



Galway Commuter Coalition
Salthill,
Co. Galway

Public Consultation Murrough Masterplan - Máistirphlean Muirbheach

<https://consult.galwaycity.ie/en/consultation/notice-proposed-variation-no-3-galway-city-development-plan-2023-2029>

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 development of Transport Orientated Developments (TODs) in Galway. However, we have a number of specific concerns we would like to see addressed in this variation to the council's development plan. We hope these changes will further support and enhance Murrough as a TOD, a future Galway neighbourhood and the nearby adjacent communities.

Inclusion of Additional Lands

We believe the proposed Masterplan should take into consideration further areas to the north of the railway. There is significant unused land adjacent to the railway, which could easily become a neighbourhood greenway, opening up active travel links to/from Ballyloughane Beach, Seagrove, Gleann Rua, Gleann an Rí, Merlin Park and Rosshill Woods. More information provided below.

Active Travel Links

Severance

There are many definitions of severance, for this submission an apt reference would be to our nearby neighbouring city of Limerick as defined in their 'Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy:

“Severance creates immediate barriers in the regeneration areas. Sometimes these barriers are intentional: e.g., the walls and fences that stretch for over 1.5 kilometres along the southern fringe of Moyross. More usually, severance in the regeneration areas are caused by transport infrastructure”

We note the continued absence of the publication of the Galway Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and call for its immediate release.

The NTA also notes severance as a potential barrier to modal shifts in their 'Permeability - A Best Practice Guide':

“Locations where severance is “built-in” to the environment by high walls or a preponderance of cul-de-sacs, would be common examples. The NTA encourages the transformation of such neighbourhoods into permeable ones, where people can walk or cycle through areas safely and conveniently, and in a manner which confers a competitive advantage to these modes over motorised forms, particularly the private car.”

Severance affects the Murrough area in numerous points, both within the Masterplan defined area, and within its vicinity.

- The lack of connections between north and south of the rail line
- The barriers around Galway Port and Bus Éireann complex.
- The lack of access to Deadman's Beach from Mellow's Park.
- The lack of access from Ballyloughnane Beach to St Patrick's Church owing to the Defence Forces Barracks.
- The walls dividing Tearmann Eala and Seagrove.
- The walls dividing Seagrove, Beach Close and Gleann Rua.
- The gated community of Gleann an Rí prohibiting access to Gleann Rua and Líos an Uisce.

We believe that for this masterplan, proposed station and proposed coastal greenway to be successful, these barriers will need to be addressed and removed as a matter of urgency. We propose that this is done in line with the NTA's 'Permeability - A Best Practice Guide'.



Map of severance barriers in the vicinity of Murrough

Ballyloughnane Road

We question whether the existing rail bridge on Ballyloughnane road could cater to the expected growth in cyclist numbers utilising this route; this would include cyclists accessing the proposed greenway, travelling onwards to the new station or newly developed housing. The level of car traffic is also likely to increase with these plans. Cyclists are afforded no active protection and this could become problematic with the increase in traffic. The painted one-way bike lane already affords an insufficient level of protection to this popular amenity.

The bridge is not on the Register of Protected Structures, but is included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH 30409419). We believe that the local authority should value this significant landmark of industrial built heritage and not propose its demolition in the future masterplan.

We see two potential solutions:

- The introduction of filtered permeability underneath the rail bridge, limiting access to bikes, pedestrians, local access for residents, emergency services and municipal vehicles.
- The building of an adjacent underpass to the Western side of the bridge. This would link up with the existing dual cyclelane to the south of the bridge. We propose that this dual cyclelane, should be continued north of the bridge, along the Ballyloughnane Road until the Dublin Road. Here it would interlink with the proposed BusConnects cyclelanes. Protection should be provided along its length, with separation from the road by means of a curb, or other suitable infrastructure.

Murrough Road

Murrough Road, will require significant investment in active travel infrastructure to make this plan viable. Presently there is only a footpath on the western side of the road. This footpath itself is less than ideal and does not have the required dips to allow wheelchair access through this neighbourhood. The council should strongly consider taking-in-charge of Gleann na Rí to facilitate better permeability and improvements to the public realm.

Rail Adjacent Greenway

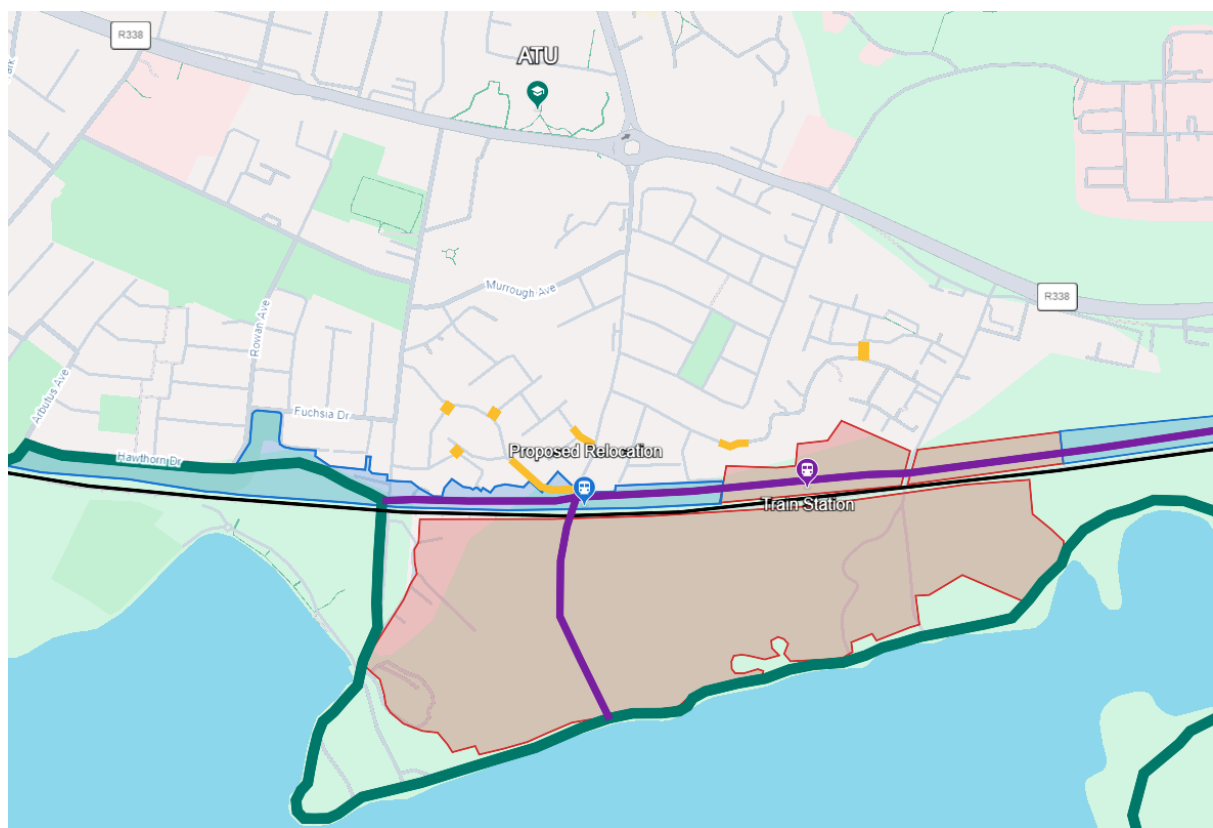
It is objective 4.8.7 of the Galway City Development plan to:

