stretches of class 4 co-inciding with the SAC – See Map 5.D.3.

Gaeltacht Residential Qualification

Section (a): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Areas within the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999) excluding those areas in Section(c) below

A Language Enurement Clause (%LEC) will be applied on a portion of residential units in developments of two or more units. The proportion of homes to which a Language Enurement Clause applies will be a minimum of 80% (rounded up) or to the proportion of persons using the Irish Language on a daily basis, in accordance with the latest published Census whichever is the greater. The balance may be allocated to applicants who qualify under the Language Enurement Clause provisions.

The Language Enurement Clause will be for duration of 15 years from the date of first occupancy of the unit.

The remainder may be made available to applicants who qualify within the following qualifying categories of persons:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.

- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Permitted developments will have a Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of 7 years duration, from the date of first occupancy of the unit, attached, or may also qualify under the Language Enurement Clause.

Section (b): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib which are outside the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999)

The position of the Irish Language in the areas outside the GTPS boundary, which is predominantly contained within the Clár area, will be protected by restricting the qualification to buy houses in housing developments of two or more houses to the following categories:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Successful developments will be subject to the Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of duration 7 years.

- Irish Speakers

Permitted developments will be subjected to a 15 year Language Enurement Clause.

Section (c): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Local Area Plan Boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearnna and Baile Chláir

Within the Local Area Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearnna and Baile Chláir a Language Enurement Clause will be applied to 20% of the units in residential developments of two or more units and will be of 15 years duration.

Section (d): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas inside the GTPS east and west of the Corrib

In determining whether an application is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the *"Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005"* shall be considered. The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home. Applicants, whose original family home is located on



the coastal strip west of An Spidéil, will be permitted to move closer to the City but not more than 8km from the original family home.

or

(c) Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop. Employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need.

or

(d) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved abroad and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area.

or

(e) Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.

A General Enurement Clause of 7 years duration will apply to eligible applicants who qualify under the above criteria.

Section (e): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib inside and outside the GTPS

In addition consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to **speak Irish in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate** their ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural, arts, heritage and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht Communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1, 2 and 3. It will also extend to Class 4 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category.

Applicants living within the development Plan boundaries of Maigh Cullinn, Bearna , An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal seeking permission outside the plan boundaries shall not be regarded as urban generated and shall be considered if they can establish housing need as defined by the County Development Plan.

5.4.3 Community Objectives

The public consultation process which included a workshop at Sean Scoil Sailearna gave rise to a list of objectives from the area. This plan supports them as being reasonable and attainable. All projects that are developed through the implementation of these objectives will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of any European **designated site as defined by the site's conservation objectives.**

The community objectives are as follows:

Culture and Heritage

- Development of a centre which will cater for a range of cultural activities e.g. language, music, folklore, archaeology, crafts etc.

- Conservation of churches and burial sites.
- Support voluntary cultural bodies.
- Conservation of the beauty of the countryside.
- Support the collection, preservation and use of local placenames.

Roads and Transportation

- Provision of new R336 along the emerging preferred corridor and associated link roads.
- Support the continued improvement of the minor road system.
- Reduce speed limit on minor roads from 80kph to 50kph.
- Improve public bus services and construct shelters at recognized bus stops.
- Develop safe cycling corridors.
- Improve route lighting.
- Support the development of the Wild Atlantic Way tourist route.

Infrastructure

- Provision of broadband services.
- Development of a recycling depot in Cois Fharráige.
- Improve water supply.
- Encourage stronger liaison between Galway County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Housing

- Restrict large housing estate development.
- Encourage the provision of small housing schemes in each parish including social houses.
- Develop community services in conjunction with housing e.g. childcare, elderly care, recreational spaces.



5.2 District E: Oileáin Árann

The three Aran Islands of Inis Mór, Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr are the limestone sentinels that stand guard over Galway Bay – see Map 5.E.1. They are the products of ancient earth movements in pre-historic, semi-tropical, carboniferous seas and are related in a geological sense to the Burren Coast of Clare rather than to the granite coast of Galway, from which they are administered.

They have been inhabited since the Stone Age, as evidenced by the forts and megalithic tombs. Successive millennia saw great Christian Settlements of worship and learning, which influenced the spread of Christianity in Europe in early medieval times. The remnants of this age lie in the ruined churches, graveyards and holy wells which are scattered throughout the Islands.

Later times saw conquests by Irish tribal groups and by an expanding British empire until when National independence was won early in the last century, the island successors of the thousands of years of human habitation became masters of their own destiny.

The unique heritage of geology, archaeology, biodiversity and human husbandry, when added to the language and folk culture of these islands on the western outpost of Europe leaves a rare and distinctive living environment which enriches the country. It is a living environment which must now cope with the challenges of the new millennium if it is to be passed on to the next generation without deterioration.

The Islanders must be supported so as to maintain a viable population on the three Islands which will have access to the services and amenities of modern living while sustaining their precious and varied inheritance.

The Islands are home to 1251 persons according to the 2011 Census – an increase of 26 persons or 2.1% since the 2006 Census; of these 845 live on Inis Mór, 157 on Inis Meáin and 249 on Inis Oírr.

The great majority of family houses are connected to septic tanks, and commercial premises are connected to proprietary sewage treatment plants, most of them being in Cill Rónáin. A new public sewerage scheme is being designed to treat the effluent of the two principal villages on Inis Mór i.e. Cill Rónáin and Cill Éinne.

There are public water schemes serving Inis Mór and Inis Oírr. Improvements to both schemes have been carried out in recent years, and further source development is planned for Inis Oírr. Inis Meáin is served by a group water scheme with desalinization of sea water. Proposals for a new scheme are being considered.

The decline in the traditional occupations of fishing and agriculture, and the dramatic rise in year round tourism have been the significant factors influencing the island community in recent years. The general decline in population has not been as dramatic as some western districts of the Conamara Gaeltacht, and the improved transport services of the ferry companies and Aer Árann has made access to mainland facilities, including national and international travel routes, other than in severe weather conditions.

There are extensive candidate Special Areas of Conservation, where development is restricted, on all three islands – see Map 5.E.2, while landscape sensitivity levels 4 and 5 are pervasive, further

restricting development. DC Standard 11 of the County Development Plan allows consideration of local housing needs in landscape class 5 on the islands, but does not allow other developments. The County Plan will require revision if it is to cater for any required community facility in locations which contain established settlements. Any such facility should be subject to agreed criteria for establishing its contribution to the social, cultural and economic welfare of the community. The criteria should be determined by a partnership of the local Comhar chumann, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Galway County Council.

Despite an ongoing decline in the population there is an optimism that there are sufficient opportunities in Tourism, culture and home-based enterprises and services to maintain the population and encourage young people to settle permanently.

Much will depend on the statutory agencies and voluntary bodies pooling their resources and working to an agreed agenda in providing infrastructural and community services.

This might best be achieved under the direction and management of an Islands development sub-committee of the County Development Board.

PLAN'S AIM FOR THE ISLANDS TOGETHER WITH GUIDING POLICIES

The Islands being a place apart it is necessary to outline the fundamental aim of this section of the Local Area Plan.

THAT THE COMMUNITIES OF INIS MÓR, INIS MEÁÍN AND INIS OÍRR WILL BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE TO LIVE ON THE ISLANDS AND EARN A LIVING, ON PAR WITH THE OTHER CITIZENS OF THE REPUBLIC, WHILE PRESERVING THE RICH HERITAGE OF LANGUAGE MUSIC, FOLKLORE, CRAFTS, BUILDING, BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL LANDSCAPE WHICH ARE UNIQUE NATIONAL ASSETS.

The core policies which are deemed necessary to work towards this aim are:

- Support the statutory agencies in delivering infrastructural services to the Islands.
- All developments to have regard, in their location and design, to the conservation of the built and environmental heritage of the islands.
- Afford maximum protection to candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Natural Heritage Areas.
- Encourage the rehabilitation of existing buildings as a more sustainable option than the provision of new buildings.
- Support the provision of jobs and work opportunities related to culture, tourism and indigenous skills.
- Support the policies on permanent residential housing as adopted in the County Development Plan – See Section 5.5.2.1 below, and the provision of social and affordable housing.
- Support the waste management principles of reduce, reuse and recycle.
- Encourage the provision of care for the elderly and for children.



- Limit the growth of motorized traffic on island roads, so as to preserve the character and safe capacity of roads and to encourage cycling and walking activities.
- Maintain extensive as opposed to intensive practices in farming and encourage organic food production.
- The fishing tradition and boating skills will be supported and encouraged to continue within the capacity of the marine environment surrounding the islands.
- Encourage the upgrade of septic tank systems to EPA standards so as to aspire to the principles of the EU Water Framework Directive and preserve the inherited environmental quality of the islands.
- To conserve and protect the Natural and Built Heritage of the Aran Islands.

Table 5.5 gives an indication of the demographic of the islands as derived from census publications.

Table 5.5

ED of Inis Mór	Population				Change in Population as %		% Daily Irish Speakers**
	1996	2002	2006	2011	1996-2002	2002-2011	
Oileáin Árann	1303	1280	1225	1251	-1.8	-2.3	82

** 2006 Census figures only available.

The table indicates a continuing decline in the population and a high percentage of daily Irish Speakers.

5.2.1 Community Facilities

(i). Education

There are two post primary schools and four primary schools serving the Islands.

- Coláistí Samhraidh
- Clár Foghlama Fadsaoil ag Údarás na Gaeltachta

(ii). Industry/Employment

The principal community development bodies on the islands are the Comharchumainn:

- On Inis Mór, the principal Comharchumainn being Comharchumainn Forbartha Árann Teo, with Comharchumann Aonghusa Teo also working in the community.
- On Inis Meáin, Comhar Inis Meáin has developed the Islands water supply and installed wind turbines as electricity generators.
- On Inis Oírr, Comharchumann Chaomháin is the community engine which among its various projects is to generate much of the islands energy requirements from renewal sources.
- Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann is a Leader 11 company representing all of the inhabited islands of the Irish coast. It administers the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP) for the islands and is formulating a national policy for island development.
- Údarás na Gaeltachta supports and subvents a significant amount of community development and private enterprise and runs an extensive training and apprenticeship programme for islanders.

- The ever-growing tourism industry had led to an extensive range of private services including registered guest houses, hostels, food and drink outlets etc. Údarás have indicated that a total of over 300 people are employed on Inis Mór in the tourism industry at summer peak.

(iii) Infrastructure

a). Water Services

Galway County Council has drawn up an Assessment of Needs which guides the investment programme for short term and medium term improvement schemes throughout the County.

The following schemes are contained in the present programme:

- Cill Rónáin/Cill Éinne Sewerage Scheme – a preliminary report has been sent to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG).
- Inis Oírr – new source development to be investigated and connection made to newly extended storage.
- Inis Meáin – new scheme to be investigated to replace desalination scheme.

b). Road Improvements

The Multi-Annual Roads Restoration Programme provides for maintenance of roads on the islands. In addition, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs allocates money annually for the upkeep of the Islands Roads.

c). Marine Works

A multi-annual programme is also in place for piers, harbours, slipways, landing places etc. A major part of the funding comes from An Roinn Gnothaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta with substantial support from County Council Funds.

Improvements at the following quays are planned but at present, do not all have any certain timeframe:

- Works at Céibh Chill Rónáin – completed
- Caladh Mór Inis Meáin
- Céibh Inis Oírr

d). Social and Affordable Housing

There is no Capital housing programme in operation for the County at present. Special Needs houses will be considered on a case by case basis.

Comharchumann Forbartha Árann Teo also intends to implement a social housing scheme.

e). Public Libraries

There are branches of Galway County Council libraries on each of the three Islands.

5.5.2 Residential Development

The County Development Plan designates a number of small villages as residential settlements which are encouraged to grow moderately in order to support existing services and so sustain their own population and that of their rural hinterland. Cill Rónáin is the sole designated settlement village of Oileáin Árann.

Section 5.3 of the County Plan sets out the rural housing policies that apply.

5.5.2.1 Residential Qualification

The islands are not included in the area which is known as the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS). They are experiencing a loss of population but growing numbers of short-stay visitors. They also contain extensive areas which are under European and National Protection as candidate Special Areas of Conservation – See Map 5.E.2, and which have high landscape sensitivity ratings in the County Development Plan – See Map 5.E.3.

Gaeltacht Residential Qualification

Section (a): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Areas within the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999) excluding those areas in Section(c) below

A Language Enurement Clause (%LEC) will be applied on a portion of residential units in developments of two or more units. The proportion of homes to which a Language Enurement Clause applies will be a minimum of 80% (rounded up) or to the proportion of persons using the Irish Language on a daily basis, in accordance with the latest published Census whichever is the greater. The balance may be allocated to applicants who qualify under the Language Enurement Clause provisions.

The Language Enurement Clause will be for duration of 15 years from the date of first occupancy of the unit.

The remainder may be made available to applicants who qualify within the following qualifying categories of persons:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating
- Employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Permitted developments will have a Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of 7 years duration, from the date of first occupancy of the unit, attached, or may also qualify under the Language Enurement Clause.

Section (b): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib which are outside the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999)

The position of the Irish Language in the areas outside the GTPS boundary, which is predominantly contained within the Clár area, will be protected by restricting the qualification to buy houses in housing developments of two or more houses to the following categories:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Successful developments will be subject to the Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of duration 7 years.

- Irish Speakers

Permitted developments will be subjected to a 15 year Language Enurement Clause.

Section (c): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Local Area Plan Boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir

Within the Local Area Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir a Language Enurement Clause will be applied to 20% of the units in residential developments of two or more units and will be of 15 years duration.

Section (d): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas inside the GTPS east and west of the Corrib

In determining whether an application is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the *"Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005"* shall be considered. The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home. Applicants, whose original family home is located on the coastal strip west of An Spidéil, will be permitted to move closer to the City but not more than 8km from the original family home.

or

(c) Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop. Employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need.

or

(d) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved abroad and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area.

or

(e) Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.

A General Enurement Clause of 7 years duration will apply to eligible applicants who qualify under the above criteria.



Section (e): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib inside and outside the GTPS

In addition consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to speak Irish **in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate** their ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural, arts, heritage and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht Communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1, 2 and 3. It will also extend to Class 4 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category.

Applicants living within the development Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna, An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéil seeking permission outside the plan boundaries shall not be regarded as urban generated and shall be considered if they can establish housing need as defined by the County Development Plan.

Because of the extent of Landscape Sensitivity 5, which covers all of the three Islands with the exception of the settled area of Inis Oírr which is rated class 4, and since County Development Plan Policy only permits local essential housing needs, there requires to be a reassessment of the landscape ratings adjoining the established areas of settlement. This would enable consideration to be given to the other community needs of the Islanders, and indeed to other permissible classes of residential development without damage to the undeveloped landscape.

This should be done in the pre-draft phase of the new County Development Plan which is due to commence in 2013.

5.5.3 Community Objectives

The public consultation process involved workshops on each of the three islands, at which the Islanders compiled a list of objectives for their community. This Plan supports them as being reasonable and attainable. All projects that are developed through the implementation of these objectives will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Works will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity **of any European designated site as defined by the site's conservation objectives.**

The Objectives are as follows:

INIS MÓR

Housing

- Support the provision of the housing needs of Islanders on their own land.
- Support the provision of a number of houses for people who wish to spend some part time **on the Island (engaged in summer work) and some for self catering "tourism".**
- Support the provision of a scattering of social housing throughout the Island.
- Undertake a campaign of rehabilitation of some ruined buildings and the removal of others under the Derelict Sites Act.

The Marine

- Improve the marine safety regime by encouraging more co-ordination and co-operation between the various emergency services.



- Complete the major pier development at Cill Ronain and continue the annual improvements to the various slipways.
- Support the local individual fishermen.
- Encourage the Marine Institute to study the reservoir of knowledge which local people have in relation to the various seaweeds. This may lead to new product development from an indigenous source.
- **Encourage NUIG to develop an "extra-mural" branch of the island to deal with zoology/biology.**

Roads and Transportation

- Improve the road surfaces.
- Undertake a study to determine the implications for traffic on the islands of the provision of roll on/roll off access.
- Develop new road signs which would be particular in design and character to the Aran Islands.
- Horse manure to be regularly cleansed from road surfaces.
- Reduce the need to import stone material to the Island by sensitively developing local stone resources.
- Continue and expand the annual Road Improvement Programme.

Infrastructure

- Provision of **children's** playground with allied equipment.
- Provision of public toilets for women.
- Encourage the development of indoor recreational facilities for tourists.
- Improve the existing recycling service.
- Seek Blue Flag status for some beaches.
- Examine the feasibility of wind turbines for single houses and for small clusters of houses.

The Environment

- Protect the landscape of the Island from damage.
- Conserve and protect the archaeological heritage of the Island
- Conserve and protect the flora and fauna of the Island.
- Encourage the development of branded organic farming.
- **Study the feasibility of the use of land for "bio-fuel/bio-mass".**

INIS MEÁIN

Housing

- Islanders to be permitted to construct a house on their own land.
- Islanders to be permitted to construct a small chalet for visitors on their land.
- Encourage the provision of a small housing cluster for people who wish to visit the island to study Irish.
- Support the provision of a septic tank emptying facility on an annual basis.

Infrastructure

- That the County Council provide an adequate public water supply.
- Remove abandoned vehicles from the Island.
- Support the relocation of overhead wirescape to below ground.
- Initiate a programme of protection from coastal erosion at vulnerable locations in particular adjoining the local airstrip.

- Continue and expand the annual Road Improvement Programme.

INIS OÍRR

Housing

- Islanders to be entitled to build a house on their own land.
- Provision of a small scheme of social housing.
- New housing to be supported to be an example of high quality energy efficient construction, making use of wind and solar resources and comprehensive insulation.
- Consideration to be given to sites of less than ½ acre for housing purposes in view of the field profiles/ownership on the Island.

Infrastructure

- Continue the improvement programme on the quay and slipways.
- Provision of a public sewerage scheme.
- Provision of an Island Fire Service.
- Continue the improvement of the public water supply.
- Development of the facilities at Áras Éanna.
- Continue and expand the annual Road Improvement Programme.

Environment

- Conserve and protect the Natural and Built Environment of Inis Oírr.
- Support increased provision of care for the Islands sites and monuments from the OPW.
- Improve recycling facilities.



District F: Imeall Na Cathrach/An Eachréidh

This is the part of the Gaeltacht which abuts and surrounds Galway City, some of it extending **inside the City's** administrative boundaries See Map No. 5.F.1, particularly since those boundaries were extended outwards twenty years ago.

It is the area under greatest pressure from City growth and must cope not only with the changes to its language and culture but with the constant demand for infrastructure and services which this now peri-urban area requires. It continues to grow at a faster rate than any other section of the County, having doubled its population since 1986.

As might be expected most of the new population is not of Gaeltacht origin and the use of Irish **as the "family" language has continued to decline, particularly east of the city in An Eachréidh.**

There is however a strong desire among people who are native to the area to maintain their Gaeltacht status and create a climate where there is a willingness to learn the language and express the area's distinctiveness in an ever modernizing environment. This view was expressed in a well attended workshop at the consultation phase of the Bearna Local Area Plan. It was also expressed at a seminar in Baile Chláir in recent times.

In **Údarás na Gaeltachta's Strategic Development Plan 2005-2010, one of its elements is "to facilitate a resurgence of Irish in those areas where Irish is at a low level of usage or without a public profile". This and the work of Foras na Gaeilge should underpin the desire of those local people who wish to maintain Gaeltacht status and inspire a revival of the use of Irish at community level.**

- It is consequently the policy of this plan to support the efforts of the local community and the statutory authorities in protecting and promoting the Irish language in this District.

The District is composed of Ten Electoral Divisions:

- Bearna
- Maigh Cuilinn
- Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin
- Ceathrú an Bhrúnaigh
- An Carn Mór
- Eanach Dhúin
- Baile Chláir
- Baile an Teampaill
- An Leacach Beag
- Lisín an Bhealaigh

Of these the following Gaeltacht areas are subdivisions **of their full ED's:** Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin, Ceathrú an Bhrúnaigh, Baile an Teampaill, An Leacach Beag, Lisín an Bhealaigh.

Table 5.6 gives some indicators of the demography of the District – derived from census publications. In the case of the unemployment rate, the 3rd level education rate and the rate of daily Irish speakers, these derive from the details of census 2002. Current figures are not yet available.

Table 5.6

	Population				Changes in Population as a %		% Daily Irish Speakers
	1996	2002	2006	2011	1996-	2002-	



					2002	2011	
Bearna	2093	2465	3015	7483	17.6	+202.7	24.6
Maigh Cuilinn	1020	1402	1772	2008	37.5	+43.2	21.8
*Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin	958	1062	1285	1490	10.8	+40.3	20.1
Ceathrú an Bhrúnaigh	623	756	881	918	21.3	+21.4	18.8
An Carn Mór	1582	1989	2139	2609	25.7	+31.2	16.8
Eanach Dhúin	1290	1551	1710	1860	20.2	+19.9	10.8
Baile Chláir	1102	1635	1852	2042	48.4	+24.9	12.6
*Baile an Teampaill	195	196	192	176	0	-10.2	12.4
*An Leacach Beag	132	147	163	208	11.3	+41.5	10.0
*Lisin an Bhealaigh	41	40	30	32	0	-20.0	9.8

The table illustrates the following:

- Within 10km of the city boundary there is a population of 18, 826 people living in the official Gaeltacht.
- The rate of growth exceeds the rate of growth of the city and, in many cases greatly exceeds the average rate for the County.
- The percentage of daily Irish speakers is significantly below a level which would merit a status of "community" language and is no more than an average figure for non-Gaeltacht areas.

5.2.2 Community Facilities

a) Education

There are eleven primary schools located in and serving this Gaeltacht district. Two others, SN An Bháin Mhóir and SN Naomh Pádraig An Creag Mhór are on the margins of the Gaeltacht but predominantly serve children from the Gaeltacht.

There are no secondary schools in the district. Pupils travel to the city or to the schools in Uachtar Ard or Órán Mór.

(ii). Industry

Although most people who work in industry, whether it be in manufacturing or various services, commute to the City. There are various locations in the District that contain well established industrial businesses. An Carn Mór has enterprises related to roofing, glazing, electronics. Baile Chláir produces sports equipment. Maigh Cuilinn produces crystal and concrete building units.

There are various overspill, city bound, service depots and warehouses on the radial routes to the City and a number of strategically located nursing homes.

The three principle towns, which, when Bearna Local Area Plan is completed, will have their own self contained plans, all have a range of modern retail and professional services and newly built hotels.

Rural Enterprise policies of the County Development Plan provide guidance for development of this nature in the rural areas **subject to proper planning and sustainable development**".

(iii). Infrastructure

a) Water Services

Galway County Council has drawn up an Assessment of Needs, which guides the investment programme for short term and medium term improvement schemes throughout the County. The following schemes are relevant in the Gaeltacht LAP area.

- 2007-2010
- Bearna Sewerage Scheme Phase 1 – Completed
 - Baile Chláir Sewerage Scheme – At tender stage
 - Galway City Western Environs Water Supply Scheme – Completed

b) Road Improvements

The National Roads Authority provide funding to the improvement and maintenance of the National Route network which radiates from the city through this Gaeltacht district. The proposed Galway City Outer By-pass and By-passes of Baile Chláir and Maigh Cuilinn will have significant effects on the living environment of people residing in this part of the Gaeltacht or in the Western Conamara Gaeltacht.

c) Social and Affordable Housing

There is no Capital housing programme in operation for the County at present. Special Needs houses will be considered on a case by case basis.

d) Galway Airport

The airport, located in An Carn Mór, has not been commercially operational since 2011.

5.6.2 Residential Settlement

The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan has designated Bearna, Maigh Cuilinn and Baile Chláir as settlements within the greater Galway Metropolitan Area. Their role is to provide an appropriate range of services for their own population and that of the hinterland which they serve.

The following small settlements are also in this district:

- Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin
- Eanach Dhúin
- Cluain Bú

Development will be considered in these villages. Section 5.3 of the County Plan sets out the appropriate rural housing policies that apply.

5.6.2.1 Residential Qualification

All of the district is located inside the area covered by the Galway Transportation and Planning Study and has experienced strong population growth in the past twenty years. It surrounds

lower Lough Corrib which is a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) and contains the full range of landscape sensitivity ratings, from rating 1 in the east to ratings 4 and 5 adjoining Lough Corrib. See Maps 5.F.2 and 5.F.3

Gaeltacht Residential Qualification

Section (a): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Areas within the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999) excluding those areas in Section(c) below

A Language Enurement Clause (%LEC) will be applied on a portion of residential units in developments of two or more units. The proportion of homes to which a Language Enurement Clause applies will be a minimum of 80% (rounded up) or to the proportion of persons using the Irish Language on a daily basis, in accordance with the latest published Census whichever is the greater. The balance may be allocated to applicants who qualify under the Language Enurement Clause provisions.

The Language Enurement Clause will be for duration of 15 years from the date of first occupancy of the unit.

The remainder may be made available to applicants who qualify within the following qualifying categories of persons:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Permitted developments will have a Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of 7 years duration, from the date of first occupancy of the unit, attached, or may also qualify under the Language Enurement Clause.

Section (b): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib which are outside the Galway Transport and Planning Study Boundary (GTPS, Sept. 1999)

The position of the Irish Language in the areas outside the GTPS boundary, which is predominantly contained within the Clár area, will be protected by restricting the qualification to buy houses in housing developments of two or more houses to the following categories:

- Local people.
- People who are employed, self employed, are creating employment in the area provided that work is expected to be on a long term basis.
- Returning emigrants for the area or people returning to the area from other parts of Ireland.
- The immediate family members of emigrants and migrants.

Successful developments will be subject to the Gaeltacht Enurement Clause of duration 7 years.

- Irish Speakers

Permitted developments will be subjected to a 15 year Language Enurement Clause.



Section (c): Residential Developments of 2 or more houses: Local Area Plan Boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir

Within the Local Area Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna and Baile Chláir a Language Enurement Clause will be applied to 20% of the units in residential developments of two or more units and will be of 15 years duration.

Section (d): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas inside the GTPS east and west of the Corrib

In determining whether an application is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the "*Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005*" shall be considered. The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home. Applicants, whose original family home is located on the coastal strip west of An Spidéil, will be permitted to move closer to the City but not more than 8km from the original family home.

or

(c) Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop. Employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need.

or

(d) Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved abroad and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area.

or

(e) Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.

A General Enurement Clause of 7 years duration will apply to eligible applicants who qualify under the above criteria.

Section (e): Residential Developments of Single Houses: Gaeltacht areas, west of the Corrib inside and outside the GTPS

In addition consideration will be given to Irish speakers who can prove their competence to **speak Irish in accordance with Galway County Council's requirements and who can demonstrate** their ability to be a long term asset to the traditional, cultural, arts, heritage and language networks of vibrant Gaeltacht Communities. This consideration will apply to applicants seeking to provide their principal permanent residence, in landscape designations Class 1, 2 and 3. It will also extend to Class 4 areas that are not in prominent scenic locations. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration will apply to approved developments in this category.

Applicants living within the development Plan boundaries of Maigh Cuilinn, Bearna , An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal seeking permission outside the plan boundaries shall not be regarded as urban generated and shall be considered if they can establish housing need as defined by the County Development Plan.

5.6.3 Community Objectives

The Local Area Plan for Maigh Cuilinn and Baile Chláir contain an extensive list of objectives relating to these villages and local communities. The Plan for Bearna also contains objectives, elicited after public consultations.

- This Local Area Plan for Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe supports the policies and objectives of these village plans and in particular those related to the protection, preservation and promotion of the Irish Language.
- The Local Area Plan underlines the importance of Galway City Outer Bypass to the social and economic advantage of the Gaeltacht and supports its development.



SECTION SIX: AN CHEATHRÚ RUA

6.1 Background

This village plan for An Cheathrú Rua has been prepared as part of Plean Ceantar Áitiúil na Gaeltachta under Section 18 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. It was considered necessary to have a focused Plan for the village having regard to its strategic location at the heart of the Conamara Gaeltacht and containing services such as third level outreach education from NUIG, an Údarás Industrial Estate, primary and secondary schools, a hotel and a nursing home. Its importance in helping to build a vibrant Gaeltacht community in its own hinterland and in Ceantar na n-Oiléan can hardly be overstated.

The 2000 Act as amended requires a Local Area Plan to be consistent with the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan.

An Cheathrú Rua Village Plan is therefore the legal instrument which will guide and oversee development in the village for the duration of the Plan period.

The plan set outs the policies and specific objectives that will guide the actions of the County Council in its statutory roll as provider of physical infrastructure, as protector of the environment and in its emerging role as facilitator of social, cultural and economic development. It consists of a written statement and accompanying maps.

By its policies and objectives it seeks to attain the vision which the local community has for the village, as expressed during the pre-plan consultation phase.

- That the village would have the status of the principal village of the Conamara Gaeltacht.
- That Irish would continue to be the community language.
- That there would be sufficient land available and serviced for the social, economic and recreational requirements of An Cheathrú Rua and its catchment area.
- That the third level outreach education facilities would continue to expand.
- That quality cultural tourism would be developed.
- That the village streetscape would be visually attractive.
- That the environmental and cultural heritage of the village and its surroundings be protected.
- That it would be a welcoming community.

6.1.1 Plan Area

The area to which the plan relates is the area within the boundary as indicated in Map No. 6.1, Appendix 1.

6.1.2 Plan Structure

The following sections of the Plan deal with the present local context and set out the various strategies, policies, objectives and control measures to achieve a vision for An Cheathrú Rua which emerged from the public consultation process and which is based on the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

Section 6.2 – Strategic Context: provides the context within which the Plan is set.

Section 6.3 – Local Context and Analysis: presents a brief statement on the present context of An Cheathrú Rua and outlines a vision for its future and the principles which will guide the Plan.

Section 6.4 – Development Strategy: presents the development strategy for the village with the County Development Plan and the Local Area Plan for the Gaeltacht.

Section 6.5 – Heritage and Conservation: provides an introduction to the record of protected structures and the natural environment.

Section 6.6 – Policies and Specific Objectives: details policy statements under various sectoral headings with associated specific objectives which the Council will strive to achieve within the lifetime of the Plan. These objectives relate to the land use zoning and action plan maps which are attached to the Plan.

Section 6.7 – Development Control Standards: details the standards which will be required of prospective developments in the village for the period of the Plan.

6.1.3 Consultation

Some public consultations have taken place in recent years and, in particular, a public workshop was held on 8th May 2006. Arising from these the following issues and opinions emerged.

