

BALLYMASTONE PHASE 3

Schools Demand & Childcare Facilities Assessment

Large-Scale Residential Development Stage 3 Planning
Application

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Client:

Glenveagh Living Limited

Date:

20 October 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

This *Schools Demand & Childcare Facilities Assessment* has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin (BSM) on behalf of Glenveagh Living Limited (the Applicant) in support of Stage 3 Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) Application to submit to Fingal County Council (FCC) regarding the proposed LRD at Ballymastone, Donabate, Co. Dublin.

The subject site (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’) is located to the east of Donabate Village, Co. Dublin (see **Figure 1-1**) and forms Phase 3 of a wider masterplan for the lands of Ballalease North, Portraine Demesne and Ballymastone townlands. Phase 1 and 2 have been granted previously and are discussed further in **Section 2.1**.

The proposed development will accommodate 398 no. high-quality homes in a mix of residential types, including a mix of 1-, 2-, 3- and 4- bed units, private amenity space, a crèche (c. 646 sq.m), and a community space (c. 100 sq.m). The site will also feature car parking, cycle parking, pedestrian/cycle links, road improvements, storage, services (including water, wastewater, electricity and telecommunications) and plant areas. Landscaping will include communal amenity areas, SuDS features, significant public open space, including outdoor exercise and play areas and equipment.

This report should be read in conjunction with the other relevant reports and drawings accompanying this LRD Application documentation pack.

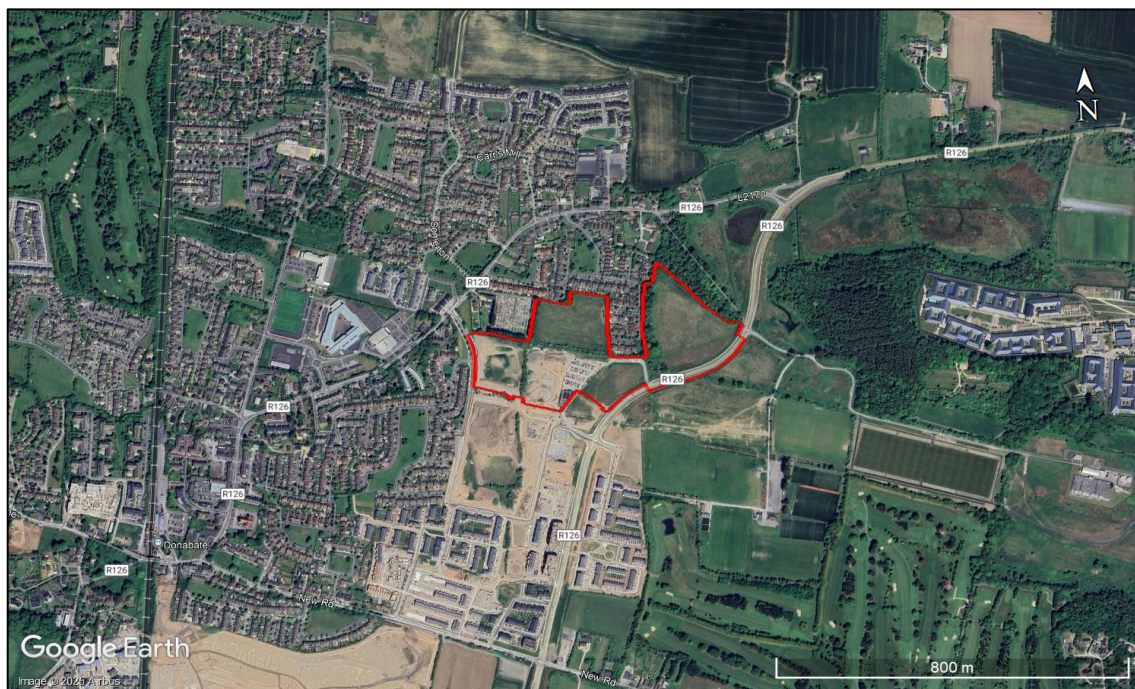


Figure 1-1: Indicative Site Location outlined in Red for LRD Phase 3 (Source: BSM, Google Earth 2025)

1.1 Background

Childcare Facilities

The provision of childcare facilities is an important factor for economic and social wellbeing. The *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001* (the Childcare Facilities Guidelines) states that access to quality childcare services contributes to the social, emotional, and educational development of children with clear economic benefits from the provision of childcare. Quality childcare can benefit children, their parents, employers, and communities in general.

Schools Demand

This Report has been prepared in response to the requirements of Fingal County Council (FCC) who will consider future school developments having regard to specific requirements of the Department of Education and Youth (DoEY)¹ set out within *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, 2008* (the Provision of Schools Guidelines). New schools shall be developed in areas where new/additional schools are required as identified by the DoEY, referred to as *School Planning Areas*, and/or within existing school/education sites.

1.2 Methodology

This report is primarily a desktop-based study, using freely available data and information services to assess the proposed development and its future population, in the context of nearby existing childcare facilities and schools.

A 1km and 2km catchment has been selected to assess childcare facilities and schools provision, within the Donabate and Portrane area, which will be easily accessible for future residents.

This catchment methodology is in accordance with the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* (the Development Plan) Objective DMS078 which requires an assessment within a 1km radius of the site while conducting a Community and Social Infrastructure Audit. Childcare and School provisions are classified as a community asset and require the same scope (see the Community and Social Infrastructure Report prepared by BSM submitted with this application documentation). A catchment of 1km supports a relatively short distance to access via foot, bicycle, or public transport for all ages. A 2km radius has been added to the assessment for completeness.

In addition, it is noted that secondary schools can often serve a wider catchment beyond 1-2km. Secondary school children can often travel further with public transport options including bus and train services (available from Donabate), as well as private transport, accessing schools in adjacent towns, and also school provision in Dublin city. In order to better understand the wider context of enrolment, secondary schools that fall within a 5km radius of the site will be referenced for context only, as they still may be accessible to students.

Information in relation to the existing childcare providers was obtained from TUSLA's 'Register of Early Years Services' published in July 2025². The most up to date enrolment data for both primary and secondary schools across the 2023/2024 & 2024/2025 academic year was obtained from the DoEY's 'Data on Individual Schools' website³. Data in relation to ongoing projects and future provisions of schools in the area was obtained from the 'Major Projects'⁴ page of the DoEY website as well.

Population data was obtained from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and has been used to create a demographic profile of the immediate area. The area assessed in this report is the Electoral Division (ED) of Donabate, which includes the settlements of Donabate and Portrane and the immediate rural and coastal environs.

The proposed development unit numbers and mix indicate the future composition of the proposed development's population. This information together with the composition of the nearby existing residential areas was used to indicate potential future demand arising from the proposed development for childcare and school facilities.

¹ Formerly the Department of Education (DoE).

² Data collected by TUSLA as part of the Register of Early Years Services sorted by County, updated monthly. Data from Dublin Co. as of July 2025 was used in this Report. Available at: <https://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-providers/register-of-early-years-services-by-county/>.

³ Enrolment data for Primary and Secondary Schools across Ireland, lists sorted by most recent/previous enrolment year (September 2024). Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/collections/data-on-individual-schools/>.

⁴ Current large-scale projects that are completed and being delivered under the School Building Program, updated on 30 September 2025 at the time of writing this report. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/services/major-projects/>.

2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

The site is a stated area of c. 11.28Ha of the overall c. 32Ha wider Ballymastone masterplan lands in the east of Donabate, as illustrated in Fig. 2-1 below. Please see Planning Report & Statement of Consistency prepared by BSM, for full locational details of the proposed development.

The lands to the south of the site consist of the permitted Phase 1 and 2 of the Ballymastone Masterplan (FCC Ref. LRD0008/S3 & FCC. Ref. LRD0039/S3). **Figure 2-1** is an extract of a Site Location Map for the *Architectural Design Statement* (ADS) prepared by MDO as part of this Stage 3 LRD Planning Application documentation.