“Reserve lands parallel with the rail line from the city centre to the eastern city boundary for future sustainable transport requirements and to provide for possible commuter rail stops.”

This is related to objective 4.3.7 of the Galway City Development plan to:

“Support measures which aim to improve the service capacity of the Galway City inter urban rail transport network including for the development of commuter rail services, with a preference for a twin track approach from the city to Athenry.”

We strongly believe the undeveloped land on the north and south of the rail corridor can easily facilitate double tracking (also an AISRR objective), the proposed Murrough train station, future additional commuter stops and active travel links. We believe that this objective on additional active travel links strongly aligns with GCC's stated development goals. It would also align with the proposed RA greenway at lands to the north of the rail line at Renmore.



Map of proposed active travel & permeability measures in Murrough

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Coastal Greenway | - | □ | Murrough North & South Areas - | □ |
| Proposed Greenway | - | □ | Proposed STRA Area - | □ |
| Proposed Permeability | - | □ | | |

This would also align to to objective 4.4.8 of the Galway City Development plan to:

“Promote, facilitate and maintain maximum connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the design and management of new public and private projects and in upgrading and retrofitting existing developments in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) and Permeability a Best Practice Guide, NTA (2015).”

We believe that this existing land, that lies north of the rail line, which is not currently covered by the Murrough masterplan should be rezoned to a new zoning type. We propose this would be designated:

Zoning Objective: <u>Sustainable Transport, Recreation & Amenity. - STRA</u>	
To provide for and protect current/future sustainable transport corridors, recreational uses, open space, amenity uses, natural heritage and biodiversity	
Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:	- Public transportation facility - Public transportation infrastructure - Active transportation infrastructure - Outdoor recreation
Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the STRA location and scale of development, for example:	- Development of buildings of a recreational, cultural or educational nature - Public utilities - Allotments - Applicable to lands in this zoning category that are used to provide public transport services: - Coffee Shop/Tea Room - Restaurant - Shop $\leq 200\text{m}^2$ - Digital Innovation Hub / Co-working Space - Business Enterprise Centre - Residential

The development of active travel infrastructure and outdoor recreation/amenity areas along this route should occur in tandem with the proposed double tracking and station planning of the rail line.

Proposed Station & Railway Infrastructure

We strongly welcome the proposed development of a station at Murrough.

The station should be the catalyst for the development of Murrough and it should be a key priority for Galway City Council, Iarnród Éireann and the National Transport Authority.

Should the station be opened at a later phase of this plan, future residents will have already adopted car-dependent lifestyles due to the lack of initial public transport for the first residents. This is a key component of successful TOD communities.

We believe that dual tracking should occur, as soon as possible, and the delivery of the station should happen during this time. High demand for public transport to ATU and Renmore will sustain the station, in the interim until the full development of Murrough is complete. This would also align with best practice in development of TODs.

However, we would hold several concerns regarding the limiting planning conditions of what is proposed.

Location:

The proposed station location is a significant distance away from the current ATU campus. The straight line distance is approximately 826 metres, which using the current road network necessitates a 1,457 metres walk, with a walking time of approximately 24 minutes.

Should an active travel path be developed along the northern side of the railway line (see above) this could be reduced to an 18 minute walk time.



Alternative Station Location

An alternative station location would be adjacent to Gleann Rua and Seagrove. This would reduce the walk-time to the ATU campus to just 12 minutes. We believe this is possible given the substantial overgrown land which exists on this site.

The ongoing development of Moyross station is an example of TOD best practice which we hope to see delivered with Murrough. We would note that Moyross is a significantly more constrained site than where we have proposed as an alternative station location. Moyross station is developing on a brownfield site adjacent to a school, community centre and park. Murrough could easily develop in a similar manner with significantly less constraints.

Moyross has been cited by councillors from other local authorities as an exemplary project.

"not accidental, but was strategic and ambitious"

- Cllr. Declan Power - Louth County Council

The movement of the station to this location would also free up additional space for the provision of housing in the Murrough North area.

The current station location should not be set in stone, and should only be developed once an option selection report by Iarnród Éireann has been carried out. We believe that this report will prove the potential for a station at our proposed location and the numerous benefits it will offer.

These benefits include:

- Substantially reduced walk and cycle times to the current ATU campus.
- Serving both the current and future ATU campuses at an easily walkable distance.
- Serving the proposed and existing communities within a short walking distance.
- Maximising the catchment population of the station.



We strongly believe an option selection report and local transport plan need to be prepared in advance, with Iarnród Éireann, before a specific location is selected.

Station Facilities

We would propose that the station be developed as a car-free station, akin to the development of Moyross station in Limerick. Parking should only be provided for accessible spaces, given that Murrough is proposed to be developed as a Transit Orientated Development. Adequate secured indoor cycle parking accompanied with active travel links should be developed in-tandem with the proposed station.

Given Galway's incredibly wet climatic conditions, we propose that the station makes provision for an indoor waiting room, and at least 60% coverage of platforms by rain canopies. We note the recent developments with the Cork Area Commuter Programme, and their recent opening of an extended canopy encompassing platforms. A similar design should be incorporated at Murrough.