- Centrality of language, music, storytelling, seafaring with the identity of the community.
- Investment required to provide employment based on maintenance of this culture.
- Support for village growth which would consolidate existing street with mixed development of vernacular design, and clustered housing layout behind the main street.
- Public agencies to acquire and provide land banks and so provide affordable serviced sites for local housing need.
- Avoid undue concentrations of Social Housing.
- Irish language condition to be applied to housing permissions.
- Support for new R336.
- Off-street parking and bus terminal required
- Potential for Marina at Céibh an tSrutháin.
- Development of beaches to blue flag status.
- Modern effluent treatment facilities to cater for this and next generation.
- Buildings to provide a range of state services in the Irish language and also for the case of the elderly and children.

6.2 Strategic Context

An Cheathrú Rua is designated as a Village (other) in the Core Strategy of the current County Development Plan. The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the mechanism for the preparation of local area plans. There is however an existing hierarchy and network of plans and strategies produced by state and semi-state agencies and other recognised organisations with which the Plan must be consistent. The Planning Authority will seek to work in partnership with these various agencies and in particular in this case with Údarás na Gaeltachta.

The following outlines the strategic context within which the Plan is set and which will guide the development of An Cheathrú Rua.

- National Development Plan 2007-2013.
- National Spatial Strategy.
- Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland 1997.
- Ensuring the Future – A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland 1999.
- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC).
- West Regional Authority, Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.
- Galway County Development Plan.
- Galway County Strategy 2002-2012.
- Galway Transportation and Planning Study.
- Beartas Forbartha an Údaráis 2005-2010.
- County Galway Housing Strategy.
- Border Midland West Operational Programme 2000.
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009.
- Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- The Wildlife Act 2000.

6.3 Local Context and Analysis

This section sets out to provide a present day context for An Cheathrú Rua. It lists hereunder the various issues from which will derive the Plans Strategy for the future development of the village and indeed its extensive hinterland.

- Location
- Setting and Form
- An Ghaeltacht
- Population and Demographics
- Local Economy
- Housing and business demands
- Transportation and Traffic
- Tourism
- Services and Facilities
- Built and Natural Environment

6.3.1 Location

An Cheathrú Rua village is situated approx 45 km west of Galway city centre at the middle of the peninsula which contains the ED of An Cromptán. The peninsula looks eastward across Casla Bay to Ros an Mhíl and Cois Fharraige, and westwards across Greatmans Bay to Leitir Móir and Garmna, the district known as Ceantar na n-Oileán.

The village is serviced by the R343 which leads away from the principal regional route R336 at Casla junction. While the road system is the principal system connecting the village with its Conamara neighbours and the world beyond, the sea was the great transportation artery which catered for the needs of the community up until modern times. The fine harbours of An tSeán Chéibh and Caladh Thadhg are an essential component of the fabric and ethos of the community. Nowadays the Conamara Regional Airport which is located at Baile na h-Abhann 10km eastwards gives a rapid connection to neighbours on Oileáin Árann.

6.3.2 Setting and Form

The built grain of the village is a fragmented series of buildings along the main street from the parish church south-westwards to the turn for Caladh Thadhg and along four minor roads leading away from the street.

Along the 1.5km length of the street there is no attractive congregational focus which would define a village centre and allow the community to establish ownership and shape the character and identity.

The gaps in the streetscape provide ample opportunity to establish buildings of contemporary design and mixed use but reflecting a Gaeltacht village ambiance, while also providing access to developable back lands for residential purposes. This particular approach found general acceptance at the public workshop.

The village possesses the range of buildings and services which would be expected to serve a community of its size in past times but which would be lacking in a community which has shown growth potential in recent census counts and which needs to encourage its younger generation to stay and build the Gaeltacht society of the future.

Apart from low density scattered housing, there are civic buildings comprising the church, primary and secondary schools, community hall and nursing home/health complex, and a range of commercial buildings including 2 hotels, post office, shops, bank, chemist, travel agency, hackney service, offices, restaurant and fast food outlets.

Most of the housing development in terms of its density, orientation and design differs very little from that in the rural hinterland, making it difficult to define a distinctive village ethos apart from the existing core adjoining the two t-junctions.

6.3.3 An Ghaeltacht

An Cheathrú Rua is situated in the heart of Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe and is the principal settlement containing the range of public, commercial and community services that are necessary for the sustainable development of the west Conamara Gaeltacht. It is also contained in the only Electoral Division in this part of the Gaeltacht which has experienced a rise in population between 1996 and 2006, modest though that rise is.

The village contains two Coláistí Samhraidh – Coláiste Chiaráin and Coláiste Cholomba which cater for up to 1300 pupils annually. Third level courses in Irish are administered by NUIG as outreach education in Áras Mháirtín Uí Chadhain whose aim is to strengthen and expand the language among the people of the Gaeltacht and the public institutions which serve the Gaeltacht.

6.3.4 Population and Demographics

An Cheathrú Rua is listed as a census “town” in C.S.O. documentation. It had a population of 242 in 1996, 629 in 2002 and 627 in 2006 and 814 in 2011 (a 25.8% increase in the last intercensal period) . As the census boundary does not coincide with the Planning boundary of most towns and tends to vary it can be difficult to track trends in population within democratically and legally established boundaries.



A consistent trend can be determined through the Electoral District of which the village forms part and which serves as the catchment for its services.

6.3.5 Local Economy

The village economy is typical of the mixture that sustains many villages of its size which serve as service centres to an extensive rural hinterland. It contains a number of small scale retail shops, public houses, food outlets, offices, a bank and some community service buildings. It also has assets which would not normally be located in villages of its size i.e. An Industrial Estate, Summer Colleges and Third Level Educational Facilities.

Údarás na Gaeltachta, which is the principal employment and community development agency in the Gaeltacht, has set out its objectives in its Strategic Development Plan 2005-2010. It signals the decline in traditional manufacturing industry and what may be a temporary recession in fish processing, but it is optimistic about growth opportunities in the services sector and particularly in cultural tourism. An Cheathrú Rua is in the pole position in regard to the latter but in order to optimise on every opportunity continual improvements are required to water and waste water services, electrical power supply, port improvements at Ceibh An tSruthain and Calaidh Thadhg, Regional Route upgrading and careful beach management.

Central to all of this is the maintenance of the character of the village and its setting in the sensitive scenic surroundings and the protection of the native language and culture of the community. This plan supports the principles of the Údarás Strategic Plan and its implementation.

6.3.6 Housing And Business Demands

The County Development Plan Core Strategy allocates a total increase of 105 additional persons in An Cheathrú Rua in the period of the County Development Plan 2009-2015 with a corresponding residential land requirement of 5.03 Ha (including a 50% over zoning) 2003-2009.

This does not include the mixed use development permissible at the village core and consequently there is more than adequate land available for the projected increase in population during the plan period and beyond.

The village core combined with the Eastáit Tionscail contains approx 12 hectares which will allow for commercial and industrial expansion on Greenfield sites or in refurbished premises.

6.3.7 Transportation and Traffic

The principal traffic routes serving An Cheathrú Rua are the R336 and the R343 which terminates at the village. Minor local roads, which are more or less un-realigned, link the village with the remainder of the peninsula.

Because of its strategic importance to all of the South Conamara Gaeltacht, Policy RT4 of the County Development Plan facilitates the development of a new strategic route along the Cois Farraige corridor from Galway to Scriob via Ros a Mhil.

In addition there is an annual allocation of funds from the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, which is matched from County funds, towards the improvement of Local Roads in the Gaeltacht.

Since there is no rail connection west of Galway City public transportation between the village and the city depends on public bus services. Bus Éireann run daily services between the city and the village with a quick turn around service back to Galway.

There are also a number of private bus operators who provide both a regular and an events charter service.

6.3.8 Tourism

The tourism industry is one of the most significant income generators in the West of Ireland, and particularly in Conamara. The combination of landscape quality, Atlantic coastline, unspoilt mountain terrain, and unique indigenous verbal and musical culture present a valuable social and economic asset.

The “niche” markets of hill walking and leisure cycling brought in an estimate 70 million Euros to the West of Ireland, a significant portion of which must have come to Conamara.

While there is a good mixture of tourist accommodation in the village, as listed in the Gael Saoire website, there is ample opportunity to market the attractions of the An Cromptán Area and its unique product. There is also the necessity of providing facilities such as a leisure centre/sports hall, swimming pool, cultural theatre/cinema and marine centre to capitalise on the growth in quality year-round tourism. It is recognised that Údarás through its subsidiary Gael Saoire are developing this potential.

6.3.9 Services and Facilities

The village has a waste water collection and treatment system which discharges foul sewage and surface water to a sea outfall.

Network improvements have been carried out. At present, site options for an Integrated Constructed Wetland is being investigated with a view to providing new treatment and disposal facilities for effluent arising in the area.

All new development would be required, if permitted, to provide on site treatment and disposal of effluent in accordance with relevant EPA standards and to make provision for connection to a new public network when available.

The present water supply to the village is abstracted from Loch An Mhuilinn and chlorinated. Construction work on a new Casla Regional Water Supply Scheme to serve a substantial regional including An Cheathrú Rua, is expected to commence in 2012. This scheme provides for a new water source and treatment works and a new trunk main to serve An Cheathrú Rua. This will secure the provision of a potable water supply to the village for the foreseeable future and allow the potential of Loch An Mhuilinn as a leisure area to be exported.

The two fishing ports adjoining the village require improvements to access parking and berthage, but are vital to the local economy. The potential to develop a marina at Céibh An tSrutháin was emphasised at the public consultation. This would be supported by the Study on Marine based tourism which pointed out an existing deficiency along the west coast.

The Blue Flagged coral strand is a prime tourism asset as well as being an attractive community **leisure area**. It's unspoiled and un-intruded environs should be protected. Other small local beaches have the potential to be sensitively accessed and utilised.

Facilities are scarce for the various sports bodies, reliance being on the availability of Pairc An Chathánaigh which is community owned. Good quality playing pitches with perimeter running/cycling/walking paths are required to serve a growing community.

Domestic waste collection is via a private contractor who hauls the disposable waste to the County Landfill at Ballinasloe. Approval was received in September 2012 to construct a waste recycling centre at Carna and it is expected that construction will commence during the lifetime of the Plan.

Electrical power to the area is taken from the 38kv line which leads westwards from Galway City to serve all of Conamara. A new 110kv power line was granted by An Bord Pleanála and is under construction. This improved electrical supply is necessary to ensure the social and economic progress of the Conamara community.

6.3.10 Built and Natural Environment

Description

The village has developed in a predominantly linear fashion along the R343. The village layout is open along the roadways. There are fine examples of early 20th century cottages and two storey farmhouses, built of local stone, scattered throughout the area. There is no uniform plot size in the village. Plot sizes become more regular in more recent development. (See Map No. 6.2).

Roofs

In the village there is a mix of hipped and double pitch roofs. On the double pitch roofs slate is the predominant roof covering. The natural stone slate in many cases has been replaced by artificial slate or other less appropriate materials. On the hip roofs which date from the mid 20th century the predominant roof material is tile. A concrete barge is common on double pitch roofs enabling the roof to withstand the harsher windier weather conditions experienced along the western sea board.

Window and Door Openings

In most buildings in the village, the windows are vertically aligned. Many buildings have had their timber sliding sash windows replaced with outward opening UPVC or timber windows; there are few houses which have retained their original window fittings.

External Finish

The predominant external finish is render over rubble stone construction. This comes in a variety of types and styles including wet dash, nap plaster or a ruled and lined render to imitate ashlar stone. Traditionally these would have been lime based renders. Today the tendency is to replace the softer and subtler finishes with harder cement based renders with modern synthetic paint systems. The use of colour should be carefully considered to harmonise with the streetscape as a whole.

Public Realm

The traditional stone walls in and around the village of An Cheathrú Rua contribute significantly to the landscape of the area. Some overhead lines in the village should be placed underground when possible. In the immediate hinterland of the village the area is characterised by rocky outcrops, high granite walls, and narrow winding roadways forming a complex landscape produced by the interaction of the land and its inhabitants.



Statement of Significance

The development of An Cheathrú Rua is reflected in its buildings. The tower of the early 19th church is incorporated into the large fine church which replaced it a century later. The size and **quality of St. Mac Dara's schoolhouse, dated 1893, and the large National School, dated 1955** demonstrate the size of the hinterland which the village serves. These buildings are on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

Natural Environment

There are no EU environmental designations nor any Natural Heritage Areas within the Plan boundary. Cill Chiaráin Bay SAC is approx 1km to the northwest.

The County Development Plan describes the County's landscapes in terms of their character, value and sensitivity. An Cheathrú Rua is located in character area No. 17 which has a high sensitivity rating. The landscape in which the village is set is rolling lowland with the unique mixture of granite rock outcrop, shallow peat soils and numerous small lakes. The rocky indented coastline of the peninsula has a unique visual quality because of its unspoilt nature and the effect of ever-changing lighting modes on rock and water and peat.

The three principal water bodies within or bounding the village are Loch An Mhuillin, Loch Scailpdonail and the small stream that runs through its centre. These are important amenity and environmental assets to be protected and sensitively developed as the village continues to grow.

While the built environment will continue to grow within the village boundary it should be recognised, in accordance with the relevant policies and objectives of the County Development Plan, that nature conservation is not confined to designated sites and that there is a need to conserve the biological diversity of the County. This should warrant attention if any areas of biological sensitivity are found in the plan area.

A survey carried out during early Winter 2006 indicated the following habitats.

Lowland Blanket Bog	(PB3)
Wet Heath	(HH3)
Exposed Siliceous Rock	(ER1)
Dense Bracken	(HD1)
Scrub	(WS1)
Dry-humid acid grassland	(GS3)
Improved grassland	(GA1)
Dry meadows and grassy verges	(GS2)
Wet grassland	(GS4)
Marsh	(GM1)
Reed and large sedge swamps	(FS1)
Mixed broadleaved/conifer woodland	(WD2)
Riparian woodland	(WN5)
Ornamental/non native shrub	(WS3)
Treelines	(WL2)
Siliceous scree and loose rock	(ED3)
Drainage ditches	(FW4)
Depositing/lowland rivers	(FW2)
Eutrophic lakes	(FL5)



Horticultural land	(BC2)
Stone walls and other stonework	(BL1)
Buildings and artificial surfaces, Gardens and amenity grasslands, Spoilt and bare ground	(BL3), (GA2), (ED2)

See Map No. 6.4, Appendix 1. There are objectives in this plan to carry out further surveys and assessments so as to inform planning decisions on development proposals.

6.4 Development Strategy

Promote An Cheathrú Rua's role as the principal village of the Conamara Gaeltacht with a distinctive oral and written tradition, where the community will be enabled to maintain their culture and where the visitor will be able to experience the culture in a welcoming environment. Encourage the growth of the village in accordance with the general provisions of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan and at a rate which will not adversely affect its character but which will help to provide the range of public and private services necessary for its role as a service hub for the West Conamara Gaeltacht.

The Core Strategy in the Galway County Development indicates that An Cheathrú Rua has been assigned a population growth target of 105 persons by 2015 with a housing land requirement of 3.36ha, or 5.03ha with 50% over-zoning, in order to accommodate residential development over the Plan period. The Core Strategy notes that there is 37.99ha of undeveloped residential zoned land in the An Cheathrú Rua plan area.

The residential lands have accordingly been phased in a sequential manner in order to comply with the provisions of the Core Strategy. Phase 1 lands of 5ha have been identified for short to medium term growth in suitable locations that are serviced and accessible, that avoid significant environmental, landscape and flood risk sensitivities and that have the potential to make a contribution to the achievement of key objectives in the LAP. The phasing as applied accordingly allows for some flexibility, as detailed in the policies and objectives of the Plan.

An area of 7 hectares is also zoned for new industry – See Map No. 6.1 and Indicative Development Guide – Appendix 1.

Support and guide the consolidation of development along the main street, and the provision of multi-use buildings there on, to cater for commercial, residential and tourism requirements. Housing development away from the main street should generally conform to the Clustered Housing Design Guidelines of the Planning Authority and should avoid suburban type layouts.

Ensure the provision of a village focus area which will be designed to reflect the local terrain and to be an attractive, safe and acceptable domain.

Support the provision of off-street car parking, location with bus stop facilities and visitors guidance information.

Continue the improvement of infrastructure such as water supply, waste water facilities, road linkages Regional and Local, and community services such as health, fire fighting, and telecommunications.

Support the Library service as a source of life long education, information and entertainment.

Support the 3rd level outreach service of NUIG at Áras Mháirtín Ui Chadhain.

Encourage the sensitive development of the local harbours and beaches as the commercial and amenity assets of the village and its hinterland.

Have regard to the setting of the village by restricting unnecessary or unsuitably designed buildings outside the village plan boundary.

6.5 Policies and Specific Objectives

This plan supports the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan. The policies and objectives of this plan are in some cases additional to those in the County Plan, and are specifically relevant to the development of An Cheathrú Rua. They relate to the following categories.

- An Gaeltacht
- Residential Areas
- Local Economy
- Public Infrastructure
- Recreation and Amenity
- Built and Natural Heritage

6.5.1 An Gaeltacht

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to protect the status of An Cheathrú Rua as a Gaeltacht Village and to resist any development which would adversely affect the language and culture of the community.

Policies:

It is the Policy of the Planning Authority:

- P.G. 1** To require the submission of a Language Impact Statement for any development which it considers will adversely affect the Irish language as a community language.
- P.G. 2** To support the cultural, community and employment initiatives of Údarás na Gaeltachta and local organisations.
- P.G. 3** To require that signage be predominantly in the Irish language with internationally recognised symbols.
- P.G. 4** To encourage and promote service delivery in the Irish language by Public Bodies.
- P.G. 5** To support the development of third level outreach education in Irish by NUIG.
- P.G. 6** To assist the local community in the preservation and promotion of the Irish language and culture in the village.



- P.G. 7** To require all new housing clusters to be named in Irish.
- P.G. 8** To require all new developments, other than those infilling and consolidating the main street frontage, to have regard to existing field patterns, boundary characteristics, established boreens and the general ruggedness of the terrain.

Specific Objectives

- O.G. 1** Provide planning and other Local Authority services in Irish at the Cheathrú Rua County Council Office.
- O.G. 2** An effective system to be put in place through which the various aspects of the Gaeltacht ethos can be assessed and protected as part of the planning process.
- O.G. 3** Ensure that all contractors employed by the County Council in the Gaeltacht will have regard to the culture in which they work.

6.5.2 Residential Areas

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to facilitate and participate in the development of good quality attractive housing to meet the needs of An Cheathrú Rua and its rural hinterland.

Policies:

It is the policy of the Planning Authority:

- P.R.A. 1** To ensure that there is a sufficient supply of serviced land for the housing needs of the local community.
- P.R.A. 2** To permit a rate of housing development which is appropriate to the size and cultural identity of the village.
- P.R.A. 3** To provide for group house layouts that are based on the clustered system and avoid suburban styles.
- P.R.A. 4** To encourage the development of a consolidated main streetscape by infilling with buildings of mixed commercial/residential use, which respect the scale and character of the area.
- P.R.A. 5** To ensure the implementation of the County Housing Strategy in Gaeltacht areas including the provision of an element of social and affordable houses.
- P.R.A. 6** To co-ordinate the provision of road, cycle and pedestrian networks and other services to new residential areas.
- P.R.A. 7** To have regard to the DOEHLG publication "Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas", and the "Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Development" as adopted by Galway County Council.
- P.R.A. 8** To encourage orderly, sequential and phased residential development in accordance with the land use management and zoning provisions set out in this Local Area Plan. This shall include a positive presumption in favour of the sequential development of suitably serviced Residential (Phase 1) lands in order to align the Local Area Plan with the Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy in the Galway County Development Plan, subject to compliance with the policies and

objectives in this Local Area Plan and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. There will be a general presumption against residential development on lands zoned Residential (Phase 2) within the lifetime of the Local Area Plan, subject to the exceptions provided for under Objective O.R.A. 5.

Specific Objectives

O.R.A. 1 Provide a range of housing and other residential accommodation to modern standards of construction and energy conservation but having regard to the character of the village and to the indigenous building characteristics of this part of Conamara.

O.R.A. 2 Reserve access points to developable backland areas as indicated on Map No. 6.2 or as otherwise agreed with developers.

O.R.A. 3 Improve the residential ambiance of the village by improving road pavements, footpaths, public lighting and street furniture.

O.R.A. 4 Provide a housing scheme for the elderly.

O.R.A. 5 Support the residential development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the Local Area 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 the town. Residential (Phase 2) lands are generally not developable within the lifetime of this Plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority within the lifetime of this Local Area Plan subject to a suitable case being made for the proposal:

- a) Single house developments for family members on family owned lands.
- b) Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area.
- c) Where it is apparent that 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.

The above exceptions will be subject to compliance with the Core Strategy in the Galway County Development Plan, the policies and objectives in this Local Area Plan, the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and to meeting normal planning, access and servicing requirements. Developments will only be permitted where a substantiated 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 the town.

O.R.A. 6 Encourage the development of sustainable residential communities through the promotion of innovative, high quality building design and appropriate layouts, that prioritise walking, cycling and public transport options and provide for a high level of permeability, accessibility and connectivity to the existing built environment, services and facilities. In this regard, future residential development proposals will be in accordance with the principles set out in the DEHLG document *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009* and

its companion document *Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide for Planning Authorities 2009* (or any updated/superseding documents).

6.5.3 Local Economy

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to facilitate the provision of jobs and services, in partnership with Údarás na Gaeltachta, having particular regard to culture, tourism, community services and education.

Policies:

It is the Policy of the Planning Authority:

- P.L.E. 1** To develop An Cheathrú Rua as the service hub for the west Conamara Gaeltacht.
- P.L.E. 2** To assist Údarás na Gaeltachta in the implementation of its strategic Development Plan.
- P.L.E. 3** To ensure that sufficient serviced land is available to cater for new enterprise and industry.
- P.L.E. 4** To facilitate the renovation or expansion of existing businesses consistent with the protection of residential amenities, public health and traffic safety.
- P.L.E. 5** To encourage retail businesses to locate along the main street while making provision for off-street parking.
- P.L.E. 6** To co-operate with Ireland West Tourism and Údarás na Gaeltachta in developing the indigenous tourism products such as ethnic culture, cycling and walking. Cycling and walking routes will be developed within and adjacent to Natura 2000 sites only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of the sites as defined by their conservation objectives.
- P.L.E. 7** To support the **recommendations of "Water Based Tourism-A Strategic Vision for Galway, April 2002"**. All projects and developments arising from the implementation of this strategy shall adhere to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Specific Objectives

- O.L.E. 1** Undertake a programme of village improvement measures in consultation with the local community and Údarás na Gaeltachta.
- O.L.E. 2** Investigate the provision of a tourism information site and singularly designed directional signposting to plans of interest.

6.5.4 Public Infrastructure

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to continue to improve the quality of the public infrastructure in its remit and to facilitate other service providers in their delivery of service to the community.

Policies:

It is the Policy of the Planning Authority:

- P.P.I. 1** To continue the multi-annual programme of road improvement of Regional and Local Routes which lead to and serve the village. All works in relation to road improvement will be subject to assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- P.P.I. 2** To promote the use of public transport and support the improvement of bus services to the village in keeping with its continual growth.
- P.P.I. 3** To promote pedestrian and cycling routes as a convenient healthy and safe method of movement within and around the village.
- P.P.I. 4** To require new development to provide adequate off-street parking in order to avoid obstruction of public roads and footpaths. Underground parking may be provided where feasible.
- P.P.I. 5** To ensure that new developments provide parking and ease of access for disabled drivers and pedestrians.
- P.P.I. 6** To deliver improved water supply and waste water treatment services in accordance with the County Councils "Water Services – Assessment of Needs".
- P.P.I. 7** To require new developments to have adequate surface water collection and disposal.
- P.P.I. 8** To support the provision of improved electrical supply to the village and surrounding area.
- P.P.I. 9** To support the delivery of Broadband communication to the village and surrounding area.
- P.P.I. 10** To promote improved public performance in waste management by provision of waste facilities and information on the principles of reduction, re-use and recycling, including composting of waste.
- P.P.I. 11** To use the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in order to improve the appearance of the village and provide for the sustainable re-use of serviced land.

Specific Objectives

- O.P.I. 1** Prepare a Traffic Management Plan for the Village.
- O.P.I. 2** Identify and secure a public car parking area including Bus Stop facilities off the Main Street.
- O.P.I. 3** Establish the need for Fire Brigade facilities in the village.
- O.P.I. 4** Continue the provision of footpaths in the village, including a connection with Páirc Uí Chathánaigh.
- O.P.I. 5** Provide a range of re-cycling facilities to meet the needs of a growing community.
- O.P.I. 6** Initiate a programme of Removal of Derelict Sites.



6.5.5 Recreation and Amenity

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to ensure that there is adequate provision for the recreational needs of the community by providing or assisting in the provision of facilities, and protecting and conserving those in existence.

Policies:

It is the policy of the Planning Authority:

- P.R.C. 1** To ensure that sufficient lands are available to meet the recreational and amenity requirements of the community, and to protect those lands from inappropriate development.
- P.R.C. 2** To restrict development on recreational and amenity land to that which is directly related to its leisure use.
- P.R.C. 3** To resist the loss of existing public or private recreational open space unless alternative facilities are provided which merit relocation.
- P.R.C. 4** To confine games and recreational activities that generates elevated noise levels to locations that avoid disturbance to residents.
- P.R.C. 5** To ensure that highly active recreational activities do not adversely affect the passive enjoyment of sites and monuments or sensitive natural habitats.
- P.R.C. 6** To support sporting bodies and local recreational groups.
- P.R.C. 7** To have regard to distinctive landscape characteristics in which the village is set, including field shapes and boundaries, scenic views, groups of trees, minor road profiles.
- P.R.C. 8** To encourage and promote the development of walking routes only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of Natura 2000 sites as defined by their conservation objectives.
- P.R.C. 9** To support the indigenous maritime traditions of the area and the potential of its harbours and beaches to provide distinctive and sustainable recreational opportunities only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of Natura 2000 sites as defined by their conservation objectives.

Specific Objectives

- O.R.C. 1** Identify and develop a site which will act as a focal point for the village and which will form an attractive and safe congregational point which the community will adopt as their own space.
- O.R.C. 2** Initiate a system of walking routes within the village and linking it with the development of a coastal walk along the peninsula. Proposed walking routes will be subject to a route selection process, which will take cognisance of site-specific circumstances including consideration of ecological sensitivity. Routes will be developed within and adjacent to Natura 2000 sites only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of the sites as defined by their conservation objectives.

O.R.C. 3 Provide and equip an outdoor children's play area.

O.R.C. 4 Protect the existing village stream and develop its amenity potential.

6.5.6 Built and Natural Heritage

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to preserve and protect buildings which are included in the Record of Protected Structures and other local buildings and structures deemed to be significant. It also aims to safeguard local habitats and areas of ecological sensitivity.

Policies:

It is the policy of the Planning Authority:

P.B.E. 1 To protect buildings of special importance as indicated in the Record of Protected Structures.

P.B.E. 2 To respect the building traditions and architectural styles indigenous to the village and this area of Conamara.

P.B.E. 3 To promote good quality contemporary design which reflects the character and cultural context of An Cheathrú Rua.

P.B.E. 4 To encourage multiple use of existing and proposed buildings along the main street so as to encourage day long activity and interest.

P.B.E. 5 To encourage the re-use of vacant or underused properties and the regeneration of development on derelict sites.

P.B.E. 6 To maintain burial grounds in a fitting condition.

P.B.E. 7 To protect and preserve archaeological sites which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places and any subsequent site discovered to be of significance.

P.B.E. 8 To consult the DoECLG in relation to developments adjoining archaeological sites or protected structures.

P.B.E. 9 To promote knowledge and understanding of and pride in the natural heritage of the village and its surroundings.

P.B.E. 10 To protect any sites which are found to be ecologically sensitive.

P.B.E. 11 To conserve ecological corridors within the village and linking to the adjoining countryside.

P.B.E. 12 To protect and maintain existing streams, lakes and other wetland sites.

P.B.E. 13 To protect existing healthy trees and hedgerow and require suitable and appropriate planting schemes to be provided in development schemes.

Specific Objectives

O.B.E. 1 Establish a register of traditional building and craft skills as an important public record.

- O.B.E. 2** All advertising signage should as a general rule be either painted on the fascia of the building or on to a signboard which is fixed to the fascia. The language should be predominantly in Irish and the signboard and lettering should be in scale, colour and context with the building itself and its neighbours.
- O.B.E. 3** Street furniture should reflect the character of the area in its design, colouring and location. Synthetic light weight material should in general be avoided.
- O.B.E. 4** Satellite dishes should not be placed on the front elevation or roof line of the building.
- O.B.E. 5** Carry out an ecological assessment of the area so as to establish its status, inform planning decisions and protect natural heritage.
- O.B.E. 6** Survey and map existing hedgerows and tree growth so as to establish and maintain wildlife corridors.
- O.B.E. 7** Examine the environmental status and leisure potential of Loch An Mhuillin when the new waste water treatment system is commissioned.
- O.B.E. 8** Carry out an assessment of the area zoned for amenity uses surrounding Loch Scailp Dhónail so as to determine the optimal balance between its use for active and passive recreation.

6.5.7 Flood Risk Management

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to ensure that flood risk is managed in accordance with the provisions of the DEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document).

Policies:

It is the policy of the Planning Authority:

- P.F.R.C. 1** 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 *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). Galway County Council will also take account of the *Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans (CFRAMs)*, *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)* and *County Galway Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2012* and any recommendations and outputs arising from same that relate to or impact on the An Cheathrú Rua Plan Area.

Specific Objectives:

- O.F.R.C. 1** Ensure the implementation of the DEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document) in relation to flood risk management within the Plan Area. This will include the following:
- a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated on **Map 6.5**, including fluvial, coastal/tidal, pluvial and groundwater flooding, and any other flood risk areas that may be identified during the period of the Plan or in relation to a planning application.

- 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 *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) Where certain measures proposed to mitigate or manage the risk of flooding associated with new developments are likely to result in significant effects to the environment or European sites downstream, such measures will undergo environmental assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment, as appropriate.

O.F.R.C. 2 Protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B, as indicated on **Map 6.5**, from inappropriate development and direct developments/ land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any superseding document). 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 and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*.



SECTION SEVEN: AN SPIDÉAL VILLAGE

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Background

An Spidéal Village Plan was prepared as part of Plean Ceantar Áitiúil na Gaeltachta under Section 18 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Because of its strategic location in the Gaeltacht and because of the development pressures arising from the growth of Galway City it was considered appropriate by the Planning Authority to draw up a plan for this established village settlement.

The Act requires that a local area plan be consistent with the Core Strategy and objectives of the County Development Plan. The County Plan is the parent document which sets out the strategic framework within which the objectives of the local area plan are formulated.

An Spidéal Village Plan is therefore the legal instrument which will guide and oversee development in the village for the duration of the plan period.