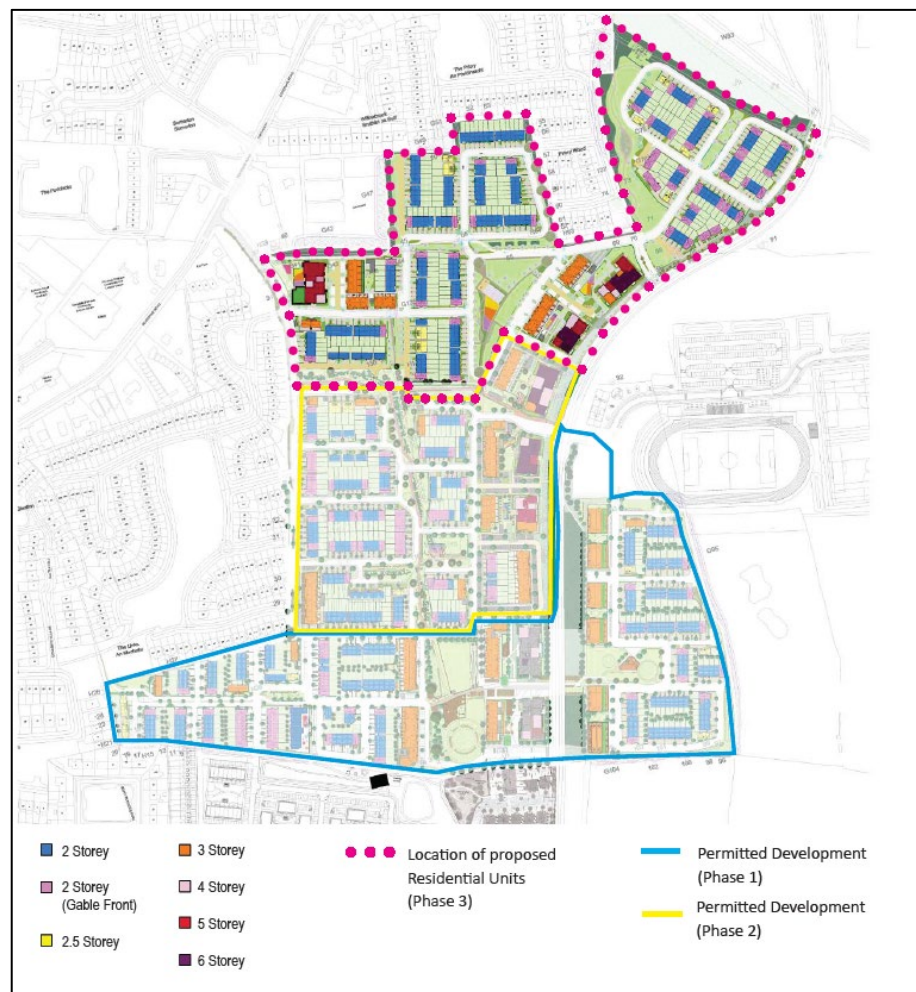


Figure 2-1: Ballymastone masterplan lands, showing permitted Phase 1 & 2 as well as proposed Phase 3 (Source: MDO ADS 2025)

The site is within lands zoned 'RA- Residential Amenity' as per the Fingal Development Plan 2023-29 (see **Figure 2-2** below), whose goal is to "provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity." The overall vision for these lands is to "ensure that any new development in existing areas would have a minimal impact on and enhance existing residential amenity." For detailed information on land use zoning and map-based objectives, please refer to the accompanying *Planning Report & Statement of Consistency* prepared by BSM.

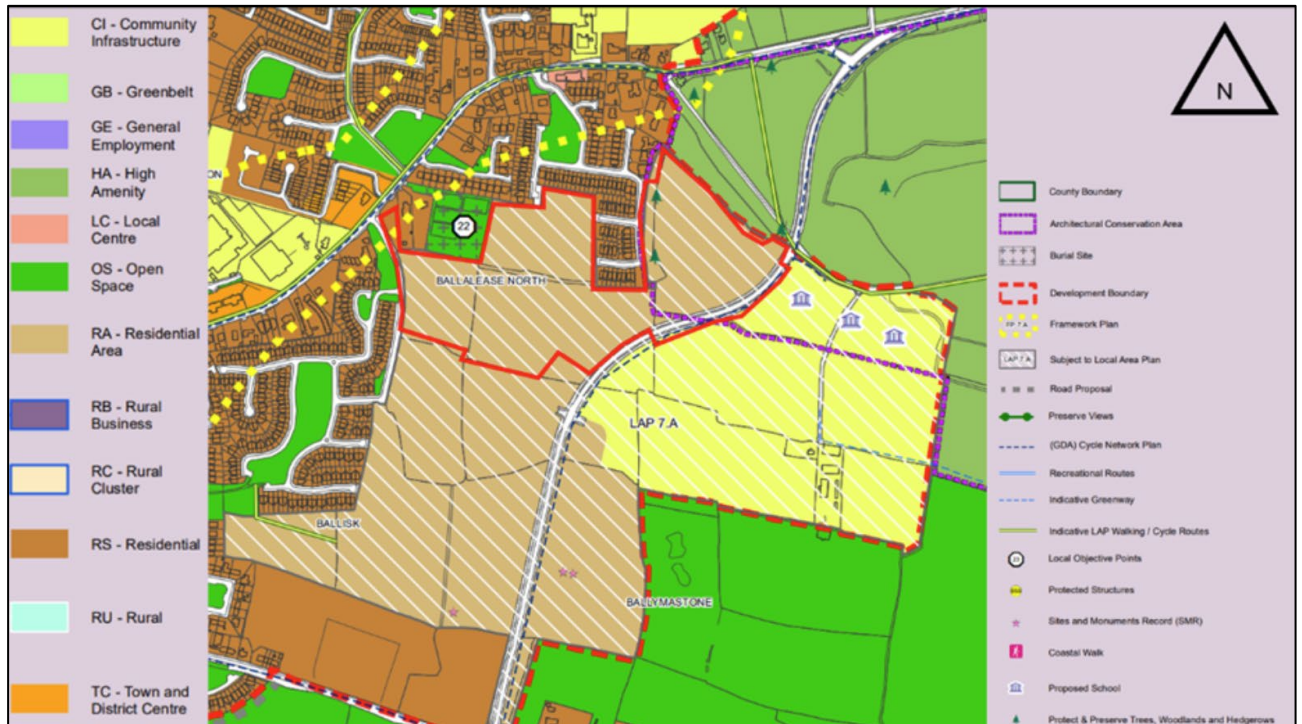


Figure 2-2: Zoning Map of Donabate, site outlined in red. (Source: FCC DP 2023, BSM Annotations 2025)

2.2 Site Context

The site of the proposed development is situated within the administrative area of FCC, to the east of Donabate village in Co. Dublin, within the townlands of Ballymastone, c. 20km north-east of Dublin City and c. 10km north-east of Dublin Airport, on the northern margin of the Dublin Metropolitan Area. Dublin City Centre, Swords, and Dublin Airport are the primary employment hubs in the wider area, but there are also a number of local industrial, retail parks, and other large employers in the area.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND APPRAISAL

3.1 National Planning Policy

3.1.1 Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (First Revision)

Project Ireland 2040 represents two key plans: The *National Planning Framework (NPF)* and the *National Development Plan Framework (NDP)* which work in tandem as a national framework to guide development through national objectives and key principles. The *NPF*, as revised in April 2025, is a development strategy guiding national, regional and local spatial development in economic, environmental, and social terms until 2040.

The revised *NPF* recognises the critical role of social infrastructure, particularly childcare and early education, in sustainable communities and enabling greater workforce participation. With Ireland's population expected to rise by an additional 1 million people by 2040, the framework highlights the continued provision and enhancement and equitable distribution of childcare and education facilities as an essential to meeting demographic and economic growth targets. This aligns with National Strategic Outcome 10 *Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services*, which seeks to ensure the shared benefits that can be delivered from these amenities.

Furthermore, National Policy Objectives (NPO) 41 reaffirms the need to deliver the overall vision outlined in the framework in relation to childcare services and schools, both primary and secondary, are set out below:

NPO 41: *“Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in: A Childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting on investment needs, including identification of regional priorities; The provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, including in support of infill brownfield development, that meet the diverse needs of local populations and act as a key enabler for housing development, thereby contributing to the development of sustainable communities; [...]” (p.87)*

3.1.2 Planning Design Standards for Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2025

In July 2025, the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2025* (the Design Guidelines) under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, were published. The design standards supersede the previous guidelines in relation to apartment design; *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2022 (updated July 2023)*, which are now revoked.

The Design Guidelines are cognisant of the latest updates to the NPF and increasing pressure to increase housing supply. The matters dealt with in the Design Guidelines include apartment mix, internal space standards, dual aspect ratios, floor to ceiling heights, apartment to stair/lift core ratios, storage space, and amenity space.

Section 4.7 of the Design Guidelines state as follows:

“Notwithstanding the Planning Guidelines for Childcare Facilities (2001), which are subject to review, and which recommend the provision of one child care facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units, the threshold for provision of any such facilities in apartment schemes should be established having regard to the scale and unit mix of the proposed development, the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area. One-bedroom or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any on-site childcare provision and subject to the factors above, this may also apply in part or whole, to units with two or more bedrooms.”

Approximately 12.3% (49 no.) of units in this proposed development are 1-bedroom units and should generally not be considered part of the calculated need for childcare provision. It is therefore anticipated that the potential for children to be living in the scheme is therefore limited to the remaining 349 no. 2-, 3-, and 4-bed units, in accordance with the Guidelines.

3.1.3 Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)

The *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (the Childcare Guidelines), published in June 2001 by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government⁵, provides a framework to guide local authorities in preparing development plans and assessing applications for planning permission, and developers and childcare providers in formulating development proposals.

The Childcare Guidelines state that the local authority policies should focus on:

“The identification of appropriate locations for the provision of childcare facilities including city centres, district centres, neighbourhood centres, residential areas, places of employment, and educational institutions and convenience to public transport nodes as a key element in the development of sustainable communities.”

Appendix 2 of the Childcare Guidelines sets out the threshold for which childcare facilities should be established based on the geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area

⁵ Renamed Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in September 2020
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stating: “for housing, a benchmark provision of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings is recommended.”, with one facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare spaces.

It is further noted that any modification to the indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings should have regard to ‘the make-up of the proposed residential area’.

Section 2.4 discusses appropriate locations for childcare facilities across various forms of development, stating:

***New communities/Larger new housing developments** - Planning authorities should require the provision of at least one childcare facility for new housing areas unless there are significant reasons to the contrary such as development consisting of single bed apartments or where there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments.*

The Childcare Guidelines also state: “The threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas.”

3.1.4 Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science - Statement of Strategy 2023-2025

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science *Statement of Strategy 2023-2025* (the Statement of Strategy) is a high-level plan that aims to ensure that “all children and young people have access to a positive learning experience and to facilitate them, through learning to realise their full potential and contribute to Ireland’s social, economic and cultural development.”