Given the extensive proposed catchment of Murrough station and the huge population of students at ATU, the station should be designed to accommodate this level of demand.

- A sheltered indoor passenger waiting area should be provided, along with consideration of station convenience store and/or a café. This would further enhance the attractiveness of public transport.
- The station's platforms should be wide enough to accommodate any planned InterCity services originating from Galway.
- Details on the proposed level of commuter service should be provided from the outset. IÉ should model and publish these numbers with the inclusion of the Western Rail Corridor phase 2, proposed enhancements to the Galway to Limerick line, and proposed hourly service to Dublin (AISRR).
- There should be two platforms provided from the outset of the station.

The provision of a station at Murrough should not limit the future provision of further commuter rail stations on this line; Renmore, Roshill & Roscam etc.

Existing Level Crossings

We support the removal of all level crossings within the local authority's jurisdiction. We support this level crossing removal. They create unnecessary risk to passengers, railway infrastructure and residents. They also limit line-speed and thus reduce the attractiveness of travel by rail. It should be noted that:

It is the policy of Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) and Iarnród Éireann (IE) to eliminate where practicable and possible all level crossings on the rail network across Ireland.

The existing level crossing should be removed and replaced with an underpass. Careful consideration and engagement between the local authority, Iarnród Éireann, the National Transport Authority and Bus Éireann is needed, as to whether the head height of this underpass needs to be sufficient to accommodate double decker buses. We would propose that, in the interest of flexibility and servicing this new TOD community, this should be the case.

We believe references to an:

“An over rail bridge connection to lands to the southern portion of the Masterplan”

should be removed. We instead propose that this is replaced with:

“An underpass and/or underpasses to lands to the southern portion of the Masterplan”

We believe an underpass would be preferable for as much barrier free access as possible between the proposed community and the existing residential communities. This would continue the legibility of the street network and minimise against the effects of severance.

Given that the two crossings located west and east of the proposed underpass are both rail bridges over road, i.e. underpasses, that this would also better align with track geometry. We believe in the interest of permeability best practice, that multiple connections should be considered. The underpass can be successfully integrated into the design of the station.





Ede-Wageningen
& Driebergen-Zeist
stations in the
Netherlands.

Demonstrating
successful integration of
an underpass and
station plaza underneath
into the design.

The level crossing (XG173) is a protected structure (Murrough Level Crossing - Gates, RPS 6402). We would propose that cast-iron gates and limestone piers are relocated to be displayed or incorporated into the design of the station complex.

The level crossings XG171, XG169 & XG167, are outside of the scope of the Murrough masterplan however should also all be considered for removal. Their continued operation will limit the effectiveness of the Murrough and Ardaun proposed developments. The local authority should engage and provide funding to Iarnród Éireann, where necessary, on this matter.

Existing references to “...sequenced with rail crossing...” are considered acceptable, as they do not make specific reference to a bridge.

In the GCC report ‘*Opportunities for Transport Orientated Development (TOD) in Major Urban Centres - Proposals for Candidate TOD Sites in Galway City*’, dated 7th July 2023; a key constraint is noted as being access to these lands.

“A key constraint to the development of these lands is access. Direct access is by way of a narrow roadway and over an uncontrolled level crossing. There is also potential access from the Ballyloughane Road to the west, but is constrained by Ballyloughane bridge which is narrow and facilitates single lane traffic only.”

We accept this as a major potential barrier to the success for these lands in the future, it could create severance and limit permeability. This would reduce active travel and public transport trips within the proposed development. We believe that this strongly makes the case for multiple underpasses and our proposed permeability measures and additional rail-adjacent greenway.

Zoning

We request that the zoning use '[public transportation facility](#)' is noted as a compatible use in the [R1, R2, RA, CE, CI & CC land uses](#). It is noted that the proposed station will be zoned in a residential R1 area.

The R1 area does not currently allow, and no variation is proposed to allow the development of a 'public transportation facility'.

We believe that this area should receive its own zoning type STRA as noted above. We would request that the above amendment to existing zoning types is made regardless of the implementation of our proposed zoning category.

Bus Services & Infrastructure

Although we believe that active travel will remain the primary mode of transport between the two ATU campuses under this plan, given our recommended infrastructure is implemented, there will still be a need for a high-frequency bus service between the two campuses.

There are two potential options for this:

- ATU provided shuttle bus
- Enhanced Bus Éireann PSO route, with onward connections along BusConnects corridors.

We believe an enhanced Bus Éireann PSO route is preferable to this, and would request that GCC liaises with the NTA, ATU and Bus Éireann to develop this option. We also strongly believe there should be no cost to travel between the ATU campuses and between either of the campuses and train station.

We would request that consideration is given to the rerouting of the proposed BusConnects route 4 through the development. This may require bus-gates or interventions in the estates north of the greenway in addition to our proposed underpasses. We would request that the LTP for Murrough extends to the adjacent areas north of the rail line to facilitate the planning of these measures.

We believe that multiple routes will likely be needed to connect Murrough to ATU, neighbouring areas and the city centre, and a highly frequent route will be required in addition to the proposed rail station. We would request that a frequency between every 5 minutes and every 10 minutes is considered. Without a frequent bus network, this development would not succeed with rail based public transport alone.

A frequency of 10 minutes is also noted as a frequency which allows for higher densities of housing, in 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities'.

Density

We support dense housing for this site, in line with best practice for TOD communities. We believe 2,500 units can easily be accommodated, while providing sufficient set-backs from coastal flood zones. However, we believe that 2,500 is an unambitious target, based on the 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities'.



Total Net Site Area ≈ 36 hectares

Density Ranges per Hectare				
Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities				
Typology	Upper Density Range	36ha	30ha	28ha
Detached/Semi-detached Housing	30dph	1,080	900	840
Semi-detached/Terraced Housing	40dph	1,440	1,200	1,120
Terraced Housing	45dph	1,620	1,350	1,260
Mid Terraced Houses, Duplex, Lowrise Apartments	80dph	2,880	2,400	2,240
Compact Own Door Houses, Duplex	100dph	3,600	3,000	2,800
Low Rise Apartments	150dph	5,400	4,500	4,200
Medium/High Rise Apartments	200dph	7,200	6,000	5,600

Blue - Denotes currently proposed density range (2,500 houses)

Pink - Denotes our amended density ranges, in line with national policy

We propose that all references to 2,500 homes be removed. This is unnecessarily prescriptive, is not in link with best practice regarding density at TODs and may be used as a maximum limit to restrict the delivery of much needed homes during a housing crisis.