The Plan sets out the policies and specific objectives that will guide the actions of the County Council in its statutory roll as provider of physical infrastructure, as protector of the environment and in its emerging role as facilitator of social, cultural and economic development including the protection of the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Gaeltacht. It consists of a written statement and accompanying maps.

In summary, the Plan seeks to shape the development of An Spidéal over a period of six years. It attempts to ensure that, as far as is possible, development is co-ordinated so that:

- The Irish language and culture of the village are protected, promoted, developed.
- There is enough developable land available to meet foreseeable need for homes, jobs and recreational activity over the Plan period.
- The most efficient use is made of the available infrastructure of roads, water supply, effluent treatment and community facilities.
- Further public infrastructural improvements are carried out.
- The environmental heritage of the area both natural and built is protected.

7.1.2 Plan Area

The area to which the Plan relates is the area within the boundary as indicated in Map No. 7.1, Appendix 1.

7.1.3 Plan Structure

The following sections of the Plan deal with the present local context and set out the various strategies, policies, objectives and control measures to achieve a vision for An Spidéal which emerged for the public consultation process and which is based on the principles of proper Planning and Sustainable Development.

Section 7.2 – Strategic Context: provides the context within which the Plan is set.

Section 7.3 – Local Context and Analysis: presents a brief statement on the present context of An Spidéal, and outlines a vision for its future and the principles which will guide the Plan.

Section 7.4 – Development Strategy: presents the development strategy for the village set within the context of the County Development Plan and the Local Area Plan for the Gaeltacht.

Section 7.5 – Heritage and Conservation: provides an introduction to the Record of Protected Structures and to the village’s natural assets.

Section 7.6 - Policies and Specific Objectives: details policy statements under various sectoral headings with associated specific objectives which the Council will strive to achieve within the lifetime of the Plan. These objectives relate to land use zoning and specific objectives maps, which are attached to the Plan.

Section 7.7 – Specific Design Guidelines: provides a guideline on specific land based areas and the type of development which the Council aspires to locate in the village.

Section 7.8 – Development Control Standards: details the standards which will be required of prospective developments in the village for the period of the Plan.

7.1.4 Consultation

A number of public consultations have taken place in recent years, and, in particular a public workshop was held on 24th April 2006. Arising from these and from some written submissions received, the following issues and opinions emerged.

- Importance of preserving and promoting the Irish Language and associated cultural heritage.
- Maintenance of village identity and resistance of development pressures from City growth.
- Provision of modern waste water treatment.
- Development of coastal/harbour zone, including blue flag beach status, for recreational and amenity use.
- Implementation of traffic management plan.
- Support for new R336 with interconnections with the village.
- Development of smaller clustered modes of housing development and resistance of suburban type design and layout.
- Provision of affordable housing sites for local demand.
- Facilitation of broadband communication.
- Development of Coláiste Chonnacht as the prime location of community and sporting facilities.
- Provision of recreation and amenity facilities at the village centre.

7.2 Strategic Context

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the mechanism for the preparation of local area plans. There is however an existing hierarchy and network of plans and strategies produced by state and semi-state agencies and other recognised organisations with which the Plan must be consistent. The Planning Authority will seek to work in partnership with these various agencies and in particular in this case with Udarás na Gaeltachta. The following outlines the strategic context within which the Plan is set and which will guide the development

of An Spidéal.

- National Development Plan 2007-2013.
- National Spatial Strategy.
- Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland 1997.
- Ensuring the Future – A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland 1999.
- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC).
- West Regional Authority, Planning Guidelines
- Galway County Development Plan.
- Galway County Strategy 2002-2012
- Galway Transportation and Planning Study.
- Beartas Forbartha an Údaráis 2005-2010.
- County Galway Housing Strategy.
- Border Midland West Operational Programme 2000.
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009
- Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- The Wildlife Act 2000.

7.3 Local Context and Analysis

This section contains a summary of the context and issues surrounding the further development of the village. It outlines under the following headings the Council's strategy which provides the foundations for the future development of An Spidéal.

- Location.
- Setting and Form.
- An Gaeltacht.
- Population and Demographics.
- Potential Housing Demand.
- Supply of Development.
- Local Economy.
- Transportation and Traffic Management.
- Public Transportation.
- Tourism.
- Services.
- Education and Community Facilities.
- Amenity and Recreation.
- Land Ecology and Landscape.

7.3.1 Location

An Spidéal lies some 18 kilometers west of Galway City in the Conamara Gaeltacht. Straddling the R336 regional route it is bounded to the north by a rugged landscape of blanket peat overlying granite bedrock and to the south by Galway Bay.

The regional route R336, which links Galway City to Leenane in the northwest of Conamara is the main transportation artery serving An Spidéal, Cois Fharráige and South Conamara. It passes through the village centre and runs parallel to the coastline continuing westwards to Indreabhán, Conamara Airport and T.G.4. The village is also served by a third class road which connects it

directly with Maigh Cuillin and the N59 national secondary route.

There are two working harbours in the village, the tSean Chéibh and an Chéibh Nua and two popular public beaches, Trá na mBan, Trá na Ceibhe which both hold Blue Flag status. Colaiste Chonnacht which is approx 700 meters east of the village boundary is the most significant location of the **community's recreation and amenity activities as well as being the summer college** for Irish language learning.

The seaside location of the village, its amenities, its culture and its proximity to the City makes it an attractive tourism venue as evidenced by the annual growth of summer visitors.

7.3.2 Setting and Form

Although well within the sphere of influence of the city, An Spidéal retains its own identity and performs an important role as a gateway to the Conamara Gaeltacht and as a local service centre in the **County Plan's Settlement Strategy**. **Set in the landscape typical of the Connemara** terrain, the location of An Spidéal Demesne on the western side of the village, containing Spidéal House and associated woodland, provides an important environmental and visual asset to the village.

The village has developed beside two neighbouring harbours reflecting the importance of the sea to the coastal community both as a generator of local employment and also as a recreational amenity. Despite this the village has tended to face inward, away from the coast and only in recent times is there evidence of a re-awakening of its amenity and tourism potential.

The village centre is at the crossroads of the R336 and the Maigh Cuillin Road and contains a good range of retail and commercial services with some residential mix. The eastern edge of the village gradually merges with the almost continuous strip of single rural houses facing southwards and seawards. The eastern edge is more clearly defined by an Spidéal Demesne and the Owenboliska River.

The R336 forms the main street and runs the length of the village in an east/west direction. Buildings lining the Main Street vary in style, size and age with the predominant use at ground floor level being commercial. Other uses along the street frontage include Cill Einde, Scoil Mhuire, the Court House/Library and Colaiste an Linbh Iosa. Generally buildings seem to be in good condition.

Street furniture include streetlights, litter bins and telephone kiosks, with an attractive cast-iron pump set into a granite wall providing a pleasant feature in the streetscape.

The road to an tSean Chéibh is relatively undeveloped, but contains significant heritage locations in an tSean Reilig and Cill Éinde. The old national school is now vacant and its location provides significant development potential for community or tourism use. The road north of the village leading to Maigh Cuillin contains a mix of traditional buildings, some of which have been refurbished and re-used. Set back from the road it also contains modern tele-film services and a permanent television production set.

7.3.3 An Gaeltacht

An Spidéal is located within Gaeltacht an Gaillimhe and is recognised as the gateway to the South Conamara Gaeltacht. A key objective of Government policy is to promote the social, physical and economic development of Gaeltacht areas and to reverse the decline in the use of Irish as the

principal means of communication. The primary responsibility devolves to the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs which seeks to achieve its objectives through its own programmes and schemes and those of the bodies under its aegis. Údarás na Gaeltachta is charged with developing the economy of the Gaeltacht with the aim of preserving and enriching Irish as the principal language of the Gaeltacht. It has produced a Strategic Development Plan for 2005-2010. The County Council in its remit under the Planning and Development Act 2000 is charged with the protecting of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht including the promoting of Irish as the community language.

7.3.4 Population and Demographics

Due to the dispersed pattern of households, the Central Statistic Office did not define An Spidéal as a Census “town” until 2002. In that years census it listed the “town’s” population as 190. The census boundary was at variance with the establish planning boundary of the village and as part of the input to the County Development Plan’s Settlement Strategy a household count was carried out in the aggregated townlands which contain the village. This gave a house count of 320 which at an average occupancy of 3.2 suggested a population in 2001 of 1024 persons.

A more accurate and relevant trend of population and households in the village and its immediate catchment can be gleaned from the census figures for the Electoral District of An Spidéal ED.

This is set out in **Table 7.3.1**.

Table 7.3.1							
Trends in Population and Households 1986-2002							
	1991	1996	2002	2006	91-96	96-02	02-06
Population	1196	1166	1253	1357	-2.5%	+7.4%	+8.3%
Households	311	323	401		+ 4%	+24%	
Average Household Size	3.8	3.6	3.1				

Within the Galway Core Strategy hierarchy, An Spidéal is designated as a Village (Other) which is a provider of a limited range of services to its own local hinterland. Service provision at this level of population usually includes a range of retail, educational and community services but limited financial, health and professional services.

7.3.5 Potential Housing Demand

Future demand for housing is a function of the rate of population increase (or decrease), the change in average household size and a range of complex economic factors. Assuming the continuation of economic trends for the duration of the plan the demand for housing is likely to increase and, even at a modest population growth, the average occupancy is likely to decrease.

The Core Strategy recognises the increase in demand for housing which has arisen from the unexpected increase in population.

7.3.6 Supply of Development Land

The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan identifies the need for 1.19 Hectares of Residential lands Phase 1 for the period up to 2015. This includes a 50% overzoning. The remaining residential lands are zoned for Phase 2 – not generally developable during the lifetime of the Plan. In addition to the mixed zoning of the village centre, can cater for additional



residential units.

There are approx. 7 hectares zoned for industrial purposes and this is deemed to be adequate for a measured growth appropriate to the village – See Map No. 7.1, Appendix 1.

7.3.7 Local Economy

The local economy of An Spidéal supports a number and variety of jobs across a wide range of sectors. Included in the employment base are the craft centre, tourist accommodation, bars, restaurants, general food stores, boutique, banking, a significant media campus and music studio all located within the plan boundary.

Other sources of local employment include the industrial estate east of the village and Coláiste Chonnacht during the summer months. The proximity of Galway City provides commutable access to a variety of jobs.

The main driving force behind much of the employment in the area is Údarás na Gaeltachta, many of whose industrial estates are located along the South Conamara Coast, including An Spidéal and its environs.

This plan supports the objectives of an tÚdarás as set out in its Strategic Development Plan 2005-2010. Its role in promoting economic social and cultural development in the Gaeltacht is central to the remit which the Planning Authority carries from the Planning and Development Act 2000 i.e. “the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht”.

In regard to An Spidéal, the underpinning of its employment base and the sensitive improvement of its services and infrastructure is necessary if it is to retain and develop its identity and attractiveness and avoid becoming a dormer facilitation for the City.

7.3.8 Roads and Traffic Management

The R336 regional route which runs east to west through the heart of the village is the principle traffic artery serving the social and commercial needs of South Connemara. It serves a population of approx. 19,000 people and a much greater equivalent population in the summer **tourism and Irish college’s season**. The **daily traffic volume** west of An Spidéal is approx. 6,000 vehicles in 2007. There has been a history of serious traffic congestion at the village centre for many years due to unrestricted and careless parking despite underused public car parking space being available at an tSeán Céibh. As a consequence a traffic management plan for the village was drawn up and has recently been adopted by the County Council.

Its Principal measures are:

- Provision and enforcement of parking restrictions
- Creation of loading bay locations
- Relocation of bus stops

Objective RT4 of the County Development Plan seeks to facilitate the development of a new strategic route along the Cois Fharráige corridor from Galway to Scriob via Ros an Mhíl.

7.3.9 Public Transportation

As there is no rail connection west of the city public transportation is dependent on public and private buses. The Galway to Leitir Mealláin bus service passes through An Spidéal.



Aer Árann operates a shuttle bus service between the city and the Airport at Baile na h-Abhann. The service varies, depending on the passenger demands and weather conditions. There are also other private buses serving the ferries and local hackney services.

7.3.10 Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in the economy of the village and its hinterland. It benefits from its multistranded attractions, its scenic landscapes, seaside location, proximity to city amenities and its cultural distinctiveness.

Fáilte Irelands report "Tourism Facts 2004" reveal a sum of 5.1 billion Euros as being the value of Irelands Tourism Industry for that year. Of this total approx. 500 million Euros was spent in Galway City and County.

The potential for An Spidéal to build on its attractiveness while protecting the tourism product is evident and Udarás with its subsidiary GaelSaoire have undertaken a strategic campaign to develop a high quality tourism product with a Gaeltacht brand.

7.3.11 Services

The source of the water supply to the village is Both Loiscithe Lough. The water scheme provides a good quality supply to the village and an extensive surrounding area, and because of the continuing growth in population of the area it will be necessary to obtain a new abstraction order relating to the source.

The existing sewerage scheme consists of a small collection system with a sea outfall discharging untreated sewage in the vicinity of a public bathing areas. Trá na mBan and Trá na Céibhe both hold Blue Flag status. An upgrading of the scheme including waste water treatment and upgrading and extension of the collection system to provide for a population equivalent of 2,312 is at planning stage and is included in the Councils Water Services Assessment of needs and in the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Water Services Programme 2005-2007.

Surface water for the village is collected in a surface water sewer system and is discharged to sea. Any future developments will be required to provide a silt trap and oil interceptor prior to discharge.

General waste and refuse is collected by a licensed waste company and the process is governed by the Connacht Waste Management Plan and any successor to same which is based on the principles of minimisation, recycling and composting. A bring-bank is located at the village centre and residential waste goes to the County Landfill which is in the Ballinasloe Town Councils Jurisdiction.

7.3.12 Community facilities

Scoil Éinde primary school and Coláiste Chroi Mhuire post primary school are located within the plan area.

There are a range of community facilities, some of which co-locate with each other. The community aspires to extending and upgrading the facilities and in particular developing the potential of the Coláiste Chonnacht site.

Table 7.3.2 Community Facilities	
Primary School – Scoil Éinne	Recycling Facilities
Post Primary School – Coláiste Chroí Mhuire	Catholic Church – Cill Éinde
Garda Station	Library/Court
Post Office	Medical Centre
	Coláiste Chonnacht
Playing Pitches Seashore Walk	Public Toilets
	Picnic Area

7.3.13 Recreation and Amenity

A range of amenity and recreational facilities are available in the village and its immediate surroundings. It has the advantage of having two fine accessible beaches, one on each side of its harbour. Trá na mBan to the east has lost its blue flag status but should be able to regain it when the waste water treatment plant is operational. Trá na Ceibhe aspires to a Blue Flag. There is a coastal amenity trail being developed between An tSean Chéibh and the Western Beach and Quay area.

Coláiste Chonnacht is located 700 meters east of the village but is an essential ingredient in community affairs; it serves as an Irish College in Summer Months, and accommodates facilities such as a crèche, art classes gaelacadamh, drama and meeting rooms at other times of the year. Planning Permission has also been granted for child care facilities on site. The G.A.A. pitches are along its frontage and have successfully hosted Comórtas Peile an Gaeltachta. Its potential to cater for a wider range of community pursuits and pastimes is significant.

7.3.14 Ecology and Landscape

An Spidéal is set in the rugged Conamara countryside linking and serving the intensive coastal strip of development that was regarded as a congested district in the late nineteenth century. The rural hinterland derives from landlord times where individual families held tenures of small rock-based stone-wall bounded "tillage" fields combined with shared commonage. This was the Runcorn system of land tenure.

While there are not statutory environmental designations within the plan boundary it is adjoined to the North by the Connemara Bog Complex SAC which is subject to the EU Habitats Directive 43/92/EEC.

The County Development Plan describes the county's landscape in term of their character value and sensitivity. An Spidéal is located within landscape character number 9 which has a medium to high landscape rating and a moderate to high sensitivity rating, depending on the precise location. The area within the plan boundary is identified in the assessment process as an area of potential settlement.

As part of the plan preparation a natural heritage appraisal was carried out on the plan area. It identified four broad landscape areas: The Coastal Area; Hinterland Area; Owenboliska River/Spidéal Demesne; and The Village Core. These are indicated in Map No 7.2, Appendix 1.

Coastal Area

The Coastal Area forms the southern extremity of the village and may be divided into two distinct character types:

- i The **soft coastline** is composed of the sandy shores.
- ii The **hard coastline** is of weathered bedrock and rounded boulder strips, with a small degree of flora and fauna, indicating an exposed shoreline. The rocks are mostly granite and basalt with some silica intrusions. In places the bedrock is highly fractured with multi-generational quartz veining. These hard wearing rocks are less prone to coastal erosion.

Hinterland Area

This is characterized by relatively open landscape and is defined by a high density of undulating wet grassland hummocks. The soil covering is thin and for the most part waterlogged, containing little or no trees. The landscape is stark presenting open views of a random topography with obvious human influences. It contains a patchwork of stone walls and a number of single dwellings of different ages and designs. While the landscape is open, the localised terrain provides minor obstructed views and as such the character of the landscape is continually changing as the observer moves through it.

The stone walls are the badge of its character forming an important heritage link and mapping out mans cultural footprint on the area. This is random, undulating and transient landscape.

Abhainn Bhoth Loiscithe

The River flows through the Hinterland Area and is characterised as a river landscape. It is a fast flowing river which has cut steep banks on either side. These banks have the effect of hiding the waters until the observer is directly adjoining them. As such the river is not a dominant visual feature in the landscape but is important as an ecological, recreational and economical resource.

Spidéal Demesne

Spidéal House is set in a demesne landscape which is a valuable characteristic of the village and adds to its distinctiveness. The lands were part of the Blake estate which eventually passed to the Morris Family, who were Lords of Killanin, and who built the house in the early nineteenth century.

One of the family, Lord Michael Killanin, RIP, acceded to the post of President of the International Olympic Committee in the nineteen seventies

The demesne is heavily wooded and forms a distinct visual barrier between the Coastal and Hinterland Areas creating a robust landscape. Given that the landscape of the coastline each side **to the village is open with some long range view's inland, the wooded area of Spidéal Demesne** provides a stark contrast and visual focus.

Within the demesne the landscape is dominated by trees therefore there are no views for the house of the village core, coastal area or hinterland area. The River Owenboliska provides a physical link to the lands outside the demesne. The demesne woodland is principally classified as mixed broadleaf. Flora and fauna are listed in Section 7.7.

Village Core

The Village Core is defined as a robust landscape. The centre has developed around the junction of the R336 and the Maigh Cuilinn Road. One corner of the junction contains Cill Einde, St Endas Catholic Church which was designed by William A Scott in the Celtic-Romanesque style and constructed in 1904. The great majority of commercial activity is contained within the core, as



indeed are the primary and post primary schools.

The eastern edge of the village gradually merges into the surrounding rural landscape while the western edge is defined by the Demesne and the Owenboliska River.

7.4 Development Strategy

The Plan seeks to strengthen An Spidéal's role as a gateway to the Gaeltacht area of Conamara and as a local service centre in accordance with the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan. It aims to protect its distinctive Gaeltacht village character by encouraging a sustainable moderate growth rate which will provide housing for local people, employment opportunities, educational facilities and a range of public services. It further seeks to make the best possible use of its natural resources for the local population and the tourism industry and to preserve and promote the Irish Language culture and heritage as a fundamental principle.

The development strategy aims to consolidate the existing settlement and preserve those structures considered worthy of protection. The village crossroads will remain the primary focus of economic activity. It will be supported as the prime commercial area facilitating retail and tourism related expansion. It will also provide for residential development on the upper floors of shops and offices so as to provide for day long mixed activity. This focal point will be enhanced through a series of village improvement measures.

The strategy promotes the development of a second node of development to the north of the village centre where the new proposed distributor road will open up lands for new uses.

The Core Strategy in the Galway County Development indicates that An Spidéal has been assigned a population growth target of 25 persons by 2015 with a housing land requirement of 0.79ha, or 1.19ha with 50% over-zoning, in order to accommodate residential development over the Plan period. The Core Strategy notes that there is 60.3ha of undeveloped residential zoned land in the An Spidéal plan area.

The residential lands have accordingly been phased in a sequential manner in order to comply with the provisions of the Core Strategy. Phase 1 lands of 1.2ha have been identified for short to medium term growth in a suitable location that is serviced and accessible, that avoids significant environmental, landscape and flood risk sensitivities and that has the potential to make a contribution to the achievement of key objectives in the LAP. This includes the consolidation of the village and the development of a new relief road north of the existing main street. The phasing as applied accordingly allows for some flexibility, as detailed in the policies and objectives of the Plan.

Additional land of approx. 6 hectares have also been zoned for the expansion needs of the existing industries, particularly relating to the craft and film enterprises. It is important that the village expands its commercial/industrial base in keeping with population growth so that it does not merely serve as a dormitory settlement.

The plan seeks to ensure early delivery of a Waste Water Treatment Plant to serve the projected twenty year needs of the population and its visitors. It also supports the provision of a new R336 Regional Route so as to connect the village with the rest of the Gaeltacht and the city in a safe and efficient manner.

A number of different types of landscape make up the unique environment in which the village is set. These may be broadly categorized into the Coastal Area, Spidéal Demesne and the rural hinterland. The Plan seeks to provide guidance on future development within these areas so that the distinctive character of the village, its natural assets and its setting will be preserved. It also aims to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the area and to protect ecological corridors and links and prevent habitat fragmentation.

New development must have regard to both the Record of Sites and Monuments and any unrecorded site which may be encountered during works process.

7.5 Heritage and Conservation

7.5.1 Built Heritage

Despite the relatively small core to the village there are a number of structures of note therein. The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is the mechanism for the implementation of the mandatory objective stated in Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to afford protection to structures which are of special interest.

7.5.2 Natural Heritage

This is the legacy which has inherited and which encompasses a range of natural assets including biodiversity, landscape, geology, geomorphology, water resources and our atmosphere. These are in constant state of change, some over great expanses of time and some rapidly due to human intervention.

While there are no statutory environmental designations within the plan area there are environmentally sensitive areas within An Spidéal which merit different degrees of protection.

The village is on a complex geological zone with varieties of granite and hornblende granodiorite.

For the most part the landscape north of the village would be classified as wet grassland. On higher ground there is a transition to wet heath and blanket bog outside the plan boundary. In recent years farming activity has scaled down or been abandoned, and these are areas of grassland that are being overgrown with bramble, bracken and young scrub woodland.

The habitats would be deemed typical of the region, and while they may not be of special conservation importance, have a local wildlife value which can be integrated into development proposals.

There is an area of wetland east of the craft village which is of local importance to wetland species and which merits conservation in its present state and protection from any pollutant threat.

The woodland of An Spidéal Demesne and Abhann Bhoth Loiscithe which runs through, are of special importance in the townscape of the village and in the quality of its natural environment. They are afforded protection because An Spidéal House is on the Record of Protected Structures.

It is the aim of the Council to afford protection to the natural heritage of An Spidéal in its many dimensions.

7.6 Policies and Specific Objectives

This Plan supports the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan. The Policies and objectives in this plan are in some cases additional to those identified in the County Plan. This section outlines the policies and objectives in relation to the future development of An Spidéal. Map No. 7.1, Appendix 1 indicates the landuse zoning objectives and associated design guidelines.

They are categorized in the following sectors:

- An Gaeltacht
- Residential Areas
- Local Economy
- Transportation and traffic management
- Tourism
- Services
- Education and community facilities
- Recreation and amenity
- Built heritage and village setting
- Natural heritage

7.6.1 An Ghaeltacht

The Planning Authority is committed to protect the status of An Spidéal as a Gaeltacht Village and to resist any development that would damage the language or the culture of the community. The County Council will liaise with Údarás na Gaeltachta, the Department of Rural, Community and Gaeltacht Affairs and with Comhairle Pobail an Spidéil, in an effort to come up with a language plan for An Spidéal which will have the express aim of further strengthening the Irish language in An Spidéal and of developing the village as a Baile Gaelach in which a wide range of services will be available through Irish as well as English.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.G. 1** To require the submission of a language impact statement for any development which the Council considers will adversely affect the Irish language as the Community Language.
- P.G. 2** To require all signage to be principally through the medium of Irish with internationally recognized symbols.
- P.G. 3** To encourage festivals which promote the use of Irish and encourage community participation in the presentation of An Spidéal in co-operation with local organizations and Údarás na Gaeltachta.
- P.G. 4** To improve service delivery through the Irish Language from public bodies.
- P.G. 5** To assist in the preservation and promotion of the Irish Language and culture in the village.

- P.G. 6** To support the cultural community and employment initiatives of Údarás na Gaeltachta and local organizations.
- P.G. 7** To have regard to the fields and their stone boundary characteristics in assessing developments in the rural hinterland of the village.

7.6.2 Residential Areas

It is an aim of the Council to facilitate the development of housing to meet the expected housing needs of the village and its neighbouring community.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.R. 1** To seek a balance and mix in the provision of social and private housing in order to promote a social and demographic balance within the village.
- P.R. 2** To permit a rate of Housing development appropriate to the village size, identity and infrastructure.
- P.R. 3** To provide for group house designs which are based on a clustered system and which avoid suburban styles.
- P.R. 4** To ensure the implementation of the County Housing Strategy in Gaeltacht Areas, working closely with existing communities and statutory bodies including Údarás na Gaeltachta.
- P.R. 5** To encourage infill development and higher residential densities at the village centre, subject to a high standard of layout, design and finish.
- P.R. 6** To co-ordinate the provision of road, cycle and pedestrian networks and other services to new residential areas.
- P.R. 7** To encourage orderly, sequential and phased residential development in accordance with the land use management and zoning provisions set out in this Local Area Plan. This shall include a positive presumption in favour of the sequential development of suitably serviced Residential (Phase 1) lands in order to align the Local Area Plan with the Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy in the Galway County Development Plan, subject to compliance with the policies and objectives in this Local Area Plan and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. There will be a general presumption against residential development on lands zoned Residential (Phase 2) within the lifetime of the Local Area Plan, subject to the exceptions provided for under **Objective O.R. 3**.

Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.R. 1** Identify and acquire appropriate lands for social housing as necessary.
- O.R. 2** Seek an appropriate element of social and affordable housing in new residential developments using the powers available under the Planning Act.
- O.R. 3** Support the residential development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1)

within the lifetime of the Local Area 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 the town. Residential (Phase 2) lands are generally not developable within the lifetime of this Plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority within the lifetime of this Local Area Plan subject to a suitable case being made for the proposal:

- a) Single house developments for family members on family owned lands.
- b) Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area.
- c) Where it is apparent that 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.

The above exceptions will be subject to compliance with the Core Strategy in the Galway County Development Plan, the policies and objectives in this Local Area Plan, the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and to meeting normal planning, access and servicing requirements. Developments will only be permitted where a substantiated 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 the town.

- O.R. 4** Encourage the development of sustainable residential communities through the promotion of innovative, high quality building design and appropriate layouts, that prioritise walking, cycling and public transport options and provide for a high level of permeability, accessibility and connectivity to the existing built environment, services and facilities. In this regard, future residential development proposals will be in accordance with the principles set out in the DEHLG document *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009* and its companion document *Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide for Planning Authorities 2009* (or any updated/superseding documents).

7.6.3 Local Economy

It is the aim of the Council to facilitate the provision of sufficient employment opportunities to cater for the needs of the people of the village and for its role as the service deliverer for the wider community of this part of the Conamara Gaeltacht

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.E.D. 1** To develop An Spidéal as a local service centre in the County and as a significant cultural centre in the Conamara Gaeltacht.
- P.E.D. 2** To encourage the appropriate development of An Spidéal Demesne in the **interests of the village's economic development.**
- P.E.D. 3** To facilitate the expansion of existing enterprises having regard to the protection of the amenity and economic value of adjacent properties.

- P.E.D. 4** To encourage new retail developments to locate within the existing village.
- P.E.D. 5** To protect residential areas and the village centre from any adverse effects of industrial development.

Specific Objectives:

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.E.D. 1** Implement a repair programme on the New Quay.
- O.E.D. 2** Continue the upgrading of An tSean Chéibh.
- O.E.D. 3** Require an Area Action Plan for any development of An Spidéal Demesne.
- O.E.D. 4** Facilitate the development of media based enterprise on lands zoned for industry, in co-operation with Údarás na Gaeltachta.
- O.E.D. 5** Require new developments to provide planting/landscaping appropriate to its location and scale, including stone walls of local stone.

7.6.4 Transportation and Traffic Management

It is the aim of the Council to ensure a safe transportation network capable of satisfying the requirements of motorists and pedestrians and to provide for and erect signage to indicate adequate car parking facilities.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.T.T.M. 1** To implement and enforce "Plean Bainistíochta Tráchtá An Spidéal".
- P.T.T.M. 2** To investigate a series of extensions and improvements to roads linking the R336 to the east with the Maigh Cuilinn Road to the north of the village.
- P.T.T.M. 3** To ensure that all new developments make parking provision for disabled drivers where physically possible.
- P.T.T.M. 4** To promote the use of public transport services and support such service improvement in keeping with village and hinterland growth.
- P.T.T.M. 5** To promote pedestrian and cycling modes as a convenient and safe method of movement both within and around the village.
- P.T.T.M. 6** To ensure that consideration is given to pedestrian and cycling linkages in all development proposals.
- P.T.T.M. 7** To support the provision of a new strategic route along the Cois Fharráige corridor from Galway to Scriob via Ros an Mhíl. Any new route will be subject to route selection and the avoidance of Natura 2000 sites will be prioritised. Any new route will be permitted only where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of the sites as defined by their conservation objectives. Where new routes are to be developed they will be subject to route selection.



Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.T.T.M. 1** Investigate the development of a relief road linking the R336 with the Maigh Cullinn Road.
- O.T.T.M. 2** Reserve a corridor from the village to the proposed new strategic route.
- O.T.T.M. 3** Provide a signage system for pedestrian/cycle routes.
- O.T.T.M. 4** Make provision for an access road which will link the lands zoned for development with the proposed relief road, and provide also for a pedestrian/cycle link between the relief road and the primary school grounds.

7.6.5 Tourism

It is the aim of the council to facilitate the sustainable expansion of the tourism industry and enhancement of the tourism product of An Spidéal.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.T. 1** To facilitate the development of this Gaeltacht village and its local area as a tourist destination in the context of cultural tourism.
- P.T. 2** To co-operate with Ireland West Tourism, Údarás na Gaeltachta, GaelSaoire and the Private Sector in the development of the tourism products.
- P.T. 3** To Facilitate infrastructure for marine tourism.
- P.T. 4** To ensure that tourism accommodation provision is of a scale and design appropriate to the village and that it does not adversely affect existing residential amenity.
- P.T. 5** To seek balance between permitting developments which facilitate the expansion of the industry and protecting local biodiversity.
- P.T. 6** Facilitate the development of a literary/cultural/art/drama centre in the village.

Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.T. 1** Continue the development of the coastline amenity walk to enhance focal buildings, the village hinterland and parts of local history.
- O.T. 2** To develop the harbour area in consultation with the local community, with seating and multi lingual information boards at suitable locations.
- O.T. 3** To investigate the leisure and amenity development of the New Quay and the Old Quay as a local amenity and tourism asset, in partnership with the local community, Ireland west and Údarás na Gaeltachta.



- O.T. 4** To maintain the Blue Flag status of Trá na mBan and, subject to available funding, carry out improvements involving rock armour, seating and picnic areas.

7.6.6 Services

It is the aim of the Council to ensure that the public service infrastructure is provided to satisfy the needs of the village community.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.S. 1** To ensure the provision of a potable water supply to all existing and new developments in the village.
- P.S. 2** To progress as a priority, the provision of a waste water collection and treatment system.
- P.S. 3** To ensure proper treatment and disposal of effluent from any new developments which are permitted in advance of the provision of the new public sewerage treatment system.
- P.S. 4** To maintain an adequate surface water drainage system throughout the plan area.
- P.S. 5** To inform and educate the public on up to date methods of waste management, recycling, composting and disposal.

Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.S. 1** Secure the necessary abstraction rights from the Abhainn Bhoth Loiscithe water body in order to maintain an adequate potable water supply to the village.
- O.S. 2** Provide a modern and adequate effluent collection and treatment system.
- O.S. 3** Ensure that all new developments contain separate surface water and foul drainage systems.
- O.S. 4** Provide a range of recycling facilities to meet the needs of the developing village.
- O.S. 5** Provide a library/courthouse building with public toilet facilities.
- O.S. 6** Provide bus shelters at bus stop zones.
- O.S. 7** Progress toward the provision of fire fighter services.

7.6.7 Education and Community Facilities

It is the aim of the Council to facilitate the expansion of resources which are necessary to provide the educational and community facilities for the village.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.E.C.F. 1** To co-operate with the schools authority in development and expansion of school facilities, including Irish Language requirements.
- P.E.C.F. 2** To expand the library services.
- P.E.C.F. 3** To explore, promote and facilitate safe environmentally friendly routes to schools.
- P.E.C.F. 4** To facilitate the provision of childcare facilities as outlined in the Childcare Guidelines in a sustainable manner compatible with the land use and transportation policies, and in consultation with the Health Executive Body.
- P.E.C.F. 5** To facilitate the land use needs of religious orders in the village.
- P.E.C.F. 6** To co-operate with the County Development Board in implementing the County Strategy.
- P.E.C.F. 7** To facilitate the provision of an indoor meeting/recreational location for older children and teenagers.

Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.E.C.F. 1** Facilitate the expansion of Colaiste Chroí Mhuire to accommodate adequate academic and sporting facilities.
- O.E.C.F. 2** Co-operate with the Department of Education, Science and the school management board in the provision of an adequate number of school places and facilities to serve the needs of the population.

7.6.8 Recreation and Amenity

It is the aim of the Council to ensure that there is adequate provision for the recreational needs of the community by providing or assisting the provision of facilities and protecting and conserving those in existence.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.R.A. 1** No development will be considered North of the R336 until the specialist study of the Spiddal House and demesne lands is completed and then any development will be subject to the findings and recommendations of this study. For those lands South of the R336 consideration will be given, prior to the completion of the study, to the provision of a single house to meet the housing need of the landowners family. The design and siting of this house shall seek to maintain the recreation, amenity and environmental quality of these lands.
- P.R.A. 2** To resist the loss of existing public or private recreational open space unless alternative facilities are provided and that there is a good case for relocation.
- P.R.A. 3** To confine games and recreational activities that generate elevated levels of noise to locations that avoid disturbance to residences.
- P.R.A. 4** To ensure that highly active recreational activities do not adversely affect the

passive enjoyment of protected sites and monuments and sensitive natural habitats.

- P.R.A. 5** To have regard to the character of stone wall boundaries in development proposals and, if it is necessary to remove them, they should be suitably relocated in the development.
- P.R.A. 6** To have regard to the character of the local village roads leading from the R336 and avoid any excessive widening or alignment other than for reasons of traffic safety.
- P.R.A. 7** To co-operate with the Western Regional Fisheries Board in protecting the fishing resource of the area.
- P.R.A. 8** To encourage suitable and appropriate landscaping and tree planting schemes in new development proposals.

Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.R.A. 1** Continue the development of the coastal walk from the village to the New Quay.
- O.R.A. 2** Maintain the Blue Flag status for Trá na mBan and Trá na Céibhe
- O.R.A. 3** Carry out a study of An Spidéal Demesne with the consent of the owner and the co-operation of the community to determine its potential for development and conservation, and with a view to creating a riverside walkway/amenity corridor.
- O.R.A. 4** Encourage development of further amenities at Colaíste Chonnacht including nature walk, a range of sports facilities and indoor recreational space for older children and teenagers.

7.6.9 Built Heritage and Village Setting

It is the aim of the Council to preserve and protect buildings which are included in the Record of Protected Structures and also to enhance the village streetscape by encouraging infill development and quality design.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.B.H. 1** To protect structures which are listed in the Record of Protected Structures.
- P.B.H. 2** To encourage the re-use of vacant, underused or derelict buildings.
- P.B.H. 3** To use the Derelict Sites Act 1990 as appropriate.
- P.B.H. 4** To promote good quality contemporary design which reflects the character and cultural context of the village.
- P.B.H. 5** To encourage multiple use of buildings at the village centre to ensure day long interest and variety.



- P.B.H. 6** To protect and preserve archaeological sites and monuments which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places and any subsequent site and monument that is discovered during the lifetime of this plan.

Specific Objectives

It is a specific objective of the Council to:

- O.B.H. 1** Rationalize the scatter of existing public signage and provide co-ordinated signage in Irish with recognised international symbols.
- O.B.H. 2** Require private signage to be in Irish and to be in scale and harmony with the village. Internally illuminated plastic signs will be discouraged.
- O.B.H. 3** Reduce the impact of wirescape on the village by ducting existing and proposed wires and cables.

7.6.10 Natural Heritage

It is the aim of the Council to protect the diverse natural heritage that is unique to the village and its surroundings.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- P.N.H. 1** To conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the plan area.
- P.N.H. 2** To protect the rural character of the village and its seaside setting.
- P.N.H. 3** To protect the woodland areas of the village and individual trees which are healthy and which enhance the village.
- P.N.H. 4** To protect and continue to improve water quality of the river and adjoining sea.
- P.N.H. 5** To continue to inform the local community of the unique quality of their natural heritage.

Specific Objectives

It is the objective of the Council to:

- O.N.H. 1** Ensure that development proposals contain an ecological assessment of any sensitive local habitats, in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

7.6.11 Flood Risk Management

It is the aim of the Planning Authority to ensure that flood risk is managed in accordance with the provisions of the DEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document).

Policies:

It is the policy of the Planning Authority:

P.F.R.S. 1 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 *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). Galway County Council will also take account of the *Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans (CFRAMs)*, *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)* and *County Galway Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2012* and any recommendations and outputs arising from same that relate to or impact on the An Spidéal Plan Area.

Specific Objectives:

O.F.R.S. 1 Ensure the implementation of the DEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document) in relation to flood risk management within the Plan Area. This will include the following:

- a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated on **Map 7.4**, including fluvial, coastal/tidal, pluvial and groundwater flooding, and any other flood risk areas that may be identified during the period of the Plan or in relation to a planning application.
- 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 *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) Where certain measures proposed to mitigate or manage the risk of flooding associated with new developments are likely to result in significant effects to the environment or European sites downstream, such measures will undergo environmental assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment, as appropriate.

O.F.R.S. 2 Protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B, as indicated on **Map 7.4**, from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any superseding document). 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 and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*.

O.F.R.S. 3 Residential Phase 2 lands as indicated on **Map 7.1**, have been zoned according to the information contained in a site-specific flood risk assessment provided by the landowner and that there is still potential for some of the lands to flood.

Available data currently is imperfect and does not allow for the definitive quantification of this potential. This does not preclude development once the proposed site design for any proposed development shows that it does not displace flood water thereby exposing lands elsewhere to unacceptable levels of flood risk and satisfies the applicant and the council that the development itself will not be exposed to unacceptable levels of flood risk. (**See Caveat in the An Spidéal Land Use Zoning map 7.1**).

7.7 Listing of Flora, Fauna located in Coastal Area and Spidéal Demesne

Listing of Flora Fauna located in Coastal Area

Coastal Flora and Fauna	
Limpets (Patella)	Channel Wrack (Pelvetia canaliculata)
Barnacles (Balanus Ballanoides)	Fucus spiralis
Lichen (Verrucaria Maura)	Ascophyllum nodosum
Lichen (Lecanora atra)	F. vesiculosus
Lichen (Ramalina siliquosa)	F. serratus

Machair Grass Species	
Fescue (Festuca rubra)	White Clover (Trifolium repens)
Ribwort plantain (Plantago lanceolata)	Sea Thrift (Armeria maritima)
Daisy (Bellis perennis)	Scurvy Grass (Cochleria officinalis)
Golden Samphire (Crithmum maritimum)	

Listing of Flora Fauna located in Spidéal Demesne

Woodland Vegetation	
Mixed Broadleaf Woodland	
Pedunculate oak (Quercus robur)	Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)
Hazel (Corylus avellana)	Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)
Beech (Faga sylvatica)	Yew (Taxus baccata) – In some instances
Ground Cover/Under Storey	
Ivy (Hedera helix)	Holly (Ilex aquifolium)
Alder (Alnus glutinosa)	Birch (Betula pubescens)
River Vicinity	
River rhododendron (Rhododendron ponticum)	Alder
Willow (Salix fragilis)	Crocossmia (Crocossmia sp.)
Male fern (Dryopteris filix-mas)	Lady fern (Athyrium filix-femina)
Hart's tongue (Phyllitus scolopendrium)	Soft shield fern (Polystichum setiferum)
Royal fern (Osmunda regalis)	

Vegetation of Landscaped Areas of the Demesne



Monterey pine (<i>Pinus radiata</i>)	Fuschia (<i>Fuschia</i> sp.)
Hydrangea (<i>Hydrangea</i> sp.)	Sycamore saplings
Ruderal species dock leaves (<i>Rumex</i> sp.)	Hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>)
Nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>)	Thistles (<i>Cirsium</i> sp.)
Pineappleweed (<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>)	Knotgrass (<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>)
Common vetch (<i>Vicia cracca</i>)	Colt's-foot (<i>Tussilago solidago</i>)
Shepherd's-purse (<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>)	Chickweed (<i>Stellaria media</i>)
Ribwort plantain	Silverweed (<i>Potentilla anserina</i>)
Broom (<i>Cytisus</i> sp.)	



SECTION EIGHT: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

8.1 Development Management

The Development Management Guidelines which are part of the County Galway Development Plan are applicable in general to the provision of this Local Area Plan.

The Zoning Matrix indicates the uses which may or may not be accommodated in the various zones of An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal. Developers are advised to confer with the Planning Department in the case of any proposals which may not be clearly dealt with in the standards or matrix. They should also have regard to guidance documents which are issued from time to time.

Development contributions are required in accordance with the scheme adopted by Galway County Council under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

Developers should also have regard to the Record of Protected Structures as contained in the County Development Plan. Many of the structures are located in the Gaeltacht.



SECTION NINE: APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Plate of housing

Maps – The Gaeltacht generally & its subdistricts

Maps – An Cheathrú Rua

Maps – An Spidéal

Appendix 2 – Land Use Zoning Objectives, Matrix and Areas



Appendix 1: Plate of Housing & Maps



Buildings of Local Importance Which Contribute Positively to the Character of the Village

An Cheathrú Rua



2371

3 bay 2 storey white washed rendered house with two breakfront windows (uPVC replacement), gable mounted chimneys and tile roof.



2372

Two storey house and office timber sliding windows, centrally mounted chimney on a hip roof with artificial slate, plaster render finish



2373

Single storey cottage; stone built with timber windows c.1990 and artificial slate roof set in a wooded plot.



2374

2 X 4 Bay 2 story houses, timber windows c.2000, nap plaster (right) stone and lined plaster render (left natural stone slate roofs.



2375

Stone built house, gable mounted chimneys, uPVC replacement windows, natural slate roof, extension to rear has nap plaster finish and artificial slate.



2376

Pair of 2 and 3 bay houses both built of local stone, with new c.2000 timber sliding windows, nap plastered gable mounted chimneys and an artificial slate roof c.2000



2377

Single storey thatched cottage, timber sliding windows, plaster render finish.



2378

Detached bungalow with tiled hip roof, dry dash plaster and uPVC replacement windows.



2379

Cottage with a natural slate roof, wet dash plaster render and uPVC replacement windows.



2380

School house with aluminum and uPVC windows, tile roof, wet dash plaster. Cut limestone decoration.



2381

Garda station and house, set back off the road with front and rear gardens. Building has a wet dash plaster render, uPVC replacement windows and a hipped roof with centrally located chimneys.



2382

Two storey house with a plaster render, artificial slate and uPVC replacement windows.



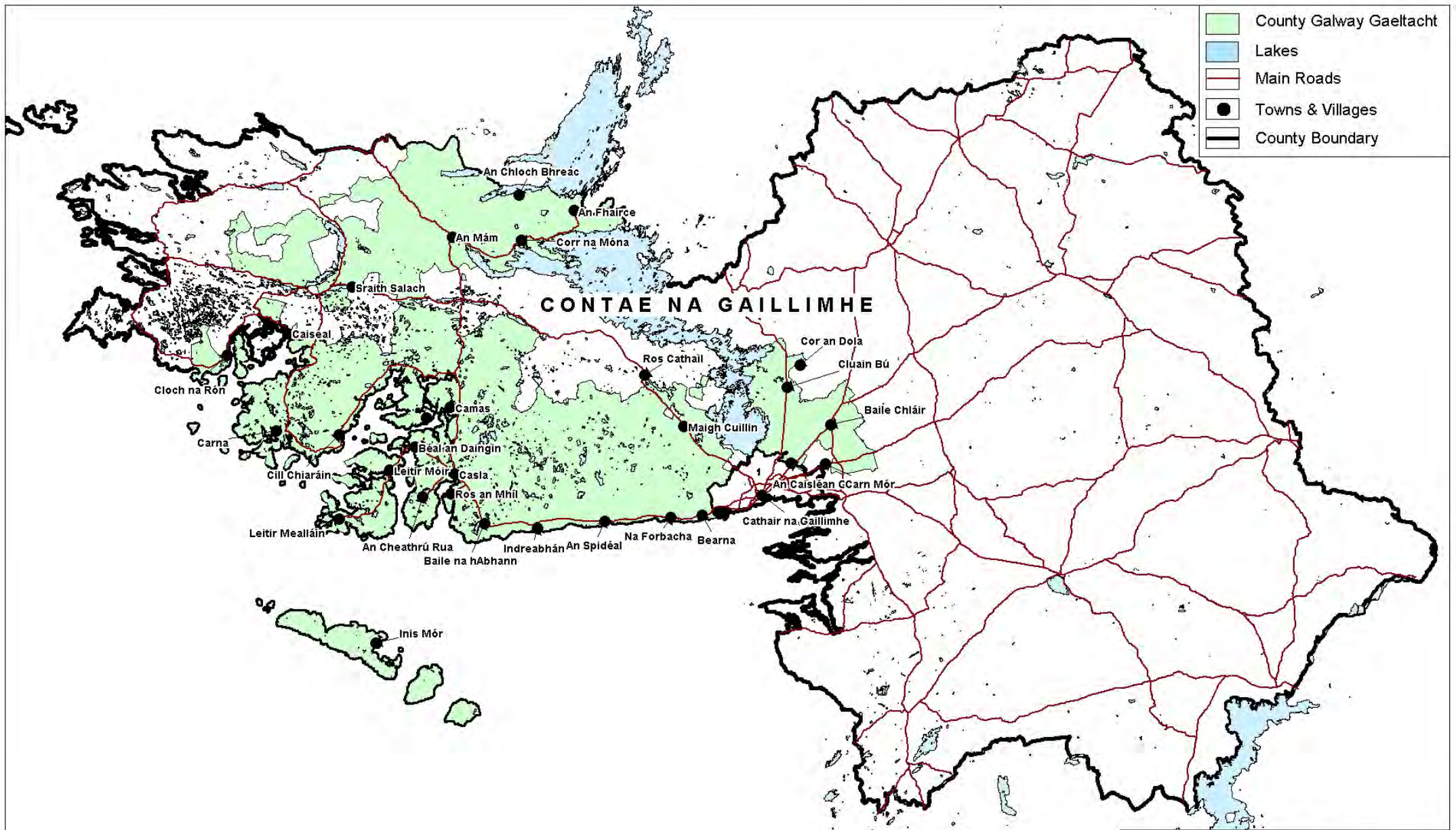
2383

3 bay 2 story house with breakfront uPVC replacement ground floor windows and door, artificial slate on a hip roof.



Appendix 1-Maps-The Gaeltacht generally & its subdistricts



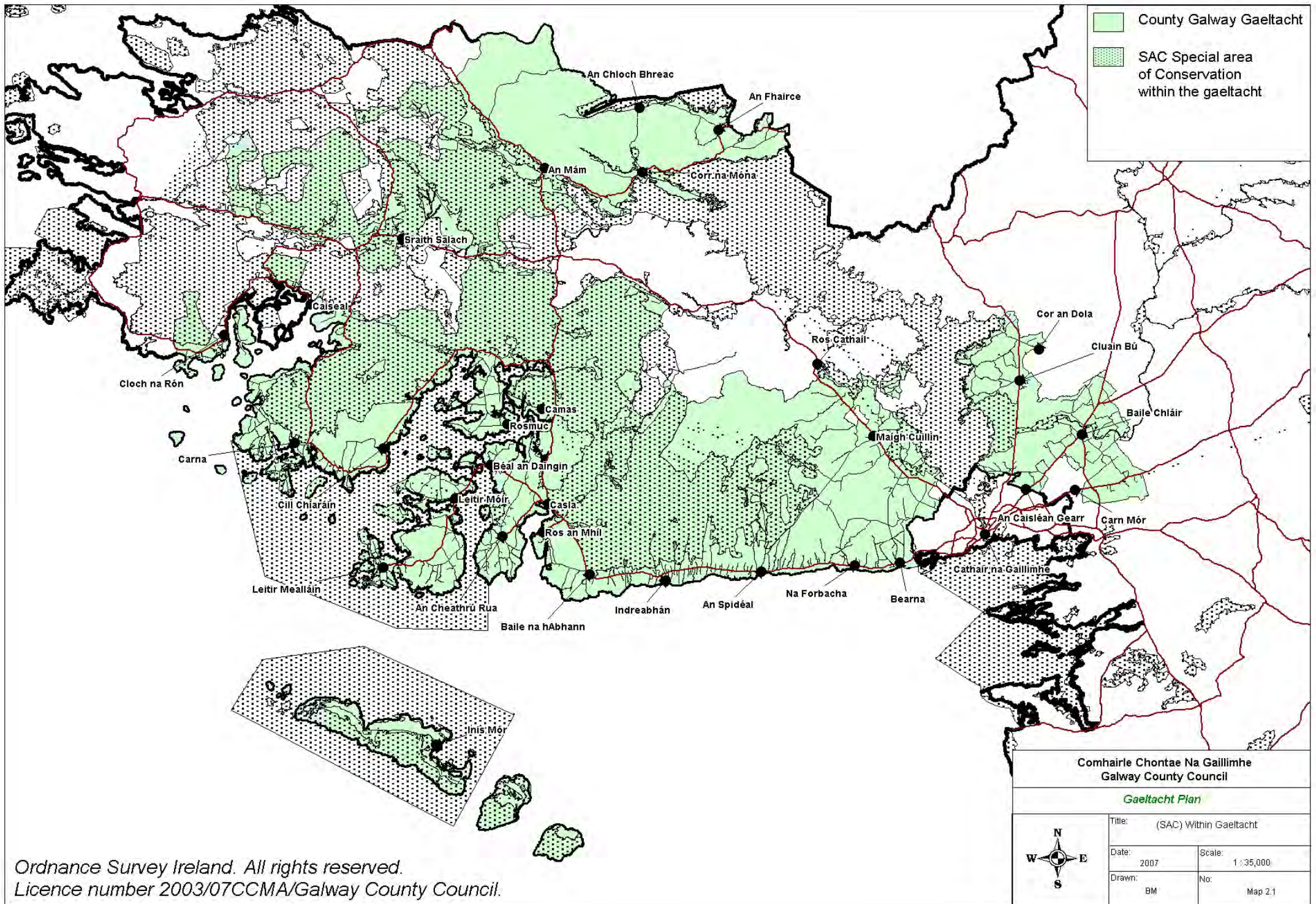


- County Galway Gaeltacht
- Lakes
- Main Roads
- Towns & Villages
- County Boundary

An Chloch Bhréac
 An Fhairce
 An Mám
 Corr na Móna
 Sraith Salach
 Caiseal
 Cloch na Rón
 Carna
 Ros Cathail
 Maigh Cuillin
 Cor an Dola
 Cluain Bú
 Baile Chláir
 Cill Chiaráin
 Leitir Mór
 Casla
 Ros an Mhíl
 An Caisleán GCarn Mór
 Cathair na Gaillimhe
 Leitir Mealláin
 An Cheathrú Rua
 Baile na hAbhann
 Indreabhán An Spidéal
 Na Forbacha Bearna
 Inis Mór

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeltacht Plan</i>		
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	Drawn: BM	No: 1.1

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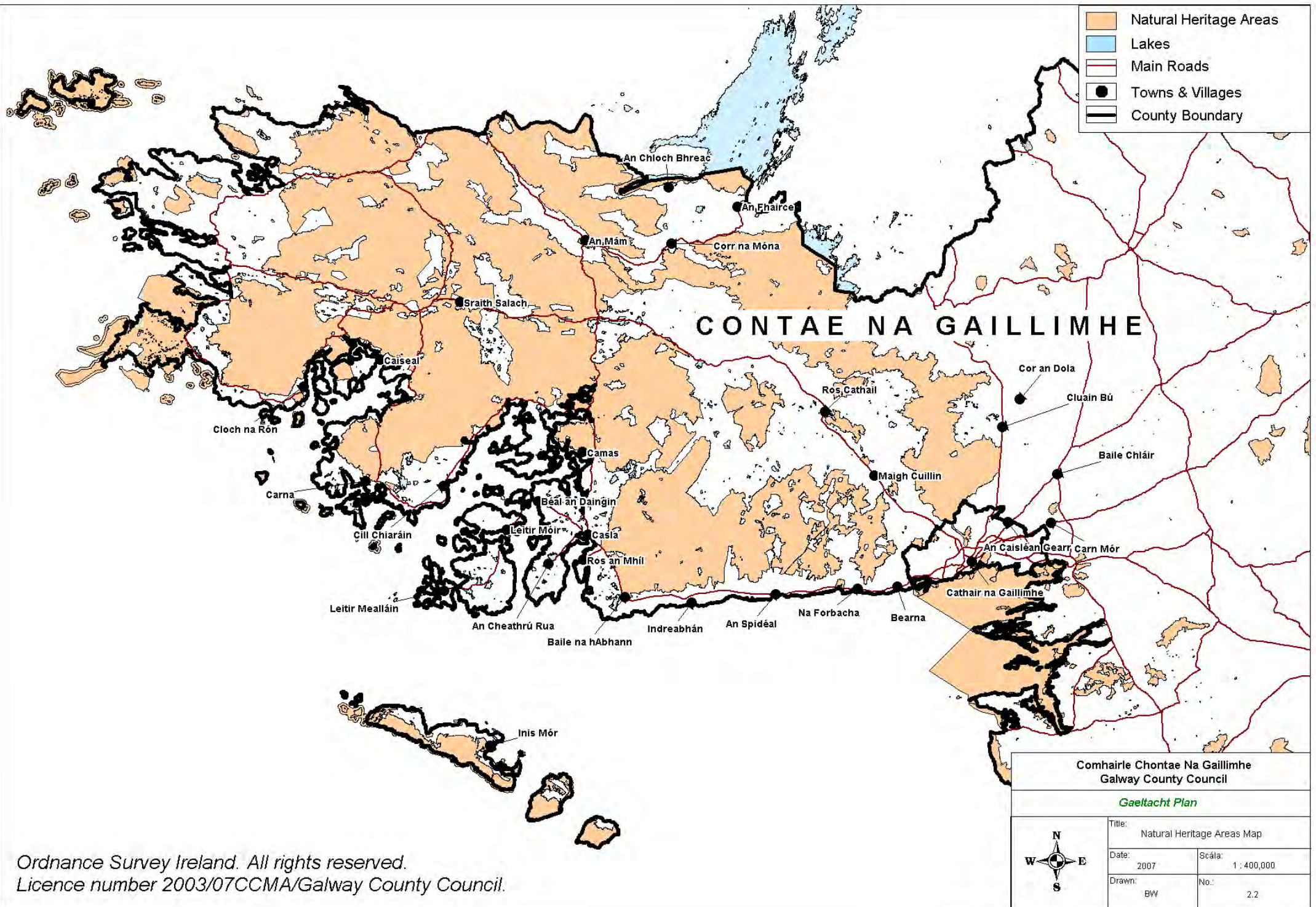
County Galway Gaeltacht
 SAC Special area of Conservation within the gaeltacht

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

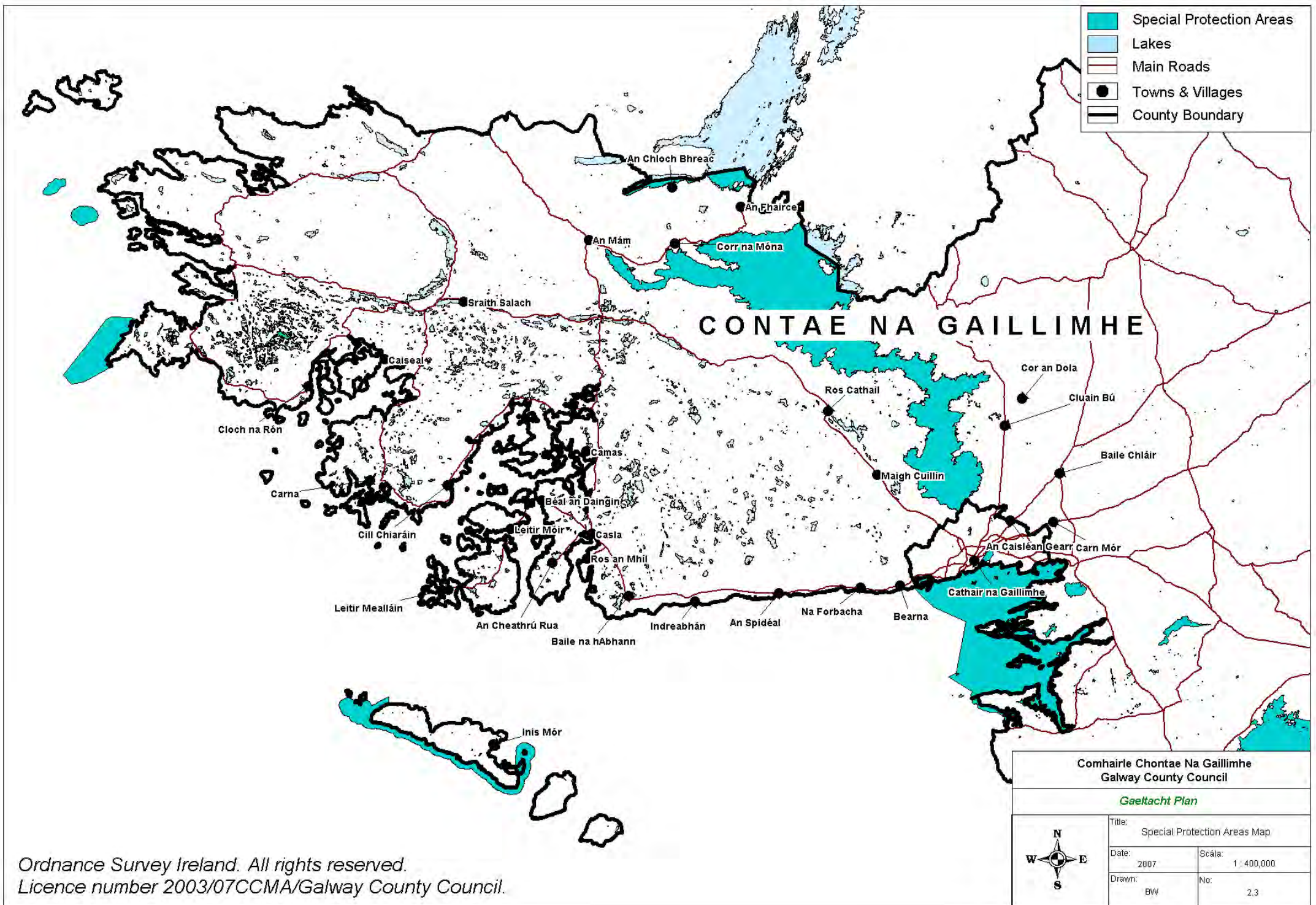
Gaeltacht Plan

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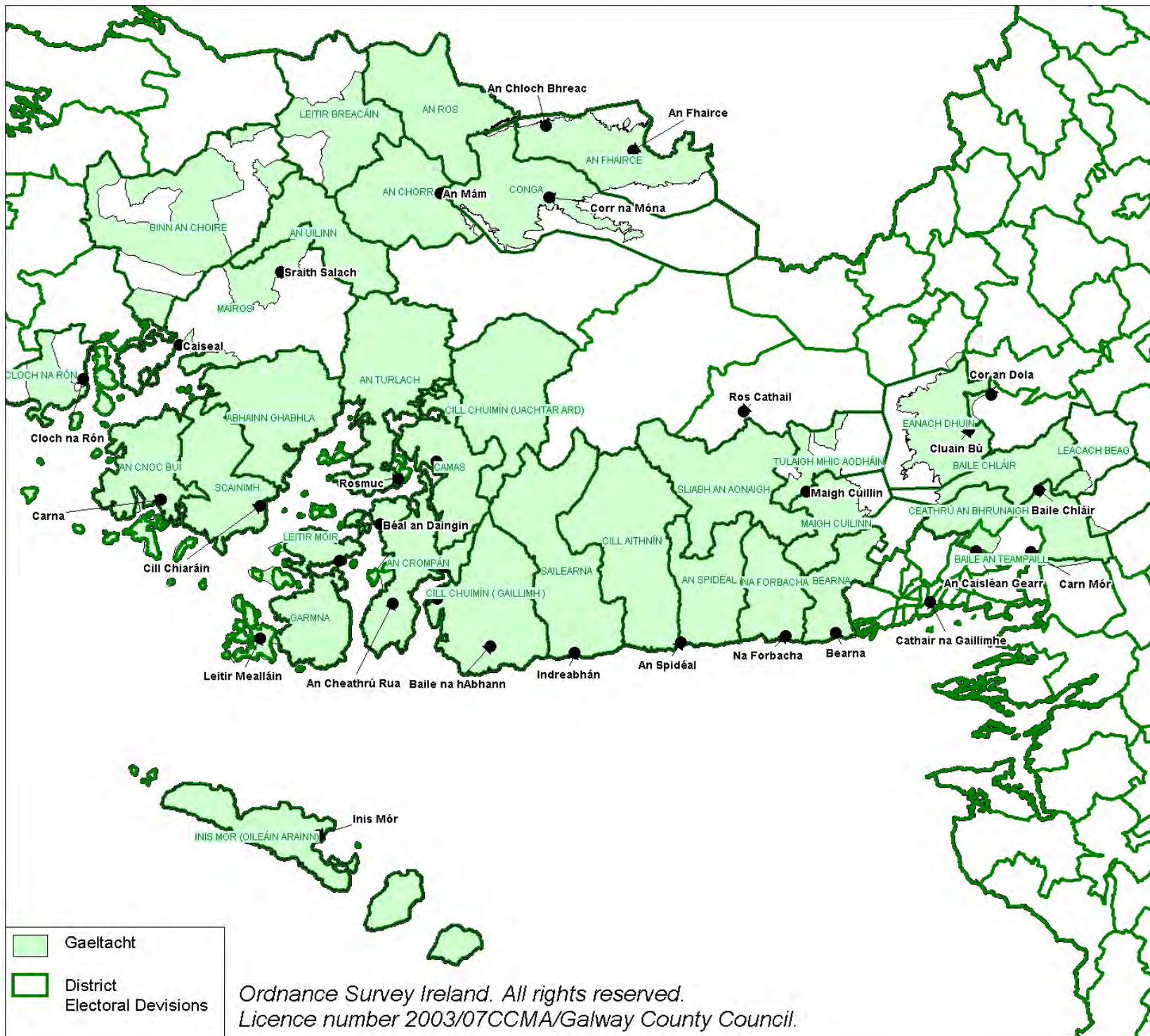
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TOWNLAND	★	☆	☆
An Ros	61	-2	-8.0
An Fhairce	20	-9	-0.2
Conga	41	-5	7.0
An Chorr	30	-17	-15.2
Leitir Breacáin	36	-9	-27.0
An Uilinn	32	-35	-35.3
Binn an Choire	36	-3	4.9
Maíros	36	-12	-6.0
An Turlach	86	-12	+2.2
Abhainn Ghabhla	75	2	-6.3
Cloch na Rón	36	---	-8.0
An Cnoc Búí	81	-8	-11.7
Scainimh	92	-3	-7.2
Leitir Mór	89	0.1	7.9
Cill Chuimín (G)	84	2	2.5
Camas	91	-2	-8.0
An Cromptán	88	5	5.8
Sailearna	83	13	18.6
Cill Aithnín	78	-1	14.6
Sliabh An Iongna	33	11	17.5
An Spideál	68	8	16.4
Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin	36	16	34.1
Maigh Cuilinn	22	37	73.6
Na Forbacha	39	17	13.9
Bearna	25	18	44.0
Eanach Dhúin	11	20	32.5
Baile Chláir	13	48	68.0
Ceathramha Bhrún	19	21	41.0
An Carn Mór	17	26	35.1
Gamna	92	-2.3	-2.4
Cill Chuimín (U)	53	-8.5	-5.4
Leacach Beag	10	11	23.4
Lisín An Bhaile	10	0	-22.0
Baile An Teampaill	12	0	-1.5
Inis Mór	82	-1.8	-6.0

