



## **DRAFT - Policy on Roadside Memorials**

### **Introduction**

Each year Galway County Council receives regular requests from the families of road incident victims who wish to erect a memorial at the scene of a road incident.

In order to progress a Policy on Roadside Memorials, following fatal collisions in County Galway, consultation in this regard involves liaison between Galway County Council, An Garda Síochána, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland's Regional Safety Engineer.

This proposed Policy, in general, will not affect existing memorials erected by members of the public. However, should an existing memorial become damaged and/ or in need of replacement, the replacement memorial must comply with this Policy.

### **Considerations**

It is understandable that bereaved families have a need to mark the passing of a loved one and often feel that the physical marking of the exact location of death is of benefit in the healing process. It is difficult for the Road Authority to act in a hard-hearted manner in such circumstances and every effort is made to facilitate the wishes of a bereaved family. Markings along the roadside indicating a fatal road incident may also promote greater safety awareness among road users.

On the other hand the primary objective of the Road Authority is the maintenance of a safe road network for all road users. The erection of permanent memorials along the roadside can cause difficulties such as:

- Interference with road maintenance such as, e.g. verge trimming, etc.
- Distraction to other road users
- They tend to attract visitors to dangerous locations
- Block sight lines

## **Policy on Temporary Marking of a Road Fatality Incident**

1. The Council has no objection to the temporary marking of a road fatality through the placing of biodegradable floral tributes, provided that these do not cause a difficulty for other road users.
2. Permanent roadside memorials shall in general be discouraged in favour of memorials in graveyards.

## **Application to Erect a Permanent Roadside Memorial:**

A Roadside Memorial is a physical object commemorating a site which is in close proximity to where a road traffic fatality has occurred.

Where families insist on permanent roadside memorials the following conditions shall apply:

In order to ensure roadside memorials are erected with road safety foremost in mind, an Application seeking the consent of the Roads Authority for the erection of any roadside memorial must be submitted in writing to Galway County Council, providing contact details (name, address and phone number) of a family member or friend who will be responsible for the memorial concerned.

- Letter of Application to Erect a Roadside Memorial - only applications from the immediate family of a road incident victim will be considered.
- written permission from the Landowner shall be included
- written permission from the next-of-kin of the deceased shall be included
- general Site Location Map and sketch of the proposed layout
- dimensioned drawing of the proposed Memorial and details of materials to be used, etc.
- Contact details in the event that additional information may be required
- No fee applies in respect of processing such Applications.
- The applicant shall be notified in writing of the decision made by Galway Co. Council

## **Specifications / General Conditions for Erecting a Roadside Memorial**

- Where it is proposed to erect a free-standing memorial in a roadside hedgerow/ road verge, its height shall not exceed 750mm. In the interest of road safety, wooden memorials only shall be erected in this situation.
- The maximum area of a roadside memorial shall not exceed 450mm high by 450mm wide, by 150mm deep. The memorial is to be located at the back of the roadside verge.
- Where it is proposed that a roadside memorial be affixed to a solid structure such as a roadside wall it shall be permissible that the memorial be in the form of a plaque or cross made from wood, stone or metal, with the height not to exceed 750mm.
- It shall be set back in line with roadside fence.
- The exact location of the memorial will have to be agreed with the local Area Engineer and in this regard the memorial may not be located at the exact location of the incident.
- Only one memorial shall be permitted per incident regardless of the number of fatalities.
- Memorial shall not be lit or have reflective properties.
- Planting of flowers, shrubs, etc., shall not be permitted adjacent to a permanent roadside memorial.
- Memorials erected without the approval of the Road Authority will be removed.
- The Road Authority will have no responsibility for the maintenance of roadside memorials – this is the responsibility of family or friends.
- It is important that all visitors to the memorial exercise extreme due care and attention (e.g. park legally, stand away from the road edge, etc.) and behave responsibly so as not to endanger themselves or other road users when maintaining or visiting a memorial.
- The monument contractor/ person erecting the memorial shall indemnify Galway County Council against all claims which may arise during the erection process. Evidence of appropriate insurances shall be provided to the Council prior to any works being undertaken.
- In the event of Galway County Council carrying out future road improvements in the area and it becomes necessary to relocate the memorial, the applicant(s) will be given the opportunity to relocate it themselves or the Council will arrange for its' re-location. The Council will pay the reasonable cost for the re-location of the memorial in this instance.
- In the case of any Dual Carriageway, NO Roadside Memorials will be permitted in proximity to any section of the Carriageway which has a Speed Limit of 100 km/h.
- In the case of Motorways in Co. Galway, NO Roadside Memorials are permissible.

Galway County Council shall review the Roadside Memorial Policy after a period of two years has elapsed.