Instead, we would propose that the Murrough North areas are assigned a density in-line with 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities' and their standards regarding density at TODs. We believe that references to the number of homes should be removed entirely, to avoid this becoming an upper limitation which the masterplan must work within the confines of.

Consideration of Proximity and Accessibility to Services and Public Transport
Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities
High Capacity Public Transport Node or Interchange - Lands within 1,000 metres (1km) walking distance of an existing or planned high capacity urban public transport node or interchange, namely an interchange or node that includes DART, high frequency Commuter Rail11, light rail or MetroLink services; or locations within 500 metres walking distance of an existing or planned BusConnects 'Core Bus Corridor' stop. - Highest densities should be applied at the node or interchange and decrease with distance. - 'Planned public transport' in these Guidelines refers to transport infrastructure and services identified in a Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy for the five cities and where a public authority (e.g. National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland or Irish Rail) has published the preferred route option and stop locations for the planned public transport.
Accessible Location - Lands within 500 metres (i.e. up to 5-6 minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services.
Intermediate Location - Lands within 500-1,000 metres (i.e. 10-12 minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services; and - Lands within 500 metres (i.e. 6 minute walk) of a reasonably frequent (minimum 15 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus service.
Peripheral - Lands that do not meet the proximity or accessibility criteria detailed above. This includes all lands in Small and Medium Sized Towns and in Rural Towns and Villages.

As you can see from the extracted table, higher densities are required at public transport hubs, such as the proposed TOD at Murrough. We believe the current low to medium density proposed does not align with this national statutory policy.

When 8 hectares are excluded from the proposed site area, for the development of an ATU campus, educational facilities, community facilities etc; this still leaves a sizable gap between the number of proposed homes, and what statutory guidance recommends in areas adjoining a 'high capacity public transport node or interchange'.

The policy also makes reference to proposed Urban Neighbourhoods in Galway.

It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 50 dph to 200 dph (net) shall generally be applied in urban neighbourhoods of Limerick, Galway and Waterford.

Given the proposed density of 69dph, we believe that this proposed Urban Neighbourhood, at a High Capacity Public Transport Node or Interchange, is in conflict with statutory policy.

We would question the findings of the MKO report. It states that:

When Murrough and Ardaun are included into this calculation, it adds an additional 124ha of land which can cater for the delivery of approximately 5,168 units.

This would equate to a dwelling per hectare measurement of 41dph. This would not meet the required statutory lower limit of 50dph. We believe that Galway should seek to reach the upper limit in delivery of housing at Murrough and also Ardaun.

The report states that GCC are considering a density of 75 units per hectare for these lands. The report states that 34.5ha are available for zoning. This slightly differs to our estimates, based on the provided GCC maps of 36ha.

Assuming, their figure to be more accurate; this would equate to a density of 72dph. This would be less dense than the existing apartments bordering Murrough North at Gleann na Rí and would not be in line with densities at a High Capacity Public Transport Node or Interchange.

The GCC report 'Opportunities for Transport Orientated Development (TOD) in Major Urban Centres - Proposals for Candidate TOD Sites in Galway City' states that the identified TOD sites in Galway including Murrough:

They meet the thresholds of being within a kilometre of an existing or planned commuter rail and/or higher frequency bus corridor stop/station and are capable of delivering development at scale being brownfield sites that are in excess of c. 5 hectares capable of delivering in excess of 500 dwellings at high densities; and greenfield sites that are in excess of c. 20 hectares capable of delivering in excess of 1000 dwellings at medium to high densities. They represent excellent opportunities to achieve TOD.

Under the above statutory guidance, these lands would be classed as low to medium-low densities.

There is also a clear disconnect between national policy, namely the National Development Plan (NDP) and the number of homes proposed in this report:

The NPF envisages the population of Galway City and Suburbs to grow by between 40,000 - 45,000 people by 2040 which is an increase of almost 55%.

The HNDA report however only targets a delivery of 8,801 units by 2035. This is clearly incompatible with timelines set by the primary planning policy in Ireland, the NPF. The proposed masterplan must take into account the National Planning Framework and not disregard it.

Amendments to Density

We believe that densities in Murrough North should align to low-rise, or medium rise apartments, this would be in line with the current densities at Gleann na Rí, which consists of 4 story apartments.

We believe that densities in Murrough South should align to medium-rise to high-rise typologies. This can be achieved through the proposed High Capacity Public Transport Node or Interchange, and with the separation provided between these lands and existing housing, through the railway and adjoining RA land-bank.

	Area	Lower	Upper	
Murrough North	4.66ha	466	699	
Murrough South	34.5ha	6,900	8,625*	
Murrough South (6 hectares excluded)	26.01ha	5,202	6,502*	*Density of 250dph
Murrough South (8 hectares excluded)	24.01ha	4,802	6,002*	
Our Proposed Density Range				
MKO Areas:	7,366	214dph		
	9,324	270dph		

Our Areas

(significant land excluded from Net Site Area for RA ecological constraints, educational and recreational uses)

Lower:	5,268	146dph
Upper:	7,201	200dph

Given Galway's consistent underperformance in meeting housing demand, high influx from migration patterns, higher than expected census growth in recent years and the proposed increases in student numbers at ATU; we believe this would all require a higher density.

Conclusion

We strongly support the development of Murrough. We would ask that our concerns around overly prescriptive zoning objectives be taken into account, to allow the design of this Transit Oriented Development to succeed.

Thank you for your time.

Galway Commuter Coalition.