NOTE

PERCENTAGE IRISH SPEAKING % -----★

PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN 1996 & 2002 % -----☆

PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN 2002 & 2006 % -----☆

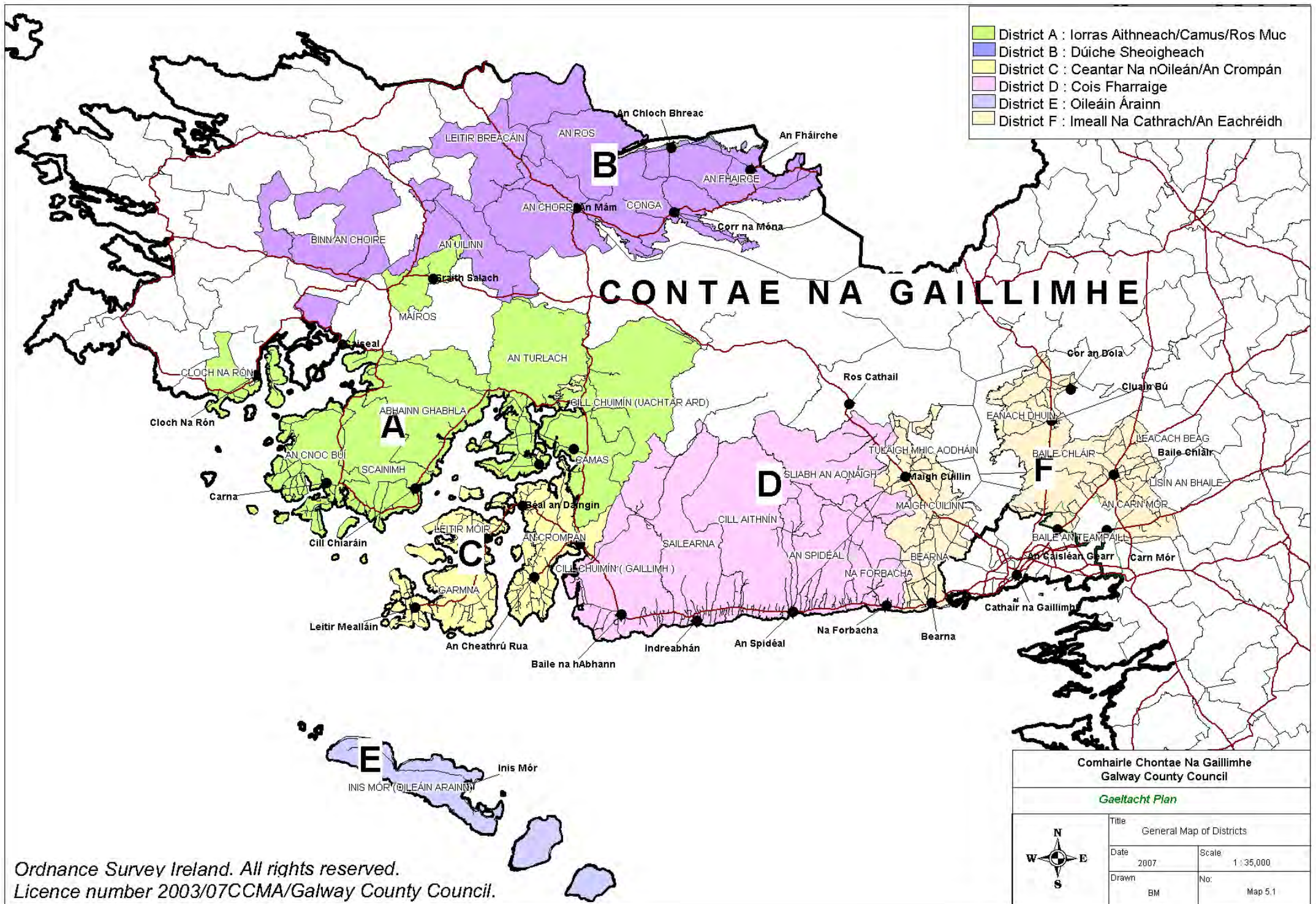
Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan

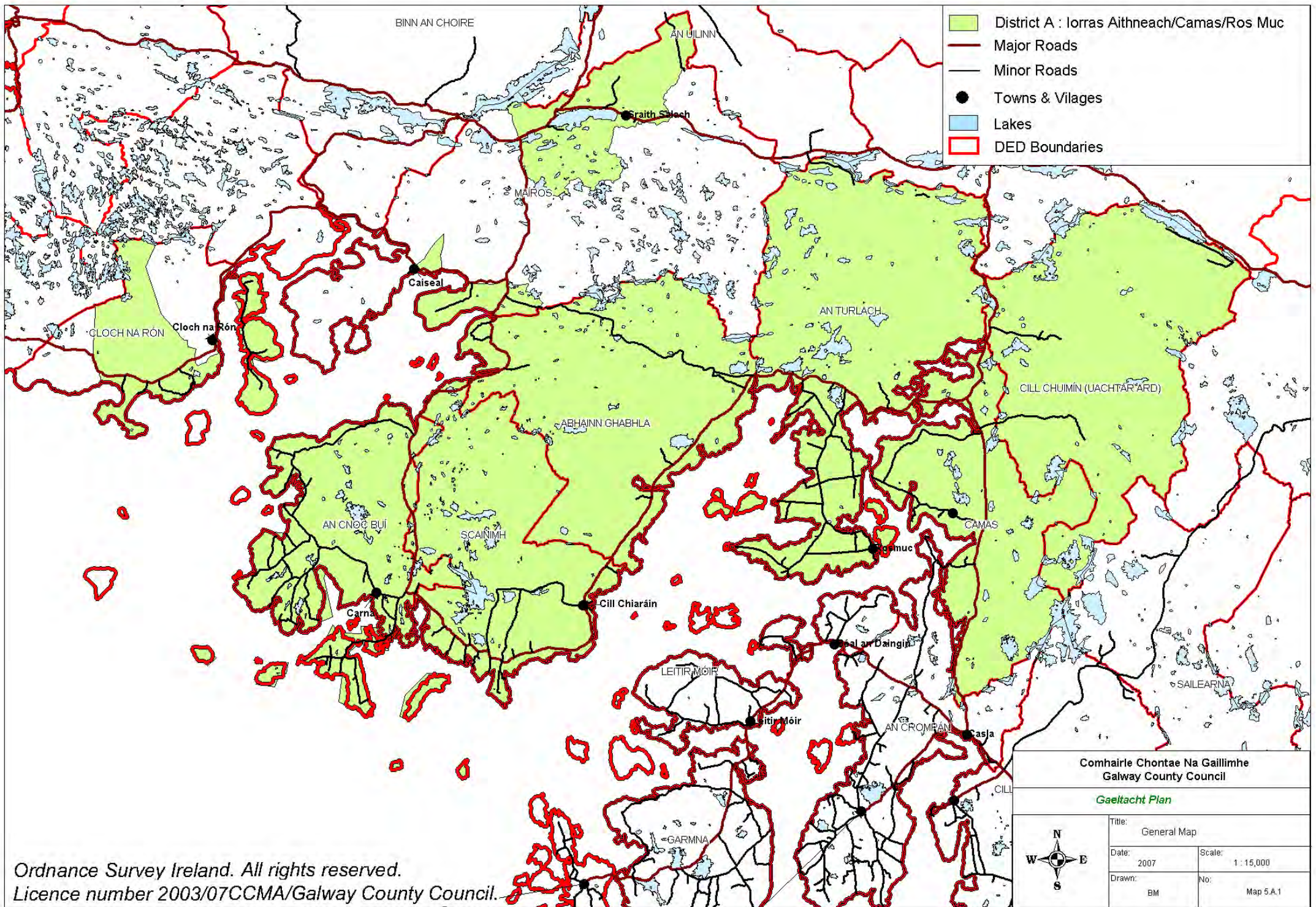
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	Date 2007	Scale 1 : 35,000
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 2.4

Gaeltacht
 District Electoral Divisions

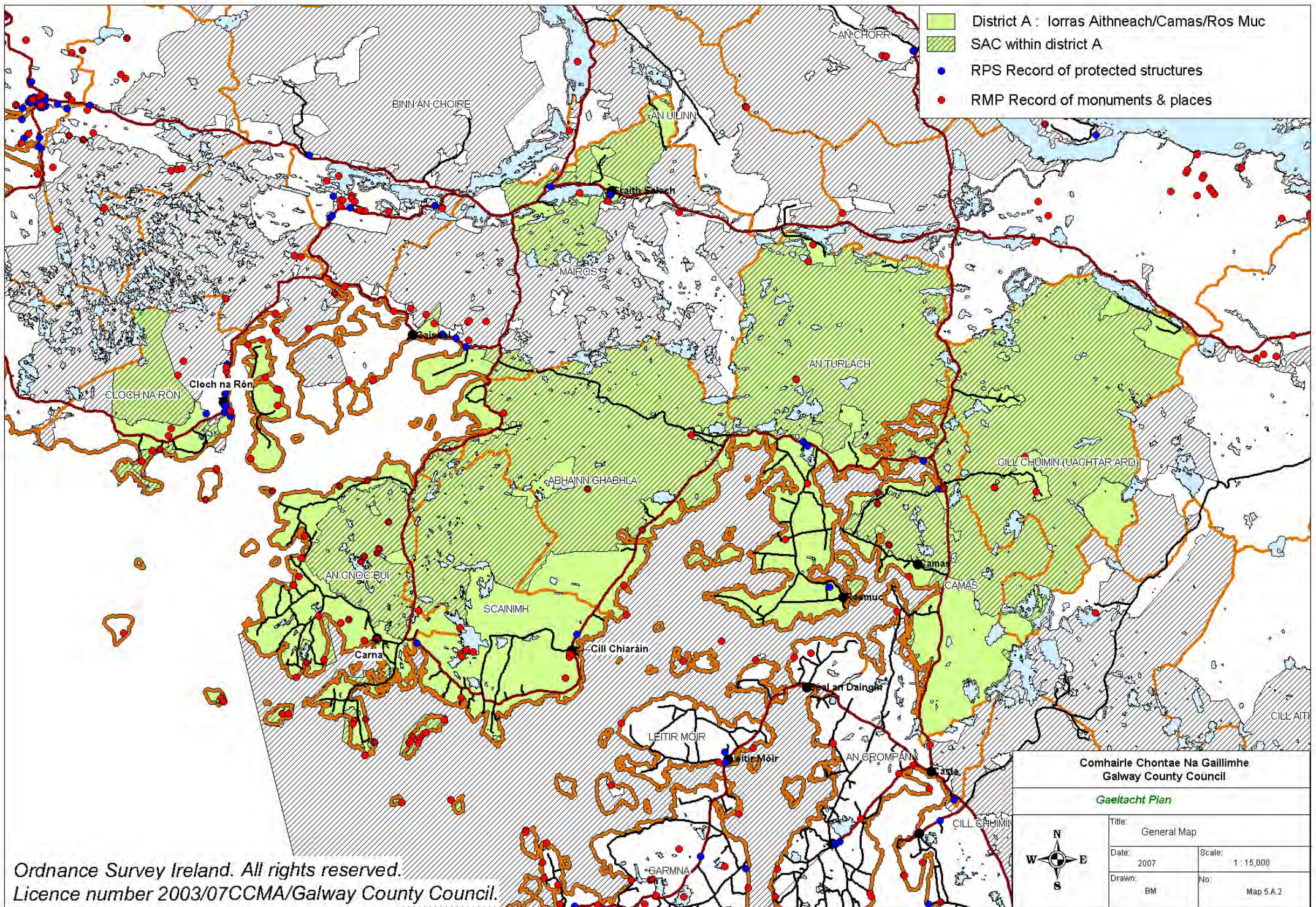
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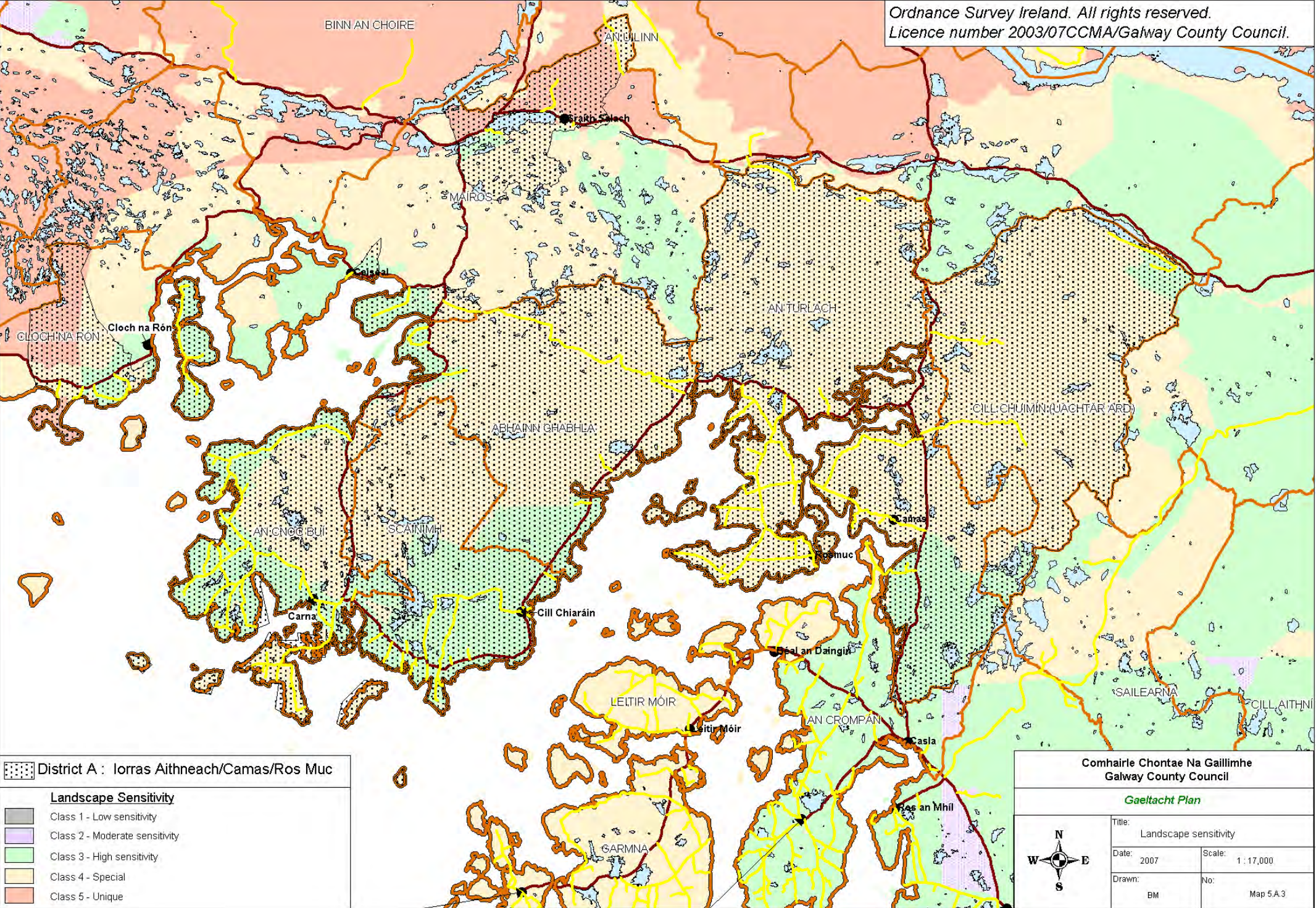


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Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan

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	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.A.2

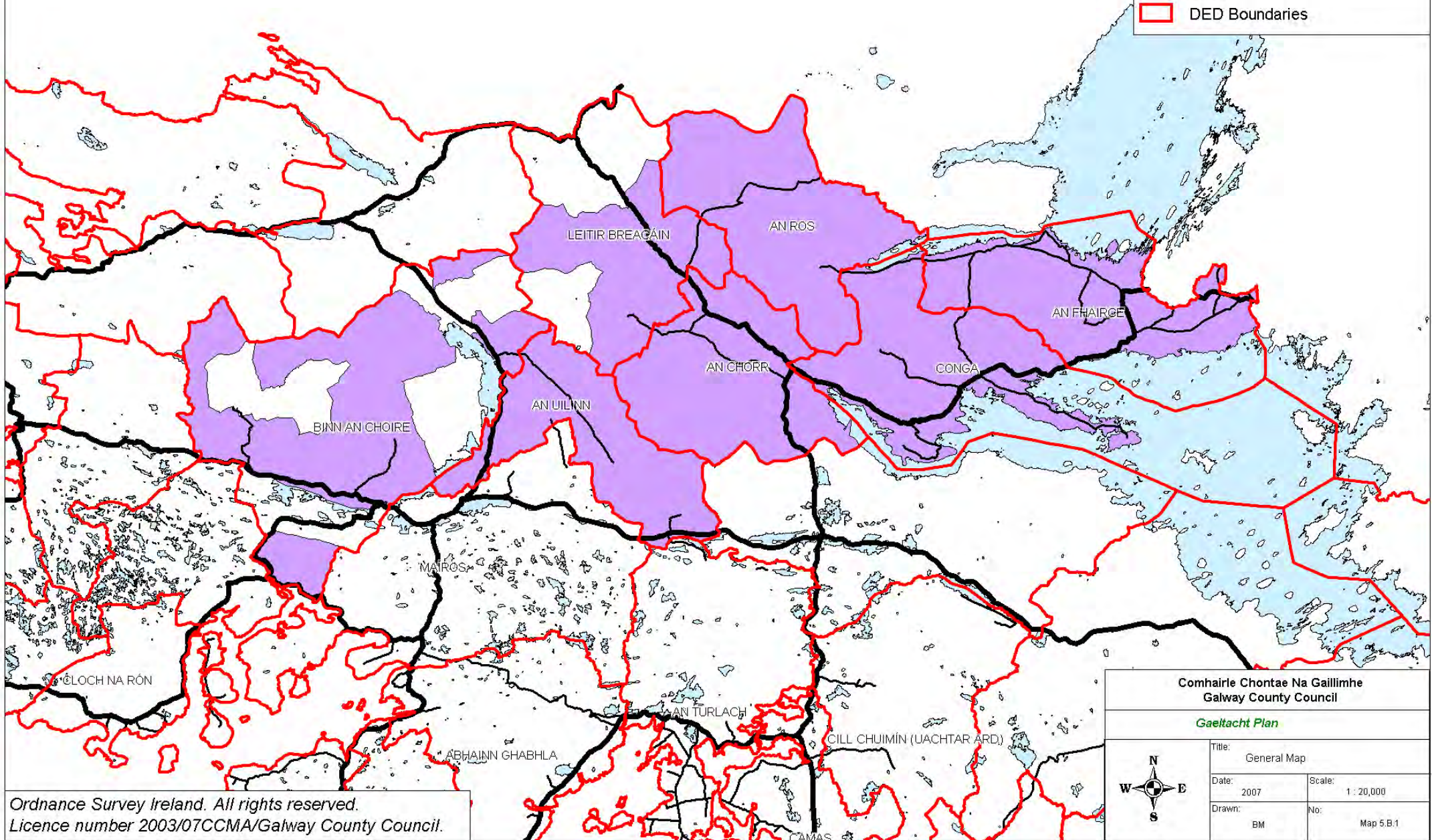


 District A : Iorras Aithneach/Camas/Ros Muc

Landscape Sensitivity	
	Class 1 - Low sensitivity
	Class 2 - Moderate sensitivity
	Class 3 - High sensitivity
	Class 4 - Special
	Class 5 - Unique

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeltacht Plan</i>		
		
Title: Landscape sensitivity		
Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 17,000	
Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.A.3	

- District B : Dúiche Sheoigheach
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Towns & Vilages
- Lakes
- DED Boundaries



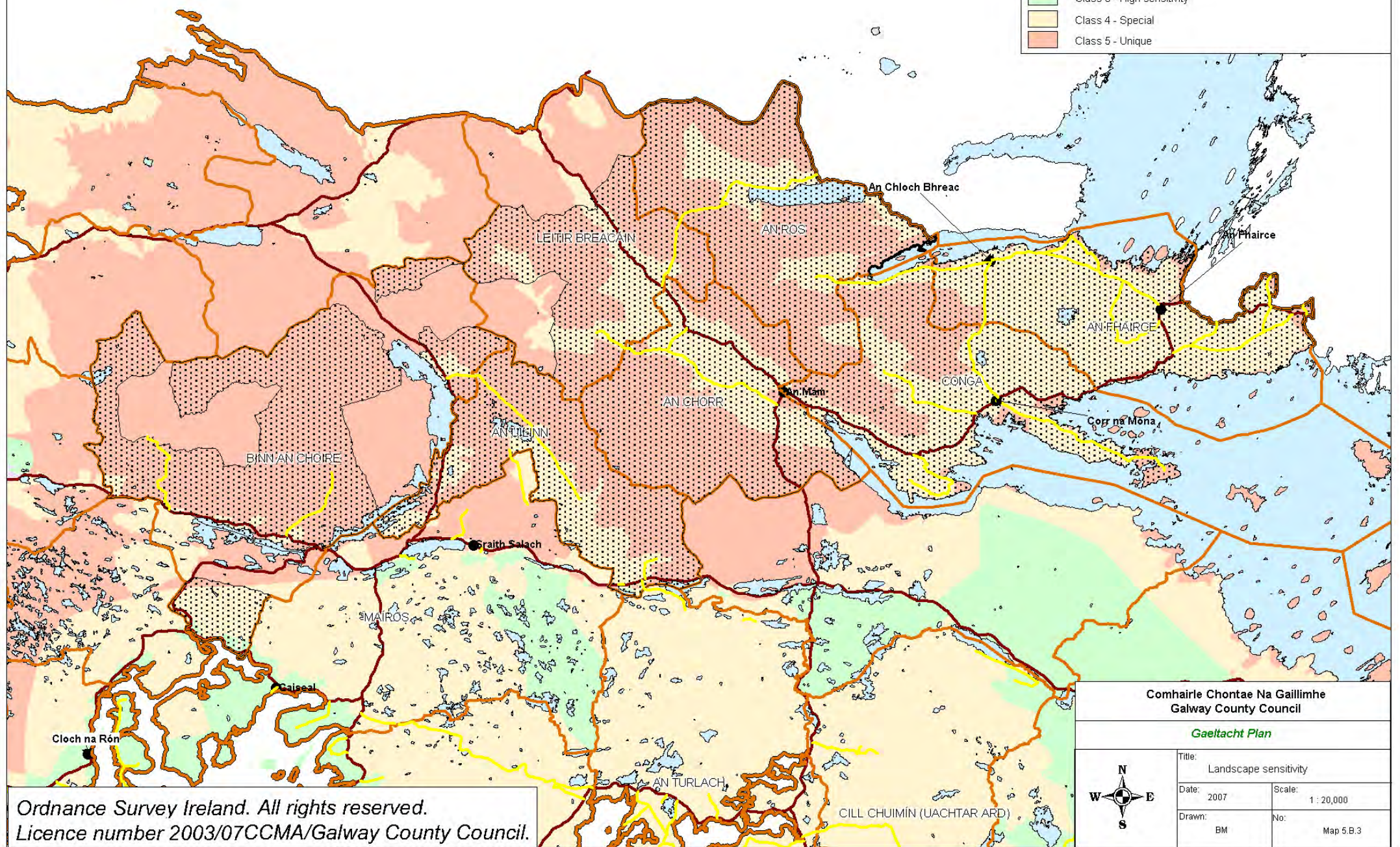
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Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
Gaeiltacht Plan		
Title: General Map		
Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 20,000	
Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.B.1	

District B : Dúiche Sheoigheach

Landscape Sensitivity

- Class 1 - Low sensitivity
- Class 2 - Moderate sensitivity
- Class 3 - High sensitivity
- Class 4 - Special
- Class 5 - Unique

