



# N6 Galway City Ring Road

## Briefing Document



## Introduction

Galway County Council (GCC), on behalf of itself and on behalf of Galway City Council, is proposing to develop the N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) around Galway City.

The N6 GCRR is a key component of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) which realises Galway City and County Council's vision of all elements of transport working together to achieve an integrated sustainable transport solution.

The specific project objectives established by Galway County and City Council, in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), are as follows:

- To provide the necessary infrastructure to **support the economic growth of Galway and the West Region** by improving connectivity to the Gateway of Galway
- **To enable other public projects to be realised** and to facilitate the effective implementation of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS)
- To support **a shift towards environmentally friendly transport modes** to bring about a sustainable transport and mobility system in Galway City and its environs
- To improve **accessibility of the Gaeltacht areas** and improve connectivity to the tourist attractions of the West Region and Connemara
- To reduce road traffic collisions by **providing safer urban streets** by segregation of the interface of by-passable traffic from urban traffic
- To **reduce journey times** and improve journey time reliability by removing bottlenecks
- To provide an essential link in the **European Transport Infrastructure** (TEN-T) comprehensive transport network which will connect the west of Ireland to the single European market

Further details of the Galway City Ring Road are available at: [www.N6GalwayCityRingRoad.ie](http://www.N6GalwayCityRingRoad.ie)

## Galway Transport Strategy (GTS)

In considering the transport needs of Galway City and environs and developing an integrated transport solution to address these, **one of the key objectives of the GTS was to consider and appraise alternative transport solutions**. This included consideration of alternative public transport options and investment in active travel modes (i.e. walking and cycling), in combination with, and in the absence of, an orbital ring road for the city.

The transport solutions that emerged from the GTS were based on achieving a long-term sustainable integrated land-use and transport plan for Galway City and its wider environs within the county.

Further details of the GTS are available at <https://www.galwaycity.ie/galway-transport-strategy>.

**A new ring road to the north of the city is proposed as part of the GTS** to deliver the necessary capacity to sustain the city and environs in terms of planned development and growth and to support the delivery of the sustainable transport measures which emerged from the strategy.

## Constraints

The significant constraints for developing new transport infrastructure in Galway can be categorised as being:

1. The physical form of the city
2. The limited space available
3. The built environment and residential areas on both sides of the River Corrib, and
4. The presence of ecological areas protected by National and European law (designated sites)

The presence of these constraints focused attention on the importance of considering all alternatives in order to minimise the impact on the human environment and the designated sites.

## Key Elements

- 6km single carriageway & 12km dual carriageway/motorway
- 8km Protected Road Scheme & 10km Motorway Scheme
- Total landtake 280 hectares
- River Corrib Bridge (length 620m)
- Menlough Viaduct (length 320m)
- Lackagh Tunnel (length 250m)
- Galway Racecourse Tunnel (length 230m)
- 4 at grade & 4 grade separated junctions



## Function of the N6 GCRR

The function of the N6 GCRR is to facilitate the reduction of existing traffic congestion and future proof the effectiveness of this part of the national road network. The N6 GCRR will serve the strategic traffic currently trying to cross the city via the existing N6 as well as the strategic traffic that is currently trying to rat-run through the city using the existing city street network due to the congestion levels on the national road network. **The N6 GCRR will free up road space in the city centre that can be used by other modes of transport.**

## Options Assessment

In addition to the GTS, at a project level, the N6 GCRR also considered a 'Do-Nothing' option, a 'Do-Minimum' option and a 'Do-Something Traffic Management Measures' alternative. Detailed environmental studies were undertaken on the entire study area, including an assessment of the impact on people, homes, and communities.

Considering all factors, the option selected from the final options has the **least impact on the receiving environment** in terms of impacts on people, ecology and all other environmental factors and has the **least number of residential demolitions**. However, given the significant constraints including the linear development of the city and the need for proximity to the city, unfortunately it is necessary to demolish 44 properties and to acquire a further 10 properties. In addition, 3 commercial properties and 2 industrial properties will be demolished.

## TEN-T Function

The European Union's (EU) TEN-T transport policy aims to create connectivity between regions, remove bottlenecks that hamper the smooth functioning of the EU's internal market and promote a sustainable, multi-modal network for passengers. The N6 GCRR is classified as part of the TEN-T comprehensive road network as it is a strategic link in the road network in the West Region.

The N6 GCRR serves traffic connecting to Galway as well as providing the necessary river crossing to facilitate the reallocation of road space within the city.

## Construction Activities

It is estimated that the overall construction period will last for approximately 36 months. A variety of construction activities will occur simultaneously to ensure efficient delivery. Construction methods employed shall be in accordance with best practice standards and guidelines. All necessary precautions and mitigation measures to reduce the potential impacts of construction activities on the environment shall be implemented.

## Traffic Impact Assessment

Future year scenarios for low growth, medium growth, and high growth were evaluated. Additionally, a sensitivity test to assess the performance of the proposed road development in conjunction with the Galway Transport Strategy was undertaken.

A traffic impact analysis determined that the introduction of the proposed road development will result in significant benefits such as:

- Enabler for a multi-modal transport solution
- Improved journey time reliability for public transport
- Releasing and freeing city centre zone from congestion

## Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process for anticipating the effects on the environment caused by a development, noting that the environment includes people, communities, property, human health, heritage, archaeology, landscape and visual, noise and air, as well as those topics usually associated with it such as biodiversity, soils and water. Details of this environmental assessment are documented in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The Natura Impact Statement (NIS), which also forms part of the application for approval to An Bord Pleanála (ABP), concluded that the proposed road development will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, whether by itself or in-combination with any other plan or project and there is no scientific doubt in relation to that conclusion.



## Summary of the Solution

Galway City and its environs has critical transport issues that require urgent resolution. The complexity of the N6 GCRR is a result of (i) the complexity of the transport issues it seeks to address and (ii) the number of significant constraints within which the design team had to work. This has required some significant engineering interventions in places.

To address these transport issues, an overall transportation solution for Galway was developed by Galway County Council, Galway City Council, and National Transport Authority (NTA) culminating in the GTS, of which the N6 GCRR forms a key element as the road component of this strategy.

The N6 GCRR is the optimum solution for a new road and is consistent with proper planning and sustainable development. This view is supported and validated by recent inclusion of policy support for both GTS and constituent measures, including the N6 GCRR, in the relevant Galway Development Plans.

## What Happens Next?

The EIA Report, NIS and the maps and schedules associated with the statutory schemes will be on display for a period of 8 weeks following publication. Formal written submissions may be made at that time to ABP. Advertisements with respect to the application for approval will provide details of closing dates for submissions.

ABP must consider the EIA Report, NIS and all submissions and may conduct an oral hearing and/or may seek additional information as part of the statutory processes.

After the oral hearing is held, ABP must consider the report and any recommendations of the Inspector holding the oral hearing. ABP may approve the N6 Galway City Ring Road Scheme or any part thereof under Section 51 of the Roads Act 1993 as amended, with or without conditions or modifications or may refuse to approve such development or any part thereof.

Subject to ABP approval, availability of funding and no legal challenges, the proposed road development then advances to land purchase, detailed design, the procurement of a contractor and, ultimately, the construction phase.



To find out more about the N6 Galway City Ring Road, visit the [www.N6GalwayCityRingRoad.ie](http://www.N6GalwayCityRingRoad.ie)

To find out more about how to make a submission or for information on the oral hearing, please contact An Bord Pleanála:

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