



Galway Commuter Coalition
Salthill,
Co. Galway

Public Consultation Galway City Council Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws 2026

<https://consult.galwaycity.ie/en/consultation/public-consultation-draft-galway-city-council-special-speed-limit-bye-laws-2026>

Introduction

The Galway Commuter Coalition was established in 2022 as a voluntary advocacy group for public transport users, cyclists, and pedestrians in Galway and the surrounding area. The Coalition acts as a unifying voice for commuters in these areas so that they may express their concerns, their hopes, and their vision of a Galway that works for all users of sustainable transport.

The Galway Commuter Coalition strongly supports the proposed reductions in speed limits across built-up areas in Galway City. However, we believe this review should apply a 30km/h speed limit on some key public roads that are missing from the current proposal. Critically, lower limits must be accompanied by physical infrastructure that encourages compliance, as motorists frequently fail to observe existing 30 km/h limits across the city.

We hope these reductions will further support and enhance road safety across Galway City for all of its residents and communities.

Summary of Recommendations

The Galway Commuter Coalition recommends that Galway City Council:

1. Adopt 30 km/h as the default speed limit on all existing urban roads and streets within Galway City.
2. Require any road retained at a higher speed limit to be individually assessed and explicitly justified based on its design, surrounding land use and the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
3. Apply the same default to all future roads and streets, with new urban roads designed for a maximum speed of 30 km/h unless a higher limit is clearly demonstrated to be safe and appropriate.
4. Extend the proposed 30 km/h network to include the roads identified in this submission, particularly the Promenade, the Salthill–city centre corridor, roads through Knocknacarra, Taylor’s Hill, Newcastle, East Galway and other residential areas.
5. Support the revised limits with a funded programme of DMURS-compliant infrastructure, including raised crossings, continuous footpaths, safer junctions, road narrowing and measures to prevent footpath parking.
6. Prioritise implementation around schools, residential communities, public transport stops, sports facilities and locations with high levels of walking, wheeling and cycling.

The guiding principle should be: 30 km/h should be the rule on Galway’s urban roads, while any higher speed limit should be a specifically assessed and justified exception.

Support for these measures

Evidence from several jurisdictions shows that a reduction in speed limits from the ~50km/h range to the 30km/h range can drastically reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured (KSI). Evidence from Wales has shown a 23.8% reduction in overall casualties on roads previously subject to 30 mph limits, alongside a 17.4% severity-adjusted reduction in people killed or seriously injured following the introduction of the default 20 mph limit.

Source: [What impact has 20mph had on road safety in Wales?](#)

This reduction will make our communities safer but also more liveable. Lower and more consistent speeds can reduce traffic noise and harsh acceleration, while making streets more attractive for walking, wheeling and cycling.

The effect on overall urban journey times is generally much smaller than a simple comparison between travelling continuously at 30 km/h and 50 km/h would suggest. Urban journey times are also determined by junctions, traffic signals, congestion, parking movements and other delays. Research reviewed in 2024 found

that 30 km/h interventions can deliver safety benefits while producing relatively small increases in average trip times. Source: [Effectiveness of 30 km/h speed limit](#)

Proposed Road Additions and a Default 30 km/h Limit

We recommend that 30 km/h become the default speed limit on all urban roads and streets within Galway City.

All existing urban roads should be designated as 30 km/h unless Galway City Council identifies and clearly justifies a specific exemption. Any road retained at a higher speed limit should be assessed individually, with the decision based on its design, surrounding land use, pedestrian and cycling activity, access to homes and businesses, and proximity to schools, public transport stops and community facilities.

The burden of justification should therefore rest on retaining a road above 30 km/h, rather than on communities having to demonstrate why an urban road should be reduced to 30 km/h.

The same principle should apply to all future roads and streets. New roads should be designed and designated for a maximum speed of 30 km/h by default. A higher limit should only be permitted where an explicit assessment demonstrates that it is appropriate and safe.

This approach would create a coherent and easily understood speed-limit network. It would avoid the current situation where 30 km/h residential areas are connected by roads with higher limits, despite those roads serving the same communities and carrying high levels of pedestrian and cycling activity.

In particular, the proposed 30 km/h network should be extended to include:

Salthill and the city-centre corridor

- Salthill Promenade
- Salthill Road Upper and Lower
- Doctor Colohan Road
- Whitestrand Road
- Whitestrand Avenue
- Father Griffin Road
- Father Griffin Avenue
- The Crescent

These roads form a key walking, cycling and public transport route between Salthill and the city centre. The Promenade in particular has exceptionally high levels of pedestrian activity, including children, older people, visitors, runners and people accessing the beach. Frequent crossing movements, parked vehicles and limited sightlines make a 50 km/h limit inappropriate.

Knocknacarra and western residential areas

- Cappagh Road
- Ballymoneen Road
- Shangort Road
- Kingston Road
- Knocknacarra Road
- Clybaun Road
- R336/Barna Road - from Silverstrand towards the city centre, particularly at its junction with Knocknacarra Road

These roads pass through large residential areas and connect housing estates, schools, community facilities, bus stops and local services.

The R336 junction with Knocknacarra Road is of particular concern because students accessing school buses must cross a busy road without a nearby pedestrian crossing.

Taylor's Hill, Ragoon and Newcastle

- Taylor's Hill
- St Mary's Terrace and St Mary's Avenue
- Ragoon Road and Shantalla Road
- Newcastle Road Upper and Lower

These roads are heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists and serve several schools, University Hospital Galway and the University of Galway. Sections of Taylor's Hill and St Mary's Avenue are narrow, have restricted visibility and contain inadequate or missing footpaths. A lower limit would better reflect the surrounding residential and school environment.

East Galway and other residential corridors

- Ballybane Road
- Castlepark Road
- Monivea Road
- Dyke Road, extending at least beyond its junction with Coolough Road and preferably as far as Carraig Bán
- Coolough Road
- The N59 from Thomas Hynes Road to the city boundary near Glenlo Abbey

These roads pass through established residential areas and are used by people walking and cycling to schools, colleges, workplaces and public transport. Several currently lack adequate crossing facilities or protected cycling infrastructure, while recorded and observed traffic speeds remain high.

Infrastructure Changes

Existing 30km/h signage and limits are often not being adhered to in areas such as Rosary Lane, where both a primary and secondary school are located. This shows

simply implementing signage is not sufficient and physical interventions are required to make areas like these safer.

In accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), Galway City Council should introduce measures such as raised crossings, continuous footpaths across side roads, tighter junctions, footpath build-outs, road narrowing, chicanes and gateway treatments. Parking should also be restricted where it obstructs footpaths or reduces visibility.

While these works extend beyond the scope of the bye-laws, the revised limits should be accompanied by a funded programme of DMURS-compliant traffic calming, prioritising schools, residential areas, public transport stops and locations with high levels of walking and cycling.

Conclusion

We strongly support the proposed speed-limit reductions. We also believe Galway City Council should adopt 30 km/h as the default speed limit on all urban roads, with higher limits permitted only where clearly justified.

The roads identified in this submission should be added to the 30 km/h network and supported by appropriate DMURS-compliant infrastructure to ensure the limits are effective in practice.

Thank you for your time.

Galway Commuter Coalition