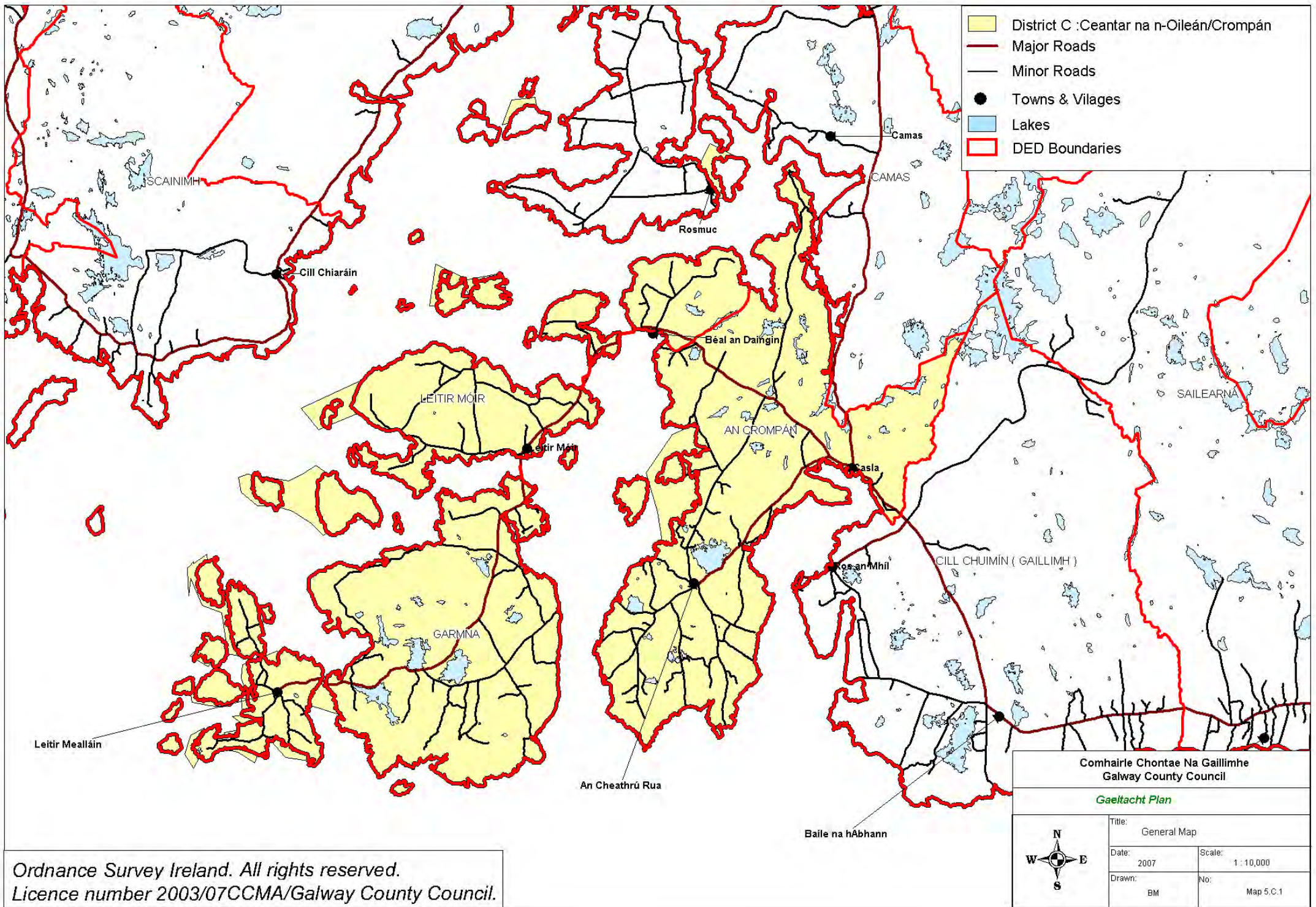


**Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council**

Gaeilteacht Plan

Title: Landscape sensitivity	
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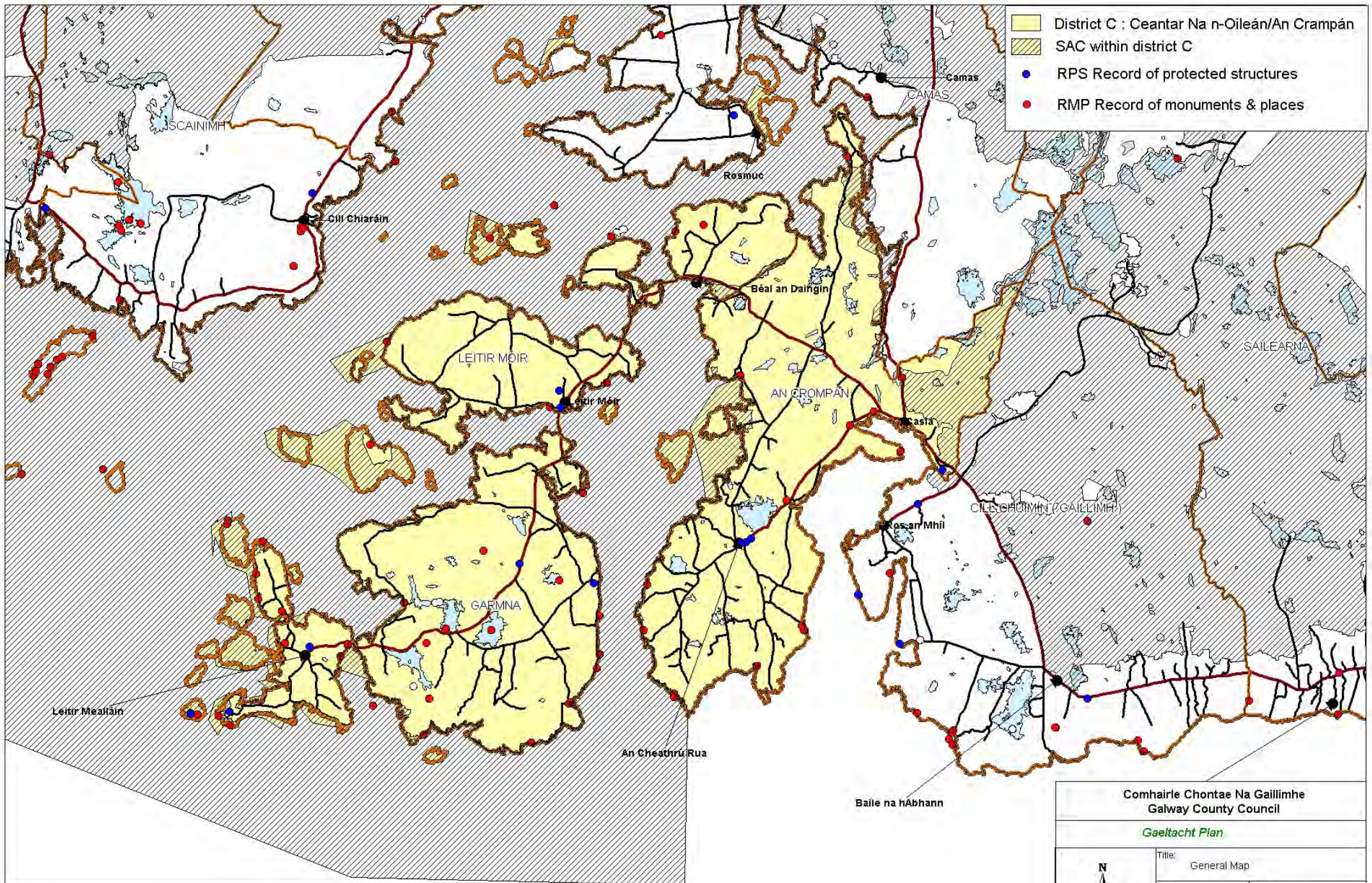
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- District C :Ceantar na n-Oileán/Crompán
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Towns & Vilages
- Lakes
- DED Boundaries

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeilacht Plan</i>		
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	Date: 2007	Scale: 1:10,000
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.C.1

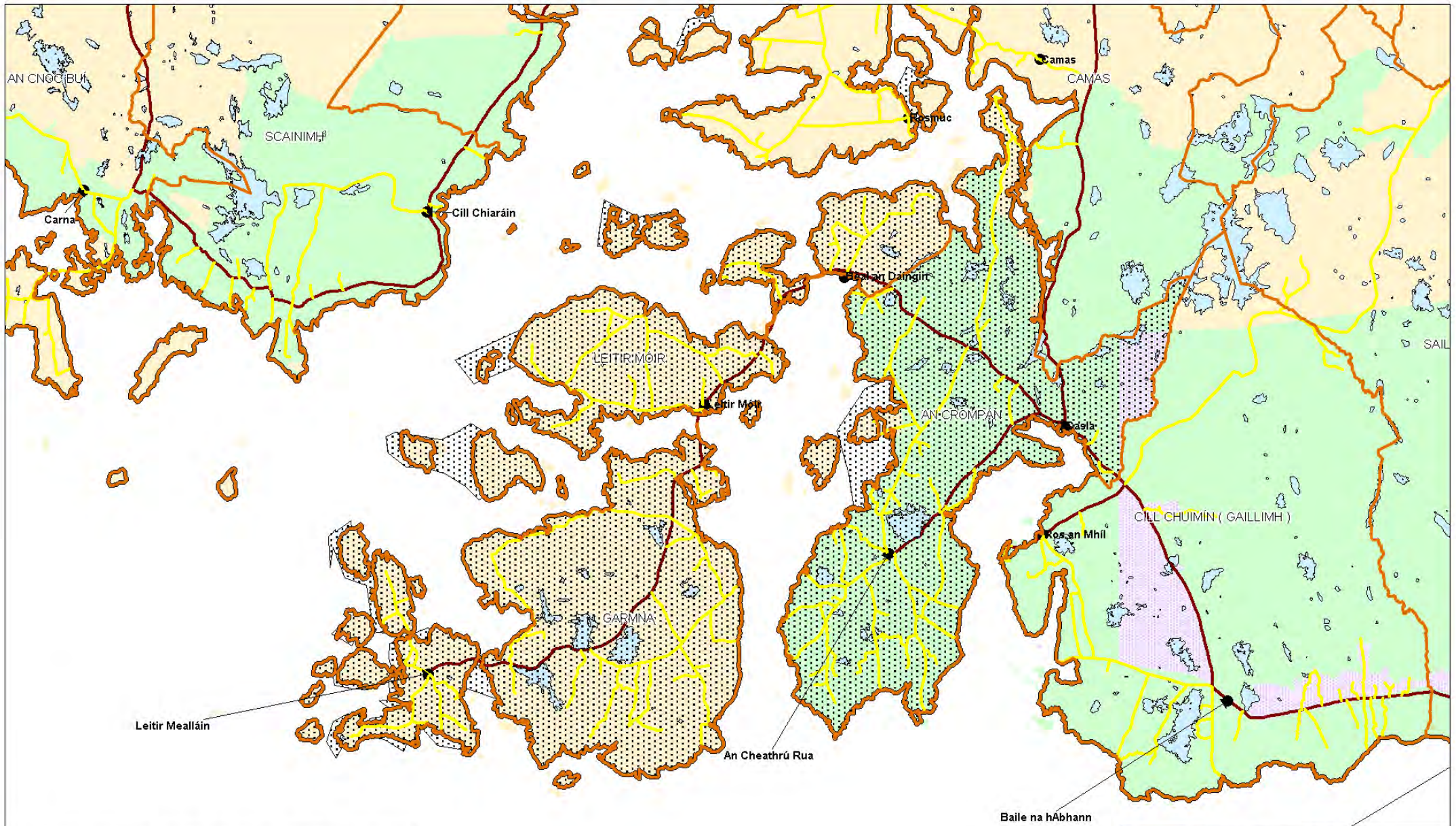
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


- District C : Ceantar Na n-Oileán/An Crampán
- SAC within district C
- RPS Record of protected structures
- RMP Record of monuments & places






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<i>Gaeltacht Plan</i>		
	Title: General Map	
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	Drawn: BM	No: Map.5.C.2




 District C : Ceantar na n-Oileán / An Croompán

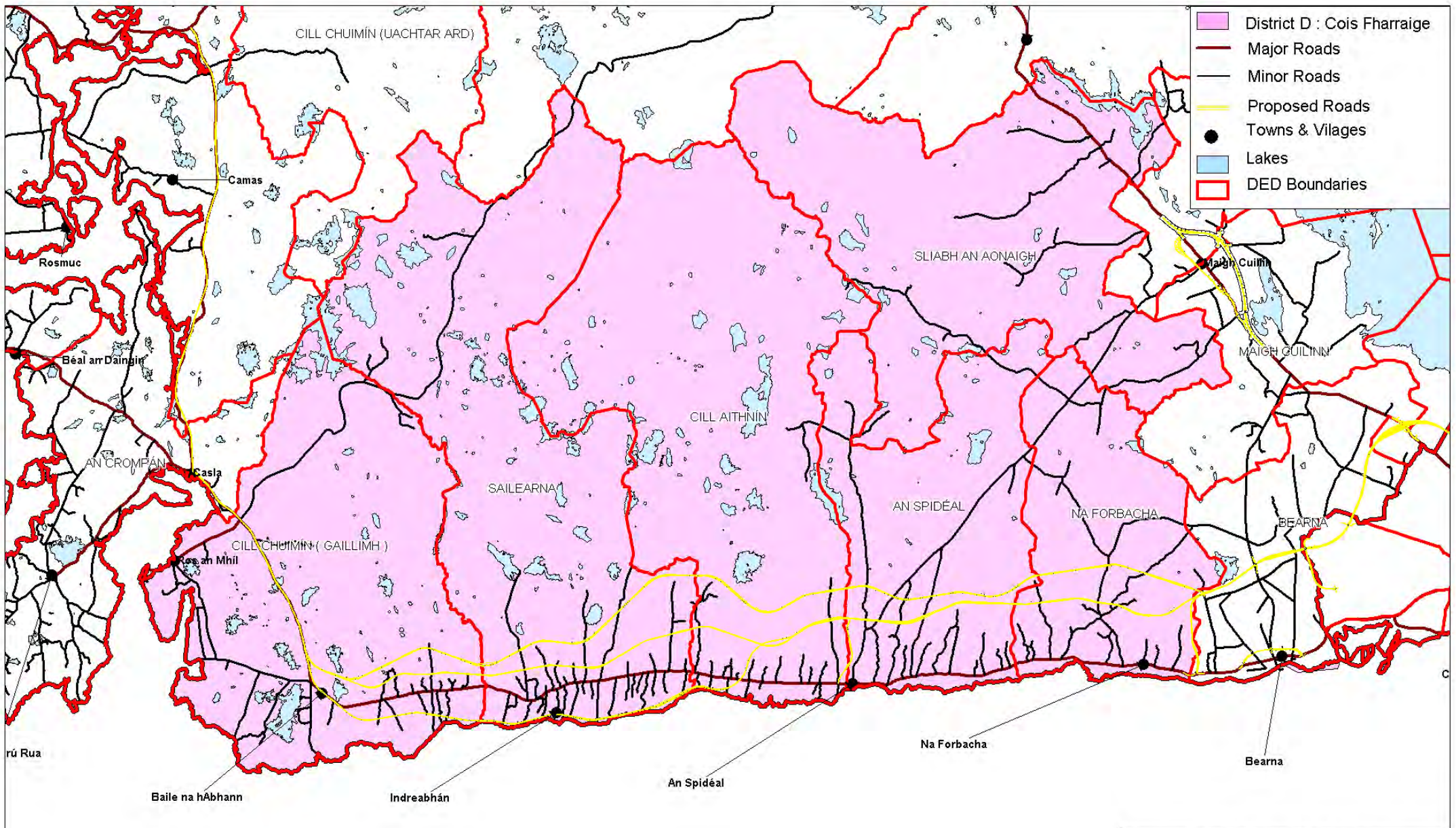
Landscape Sensitivity

-  Class 1 - Low sensitivity
-  Class 2 - Moderate sensitivity
-  Class 3 - High sensitivity
-  Class 4 - Special
-  Class 5 - Unique

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan

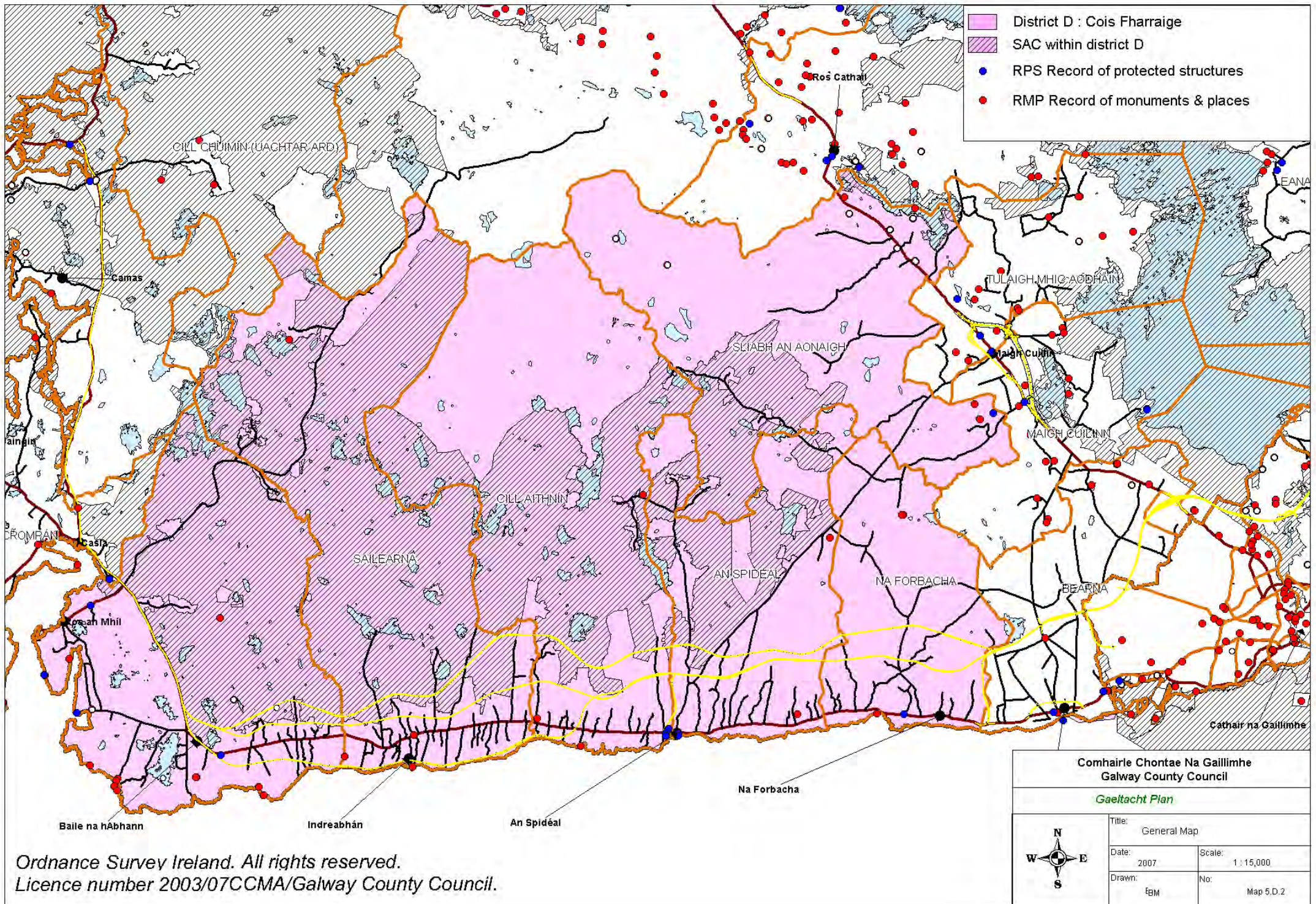
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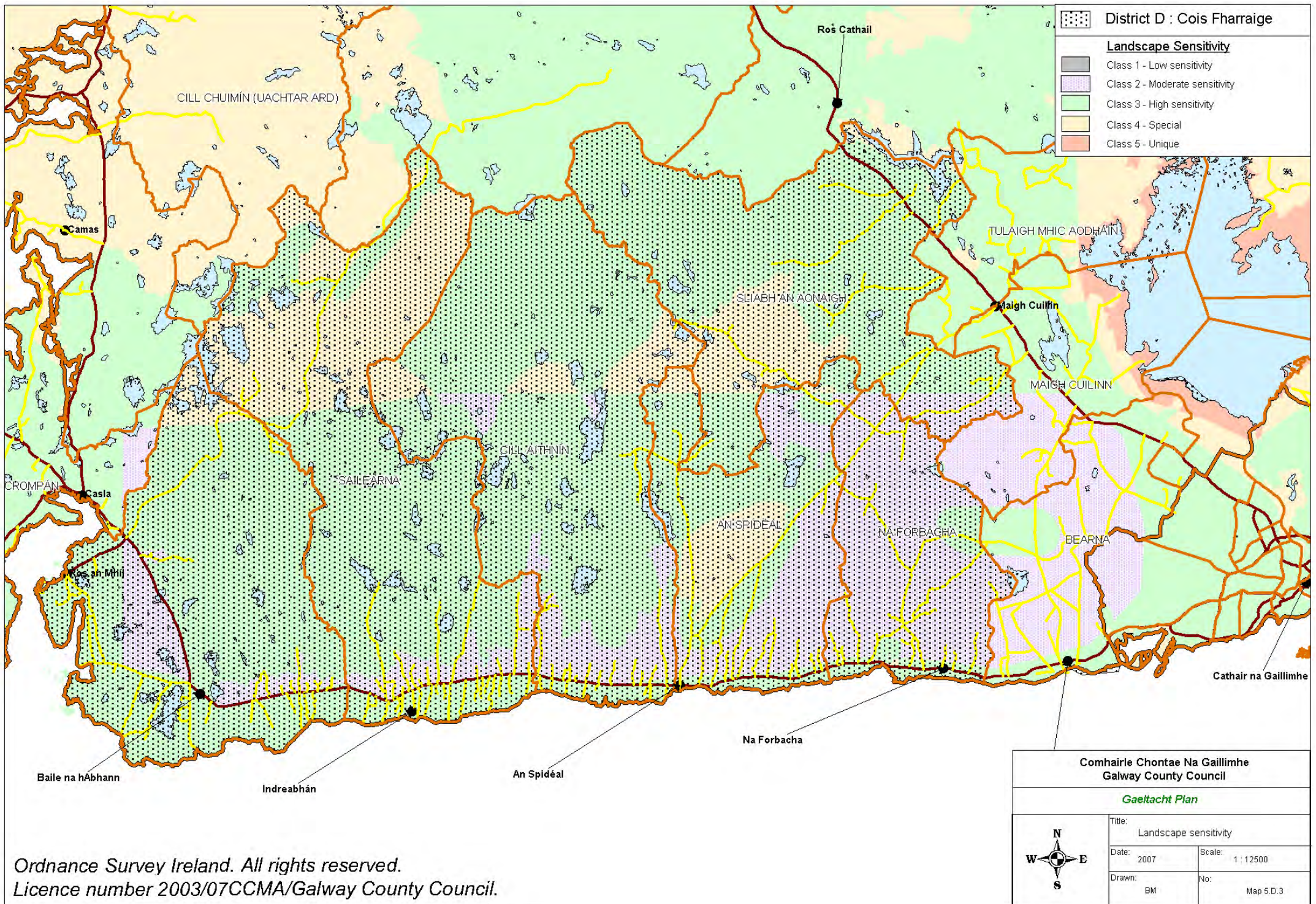
- District D : Cois Fharrage
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Proposed Roads
- Towns & Vilages
- Lakes
- DED Boundaries

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeltacht Plan</i>		
	Title: General Map	
	Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 7500
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.D.1

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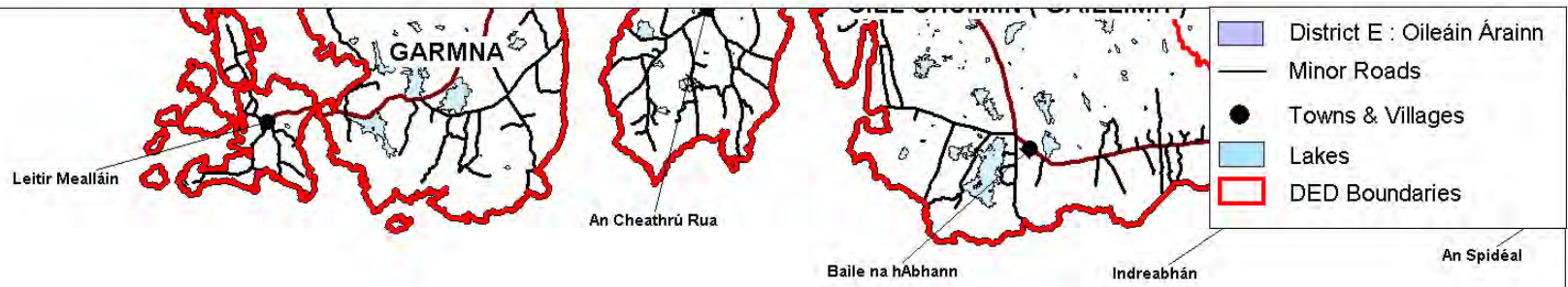
District D : Cois Fharráige

Landscape Sensitivity

- Class 1 - Low sensitivity
- Class 2 - Moderate sensitivity
- Class 3 - High sensitivity
- Class 4 - Special
- Class 5 - Unique

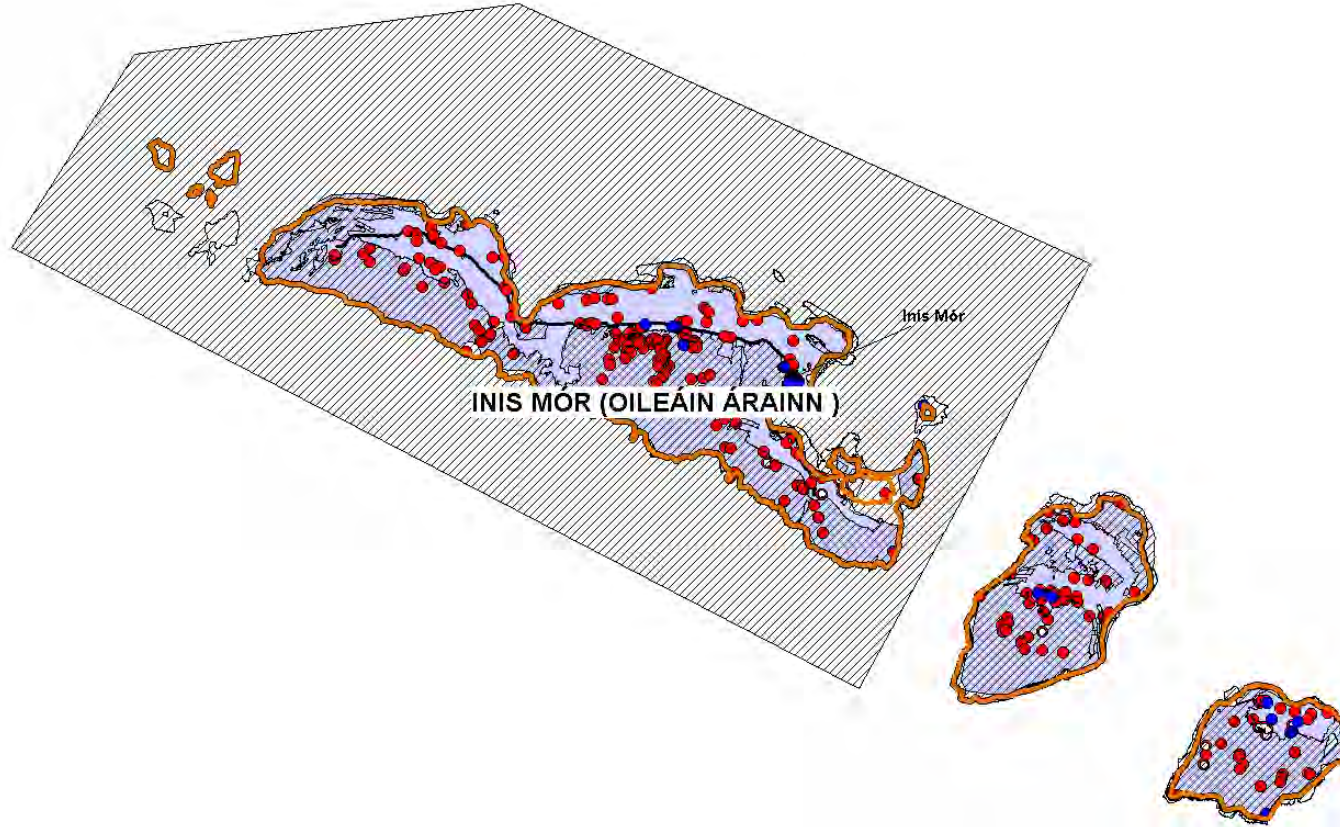
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Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeilacht Plan</i>		
	Title: Landscape sensitivity	
	Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 12500
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.D.3



Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeltacht Plan</i>		
	Title: General Map	
	Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 15,000
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.E.1

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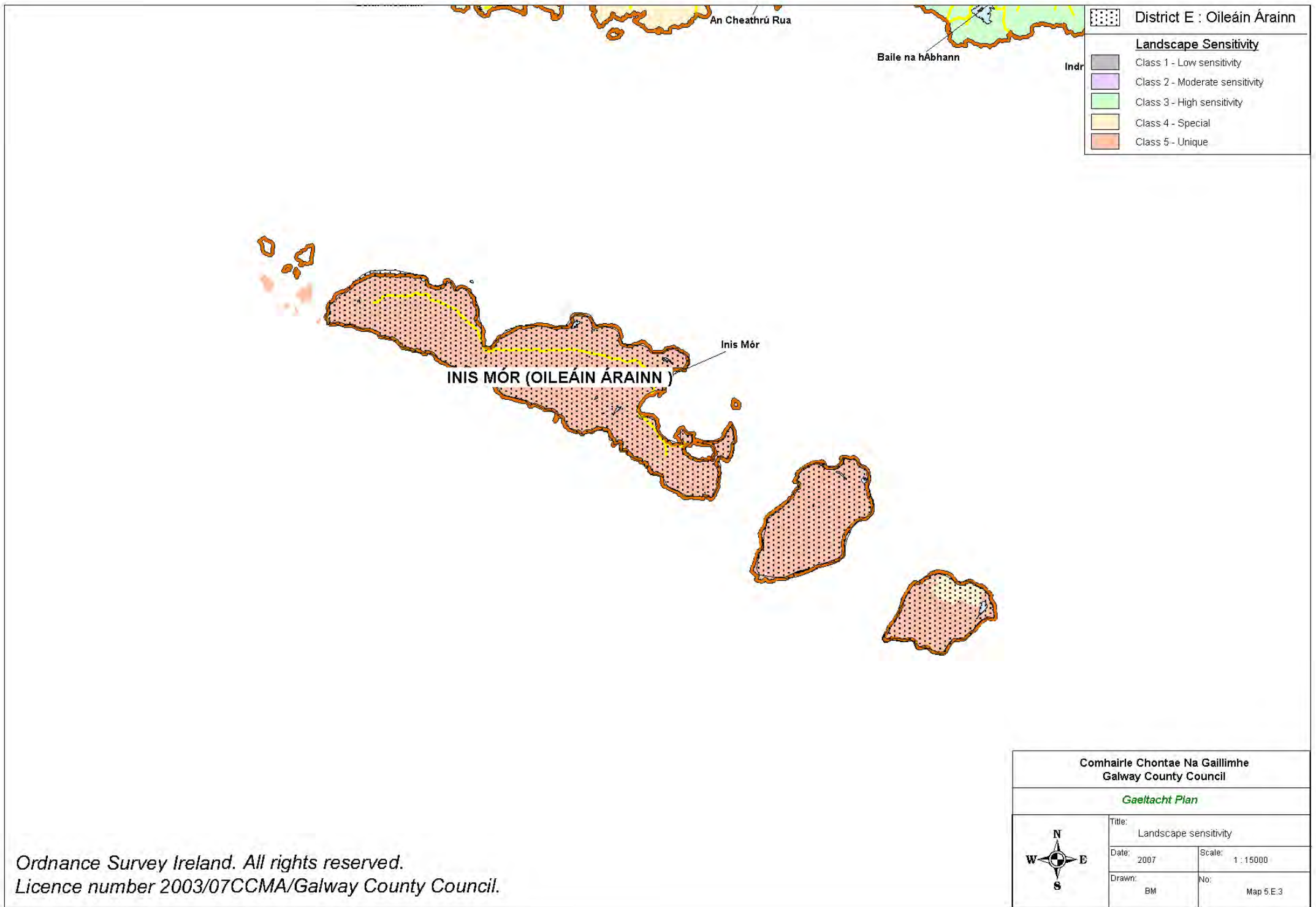


- District E : Oileáin Árann
- SAC within district E
- RPS Record of protected structures
- RMP Record of monuments & places

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan

	Title: General Map	
	Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 15,000
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.E.2



District E : Oileáin Árainn

Landscape Sensitivity

- Class 1 - Low sensitivity
- Class 2 - Moderate sensitivity
- Class 3 - High sensitivity
- Class 4 - Special
- Class 5 - Unique

INIS MÓR (OILEÁIN ÁRAINN)