The Statement of Strategy highlights the importance of the role of schools and education settings with a focus on key areas such as supporting children’s learning in the aftermath of the pandemic, addressing educational disadvantage, migrant inclusion, supporting children and young people with special educational needs, combating climate change and supporting the active participation of children and young people in the system.

3.1.5 The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice (2008)

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government together with the Department of Education and Science published the *Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice* (the Provision for School Guidelines) in July 2008.

The document was designed to facilitate the provision of schools and related infrastructure alongside mechanisms for new schools through the following Agreed Actions between the two departments:

1. Forecasting Future Education Demand
2. Planning for New Schools through Local Authority Development Plans
3. Location of Schools – Planning Considerations
4. Site Development Standards
5. School Development Proposals and the Development Management Process
6. School Site Identification and Acquisition

In relation to a development management process, the *Provision for School Guidelines* require planning authorities to:

“Take due account of the requirements of section 4.4 of the draft planning guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, which requires planning applications for major housing proposals to be accompanied by assessments of the capacity of local schools to accommodate the proposed development.”

3.1.6 Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures

The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020

The Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures – The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020* is the first overarching national children's policy framework addressing the age ranges for children and young people (0–24 years). It adopts a whole of Government approach and will be underpinned by a number of constituent strategies in the areas of early years, youth and participation.

This framework has been updated by the *Young Ireland National Framework for Children and Young People* as referenced below.

3.1.7 Young Ireland National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (2023-2028)

The central aim of this Policy Framework is to provide a platform to realize the rights of children and young people in Ireland, so that all partners can work effectively together to ensure children and young people can thrive. The policy framework will re-establish governance structures to drive policy development and implementation, while demonstrating accountability for children and young people's policy.

3.2 Regional Planning Policy

3.2.1 Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031

The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) within the Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) is a strategic plan that provides guidance through Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs), to form a regional framework to assist local planning and economic development throughout the Eastern and Midland region.

The RSES echoes the importance childcare, like other social infrastructure, in developing a strong and healthy community. In Section 9, the RSES encourages Local Authorities consider demographic trends and patterns when assesses the need for social infrastructure. There are a number of RPOs support the provision of and access to social infrastructure:

RPO 9.13 (Healthy Placemaking): *Local authorities and relevant agencies shall ensure that new social infrastructure developments are accessible and inclusive for a range of users by adopting a universal design approach and provide for an age friendly society in which people of all ages can live full, active, valued and healthy lives.*

RPO 9.14 (Recreation and Open Space): *Local authorities shall seek to support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure that all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet the need of the communities they serve."*

RPO 9.19 (Social and Economic Opportunity): *EMRA shall work collaboratively with stakeholders including the wide range of service providers through the LECPs to effectively plan for social infrastructure needs.*

Regarding Childcare and School provision, the RSES outlines for Local Authorities to understand demographic trends when conducting assessments for future provisions stating:

RPO 9.20 (Childcare, Education and Lifelong Learning): *"Support investment in the sustainable development of the Region's childcare services as an integral part of regional infrastructure to include... quality and supply of sufficient childcare places."*

RPO 9.21 (Childcare, Education and Lifelong Learning): *"In areas where significant new housing is proposed, an assessment of need regarding schools' provision should be carried out in collaboration with the DoES*

and the statutory plans shall designate new school sites at accessible, pedestrian, cycle and public transport friendly locations.”

In the context of the RSES, this *Schools Demand & Childcare Facilities Assessment* has been created taking into account the applicable RPOs.

3.3 Local Planning Policy

3.3.1 Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029

The *Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029* sets out the strategy on

Childcare Facilities

Chapter 4 of the Development Plan sets out a strategy for Placemaking in Fingal.

Regarding childcare facilities, Section 4.5.1.7 notes the provision of high-quality accessible childcare and early learning facilities in existing and new communities is an important factor for the economic and social wellbeing of an area. Within the administrative area of FCC, there are currently 320 no. registered childcare services, and the Council will continue to engage with Fingal County Childcare Committee (FCCC) regarding proposals for new facilities.

Regarding childcare facilities, the Development Plan sets out the following considerations:

Objective CIO27- Optimum Childcare Locations

“Encourage the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations, including residential areas, town and local centres, areas of employment and areas close to public transport nodes. Encourage the co-location of childcare facilities and community facilities where appropriate, such as community centres and schools, with an emphasis on community and not for profit childcare facilities where appropriate.”

Objective CIO28- Childcare Facilities and New Development

“Require the provision of appropriate childcare facilities as an essential part of new residential and mixed-use developments in accordance with the provisions of the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001 or any superseding Guidelines, or as required by the Planning Authority. Such facilities should be provided in a timely manner and be an integral part of the development proposal.”

Objective CIO29- Community Based Childcare

“Promote the establishment of community-based, non-profit, childcare in future Fingal community facilities.”

Schools

School facilities play a key role in their respective communities and often are a determining factor as to why people choose to live in a certain area.

The Development Plan incorporates policies and objectives as set out in The Provision of Schools Guidelines. FCC in collaboration with the Department of Education and Youth (DoEY) ensures adequate school provision is provided throughout the county with a focus on enhanced facilities designed to meet varied community needs including amenities such as full-size sports pitches, community meeting rooms, dressing rooms and playgrounds (this may vary from site to site).

Whilst the provision of new schools is the responsibility of the DoEY, FCC has and will continue to work collaboratively with the Department to expand educational facilities and identify new schools throughout the area of Fingal. As part of this collaboration, Gealscoil na Mara, which is an Irish-medium primary school, was opened in 2020 in the town of Donabate.

Section 4.5.1.4 of the Development Plan aims to provide for the provision of schools through a series of objectives:

With regard to residential development and social and community infrastructure, the Development Plan sets out the following policies and objectives:

Objective CIOSO17- Educational Infrastructure

“Encourage the continued use and possible intensification of existing educational infrastructure where appropriate. Facilitate the development of new schools, the re-development of existing schools and extensions planned as part of the Government’s School Building Programme.”

Objective CIOSO18- Sites for Primary and Secondary Schools

“Identify sites for primary and secondary schools in consultation with the Department of Education based on future population growth projections and in accordance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy.”

Objective CIOSO19- Additional Schools

“Facilitate the development of additional schools, including Gaelscoileanna and Gaelcholáistí, at both primary and secondary level in a timely manner in partnership with the Department of Education and Skills and/or other bodies.”

Objective CIOSO20- Design of Schools

“Require new schools and other education centres to meet the Council’s standards regarding quality of design with an emphasis on contemporary design, landscaping and vehicular movement and vehicular parking. Design of schools and other educational centres should also take account of sustainable building practices, water and energy conservation as well as air quality and climate change. Such standards are to be considered and demonstrated in any application for an educational centre.”

Objective CIOSO21 – Multiple Usage of School Buildings

“Promote and encourage the multiple usage of school buildings and associated infrastructure so that school facilities are also available for use by the local community after school hours.”

3.4 Description of Development

The proposed development will consist of the construction of a residential development, which represents Phase 3 of a wider development of the masterplan lands, ranging in height from 2- to 6-storeys to accommodate 398 no. residential dwelling (including a mix of apartments, duplexes and houses), private amenity space, a crèche (c. 646sq.m), and a community space (c. 100sq.m.). The site will accommodate 316 no. car parking spaces in total (comprised of 288 no. residential spaces, 10 no. spaces for the proposed crèche/community space, 6 no. EV charging spaces including accessible spaces, and 12 no. spaces ducted for future provisions, 1,619 no. bicycle parking spaces, new pedestrian/ cycle links, road improvements, storage services (including water, wastewater, electricity and telecommunications) and plant area. Landscaping will include communal amenity areas, SuDS features, and significant public open space (c. 15.3% of the net site) including outdoor exercise and play equipment.

A detailed development description is set out in the *Planning Report and Statement of Consistency* prepared by BSM and *Architectural Design Statement* prepared by MDO, both submitted as part of this application.

3.5 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises 398 no. units. The following table below outlines the unit mix:

Table 2-1 Unit Overview of Unit Mix and Numbers of the Proposed Development (CSO 2022, BSM 2025)

Unit Types:	No. of Beds:	Total No:	Percentage (%)
Apartments	1-Bed	47	11.8
	2-Bed	68	17.1
	3-Bed	9	2.3
		124	31.2%
Duplex Units	1-Bed	2	0.5
	2-Bed	24	6.0
	3-Bed	21	5.3
		47	11.8%
Houses	2-Bed	81	20.4
	3-Bed	134	33.7
	4-Bed	12	3.0
		227	57.0%
Total: 398 Units			

A full description of development is set out in the *Planning Report and Statement of Consistency* which is included as part of the LRD application and should be read in conjunction with this report.

4 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

As set out in Section 1 above, it is considered that a catchment assessment area of 1km and 2km is a fair representation of accessible childcare facilities and primary schools given the location of the site, taking into consideration the proximity of new housing areas and Donabate Village. However, for completeness, secondary schools within a wider catchment area of 5km are discussed to provide additional context (see **Section 1.2** for more information).

As mentioned in **Section 1.2**, the demographic profile is based on population data from Census 2022. The site is located within the administrative area of FCC (see **Figure 4-2**) and Donabate Electoral Division (ED) (see **Figure 4-1**), forming the main demographic profile of the area surrounding the site.