Proposed Changes

Blue strike-through - Proposed Deletion

Pink underline - Proposed addition

	Policy 10.6 Murrough
1.	Develop the Murrough area in accordance with a Local Area Plan <u>a Masterplan</u> which will reserve a substantial bank of land for recreational purposes, allow for public access and allow for mixed-use development which will create a sustainable neighbourhood and maximise the sustainable development of appropriate recreation facilities. <u>addresses land use mix, phasing, transport integration, built heritage, biodiversity, flood risk, and coastal resilience.</u>
2.	Provision shall be made for the following infrastructure: a. An over rail bridge connection <u>underpass/es</u> to lands to the southern portion of the masterplan, b. A new linear coastal amenity and flood defence c. A dual track rail line and commuter rail stop north of the railway line, d. Active Travel links to Gleann na Rí and Gleann Rua estate to the north, and <u>connections west towards Ballyloughane and connections east towards Tearmann Eala, Beach Close and Seagrove,</u> facilitating options for the proposed Greenway which will traverse east-west through the site. <u>Additional permeability measures between existing ways, within the vicinity of the masterplan area, will also be considered in line with the NTA's 'Permeability - A Best Practice Guide'</u> e. and associated water/wastewater and surface water.
3.	Development will support compact growth, sustainable mobility, and highquality placemaking as part of Galway City's long-term growth framework.
4.	Ensure that Murrough House, and its principal elevation, is recognised through design, treatment and layout as a notable asset within the new Coastal Community with provision being made for a sustainable, long-term use for the building.
5.	Provide for a new University Campus, with a landmark building set towards the Coast.
6.	All proposed development within the Murrough Area must demonstrate how, in layout, density, design and connectivity, it will be consistent with the comprehensive development of a sustainable, transport orientated coastal community.
7.	Appropriate treatment, including set-backs and access management, will be required in appropriate areas to safeguard European Sites and areas identified as having particular biodiversity value. Development will support existing historical, ecological and environmental features.
8.	Uses on Murrough lands within Flood Zones A and B shall be limited shall be limited to water compatible uses. This limitation shall take primacy over any other provision relating to land use zoning at these lands.

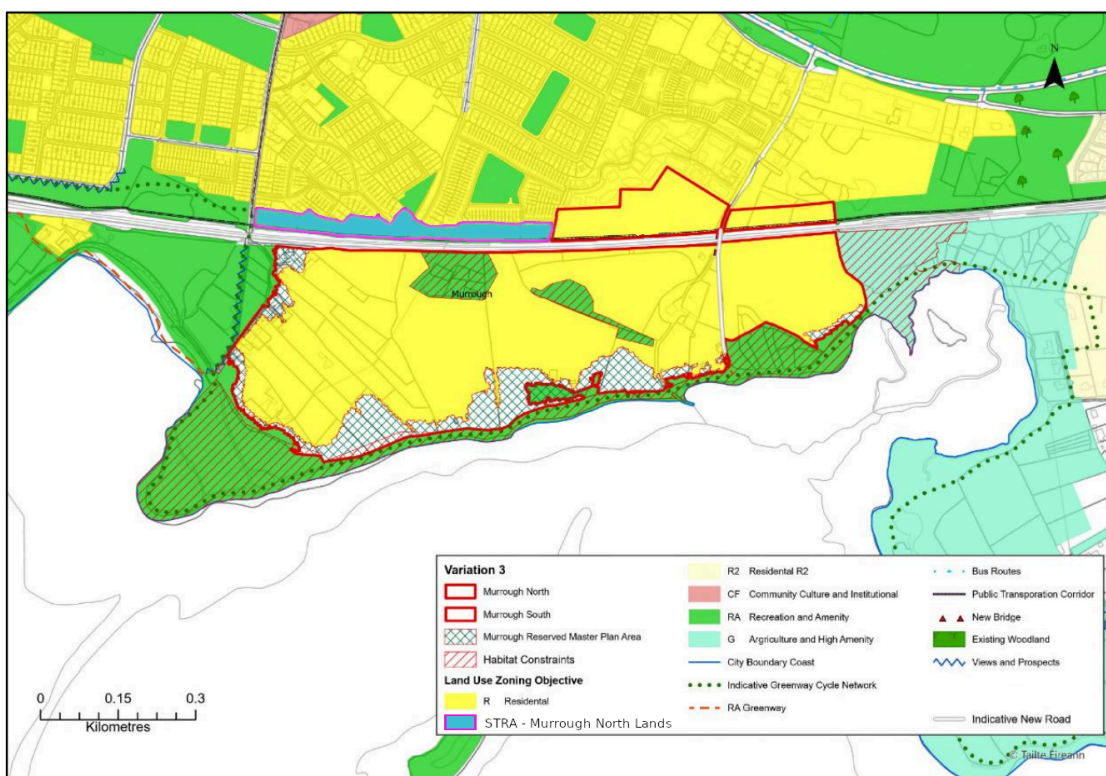
	Policy 10.6 Murrough
9.	To safeguard the long-term development (beyond the Plan period 2023-2029) of the Murrough area, land within Corrib go Costa future scenario areas have been reserved for potential future Masterplan expansion. Uses in these areas shall be limited shall be limited to water compatible uses for the Plan period 2023-2029. This limitation shall take primacy over any other provision relating to land use zoning at these parts of the lands.
10.	All appropriate uses will be considered for these lands during future reviews of and/or variations to the City Development Plan and associated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes, however these lands will be reserved for the current Plan period in order to enable future expansion where this is deemed appropriate.
11.	Detailed, site specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any proposal for development within Flood Zones A or B or within the Corrib go Costa future scenario areas

A.12 Add the following text after Table 1.9 in Section 1.5.3 Core Strategy Statement (page 34):

...3. Targeted greenfield zoning This includes a first phase review at Ardaun and a new transport-orientated coastal community at Murrough (~~capacity up to 2,500 homes,~~ sequenced with rail crossing and dual tracking of the line, wastewater and flood resilience works), with additional lands to be zoned at Merlin, Rosshill and Letteragh.

Map Changes

- Remove specific references to the proposed location of a train station. This should not be finalised until a Local Transport Plan and option selection report are produced with input from Iarnród Éireann.
- Zone additional lands north of the railway line as STRA, which are open to uses as sustainable transport corridors, recreation and amenity. In the absence of [STRA zoning](#), [RA zoning](#) could also be appropriate provided this zoning type is edited to allow for a '[public transportation facility](#)' as a compatible use. This landbank, and some of proposed zoned residential lands at the existing Murrough North, should be reserved for future dual tracking of the railway and active travel infrastructure.