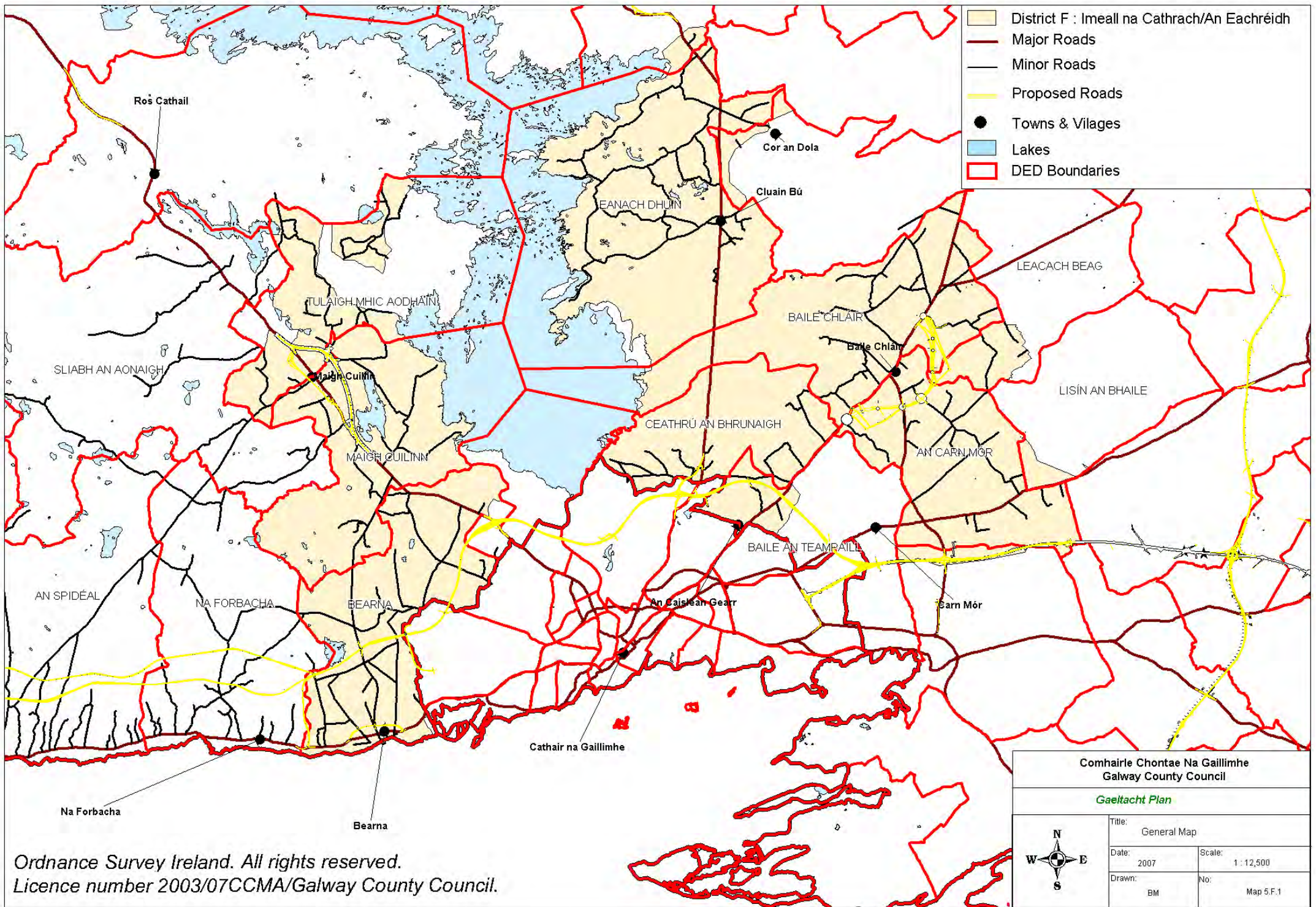
Inis Mór

An Cheathrú Rua

Baile na hÁbhann

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council		
<i>Gaeltacht Plan</i>		
	Title: Landscape sensitivity	
	Date: 2007	Scale: 1 : 15000
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.E.3

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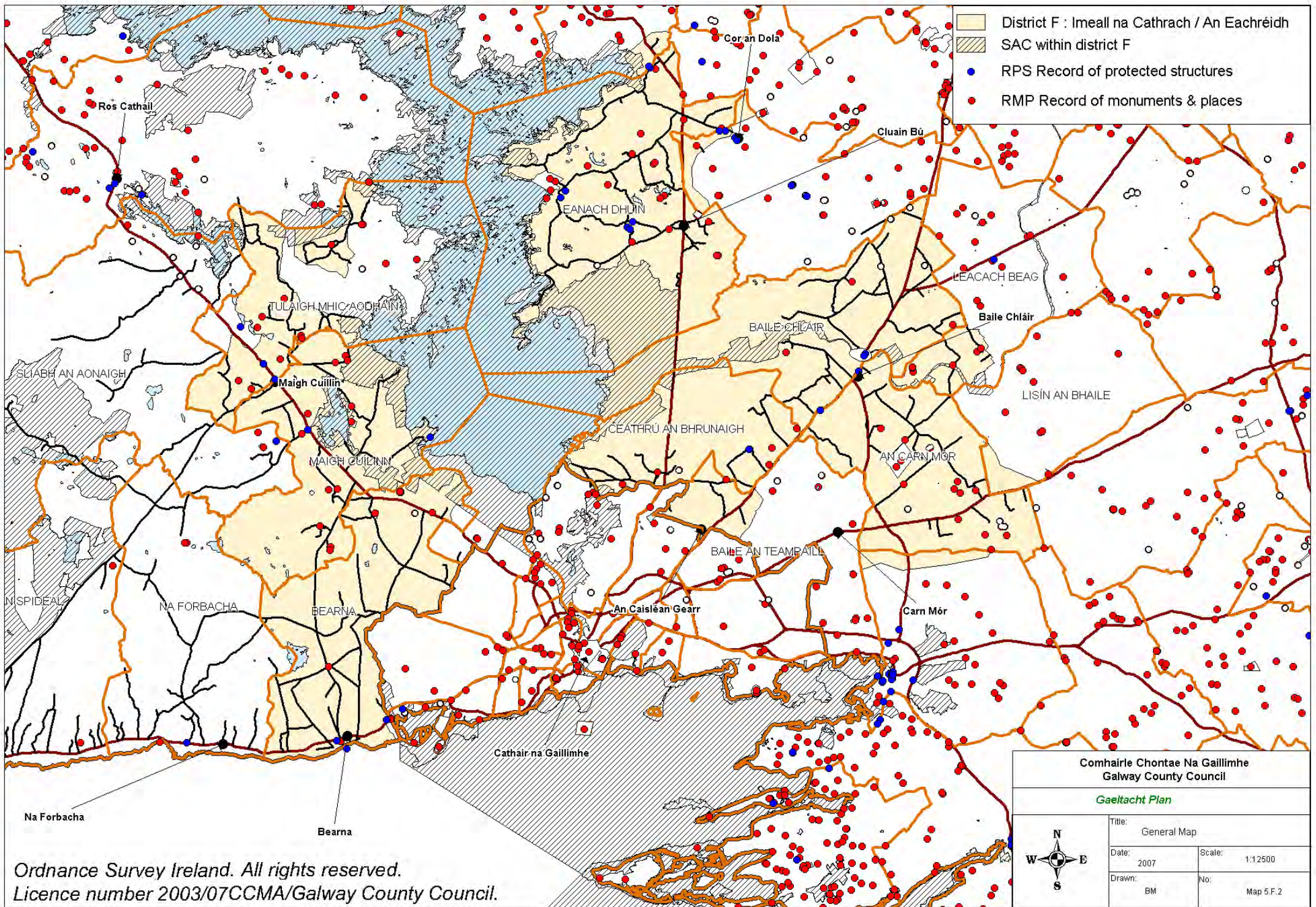
- District F : Imeall na Cathrach/An Eachréidh
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Proposed Roads
- Towns & Villages
- Lakes
- DED Boundaries

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Gaeilacht Plan

	Title: General Map	
	Date: 2007	Scale: 1:12,500
	Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.F.1

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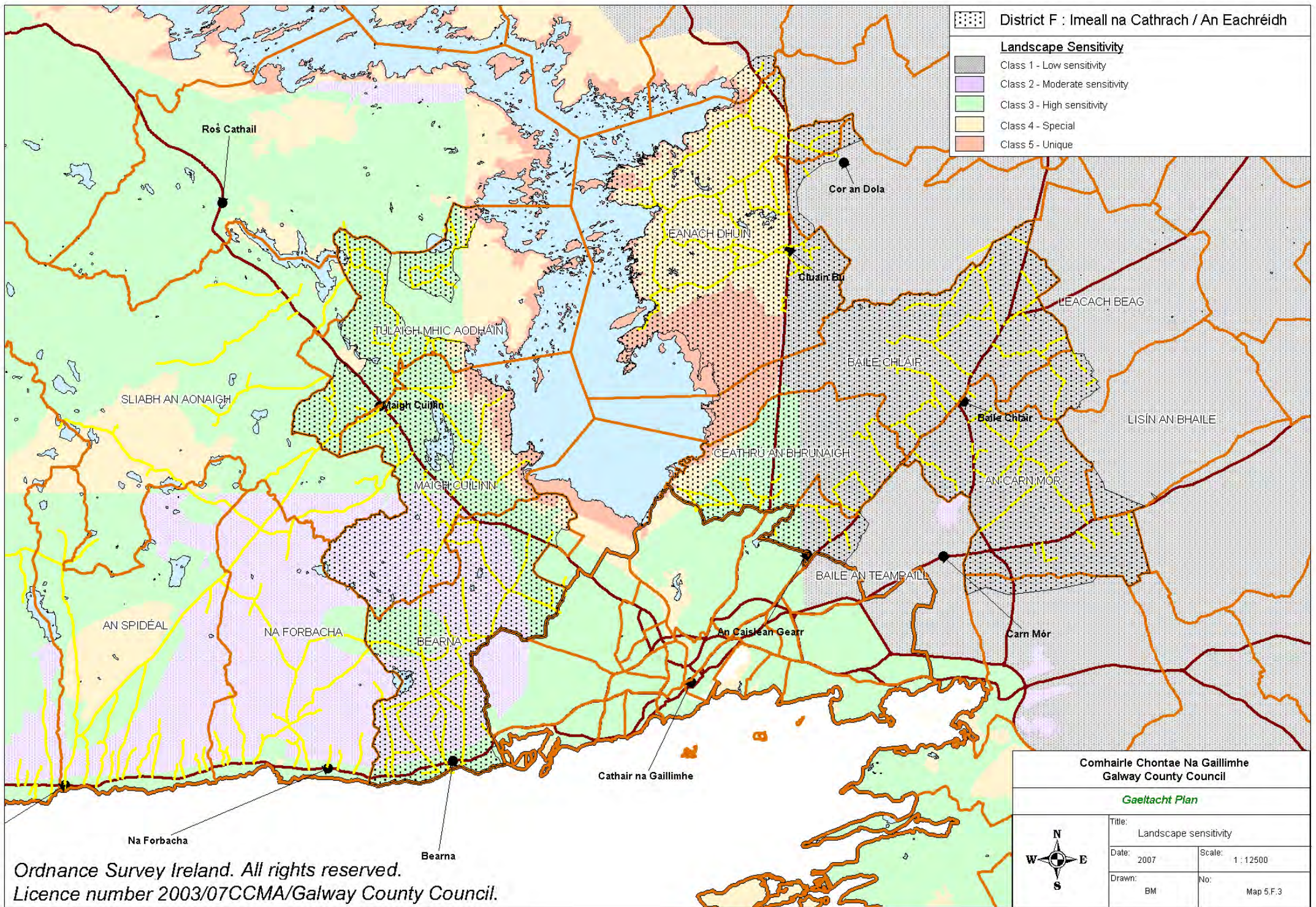
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 Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan

Title: General Map	
Date: 2007	Scale: 1:12500
Drawn: BM	No: Map 5.F.2

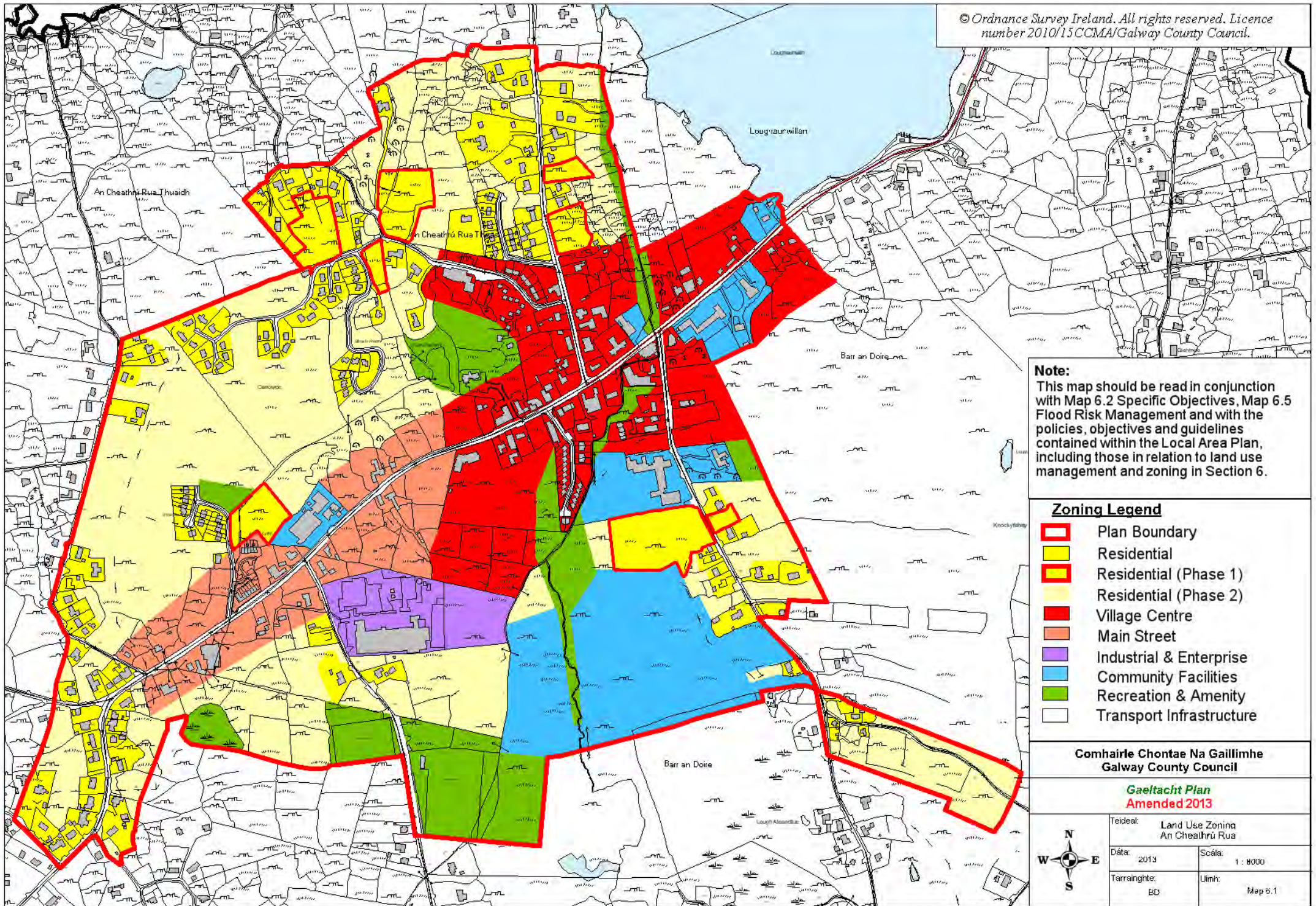




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Appendix 1-Maps-An heathrú Rua





Note:
 This map should be read in conjunction with Map 6.2 Specific Objectives, Map 6.5 Flood Risk Management and with the policies, objectives and guidelines contained within the Local Area Plan, including those in relation to land use management and zoning in Section 6.

Zoning Legend

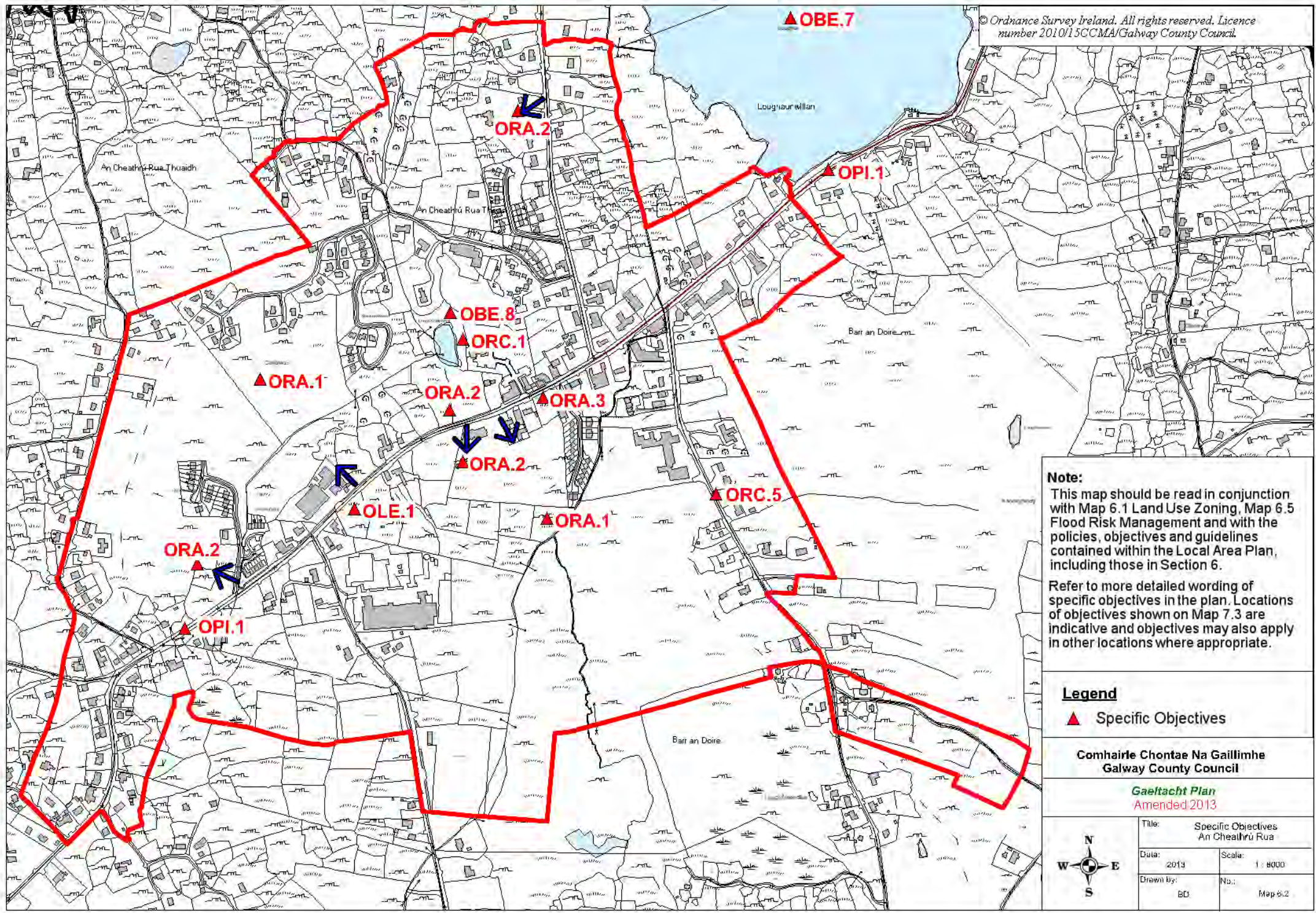
- Plan Boundary
- Residential
- Residential (Phase 1)
- Residential (Phase 2)
- Village Centre
- Main Street
- Industrial & Enterprise
- Community Facilities
- Recreation & Amenity
- Transport Infrastructure

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
 Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan
 Amended 2013



Teideal:	Land Use Zoning An Cheathrú Rua	
Dáta:	2013	Scála: 1 : 8000
Tarraingte:	BD	Uimh: Map 6.1



Note:
 This map should be read in conjunction with Map 6.1 Land Use Zoning, Map 6.5 Flood Risk Management and with the policies, objectives and guidelines contained within the Local Area Plan, including those in Section 6.
 Refer to more detailed wording of specific objectives in the plan. Locations of objectives shown on Map 7.3 are indicative and objectives may also apply in other locations where appropriate.

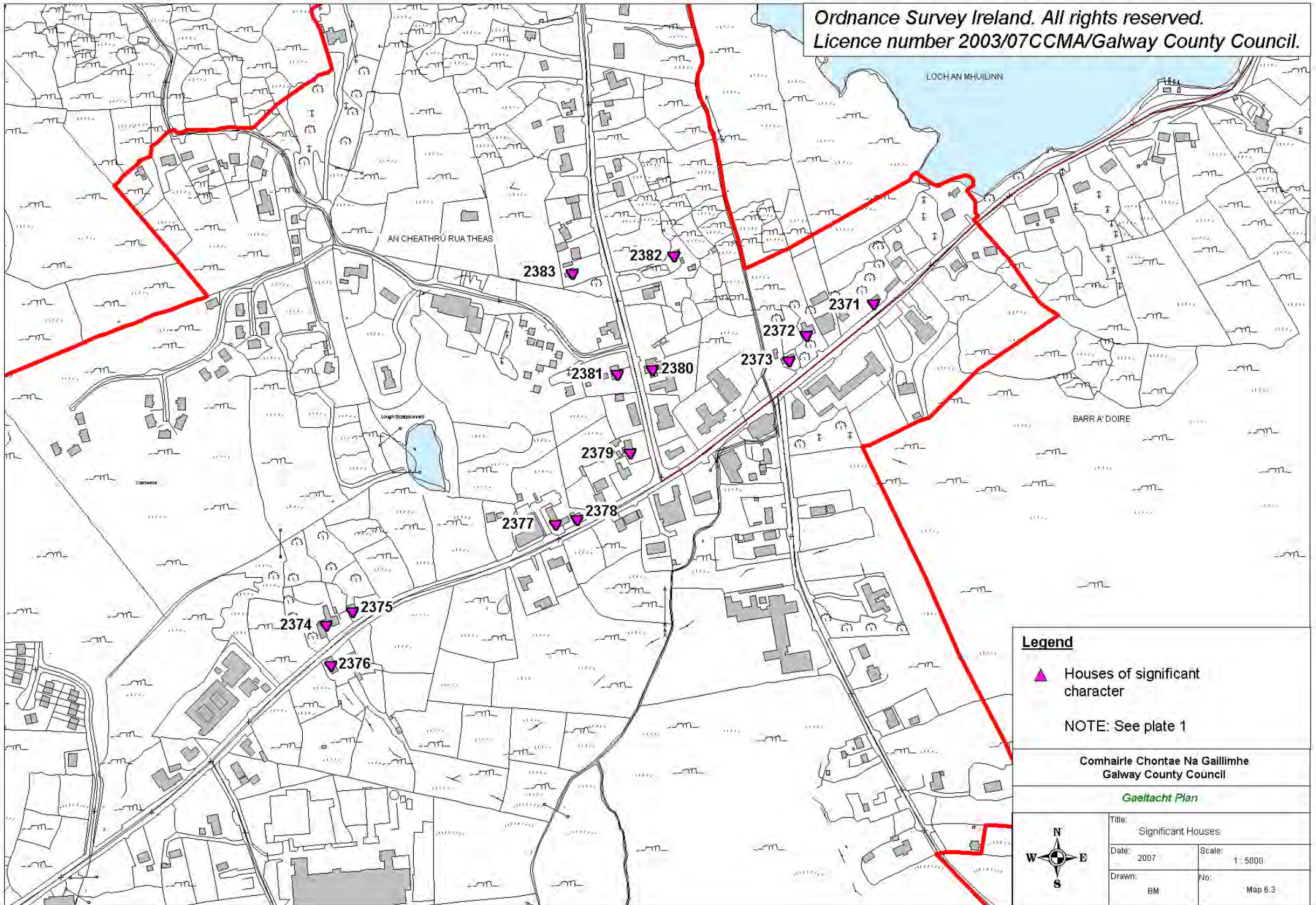
Legend
 ▲ Specific Objectives

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
 Galway County Council

Gaeilteacht Plan
 Amended 2013



Title: Specific Objectives An Cheathrú Rua	
Date: 2013	Scale: 1 : 8000
Drawn by: BD	Ns.: Map 6.2



Legend

- ▲ Houses of significant character










NOTE: See plate 1














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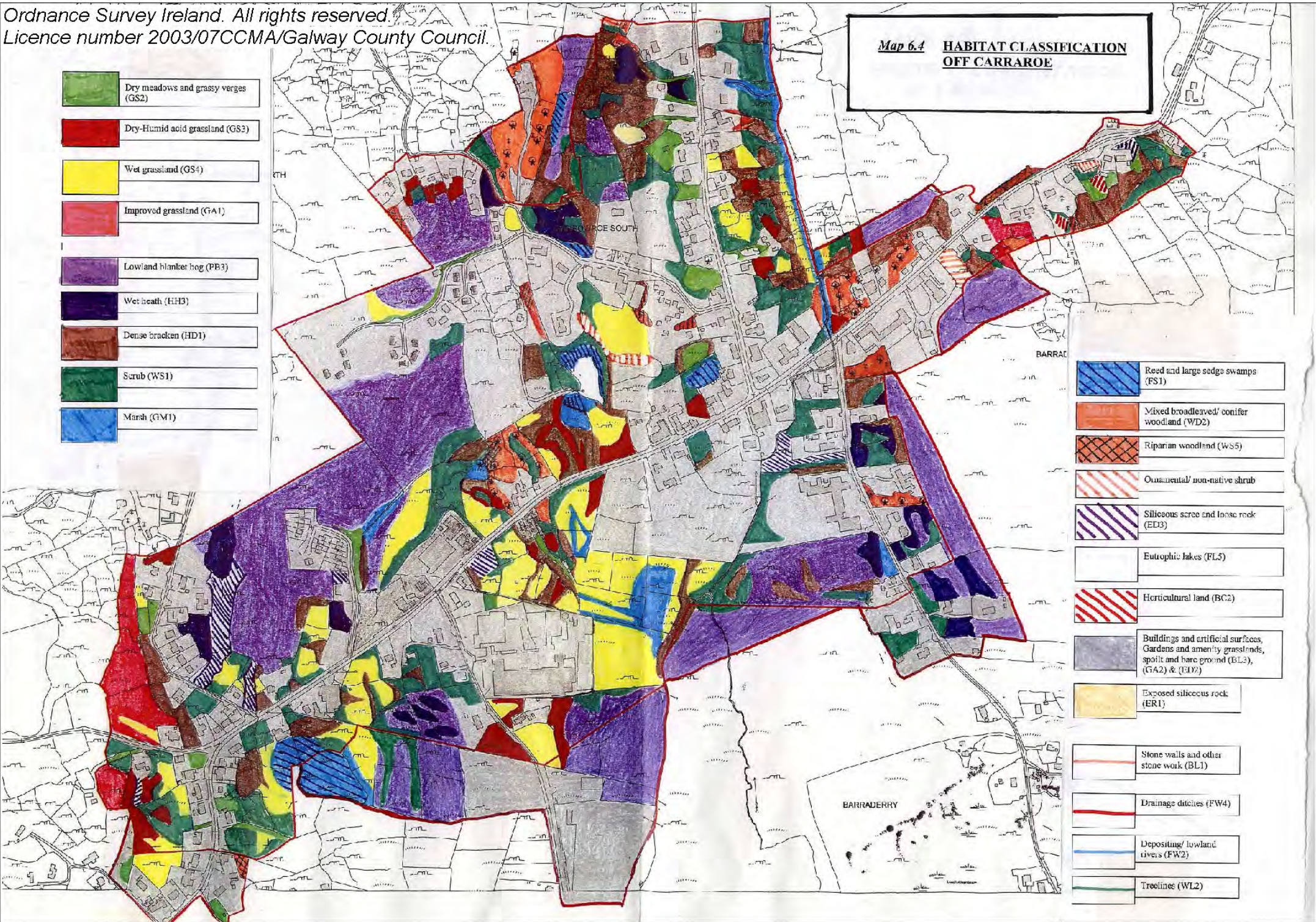
Gaeltacht Plan

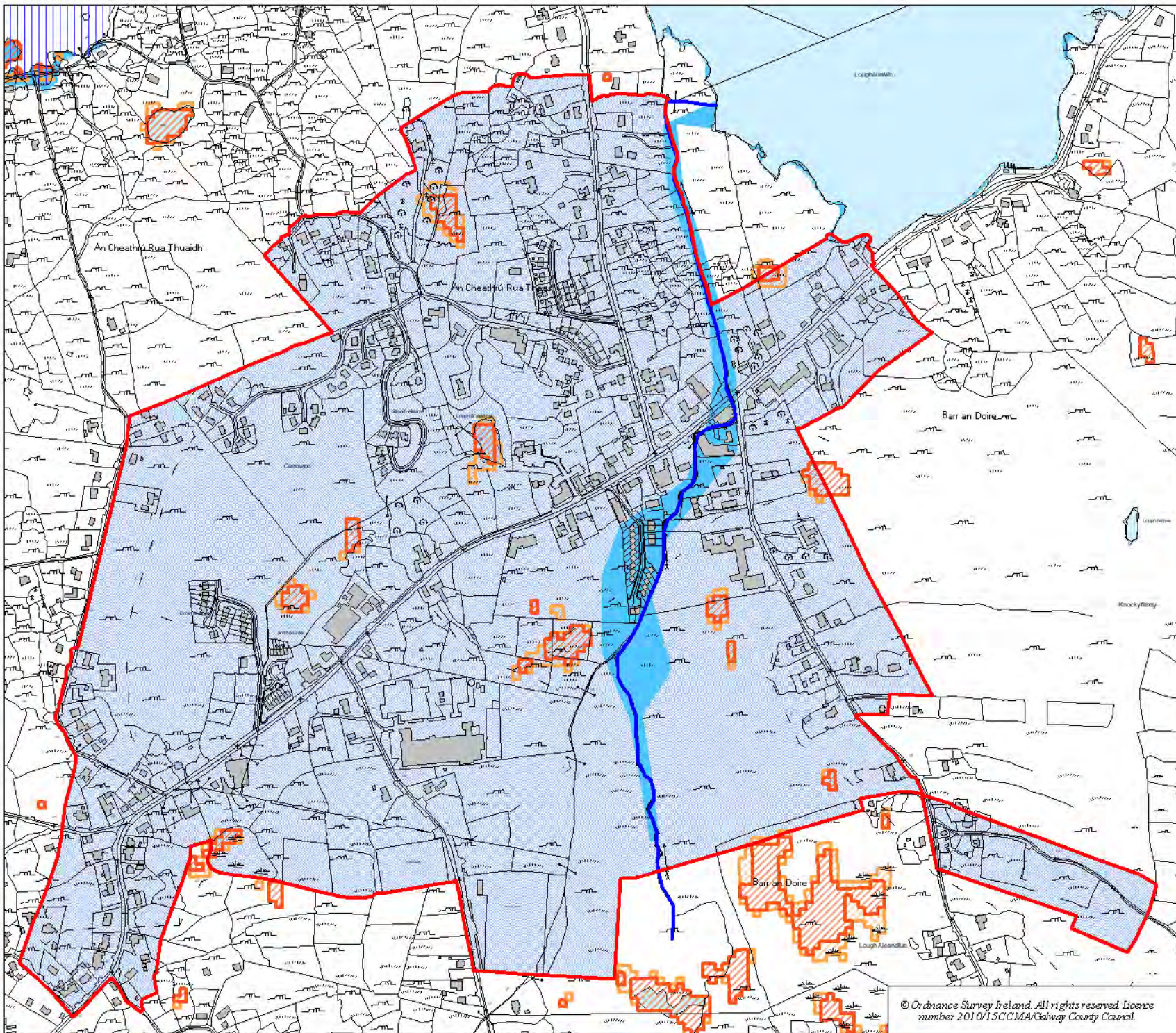
Title: Significant Houses	
Date: 2007	Scale: 1: 5000
Drawn: BM	No: Map 6.3

**Map 6.4 HABITAT CLASSIFICATION
 OFF CARRAROE**

-  Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2)
-  Dry-Humid acid grassland (GS3)
-  Wet grassland (GS4)
-  Improved grassland (GA1)
-  Lowland blanket bog (PB3)
-  Wet heath (HH3)
-  Dense bracken (HD1)
-  Scrub (WS1)
-  Marsh (GM1)

-  Reed and large sedge swamps (FS1)
-  Mixed broadleaved/ conifer woodland (WD2)
-  Riparian woodland (WS5)
-  Ornamental/ non-native shrub
-  Siliceous scree and loose rock (ED3)
-  Eutrophic lakes (FL5)
-  Horticultural land (BC2)
-  Buildings and artificial surfaces, Gardens and amenity grasslands, spoil and bare ground (BL3), (GA2) & (IU2)
-  Exposed siliceous rock (ER1)
-  Stone walls and other stone work (BL1)
-  Drainage ditches (FW4)
-  Depositing/ lowland rivers (FW2)
-  Treelines (WL2)





Important User Note:

The flood information presented in this Map (6.5) has been compiled based on OPW Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), research carried out on behalf of Galway County Council (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Galway) and tested against knowledge of flood events in the area. They indicate broadly areas that may be prone to flooding, and form part of the flood risk assessment and consideration for the Plan.

