

Traveller Accommodation Programme Capital/Maintenance Update

November 2023

The table below provides an overview of progress in relation to the capital schemes noted in TAP 2019 – 2024.

	Location	Update
4 Culturally Specific Traveller Units	Doughiska	CAS/CALF Funding approved. Part 8 publication delayed pending clarity on timeframes for knotweed removal – projected Part 8 publication Q1 2024. Respond - €1,278,376 approved at Stage 1.
5 Culturally Specific Traveller Units**	Doughiska (redesign of St. Nicholas Halting Site)	Preliminary proposals are being considered for the redevelopment of the existing halting site and replacement with group / Traveller specific homes. Potential for 5 units (similar to Circular Road) to be included in next TAP for delivery. Consultation with residents will be required in advance of design team engagement.
5 Culturally Specific Traveller Units	Circular Road	Site has been decanted. Contract awarded and commenced on site in September 2023. Contract duration is 15 months.
8 Culturally Specific Traveller Units	Merlin Lane Lands	Prelim design stage. Stage 1 application pending. Additional adjacent lands acquired in 2022. Engagement with GCC planners re proposed development ongoing. Will not be completed by 2024 and will be noted for delivery in the next TAP.
8 Unit Group Scheme	Fana Glas Ballybane	Wider housing proposal for the area being considered. Will not be completed by 2024 and will be noted for delivery in the next TAP.

Planned Maintenance / Upgrades

Group Housing Scheme Upgrades

A programme of works is being developed to upgrade the existing stock of Traveller group housing schemes across the city. Funding provision was secured in the 2022 budget to commence a cycle of such planned works over the next 3 years.

Condition surveys were planned to commence in 2022 with the first phase of works following thereafter. Prioritisation of work will be based on needs identified in surveys. Existing deficiencies will be dealt with, and these works will signal a move to a planned maintenance approach for Traveller Accommodation.

Tender documents for the appointment of consultants to carry out Traveller accommodation condition surveys and subsequent works were published on eTenders in 2022 and 2023 with a closing date for replies of June 2022 and October 2023. No tenders were received by the June 2022 or the October 2023 closing dates for receipt of completed tender documentation. GCC are now reconsidering a way forward to procure the required services. The tender documents are at present being updated to include details of Non-Traveller-Specific Properties. Energy retrofit will also be considered for these homes. The works will go out to tender again in 2024.

A programme of window and door replacement for all 8 units in Beal Srutha to be complete by year end. It is intended to carry out condition surveys of external windows and doors in 2024 on other Traveller accommodation units to determine if replacement is required.

Carrowbrowne Halting sites.

Transient Site

An upgrade of **Gas Boilers** was completed and closed out in December 2022 at a cost of €40,000.

A funding application was submitted to the TAU towards costs of an **upgrade of the play facility** at Carrowbrowne Transient site and this was completed 5th September 2023. While an initial €17,500 per local authority was preliminarily available from Dormant Accounts Funding, Council applied for €94k. The application for funding has been successful and Council has been awarded €94,894 towards the upgrade of the play facility. Procurement of a contractor has commenced through e-tenders. Tenders have been received and Contractor to be appointed. Works to be completed by year end.

Tender documents for the refurbishment of the **community centre** on the Transient site were published in Q2 2022. Proposed works include the replacement of the 2 boilers for the district heating system. A funding application to the Department for these works was not approved but the Council will fund the cost of the works from own resources. There were no replies to the Tender published on eTenders and therefore the Council engaged a Contractor directly to undertake the works. Works were closed out in December 2022 at a cost of €24,620.

The installation of **traffic calming measures** and associated works for the temporary and transient halting sites were completed in 2022. The works involved the laying of a macadam-based speed ramps at 3 locations, the installation of appropriate signage and road markings. The works were completed with all ramps and signs. Total value of €17,000.

The **sewerage pumping stations** serviced on temporary and transient underwent upgrades in 2022, new sewerage pumps were installed including new access covers with modern safety features. There is continuous safety servicing and monitoring: these works are ongoing. Total costs are €30,000.

Fire Safety / Traveller Specific Housing - Upgrade of smoke / heat carbon alarms and fire blankets

Transient site, temporary Halting site, St Nicholas Park, Circular Road, Doughiska and Cul Tra sites:
Condition surveys for the above sites for fire related lifesaving equipment was carried between January 2023. The fire safety items checked on the survey are as follows:

- Heat Detectors
- Fire blankets
- Smoke Alarms
- Carbon monoxide alarms.

The works also included a Safe Electric Periodic Certificate issued for each installation. Any issues found at time of survey, were rectified.

Property Acquisitions

The damaged property at Kiltulla, Oranmore was been assessed, and demolition and rebuild are required. A design team was appointed to bring the project through design, planning, and construction phases. A planning application was lodged with Galway County Council in September 2021 with an initial decision due on the 25th November 2021. A subsequent planning application was required and was lodged, with a decision date due in March 2022. Planning permission was approved on the 14th March 2022. An appeal has subsequently been with An Bord Plenala and a decision with a grant of

Planning Permission was issued by ABP in August 2023. This project will be progressed by the Councils Technical Team within the Capital Delivery Unit.

Acquisitions - Traveller Accommodation Support Unit Funding

In 2023 Work progressed on delivery of units through individual unit acquisitions through funding from the Traveller Accommodation Support Unit.

Year	Unit Detail	East	West
2022	3 Bed House		1
2023	3 Bed House	1	
2023	4 Bed House	1	
2023	3 Bed House		2

The Council are currently at a status of conveyancing on 1 further 3 Bed Unit on the East of the City with anticipated close of sale in Q1 2024.

Replacement Caravans / Caravan Loans Maria

Council agreed to acquire one caravan for a family on the Doughiska halting site due to over-crowding. This acquisition will exhaust the full budget for 2022 as recoupment of 50% of costs will not be permissible in this instance. The caravan has been purchased and installed. Details of the caravan loan scheme were announced on the 18 July and Council will consider all future applications for replacement caravans under the terms of the scheme. 24 applications have been received to date.

Galway City Council / TAU Funded Works 2023

In addition to funding allocated in the revenue budget for general maintenance and management of Traveller accommodation in the city, €1,280,885.21 was approved and / or recouped from the Department of Housing Traveller Accommodation Unit for expenditure incurred in 2023.

Clean-ups to Traveller Accommodation sites has cost c.€120,000 in 2023 to date, this is mainly funded from Galway City Councils Revenue Budget.

	Expenditure	TAU Income
Traveller Management / Maintenance & Waste Clearance / Disposal	€453,733	€49,093.21
Property Acquisitions 2023	€1,180,000	€1,231,792
Safety Works to the Halting Sites	€9,100	€0.00
Total	€1,642,833	€1,280,885.21