Notes:

Murrough North 1 Area: 25,558m ²	-	2.55ha
Murrough North 2 Area: 15,114m ²	-	1.51ha
Murrough South Area: 340,116m ²	-	34.01ha
Less RA1	11,733	
RA2	8,240	
Murrough South Usable 320,143	-	32.01ha
Total	360,815	36.0815ha ≈ 36 hectares

Terraced Housing	45dph	-	1,620
Mid Terraced Houses, Duplex, Lowrise Apartments	80dph	-	2,880
Compact Own Door Houses, Duplex	100dph	-	3,600
Low Rise Apartments	150dph	-	5,400
Medium/High Rise Apartments	200dph	-	7,200

SEA Environmental Report

Murrough - the area at the Murrough supports a number of habitats of high biodiversity value, including habitats listed under Annex I of the Habitats Directive as well as habitats such as woodland, scrub, treeline, hedgerow and grassland habitats which provide high biodiversity in a local context and provide connectivity to the wider landscape. This area also has potential to supporting populations of protected faunal species, particularly those associated with the nearby designated sites. Areas of elevated ecological sensitivity arising high botanical species diversity, Annex I status habitats, location in relation to designated sites and/or importance for breeding bird species are found at this site.

3. Targeted greenfield zoning—including a first phase review at Ardaun and a new transport orientated coastal community at Murrough (capacity up to 2,500 homes, sequenced with rail crossing, wastewater and flood resilience works), additional lands to be zoned at Merlin, Roshill and Letteragh, and

Land use zoning at the Murrough, in particular, has integrated environmental considerations to a significant degree, with the most sensitive ecological areas zoned “Recreation and Amenity” and multiple written provisions and mitigation included to contribute towards ecological safeguarding. Furthermore, Flood Zones A and B have been zoned “Recreation and Amenity” and uses in future climate scenario risk areas (mid-range as well as high end) have been limited to water compatible uses for the Plan period.

NATURA Impact Statement

7. Appropriate treatment, including set-backs and access management, will be required in appropriate areas to safeguard European Sites and areas identified as having particular biodiversity value.

Development will support existing historical, ecological and environmental features.

In addition, several measures already in place in the existing Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied) relating to the requirement for Appropriate Assessment of all relevant projects within the area

to which the proposed Variation relates, and the appropriate management and treatment of invasives species across the area to which the proposed variation relates ensure that there will be no adverse effects

to European sites as a result of the Proposed Variation.

Proposed Variation A.55 Murrough

The designation of these lands will help stimulate economic growth and support the provision of critical infrastructure such as a dual rail line, station/platform, bridges and/or underpasses, along with coastal infrastructure, which would ultimately enhance the quality of life in this strategically important urban area. The creation of a Masterplan / Area Plan will be required prior to development, addressing land use mix, phasing, transport integration, flood risk, coastal resilience and ecological safeguarding....

It is an objective for these lands that:

Development shall be subject to a Masterplan, addressing land use mix, phasing, transport integration, flood risk, and coastal resilience.

Provide for a new University Campus, with a landmark building set towards the Coast.

All proposed development within the Murrough Area must demonstrate how, in layout, density, design and connectivity, it will be consistent with the comprehensive development of a sustainable, transport orientated coastal community.

Provision shall be made for the following infrastructure:

- An ~~over-rail bridge~~ connection **via underpass(es) and/or bridge(s)** to lands to the southern portion of the Masterplan,
- A new linear coastal amenity and flood defence,
- A dual track rail line and commuter rail stop ~~north of the railway line,~~

- Active Travel links to Gleann na Rí and Gleann Rua estate to the north and connections west towards Ballyloughane, facilitating options for the proposed Greenway which will traverse east west through the site, and,
- associated water/wastewater and surface water.

Development will support compact growth, sustainable mobility, and high-quality placemaking as part of Galway City's long-term growth framework.

Ensure that Murrough House, and its principal elevation, is recognised through design, treatment and layout as a notable asset within the new Coastal Community with provision being made for a

sustainable, long-term use for the building.

Appropriate treatment, including set-backs and access management, will be required in appropriate areas to safeguard European Sites and areas identified as having particular biodiversity value.

Development will support existing historical, ecological and environmental features.

Uses on Murrough lands within Flood Zones A and B shall be limited shall be limited to water compatible uses. This limitation shall take primacy over any other provision relating to land use zoning at

these lands.

To safeguard the long-term development (beyond the Plan period 2023-2029) of the Murrough area, land within Corrib go Costa future scenario areas have been reserved for potential future Masterplan

expansion. Uses in these areas shall be limited shall be limited to water compatible uses for the Plan period 2023-2029. This limitation shall take primacy over any other provision relating to land use

zoning at these parts of the lands.

All appropriate uses will be considered for these lands during future reviews of and/or variations to the City Development Plan and associated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes, however

these lands will be reserved for the current Plan period in order to enable future expansion where this is deemed appropriate.

Detailed, site specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any proposal for development within Flood Zones A or B or within the Corrib go Costa future scenario areas.

Variation 3

Lands at Murrough, although primarily designated for recreation and amenity purposes, will also sustain mixed uses including an element of housing and a significant delivery of amenity. This in time will service both the adjacent third level institute at Atlantic Technological University (ATU) and the existing and planned population on the east of the city. It is anticipated that an ~~LAP~~ **Masterplan** will be brought forward during the currency of this plan and that recreational facilities and infrastructure may be delivered but housing is not targeted in the period of this plan.

Proposals for Candidate TOD Sites in Galway City GCC July 2023

2. East of the city centre along a public transport corridor comprising the Dublin Road and the rail line is the Murrough LAP and environs. This corridor has a combination of brownfield and greenfield lands which are proximate to the railway line and to the proposed BusConnects Dublin Road bus corridor which will provide high frequency bus services along this route. Lands adjacent to the railway line are reserved for sustainable transport use which can support active travel connections to the city centre and also includes for potential for a commuter rail stop facilities. The large-scale lands at Murrough, Merlin hospital, Roscam and council 3 owned lands at Doughiska together with the designated Regeneration and opportunity sites along the Dublin Road are capable of delivering development of scale creating enhanced residential and mixed-use city districts centred around public transport and active travel services. Public investment will be required to upgrade existing water and wastewater services and to extend the waste water network. Railway infrastructure works will also be required to provide access to lands south of the rail line and a commuter rail stop.