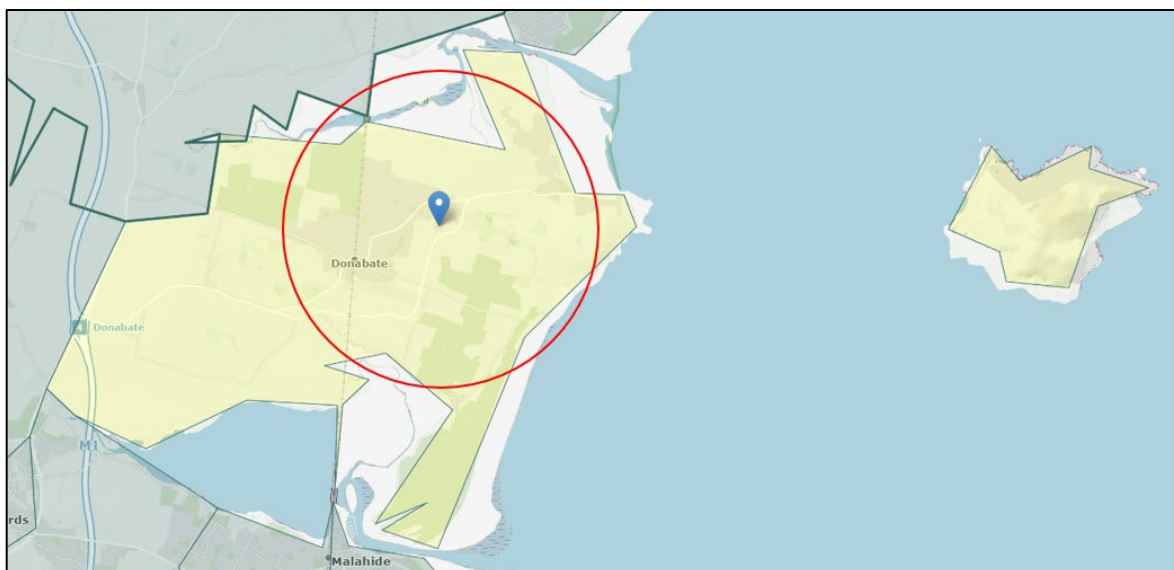


Figure 4-1: Donabate ED with a blue pin depicting the site and a red circle denoting the 2km radius catchment area. (Source: CSO Census Interactive Map 2022, BSM Annotation 2025)

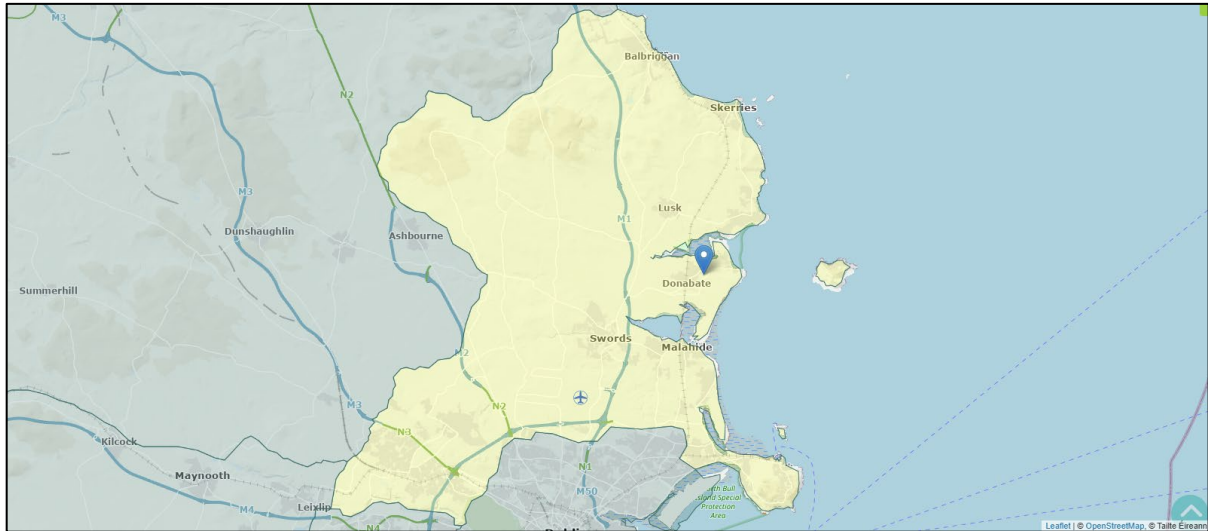


Figure 4-2: Administrative Area of Fingal County Council, within Dublin County. The site is annotated with a blue pin. (Source: CSO Census Interactive Map 2022, BSM Annotation 2025)

4.1 Population Profile

Between 2016 and 2022, the population of FCC grew at a faster rate (c. 11.6%) when compared to the State (c. 8.1%) over the same period. Donabate ED increased at a substantially faster rate with a population increase of c. 25.4% between 2016 and 2022 as shown in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Population Growth with The State, Fingal and Donabate ED between 2016-2022 (Source: CSO, BSM 2025)

Area	2016 Population	2022 Population	2016-2022 Change (%)
State	4,761,865	5,149,139	8.1%
Fingal County Council (FCC)	296,020	330,506	11.6%
Donabate ED	9,399	11,783	25.4%

4.2 Age Profile

In order to assess the proportion of the population which require childcare services and school provision, the age profile of FCC and Donabate ED between 2016 and 2022 was reviewed as shown below in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2: Age Profile of Fingal County Council and Donabate ED between 2016 and 2022 (Source: CSO, BSM Calculations 2025)

Age Group	FCC 2016 Population	FCC 2022 Population		Donabate ED 2016 Population	Donabate ED 2022 Population	
Change (%)				Change (%)		
0-4-year-olds	24,899	21,017	-15.6%	735	861	17.1%
5-9-year-olds	26,260	25,315	-3.6%	873	864	-1%
10-14-year-olds	21,454	27,716	29.2%	861	962	11.7%
15-19-year-olds	17,750	22,876	28.9%	701	944	34.7%
20-24-year-olds	15,757	19,097	21.2%	457	692	51.4%
25-64-year-olds	162,865	177,941	9.3%	5,095	6,537	28.3%
65 + year olds	27,035	36,544	35.2%	677	923	36.3%
Total:	296,020	330,506	11.6%	9,399	11,783	25.4%

The age brackets used in the Census 2022 illustrates the age profiles from 0-19 years old. As the age brackets are not as per primary and secondary school ages it is further explained below:

- 0-4 years old (Pre-school age)

- 5-9 years old (Primary School Age)
- 10-14 years old (10-11 years old Primary School / 12-14 years old Secondary School)
- 15-19 years old (15-18 years old Secondary School / 19 years old Further Education)

CSO Census data from 2016 and 2022 indicated that Donabate ED has had a substantial increase in population (c. 25.4%), compared to the already high population growth in FCC (c. 11.6%) during the same period. The pre-school population (typically age 0-4) has decreased in FCC (c. -15.6%) and increased in Donabate ED (c. 17.1%), respectively.

The population in primary school (ages 5-9) have primarily remained unchanged with a slight decrease of c. -1%. Those in primary/secondary school (ages 10-14) has increased by c. 11.7%. Those in secondary school/higher education (ages 15-19) have had a substantial increase of c. 34.7% between 2016-2022.

The age 0-4 and age 5-9 cohorts of Donabate ED, each account for c. 7.3% of the overall population as per the Census 2022. Similarly, the age 10-14 cohort accounts for c. 8.2% of the total population in 2022 and the 15-19-year-old age cohort account for a comparable proportion (c. 8%). All these figures are broadly in line with FCC population demographics as shown in **Table 4-3** below.

Table 4-3: 0-19-year-old Population breakdown in FCC and Donabate ED (Source: CSO 2025, BSM 2025)

Area	Pre School (0-4 years old)		Primary School (5-9 years old)		Primary/Secondary (10-14 years old)		Secondary School/Higher education (15-19 years old)	
	Total	% of Population	Total	% of Population	Total	% of Population	Total	% of Population
FCC	21,017	c. 6.4%	25,315	c. 7.7%	27,716	c. 8.4%	22,876	c. 6.9%
Donabate ED	861	c. 7.3%	864	c. 7.3%	962	c. 8.2%	944	c. 8%

Overall, in 2022 those eligible for pre-school (ages 0-4) as well as primary/secondary/higher education (age 5-19) within Donabate ED have increased compared to 2016 Census figures

4.3 Average Household Size

The average household (HH) size is calculated using the total number of households divided by the total number of people within the household. **Table 4-4** below shows the average HH size in FCC and Donabate ED.

Donabate ED has an average HH size of c. 3.01 people. Similarly, FCC has an average HH size of c. 3.02 people. The Census 2022 confirms that the national average number of children per family is 1.34, having decreased from 1.38 in 2016.

Table 4-4: Average HH size in FCC and Donabate ED (Source: CSO, BSM Calculations 2025)

Area	Households (HH)	Persons	Average HH Size
FCC	107,846	325,642	c. 3.02 people
Donabate ED	3,900	11,738	c. 3.01 people

4.4 Population of the Proposed Development

The proposed development is comprised of 398 no. units consisting of:

- 49 no. 1-bed units
- 173 no. 2-bed units
- 164 no. 3-bed units
- 12 no. 4-bed units

As noted above (**Table 4-4**), the average HH size in Donabate ED recorded in 2022 is c. 3.01 people. **Table 4-5** below shows the anticipated population of the proposed development applying the average HH size of Donabate ED (c. 3.01). Noting the number of 1-bed units (49 no. units), it is expected that these will generate a smaller HH size and therefore an average of 1.5 persons has been applied.