The flood extents on the OPW PFRA Maps are based on broad-scale simple analysis and may not be accurate for a specific location/use. Information on the purpose, development and limitations of the OPW PFRA maps are available in the relevant report see www.cfram.ie. Users should seek professional advice if they intend to rely on the OPW PFRA Maps in any way.

Note:
This map should be read in conjunction with Map 6.1 Land Use Zoning, Map 6.2 Specific Objectives and the policies, objectives and guidelines contained within the Local Area Plan, including those related to flood risk management and assessment.

Legend

-  Plan Boundary
-  Indicative Flood Zone A (PFRA Fluvial 100/ Coastal Indicative)
-  Indicative Flood Zone B (PFRA Fluvial 1000/ Coastal Indicative)
-  Indicative Flood Zone C (Areas not covered by A or B)
-  Pluvial Indicative (PFRA)
-  Pluvial Extreme (PFRA)
-  Galway Bay
-  Rivers / Streams
-  Lakes

**Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council**

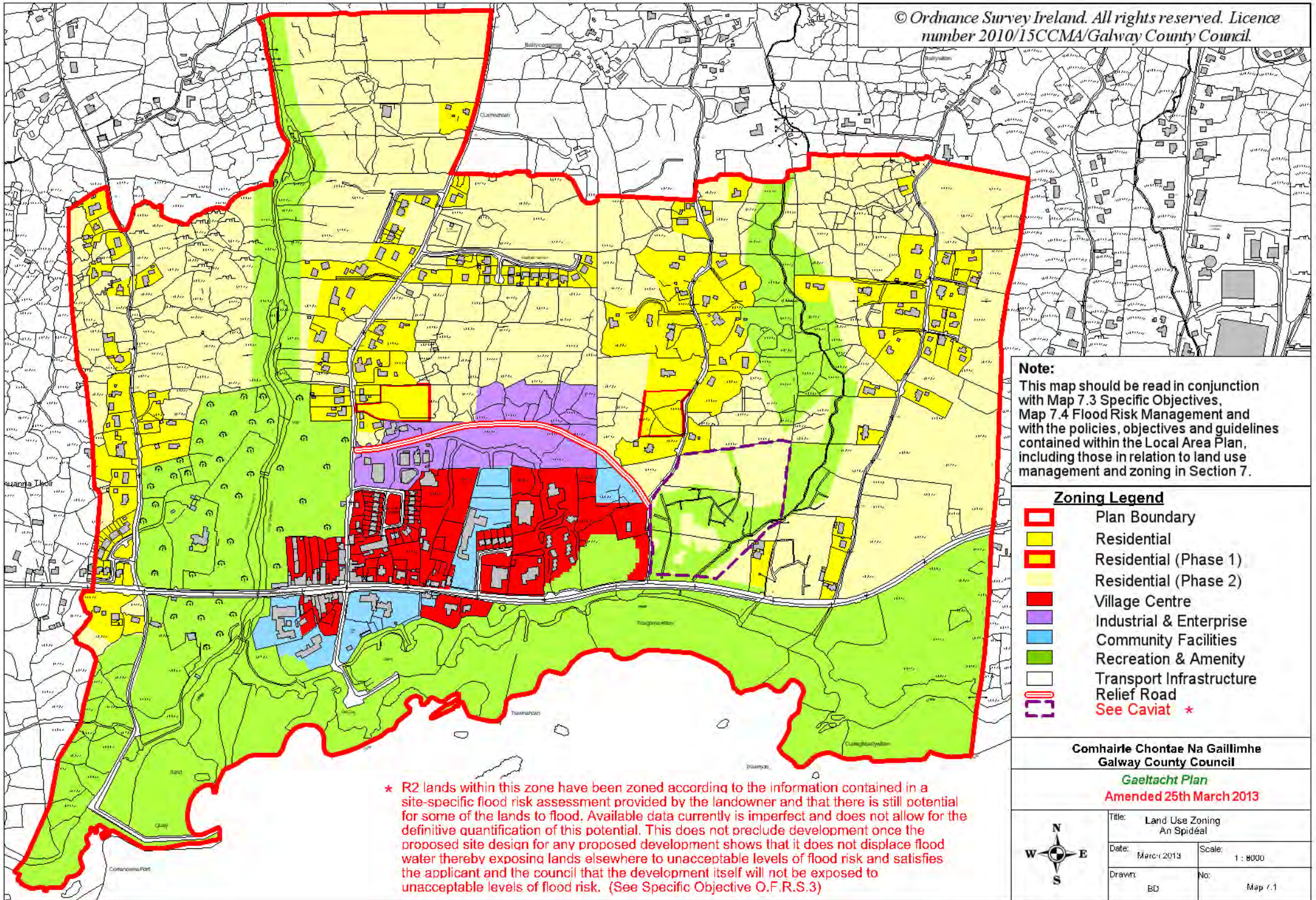
**Gaeltacht Plan
Amended 2013**



Title: Flood Risk Management An Cheathrú Rua	
Date: 2013	Scale: 1 : 8000
Drawn: BD	No: Map 6.5

Appendix 1-Maps-An Spidéal





Note:
 This map should be read in conjunction with Map 7.3 Specific Objectives, Map 7.4 Flood Risk Management and with the policies, objectives and guidelines contained within the Local Area Plan, including those in relation to land use management and zoning in Section 7.

- Zoning Legend**
- Plan Boundary
 - Residential
 - Residential (Phase 1)
 - Residential (Phase 2)
 - Village Centre
 - Industrial & Enterprise
 - Community Facilities
 - Recreation & Amenity
 - Transport Infrastructure
 - Relief Road
 - See Caviat *

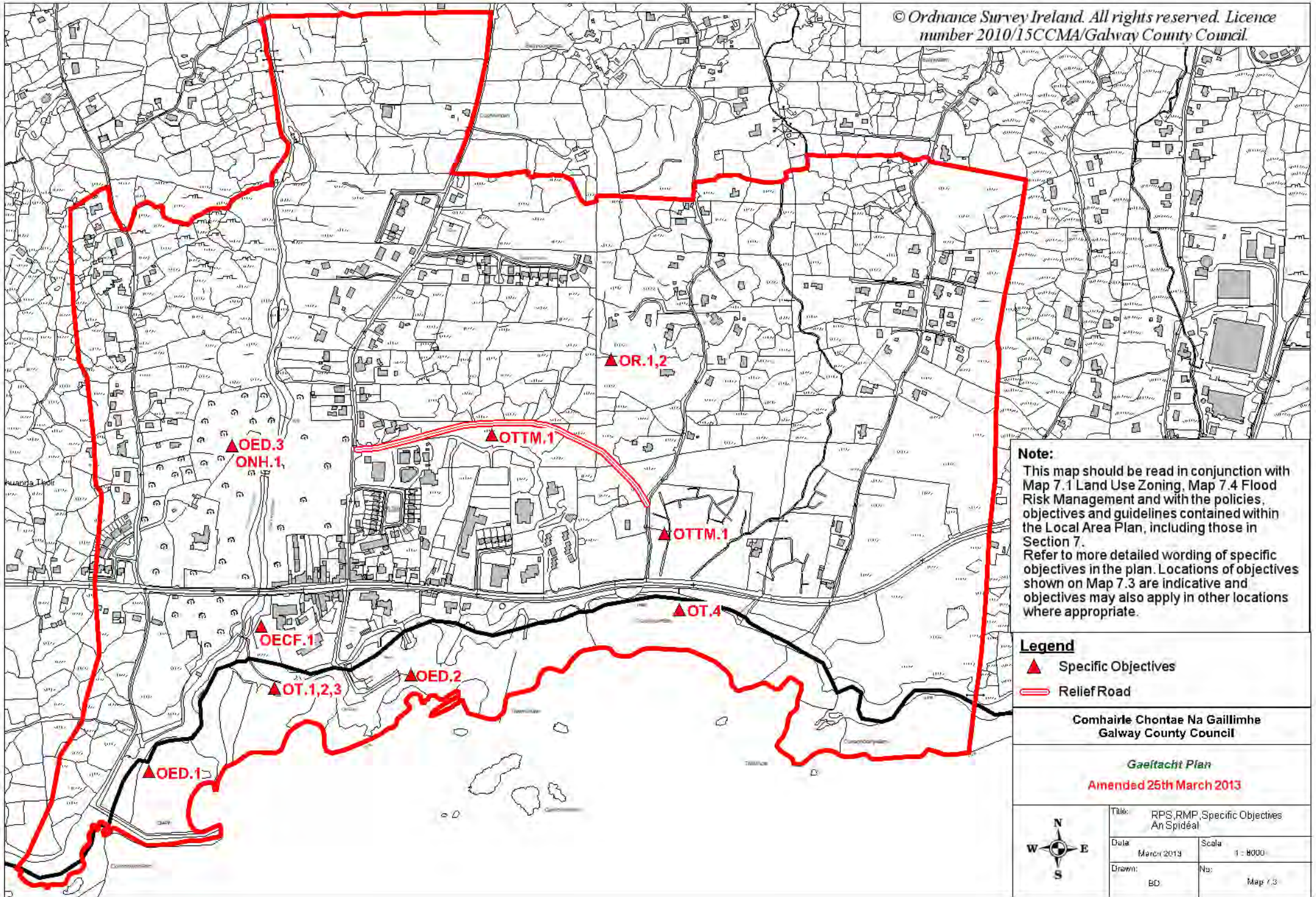
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 Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan
 Amended 25th March 2013



Title: Land Use Zoning An Spidéal	
Date: March 2013	Scale: 1 : 8000
Drawn: BD	No: Map 7.1

* R2 lands within this zone have been zoned according to the information contained in a site-specific flood risk assessment provided by the landowner and that there is still potential for some of the lands to flood. Available data currently is imperfect and does not allow for the definitive quantification of this potential. This does not preclude development once the proposed site design for any proposed development shows that it does not displace flood water thereby exposing lands elsewhere to unacceptable levels of flood risk and satisfies the applicant and the council that the development itself will not be exposed to unacceptable levels of flood risk. (See Specific Objective O.F.R.S.3)



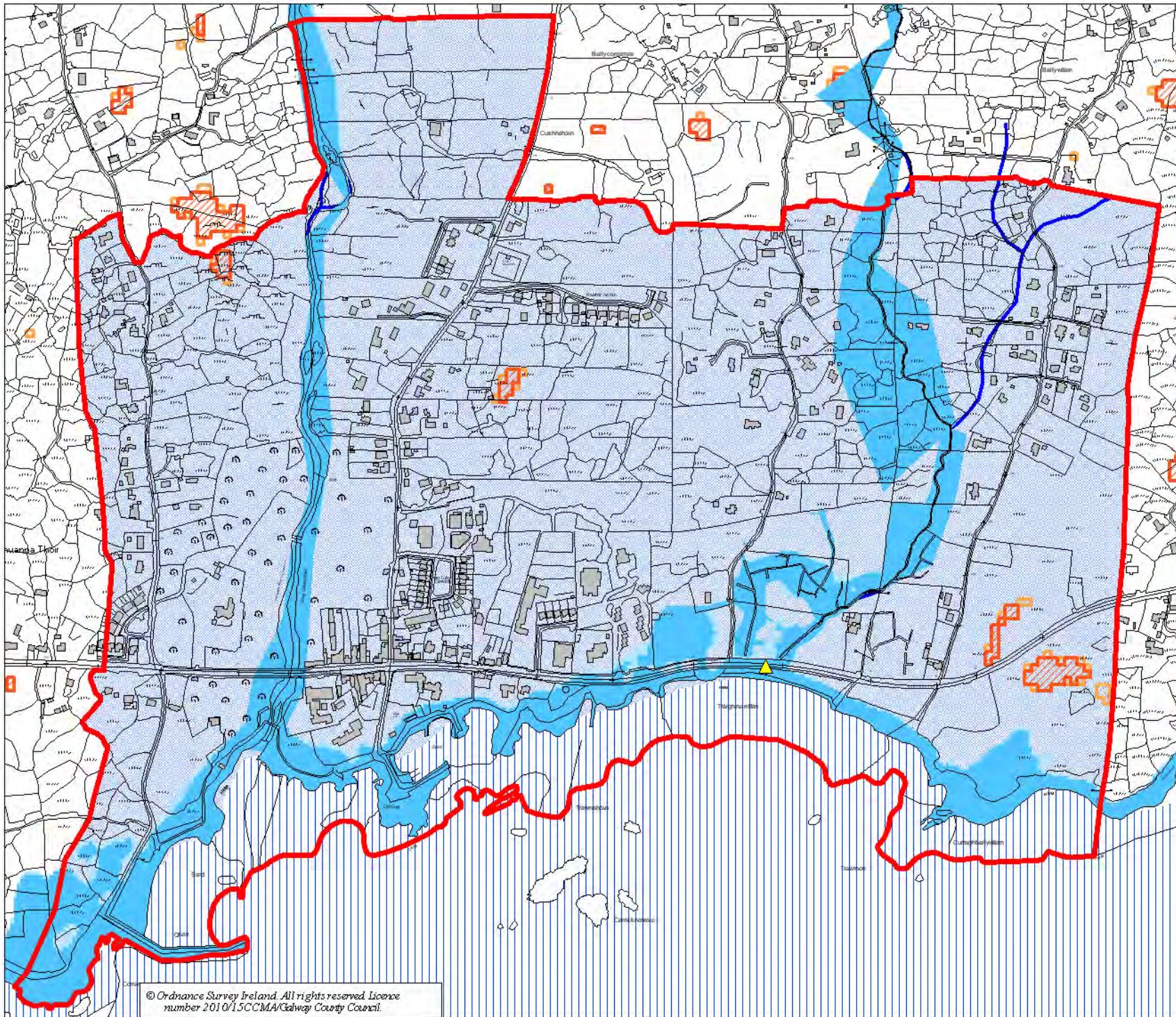
Note:
 This map should be read in conjunction with Map 7.1 Land Use Zoning, Map 7.4 Flood Risk Management and with the policies, objectives and guidelines contained within the Local Area Plan, including those in Section 7. Refer to more detailed wording of specific objectives in the plan. Locations of objectives shown on Map 7.3 are indicative and objectives may also apply in other locations where appropriate.

Legend
 ▲ Specific Objectives
 == Relief Road

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 Galway County Council

Gaeilteacht Plan
 Amended 25th March 2013

	Title: RPS,RMP, Specific Objectives An Spidéal	
	Date: Mar 2013	Scale: 1:8000
	Drawn: BD	No: Map 7.3



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Important User Note:
 The flood information presented in this Map (7.4) has been compiled based on OPW Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), research carried out on behalf of Galway County Council (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Galway) and tested against knowledge of flood events in the area. They indicate broadly areas that may be prone to flooding, and form part of the flood risk assessment and consideration for the Plan.

The flood extents on the OPW PFRA Maps are based on broad-scale simple analysis and may not be accurate for a specific location/use. Information on the purpose, development and limitations of the OPW PFRA maps are available in the relevant report see www.cfram.ie. Users should seek professional advice if they intend to rely on the OPW PFRA Maps in any way.

Note:
 This map should be read in conjunction with Map 7.1 Land Use Zoning, Map 7.3 Specific Objectives and the policies, objectives and guidelines contained within the Local Area Plan, including those related to flood risk management and assessment.

- Legend**
- Plan Boundary
 - Indicative Flood Zone A (PFRA Fluvial 100 / Coastal Indicative / SFRA Data)
 - Indicative Flood Zone B (PFRA Fluvial 1000 / Coastal Extreme)
 - Indicative Flood Zone C (Areas not covered by A or B)
 - Pluvial Indicative (PFRA)
 - Pluvial Extreme (PFRA)
 - Recorded / Historical Flood Events
 - Galway Bay
 - Rivers / Streams

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
 Galway County Council

Gaeltacht Plan
 Amended 25th March 2013

	Title: Flood Risk Management An Spidéal	
	Date: March 2013	Scale: 1 : 8000
	Drawn: BD	No: Map 7.4

Appendix 2: Land Use Zoning Objectives, Matrix and Areas



Land Use Zoning Objectives and Zoning Matrix

Areas zoned within the Local Area Plan are for those uses in particular areas for particular purposes as defined in the Planning Acts. The matrix table outlines the zoning objective for each area of the village and indicates the uses which may or may not be considered under each objective identified in the plan. It is acknowledged that this is not an exhaustive list of potential land use zones which may be proposed. Those land uses not listed in the matrix in Schedule 1 will be considered on the merits of the individual planning application the general policies and zoning objectives for the area including the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Development proposals will be expected to be compatible with this land use zoning matrix. However, in certain circumstances further consideration may be given to particular uses which would provide benefit to the wider community which are in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. These uses will also be required to demonstrate that they are consistent with the Plans development standards and the Plans requirements on public health, traffic safety, residential amenity, Heritage, design and visual amenity.

Permitted in Principle (P)

Land uses designated under each zoning objective as "Permitted in Principle" are generally acceptable, subject to compliance with the relevant policies, standards and requirements set out in the Plan.

Open for Consideration (O)

Land uses shown as "Open for Consideration" are uses that are to be considered acceptable in principle in all parts of the relevant use zone. However, such uses may be acceptable in circumstances where the general objectives for the zone and the permitted or existing uses as well as being in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Not Permitted (X)

Land uses that are not indicated as "Permitted in Principle" or Open for Consideration" will not normally be permitted.

Other Uses

Proposed land uses not listed in the matrix will be considered on the merits of the individual planning application the general policies and zoning objectives for the area including the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Land use categories are described below. All zones should be considered as mixed development zones, within the context of the village. Zoning should be considered as primary use zones but not necessarily excluding other development that in the opinion of the Council are necessary for the vitality and proper development of the town.

Residential (R) land use objectives shall be described as follows:

- To provide for residential development.
- To provide a mix of residential choices.
- To protect residential amenity.
- To provide for local shopping, amenity, recreation, education, childcare community and recycling facilities.
- To provide for public services.



- To provide for tourist accommodation.
- To provide for renewable energy choices.

Village Centre (Mixed Development) (VC) zoning objectives shall be described as follows:

- To provide for shopping and retail stores.
- To provide for office development.
- To provide for other appropriate village centre uses including upper floor apartments.
- To preserve existing civic amenity, village centre character, and heritage building sites.
- To improve civic amenity by requiring high standards of urban design.
- To provide for appropriate development on infill sites.
- To provide for amenity, recreation, education, childcare, community, financial, parking, health and recycling facilities.
- To provide for advertising and advertising structures.
- To seek the provision of appropriate public services.
- To provide for tourism-related activities.

Industrial and Enterprise (IE) zoning objectives shall be described as follows:

- To provide for manufacturing and service industry and limited storage facilities.
- To restrict residential development.
- To provide for training, education, childcare, financial, parking and recycling facilities and waste disposal options.
- To provide for advertising and advertising structures.
- To seek the provision of appropriate public services.

Recreation and Amenity (RA) zoning objectives shall be described as follows:

- To provide for public open space.
- To provide for amenity improvement schemes.
- To protect the natural riverside and built heritage.
- To allow for the consideration of community and recycling facilities.
- To avoid inappropriate risk of flooding in flood risk areas and zones.

Community Facilities (CF) zoning objectives shall be generally described as follows:

- To provide for health, welfare, religious, educational, childcare and recycling facilities.
- To seek the provision of appropriate public services.

KEY

P Permitted in principle
O Open for consideration
X Not normally permitted

(R) Residential
(VC) Village Centre (Mixed Dev.)
(IE) Industrial and Enterprise
(RA) Recreation and Amenity
(CF) Community Facility

USE	R	VC	IE	RA	CF
Abattoir	X	X	O	X	X
Advertisements and Advertising Structures	X	P	P	X	O
Aerodrome/Airfield	X	X	X	X	X
Agricultural Buildings	O	X	X	X	X
Agri-Tourism	O	O	X	X	O
Agri-Business	X	O	P	X	O
Amusement Arcade	X	O	X	X	X
Anaerobic Digestion Plant	O	X	X	X	X
Apartments	X	P	X	X	X
ATM	X	P	O	X	X
Bank	X	P	X	X	O
Bed and Breakfast	X	O	X	X	X
Betting Office	X	P	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	O
Bring Banks	O	P	O	O	P
Buildings for the health, safety and welfare of the public	O	P	X	X	P
Building Society	X	P	X	X	X
Café	X	P	O	X	O
Caravan Park-Holiday	O	X	X	X	X
Caravan Park- Residential	O	X	X	X	X
Car Dismantling Facility / Scrapyard	X	X	O	X	X
Car Park	O	P	O	O	O
Cash and Carry/ Wholesale Outlet	X	O	O	X	X
Casual trading	X	O	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	O
Cinema	X	P	X	X	X
Community Facility	X	P	X	O	P
Concrete, Asphalt etc. plant	X	X	X	X	X
Chemist	X	P	X	X	O
Childcare Facilities (Crèche/ Nursery)	X	P	P	X	P
Cultural Use	O	P	X	O	O
Children's Playgrounds	O	O	O	O	P
Civic Recycling centre	O	O	P	X	P
Club House and Associated Facilities	O	P	X	P	P
Commercial Garage	X	P	P	X	X
Composting Centre	O	X	P	O	O
Conference Centre	X	P	O	X	X
Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Recycling Centre	X	X	X	X	X
Credit Union	X	P	O	X	O



USE	R	VC	IE	RA	CF
DIY/ Garden Retail Centre	X	P	P	X	X
Dance Hall/ Discotheque	X	P	X	X	O
Doctor/ Dentist	X	P	X	X	O
Drive-through Restaurant	X	O	O	X	X
Education	X	P	O	X	P
Enterprise Centre	X	O	P	X	O
Enterprise Unit/ Campus Industry	X	O	P	X	X
Funeral Home	X	O	X	X	P
Garden Centre	X	P	O	X	X
Golf Course/ Pitch & Putt	X	X	X	P	X
Guesthouse**	X	P	X	X	X
Gym	X	P	O	X	O
Hair Dressing Salon	X	P	O	X	X
Halting Sites/Group Housing	X	X	X	X	X
Hazardous Waste Depot	X	X	X	X	X
Health Centre	X	P	X	X	O
Heavy Vehicle Park	X	X	P	X	X
Holiday Homes	O	P	X	X	X
Home Based Economic Activities (Cottage Enterprise)	O	O	X	X	X
Hospital	X	O	O	X	P
Hostel	X	P	X	X	X
Hotel/Motel	X	P	X	X	X
Household Fuel Depot	X	X	O	X	X
Industry-Extractive	X	X	X	X	X
Industry-General	X	X	P	X	X
Industry-Light	X	O	P	X	X
Industry-Special	X	X	P	X	X
Launderette	X	P	O	X	X
Leisure Facility	X	P	O	X	O
Library	X	P	X	X	P
Mart /Co-op	X	X	P	X	X
Media Recording and general media associated uses	O	O	O	X	O
Medical and Related Consultants	X	P	X	X	O
Motor Sales Showroom	X	P	P	X	X
Municipal Waste Incinerator	X	X	X	X	X
Office Residential	O	P	X	X	X
Office based-Industry	X	P	P	X	X
Offices less than 100m ²	O	P	O	X	O
Offices 100m ² to 1000m ²	X	P	O	X	O
Offices over 1000m ²	X	O	O	X	X
All Other Offices	X	O	P	X	X
Open Space	O	P	P	P	P
Park & Ride Facility	X	O	P	X	X
Private Garage (non commercial)	O	O	X	X	X
Petrol Station	X	O	P	X	X
Place of Public Worship	O	P	O	X	P
Plant/ tool hire	X	X	P	X	X



USE	R	VC	IE	RA	CF
Playing Pitch	O	X	O	P	P
Public House	X	P	X	X	X
Public Service Installation	O	P	P	X	X
Recycling Facility < 2000sqm	X	P	X	X	X
Recycling Facility > 2000sqm	X	O	X	X	X
Refuse landfill	X	X	X	X	X
Refuse Transfer Station	X	X	X	X	X
Residential	P	***p	X	X	O
Residential Institution	O	O	X	X	O
Restaurant	X	P	O	X	X
Retail Warehouse	X	O	O	X	X
Retirement Home/ Nursing Home	O	O	X	X	P
Reuse and Repair centre	X	O	P	X	X
Rural Industry-Food	O	X	O	X	X
Science and Technology Based Enterprise	X	X	P	X	X
Shop (comparison)	X	P	O	X	X
Shop (convenience)	X	P	X	X	X
Shopping Centre	X	P	X	X	X
Shop (neighbourhood)	X	P	X	X	X
Small Scale Manufacturing	X	O	P	X	X
Take-away	X	P	O	X	X
Tele-services	X	O	O	X	X
Third Level Institution	O	O	O	X	O
Training Centre	X	O	P	X	O
Transport Depot	X	O	O	X	X
Veterinary Surgery	X	O	O	X	X
Warehousing	X	O	P	X	X
Warehousing (retail/non-food, max. 5000m ²)	X	O	O	X	X
Wind Energy	O	X	O	X	X

* Regard will also be given to the Guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing, and any adopted version published during the lifetime of the Plan. Multiple residential developments will not be permitted.

** Open to consideration where residence is already established.

*** Exclusively residential proposals in the village centre (Mixed. Dev) zone will not normally be permitted.



Land Zoning and Indicative Development Guide (Attachment of Map 6.1)

Village Centre:

Mixed Uses

Principally two storey buildings but consideration will be given to well designed three storey or two storey dormer.

Plot Ratio: Normal upper ratios 1.25, but consideration given to higher ratio where well designed buildings contribute to the streetscape and where adequate off-street parking is provided. Buildings to be orientated to the public street with access on to the street, but access may also be provided onto side streets or courtyards in the case of in-depth development. Garish colourings to be avoided. Internally illuminated and plastic signage to be avoided. Pavement characteristics to respect Gaeltacht village ethos.

Main Street:

Mixed Uses

The principal aim is to build a strong linear streetscape of single and two storey (maximum) buildings which reflects a contemporary, confident, growing Gaeltacht village. Allowable are for retail/office/light industrial on ground floor with residential overhead.

Off street parking required with safe access onto street preservation of access ways to lands zoned residential at rear may be required at some points.

Signage to be similar to village core requirements and to be appropriate to Gaeltacht location.

Plot Ratio: normal maximum to the 1.0, but consideration to be given to higher ratio where a replacement building is involved and where there is a quality design solution.

Residential Zone:

Dwelling Houses

The terrain in which the village is set is open and rugged and forms part of landscape sensitivity class 3, which the County Development Plan ascribes to this part of Conamara, while the restrictions on rural housing in class 3 landscape will not apply within the village development boundary, housing development in the residential zone of the village will be required to settle into the contours of the landscape with as little intrusion as possible.

Layouts to follow the principles of "Clustered House Design Guidelines" a support document of Galway County Development Plan. Individual clusters to contain not more than ten dwellings. In the case of more comprehensive developments an Integrated Action Area layout will be required.

Clusters to show pedestrian linkages to village centre, where feasible.

House types to be single storey and two storey, and should reflect village ethos. Plot Ratio to be in the range 0.20 to 0.25.

Road carriageways to be surface dressed in local stone chippings with entrances to clusters being defined by natural stone flags or paviers. Footpaths and public lighting should also be appropriate to this terrain.



Land Use Zoning Areas

An Cheathra Rúa Land Use Zones	Developed Land Area (ha)	Undeveloped Land Area (ha)	Total Area (ha)
Residential (Existing)	17.31	0.00	17.31
Residential (Phase 1)	0.00	5.03	5.03
Residential (Phase 2)	0.00	41.62	41.62
Residential (Total)	17.40	46.68	64.08
Village Centre	8.49	11.93	20.42
Main Street	2.93	6.31	9.24
Industrial and Enterprise	2.59	1.11	3.70
Community Facilities	4.13	12.27	16.40
Recreation and Amenity	0.30	8.11	8.41
Transport Infrastructure	5.68	0.00	5.68
Total Area (ha)	41.53	86.27	122.12

An Spidéal Land Use Zones	Developed Land Area (ha)	Undeveloped Land Area (ha)	Total Area (ha)
Residential (Existing)	20.80	0.00	20.80
Residential (Phase 1)	0.00	1.19	1.19
Residential (Phase 2)	0.00	57.31	57.31
Residential (Total)	20.80	58.50	79.30
Village Centre	1.27	3.67	4.94
Industrial and Enterprise	6.44	2.39	8.82
Community Facilities	3.11	0.44	3.55
Recreation and Amenity	1.33	55.61	56.944
Transport Infrastructure	6.02	0.00	6.02
Total Area (ha)	38.97	120.61	159.57

Note: Above areas measured from GIS and have been rounded to two decimal places.