1.5.4 Housing Growth Strategy

3. Targeted greenfield zoning

This includes a first phase review at Ardaun and a new transport-orientated coastal community at Murrough (capacity up to 2,500 homes, sequenced with rail crossing, wastewater and flood resilience works), with additional lands to be zoned at Merlin, Rosshill and Letteragh

1.5.4 Architecture, Urban Design and Placemaking Policy

It is an objective to develop an Architectural Policy for Galway City. A City Architectural Policy will provide a unifying set of principles to guide how neighbourhoods evolve, ensuring that growth, renewal and intensification contribute positively to the city's identity and built environment. As Galway continues to consolidate through considered infill development and comprehensive activation of greenfield lands, a clear architectural policy will help shape places that are distinctive, legible and rooted in local character. 33 The policy will support high-quality design that responds to the grain of existing neighbourhoods, strengthen the city's varied architectural traditions and recognise conservation at the heart of sustainable development. It will recognise the value of Galway's industrial heritage, archaeology and historic urban layers, ensuring that new buildings and public spaces complement and celebrate these assets. By promoting coherent design principles—rather than prescribing stylistic outcomes—the policy will encourage innovation and a strong sense of place. It will help create well-designed streets, blocks and buildings that enrich the daily life of residents and visitors

Galway City comprises of a number of neighbourhoods, each having their own distinct character and identity. It is policy to strengthen communities and

neighbourhoods in the city and to support the development of new communities in areas such as at the planned urban extension at Ardaun (LAP) and on designated Regeneration and Opportunity areas. Guided by the principles of the neighbourhood concept as included for in Chapter 3, the Urban Density and Building Height Study has set out a spatial strategy to ensure that additional development can assimilate well into area setting and takes account of a wide range of relevant issues including the context of the site, the character of the surrounding area, existing amenity value and the need for good quality, urban and building design to support successful placemaking and liveability. It is the intention that the evolution and development of neighbourhoods will be guided by a Galway City architectural policy, which will ensure that growth, renewal and intensification contribute positively to the city's identity and built environment.

10.25 Murrough

Murrough is an extensive area of semi-natural environment adjacent to developed areas east of the city, including Renmore, Ballybaan and Doughiska. The lands at Murrough have the distinction of being of substantial size (approximately 34 hectares) and located adjacent to the coastline, which is defined by a variety of features including beach and rocky shoreline. The area has direct pedestrian links to Ballyloughane Beach to the west and possibilities exist for coastal walks to Oranmore, to the east. The railway line and land reserved for a possible public transportation corridor form the northern demarcation of the lands.

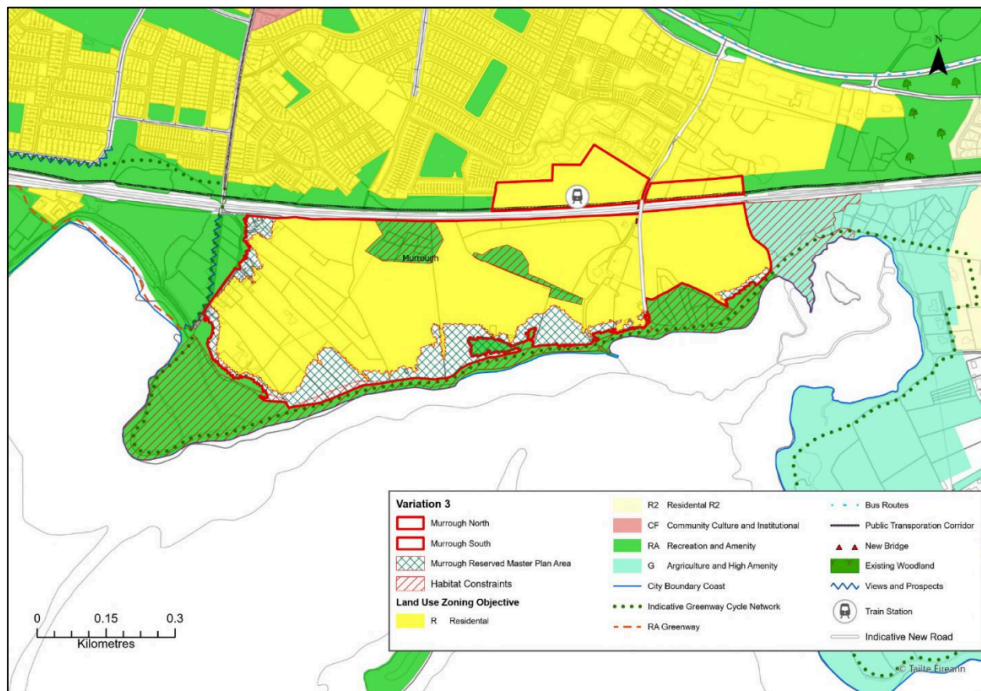
The lands have road and pedestrian access from Ballyloughane Road and Murrough Road, and comprise a large bank of lands in a strategically important area on the edge of the Established Suburbs. It is considered that with the right infrastructure and investment, there would be significant potential to create a transport-oriented coastal community providing both additional housing growth in line with the Housing Growth Guidelines (2025) and significant additional educational facilities.