Table 4-5: The Population of the Proposed Development (Source: CSO, BSM 2025)

Area	Calculation	Total
Donabate ED	349 no. units X 3.01 (avg. HH size) + 49 no. units X 1.5 (avg. HH size)	c. 1,124 people

Based on the above, the proposed development will generate a population of approximately c. 1,124 people.

5 EXISTING AND PROPOSED CHILDCARE PROVISION

As part of this report, we have surveyed the provision of Childcare Services in the area to provide a summary of both existing and permitted childcare facilities in the vicinity.

5.1 Existing Childcare Provision

Figure 5-1 below outlines the number and distribution of childcare facilities registered with TUSLA, the independent statutory regulator of Early Years Services in Ireland, within a 1km and 2km radius of the proposed development.

There are 10 no. existing childcare facilities within a 1km radius of the site, with a further 4 no. facilities within 2kms.

The existing childcare facilities are of varying scale and operational services as shown in the corresponding table (**Table 5-1**), however 7 no. facilities are of larger scale with the capacity to accommodate between 30-186 children per day. Sophia Nurturing Centre Donabate (1) is within closest proximity to the site (c. 0.38km) and has capacity to accommodate c. 15 no. children through part-time and sessional day care services.

The 14 no. childcare facilities within the 2km catchment area have a total capacity of 664 no. places with 468 no. of those places (c. 70.5%) being within 1km of the site.

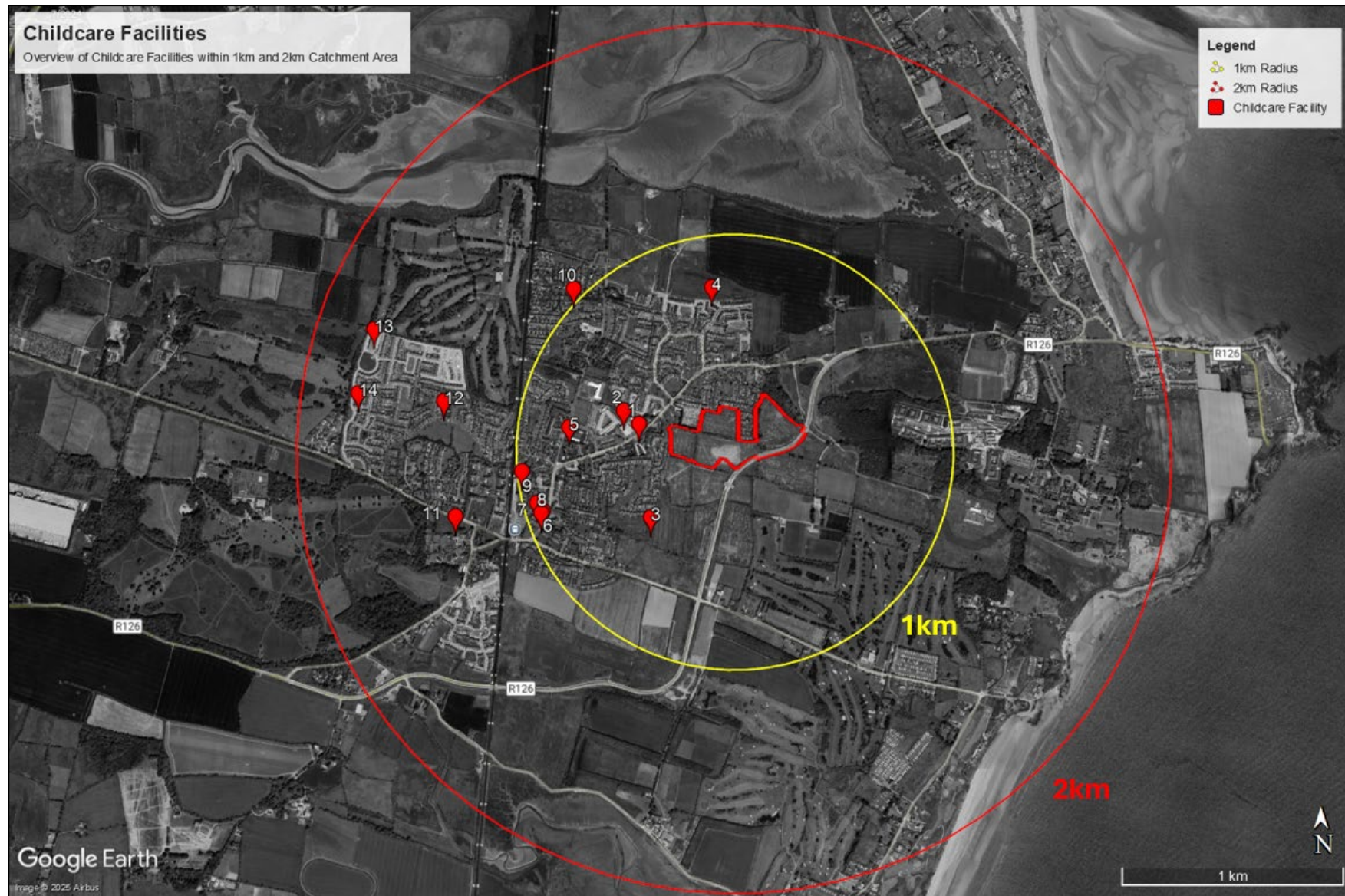


Figure 5-1: Overview of Childcare Facilities within a 1km and 2km Catchment Area of the Site (Source: TUSLA, Google Earth, and BSM Calculations 2025)

Table 5-1: Overview of Childcare Services within a 1km and 2km Catchment Area of the Site (Source: TUSLA Early Years Register August 2025³, BSM Calculations 2025)

No.	Childcare Facility Name	Address	Age Profile	Service Type	No. of Children that can be accommodated	Distance
Less than 1km						
1.	Sophia Nurturing Centre Donabate	7 Hazelgrove, Portrane Road, Ballalease North, Donabate, Co. Dublin	0-6 years	Part-Time/ Sessional	15	0.38km
2.	Bright Sparks Community Pre School	Donabate Community Centre, Portrane Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin	3-6 years	Part-Time/ Sessional	16	0.45km
3.	Little Harvard Childcare	The Court, Balmoston Boulevard, Ballymastone, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36 E3Y5	1-6 years	Part-Time, Sessional, Full Day	186	0.51km
4.	Charlies Childcare	17/19 Rahillion Walk, Donabate, Co. Dublin	1-6 years	Full Day	86	0.67km
5.	Linda's Crèche and Montessori School	St Josephs, Beaverstown Rd, Ballalease West, Donabate, Co. Dublin	1-6 years	Full Day/Sessional	45	0.70km
6.	Best Bee Kids-Unit 2	Unit 2 Main Street, Donabate, Co. Dublin	2-6 years	Sessional	22	0.90km
7.	Best Bee Kids- Unit 1	St. Patrick's Parish Hall, Mian Street, Donabate, Co. Dublin	2.5-6 years	Sessional	11	0.91km
8.	Little Sparrows Pre-school	Hollyford, St. Patrick Terrace, Donabate, Co. Dublin	2-6 years	Childminder	5	0.91km
9.	Daisybelle T/A Treehouse Childcare	40 38 Ballisk Ct, Ballalease West, Donabate, Co. Dublin	1-6 years	Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional	60	0.93km
10.	Baloos Montessori	8 Beaverbrook, Ballisk Common, Donabate, Co. Dublin	2-6 years	Sessional	22	0.94km
Less than 2km						
11.	Roots and Wings Kindergarten & Afterschool	The Square, Donabate, Co. Dublin	3-6 years	Part-Time, Sessional	30	1.28km
12.	Beverton Pre School	31 Beverton Drive, Ballisk Common, Donabate, Co. Dublin	2-6 years	Sessional	26	1.28km
13.	Roots and Wings on the Green	39 Beresford Crescent, Donabate, Dublin, Co. Dublin	1-6 years	Full Day, Part-Time, Sessional	75	1.65km
14.	Roots and Wings Early Years Education and Care	22 Beresford Rd., Turvey Ave, Donabate, Co. Dublin	2-6 years	Full Day, Part-Time, Sessional	65	1.68km
Total:					664 no. childcare spaces	

5.2 Permitted Childcare Provision

As part of this report, we have also considered other significant permitted schemes within the surrounding area which includes the provision of childcare facilities and will contribute to the overall quantum of childcare places available. Details of the permitted childcare facilities are shown in **Table 5-2**.

Table 5-2: Permitted Childcare Services within a 1km catchment (Source: FCC Planning Portal 2025, BSM 2025)

Reg. Ref.	Address	No. of Children that can be accommodated	Size (sqm)	Distance from Site
Reg. Ref F17A/0373 ABP Reg. Ref PL06F.249206	Lands at New Road, Ballisk, Donabate, Co. Dublin	c. 60	1 no. Childcare Facility c. 123 sq.m	0.31km
Reg. Ref LRD0017/S3	Corballis East, Donabate, Co Dublin	c. 237	2 no. Childcare Facility c. 1,243 sq.m	0.53km & 0.82km
Reg. Ref F22A/0527	Corballis East, Donabate, Co Dublin	c. 78	1 no. Childcare Facility c. 595 sq.m	0.71km
F17A/0113 (as extended under F17A/0113/E1) ⁶	Lands at Hearse Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin	c. 61	1 no. Childcare Facility c. 322 sq.m	0.98km
Total:		c. 436 no. spaces		

Within 1km of the site there are 4 no. permitted childcare facilities that will accommodate c. 436 no. children.

6 ESTIMATED CHILDCARE DEMAND AND ANALYSIS

As noted above in **Section 3.1.2**, the 2025 Planning Design Standards for Apartments sets out the following in relation to the provision of childcare facilities:

“Notwithstanding the Planning Guidelines for Childcare Facilities (2001), in respect of which a review is to be progressed, and which recommend the provision of one child-care facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units, the threshold for provision of any such facilities in apartment schemes should be established having regard to the scale and unit mix of the proposed development and the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area. One-bedroom or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any childcare provision and subject to location, this may also apply in part or whole, to units with two or more bedrooms”.

The proposed development contains 49 no. 1-bedroom units which equates to c. 12.3% of the development, which should be discounted while calculating childcare as per the Design Guidelines above. This leaves 349 no. units that would be considered to contribute to a requirement for childcare places required:

$$349 \text{ no. units} / 75 \text{ dwellings} = 4.65 \times 20 \text{ (minimum required spaces)} = 93 \text{ no. childcare places.}$$

The proposed development generates the demand for c. 93 no. childcare places.

As part of the proposed development a childcare facility of c. 646sq.m is proposed. Using a range of approximately 4-6sq.m per childcare place, this would provide c. 108 - 161 childcare places.

In addition, the permitted Phase 1 of the Ballymastone masterplan lands provide a c. 909sq.m crèche with a capacity to accommodate c.182 no. of children. This permitted childcare facility meets the demand of c.101 no. childcare

⁶ Substantially complete, but not yet operational.

spaces generated by the Phase 1 permitted development with the remainder c.81 no. places serving future residential development at Phases 2 and 3 of the Ballymastone masterplan lands.

The permitted Phase 2 of the Ballymastone masterplan lands generated an identified childcare place requirement of c. 83 no. places, which was largely met by the permitted Phase 1 creche. In addition, this proposed Phase 3 creche providing between c. 108-161 childcare places (or c.129 places at 5sqm/ childcare place) meets the identified generated demand of Phase 3 (as set out above at c.93 no. childcare places) and will serve additional demand that may be generated.

It is considered that this childcare facility will meet the demand generated by the development ensuring childcare facilities are available to the existing and new residents.

We consider the proposed development to be fully in accordance with Government guidance in relation to the Development Plan and the Childcare Guidelines.

7 EXISTING AND PROPOSED SCHOOL PROVISION

As part of this report, we have carried out a desktop analysis of the provision of primary and secondary schools within a 1km and 2km radius of the proposed development. As noted previously at Section 1.2, secondary schools can often serve a wider catchment beyond 1-2km. In order to better understand the wider context of enrolment, secondary schools that fall within a 5km radius of the site will be referenced for context only, as they may be considered accessible to students.

7.1 Existing Primary School Provision

The primary education sector includes a range of school types, including state-funded schools, special schools and private primary schools, and include religious schools, non-denominational schools, multi-denominational schools and Gaelscoileanna (Irish-medium schools).

There are 4 no. primary schools within 1km of the site for future residents to avail of, as illustrated in **Figure 7-1**. Scoil Phadraig Cailini National School (1) is the closest primary school in proximity to the site (c. 0.42km) with 384 no. children enrolled in 2024/2025. Gaelscoil Na Mara (3) opened in September 2020 with an enrolment of 12 pupils. In the 2024/2025 enrolment year there were 105 no. pupils, an increase of c. 38.2% since the previous 2023/2024 enrolment year. The largest primary school, Donabate Portrane Educate Together (4), records 419 no. enrolments in 2024/2025 and is c. 0.65km from the site.

The identified 4 no. primary schools all located within 1km of the site, have a total 2024/25 enrolment of c.1,279 no. students.

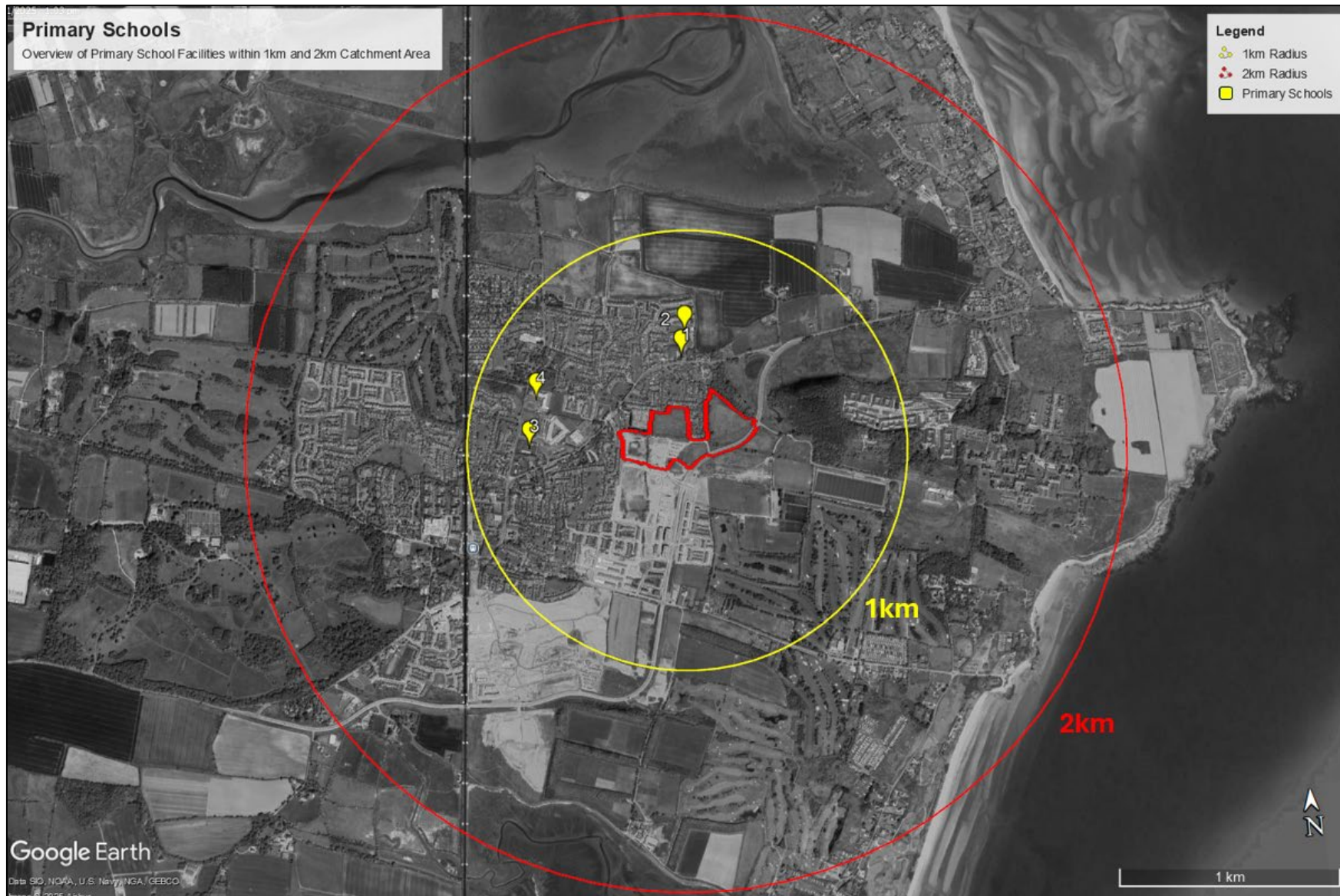


Figure 7-1: Overview of Primary Schools within the 1km and 2km Catchment Area (Source: DoEY, Google Earth and BSM Annotation, 2025)

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Table 7-1: Overview of Primary Schools within the 1km and 2km Catchment Area (Source: DoEY, BSM 2025)

No.	Primary School	Type	Address	Enrolled Pupils 2023/2024	Enrolled Pupils 2024/2025	Distance
1.	Scoil Phadraic Cailini National School	Girls	Portrane Road, Rahillion, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36KH36	389	384	c. 0.42km
2.	St. Patrick's Boy's National School	Boys	Portrane Road, Rahillion, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36W309	371	371	c. 0.54km
3.	Gaelscoil Na Mara	Mixed	Portrane Road, Ballisk Common, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36WT02	76	105	c. 0.65km
4.	Donabate Portrane Educate Together National School	Mixed	Ballisk Common, Beaverstown Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36HX03	420	419	c. 0.65km
Total:					1,279 no. pupils	

7.2 Existing Secondary School Provision

The number and distribution of secondary schools within 1km and 2km of the site is illustrated below in **Figure 7-2**. As set out earlier, secondary schools within 5km radius of the site are also referenced to provide additional context of education facilities.

Donabate Community College (1) is the closest to the site (c. 0.54km) and has an enrolment of 810 no. pupils in 2024/2025. Within the wider context of 5km radius of the proposed development, there are 2 no. other secondary schools totalling c.1,173 no. pupils enrolled in 2024/2025. Lusk Community College (3) is the largest secondary school of these with an enrolment of 1,081 no. pupils in 2024/2025.

Schools outside of the immediate 1-2km catchment are accessible by a variety of transportation options. St. Joseph's (2) in Rush is accessible by rail and bus and Lusk Community College (3) is accessible by bus. Secondary schools in Malahide, are also accessible by rail to the south of the immediate catchment area, with schools in Swords accessible by public transport, beyond the 5km radius.