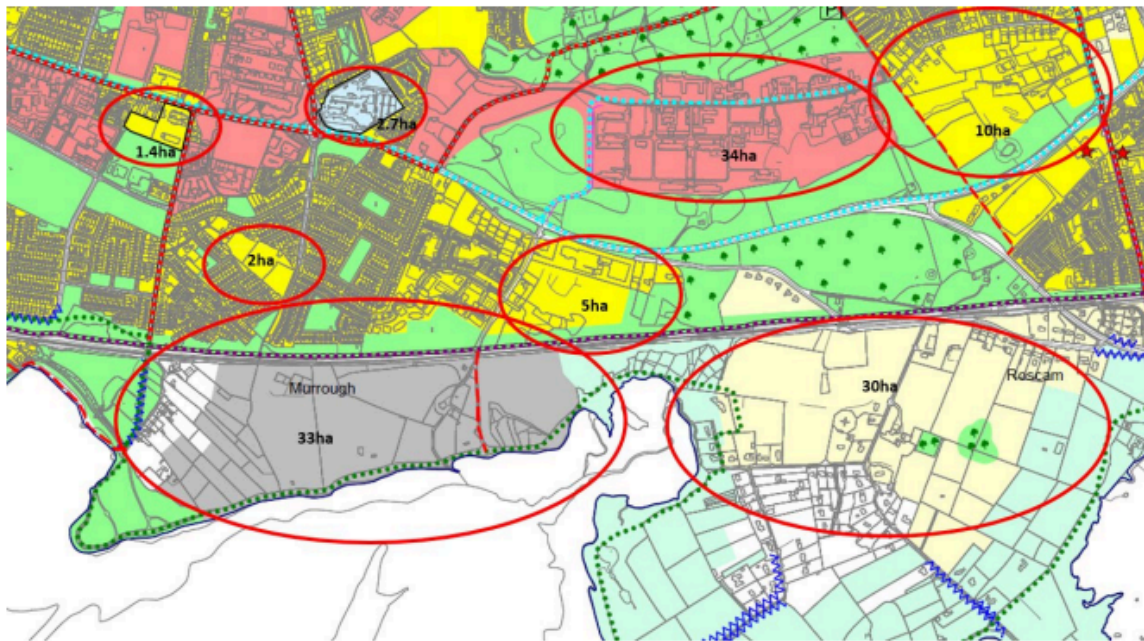
~~There is also road and pedestrian access from Ballyloughane Road and Murrough Road. Given the rapid expansion of residential development in the east of the city and having regard to the 40 future development of Ardaun, there is a demand for coastal and recreation facilities on the east side of the city. This demand is further increased by the current imbalance of coastal amenity/recreational facilities in the city with the bulk of these facilities, Salthill and Silverstrand being located on the west side of the city. The Murrough area offers potential for the provision of coastal and recreation facilities. These will complement the improved facilities at Ballyloughane Beach. Given the possibility of good public transport links, there is also the opportunity for mixed use development for a portion of the area. Mixed use development would contribute to the vitality of the area and provide a new residential neighbourhood. There is also potential for development, in particular~~

~~sports and recreation facilities, allied to ATU who are landowners in this area and the owners of Murrough House a protected structure.~~

In recognition of this, the Council will, **by itself or in cooperation with relevant stakeholders**, prepare a LAP Masterplan for the Murrough area. The aim of the ~~LAP Masterplan~~ is to ensure the **appropriate development of the lands, phased with regard to required infrastructure upgrades in the area** ~~reservation of a substantial bank of lands for recreational purposes.~~ The Plan will ~~allow for mixed-use development, which will maximize the development of recreation facilities and will create a vibrant area with efficient public transport links to the rest of the city. It will integrate with the amenity facilities at Ballyloughane beach~~ **address land use mix, phasing, transport integration, flood risk, coastal resilience and ecological safeguarding**. The plan will include for examination of options to address the access challenges associated with these lands. It will examine suitable options for vehicular access noting that the intensification of use of the existing level crossing is not appropriate. The Plan will take account of the sensitive ecological environment at this location and will incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate against flood risk. ~~In order to achieve the necessary recreational facilities, two thirds of the area will be reserved for this purpose.~~

~~Developments compatible with the G zoning which will not prejudice the aims of the LAP Masterplan will be open to consideration in advance of the adoption of the LAP Masterplan. In particular and i~~ **As part of the masterplan, provision shall be made for an over rail bridge connection to the southern portion of the lands, new coastal amenity and flood defence, a dual track rail line and commuter rail stop, and active travel links.** In view of the significant interest of ATU in lands at Murrough for the development of such uses, the Council will endeavour to work in partnership with the college and **other relevant stakeholders** to achieve a safe and suitable access to service the lands that will in turn facilitate their use for **educational**, sports and ancillary facilities.

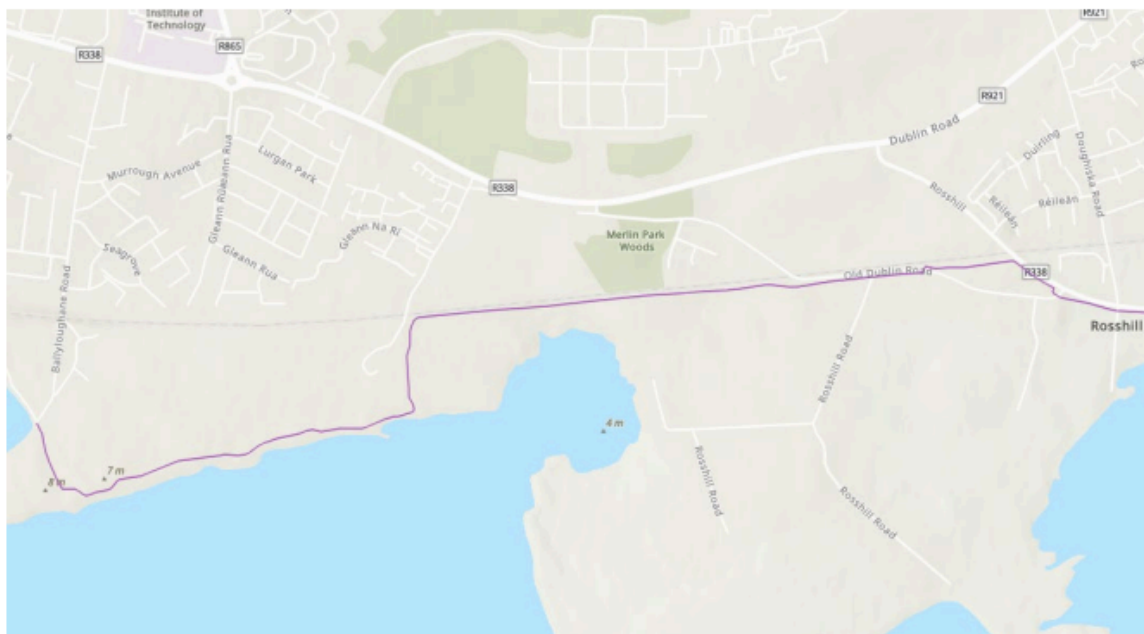




LEGEND:

Public Transport Corridor/Train line Bus Route

Map 1 – Existing Public Transport Infrastructure serving Murrough & Environs



LEGEND:

Preferred Greenway/Cycleway Route

Map 2 – Segment of Proposed Athlone to Galway Cycleway Infrastructure traversing Murrough & Environs