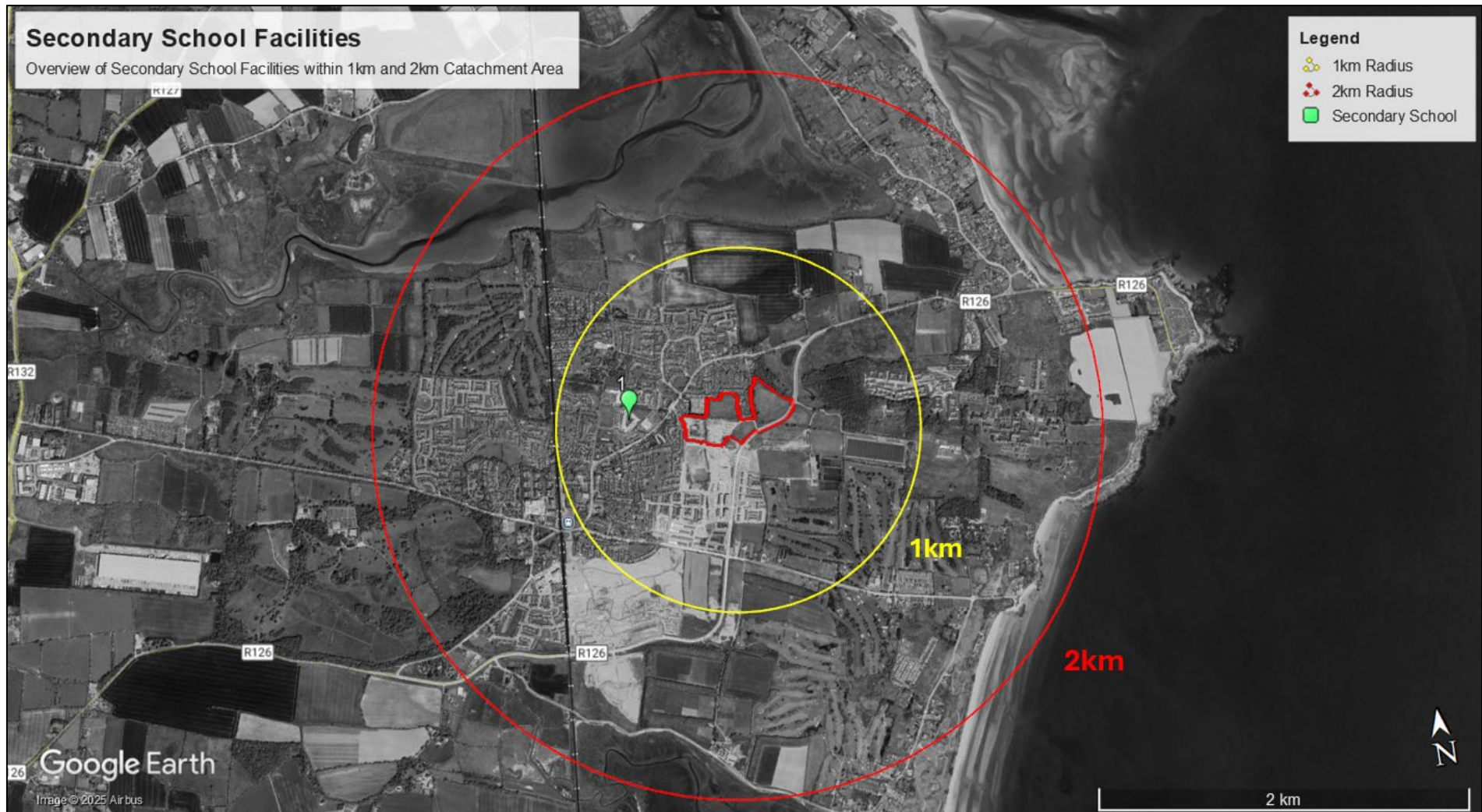


Figure 7-2: Overview of Secondary Schools within the 1km and 2km Catchment Area (Source: Google Earth, BSM 2025)

Table 7-2: Overview of Secondary Schools within the 1km and 2km (and 5km) Catchment Area (Source: DoEY, BSM 2025)

No.	Secondary School	Type	Address	Enrolled Pupils 2023/2024	Enrolled Pupils 2024/2025	Distance
1km						
1.	Donabate Community College	Mixed	Portrane Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36F598	810	813	c. 0.54km
Total:					813 no. pupils	
<5km						
	St. Joseph's Secondary School	Girls	Convent Lane, Rush, Co. Dublin	942	928	c. 4.59km
	Lusk Community College	Mixed	Rathmore Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin, K45WN50	986	1,081	c. 4.79km
Total:					2,822 no. pupils	

7.3 Permitted & Proposed School Provision

The Minister of Education has set out key priorities for the *NDP* period of 2021-2025 regarding school provision including the delivery of 150-200 school building projects annually to provide necessary additional capacity.

The Planning and Building Unit within the DoEY are responsible for identifying the need for school accommodation, setting out technical specifications for educational buildings, prioritising the allocation of resources and overseeing the delivery of the capital and school building programme.

As of September 2025, a total of 2 no. schools within a 2km radius from the site are included as part of the School Building Programme (Gaelscoil na Mara and SNC Naomh Padraig).

An educational campus at Rush (granted under FCC Ref. F24A/0739E) which will involve the construction of a new three storey 1000 no. pupil post primary school for St. Joseph's Secondary School and the construction of a two storey building for Gaelscoil Ros Eo, have been included in this table as per the methodology of secondary schools discussed above.

The schools and their current status as identified within the School Building Programme is set out below:

Table 7-3: Status of Schools within the School Building Programme (Source: DoEY, September 2025⁷, FCC Planning Portal 2025)

School	Address	Type	Current Status & Works
Gaelscoil na Mara	Ballisk, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36WT02	Primary School	New school building project to provide 16 mainstream classes and 4 special education classrooms.
S N C Naomh Padraig (St. Patrick's Boys' National School)	Portrane Road, Rahillion, Donabate, Co. Dublin, K36W309	Primary School	School extension project.
St. Joseph's Secondary School, Rush and Gaelscoil Ros Eo	Rush, Co. Dublin	Secondary School	Granted permission, 3 no. storey secondary school and 2 no. storey primary school.

It is noted that there are additional provisions for new schools adjacent to the Ballymastone Lands on Community Infrastructure zoned lands to the east of the proposed development, as set out in the *Ballymastone Framework Plan 2018*:

"The Ballymastone lands will also contribute to the creation of a more socially inclusive, equal and culturally diverse society by providing for appropriate community infrastructure, quality public realm and improving access throughout Donabate. In particular, the eastern portion of the lands are identified as an appropriate location for an 'Education and Recreation Hub', which will include the consolidation of the established sporting amenities and will be co-located with proposed new school facilities. Two primary schools and one post-primary school will be provided on the Ballymastone lands."

The *Donabate Local Area Plan 2016* (as extended) (LAP) includes the Ballymastone Educational and Recreational Campus project as part of the Community Infrastructure Strategy for the plan period. The proposed Ballymastone Educational and Recreational Campus *"will provide additional facilities for the*

⁷ Updated Monthly, September 2025 Current status of large-scale projects being delivered under the School Building Programme. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/services/major-projects/>.

population of the Peninsula anchored by local clubs and the development of new school, sporting and recreational facilities.”

Additionally, the Fingal Development Plan objectives for these Community Infrastructure zoned lands includes (as per Fig. 2-2 above) specific objectives for 3 no. proposed schools.

8 ESTIMATED SCHOOL DEMAND AND ANALYSIS

Accurate projections of enrolment form an essential part of planning of the education system in Ireland, including areas such as teacher demand and supply modelling.

8.1 Estimated Primary School Demand

Within Donabate ED, Census 2022 sets out a total of 864 no. 5–9-year-olds and 962 no. 10–14-year-olds, which equates to c. 15.5% of the population, an increase of c. 5.3% since the 2016 Census. The 5–14-year-old population within Donabate ED (c. 15.5%) is marginally lower than the same age group in FCC (c. 16.0%).

As recorded in the *Regional Projections of full-time enrolments, Primary and Second Level 2021-2036*⁸ and *Projections of full-time enrolment Primary and Post-Primary level, 2023-2042*⁹ produced by the DoEY, it is projected that the Dublin region will see primary school enrolment fall by almost 24% (34,500 pupils) between 2020 and 2036 as illustrated in **Figure 8-1**.

The primary school enrolment figures within Donabate ED are slightly above these projections and the enrolment numbers slightly increasing from 1,256 no. pupils in 2023/2024 to 1,279 no. pupils in 2024/2025 (c. 1.8%), as set out in Section 7.1 above.

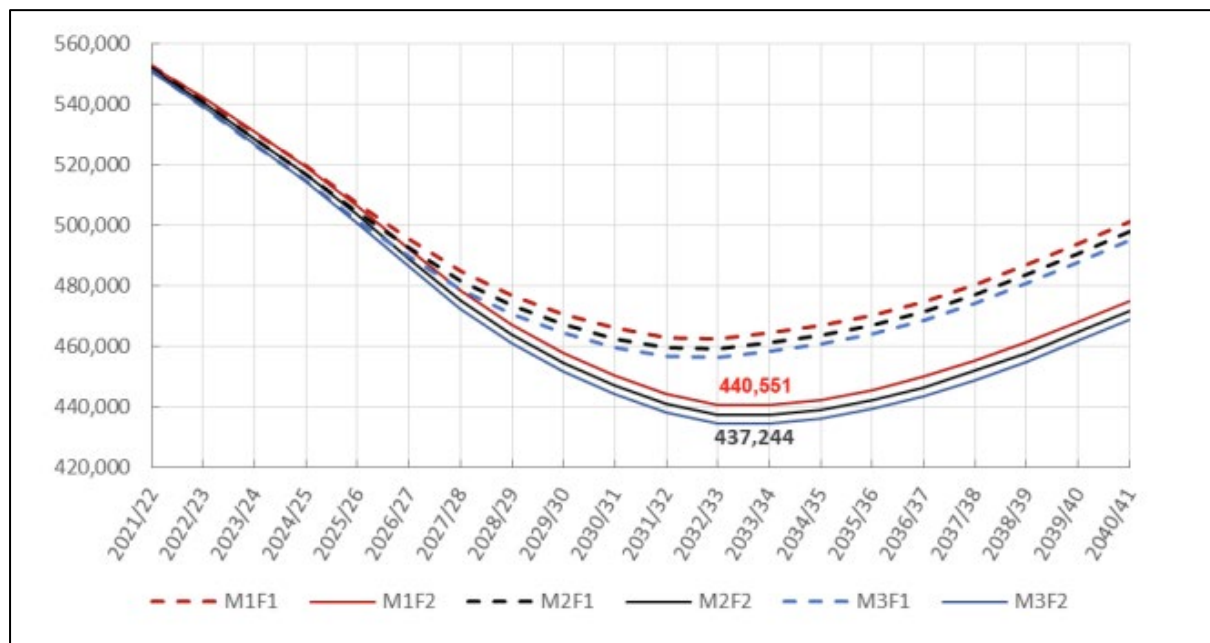


Figure 8-1: Projected Enrolment at Primary School Level 2021-2040 (Source: Department of Education, 2022)

It is estimated within the *Provision for School Guidelines* that an average of 12% of the population is expected to be present for primary education. An analysis of the likely primary school demand from the proposed development based on the number of units and the average HH size within Donabate ED has been applied

⁸ [Regional Projections of full-time enrolments, Primary and second level 2021-2036](#) (November 2021)

⁹ [Projections of full-time enrolments Primary and Post-Primary level, 2023-2042](#) (March 2024)

in **Table 8-1** below, noting that 1-bed units are discounted from the estimated school demand, as per Section 6 above. :

Table 8-1: Estimated Demand of Primary School Population (Source: CSO 2022, BSM Calculations 2025)

Units	Average HH Size (Donabate ED)	Population of the Proposed Development	Projected Primary School Population (12%)
398 (total units)	3.01	c. 1,198 no. people	c. 144 no. of children
349 (less 1 bed units)	3.01	c. 1,050 no. people	c. 126 no. of children

The demand for primary school places generated by the proposed development (using total no. of units as per **Table 8-1** above) is c. 144 no. places, which equates to c. 18 no. places per year group based on an eight-year primary school cycle. Disregarding one-bedroom units as a generator of demand for school places (applying the same methodology as the *childcare demand analysis*), the proposed development generates the need for 126 no. primary school places which equates to c. 16 no. places per year group.

Within the catchment area there are 1,279 no. children enrolled across 4 no. primary schools, equating to c. 40 no. primary school places per primary school year. In addition, 1 no. existing primary school is subject to upgrade works which is expected to create additional primary school places in the area.

Based on this analysis, the demand for primary school places per a year (16 no. spaces) is lower than the estimated school places available per year (c.40 no. spaces), therefore it is expected the primary schools within the catchment area will be able to facilitate the anticipated demand from the proposed development.

8.2 Estimated Secondary School Demand

Within Donabate ED, Census 2022 sets out a total of 962 no. 10–14-year-olds and 944 no. 15–19-year-olds (1,906 no. children), which equates to c. 16.2% of the total population of Donabate ED.

Unlike the age cohorts within primary school, there is a slightly higher percentage of population within secondary school age in Donabate ED (c. 16.2%) in comparison to FCC as a whole (c. 13%).

As stated in the *Regional Projections of full-time enrolments, Primary and Second Level 2021-2036* (the Enrolment Figures) secondary school population figures are envisaged at the State level to have a total enrolment of 401,584 no. children, which equates to c. 7.9% of the latest 2022 Census population figure of the State (based on a total population of c. 5.1 million people).

The enrolment figures produced by the DoEY envisage that enrolments will increase by 10,694 no. places between 2020 and 2024 as illustrated in **Figure 8-2**, however will begin to decrease between 2025-2036 by 16,323 no. places.

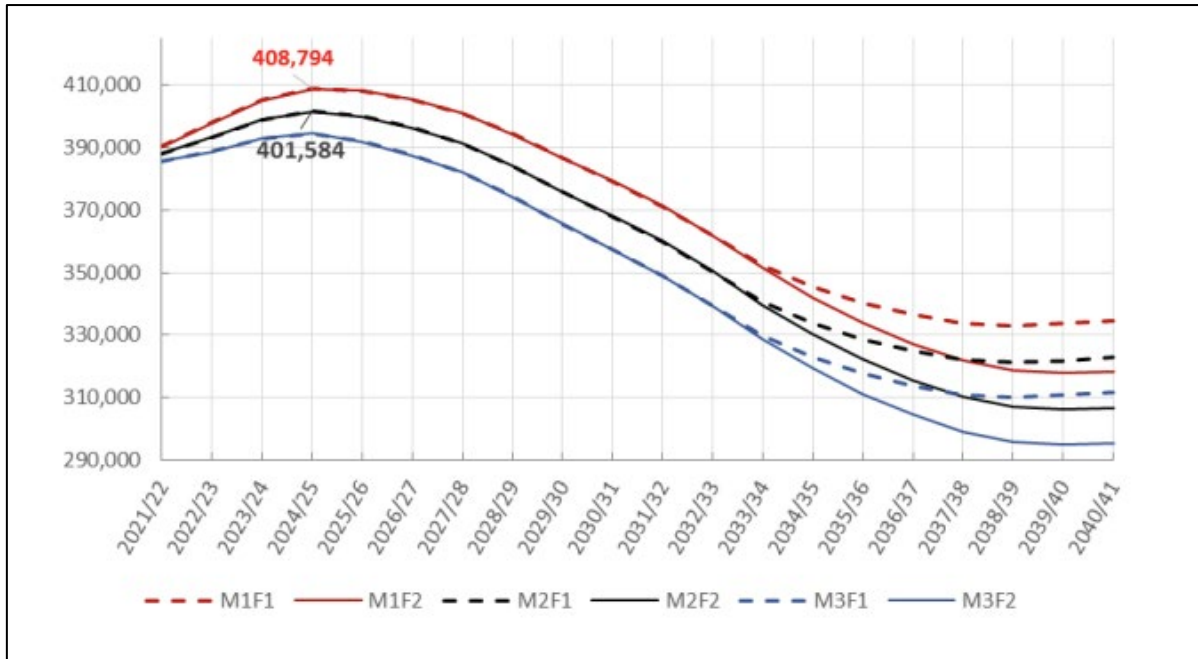


Figure 8-2: Projected Enrolment at Secondary School Level 2021-2040 (Source: Department of Education, 2022)

Based on these figures, the proposed secondary school population is set out below in **Table 8-2**.

Table 8-2: Estimated Demand of Secondary School Population. (Source: CSO 2022, BSM 2025)

Units	Average HH Size (Donabate ED)	Population of the Proposed Development	Projected Secondary School Population (7.8%)
398 (total units)	3.01	c. 1,198 no. people	c. 93 no. of children
349 (minus 1 bed units)	3.01	c. 1,050 no. people	c. 82 no. of children

The proposed development calculates a demand for c. 93 no. secondary school places which equates to c. 15 no. school places per year group based on a six-year secondary school cycle. Disregarding one-bedroom units as a generator of demand for school places (applying the same methodology as the childcare demand analysis), there is an anticipated demand of c. 82 no. places which equates to c. 14 no. places per year group.

Within the 1-2km catchment radius of the proposed development, 813 no. enrolled spaces have been identified at Donabate Community College (as per **Figure 7-2** above) equating to c.135 no. places per school year.

In addition to the 1-2km catchment, as per **Figure 7-2** above, there are over 2,000 school places identified within 5km radius of the proposed development, equating to c. 333 no. places per school year.

Based on the above assessment, it is considered the secondary schools within the 1-2km catchment area (and additionally within the 5km radius catchment area) have capacity to facilitate the anticipated demand for secondary school places generated by the proposed development, as the demand is significantly less than the capacity available.

9 CONCLUSION

The proposed development of the lands at Ballymastone represents an opportunity to deliver new development offering a quality living environment, respectful of its context, site topography, and site character, located beside Donabate village.

The provision of a c. 646sq.m crèche providing between c. 108-161 childcare places meets the identified generated demand of Phase 3 and will serve additional demand that may be generated.

The development generates the need for approximately 126 no. primary school places and 82 no. secondary school places across the school cycle, which can be accommodated by the existing primary and secondary school provision within a 1km and 2km radius of the site.

We consider the proposed development to be fully in accordance with Government guidance in relation to: *Childcare Facilities Guidelines 2001*, the *Provision of Schools and the Planning System*; *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* policies and objectives and the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2025*.

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