COAKLEY O'NEILL
town planning

Social & Community Audit

Large Scale Residential Development at

Old Orchard, Monaleen,

Co. Limerick

Prepared in May 2026 on behalf of

GLR Property Ltd.

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CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction 1
2.0 Site Location and Description 1
3.0 Policy Context 2
The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008) 2
Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities - Best Practice Guidelines (2007) 3
Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Growth Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) 3
National Planning Framework First Revision (2025) 3
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (2020) 4
Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 4
4.0 Catchment of the Proposed Development Site 5
5.0 Community Profile – Existing social and community Infrastructure Provision 6
Education/Training 6
Childcare 7
Health 8
Sports/Recreation and Open Space 9
Social/Community Facilities 9
Arts and Culture 10
Faith 10
Other Social and Community Infrastructure 10
6.0 Findings and Recommendations 11
7.0 Conclusion 12

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Core Strategy of the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 identifies a planned population growth of 41,661 people over the plan period. Of this growth, 30,621 people are to live within Limerick City and its suburbs which includes Monaleen.

1.2 Having regard to this, this Social and Community Audit (SCA) has been prepared by Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd. on behalf of our clients, GLR Property Ltd., to accompany an application for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) on lands at the Golf Links Road, Castletroy.

1.3 The purpose of this SCA is to examine and analyse the availability and capacity of existing social and community infrastructure provision in the vicinity of the proposed development site, and to determine future requirements based on anticipated population growth as a result of the proposed LRD.

1.4 Social and community infrastructure relates to the provision of services and facilities which are essential for supporting and sustaining the health, wellbeing, and social development of a place. Social and community infrastructure facilities include, for example, education, childcare, and healthcare services such as GP surgeries and hospitals, community specific services such as libraries, community centres, and various local support services, as well as spaces which can offer active sports and passive recreational activities.

1.5 Social and community infrastructure is not only functional but can also provide an invisible platform of community and social interaction that contributes towards quality of life, social cohesion and a strong sense of place. Provision of such infrastructure in the vicinity of the proposed development site is therefore vital to support the surrounding existing residential base and anticipated increase in population as a result of the proposed LRD, with regard to both physical facilities and aspects of local community life that foster social engagement.

1.6 This SCA has been considered in the context of the spatial development objectives for Monaleen and the Limerick City suburbs that are set out in statutory policy documents at national, regional and local level. This SCA was conducted using desktop research and multiple site visits during 2025.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1 The proposed development is located within Monaleen, County Limerick. Monaleen forms part of the wider Ballysimon/Castletroy suburb of Limerick City which has seen substantial levels of both residential, educational and commercial development over the last number of years.

2.2 Monaleen has a strong base of existing educational and sports facilities in addition to retail and hospitality services. The immediate surroundings of the site can be considered to be residential in nature with 3no. well established residential developments bounding the site – Evanwood to the south, Kylemore to the east and Ashfort to the north.



Figure 1 Subject Site identified in Red.

2.3 The overall site area comprises of 3.54 hectares, the site while previously in agricultural use is now in advance stages of construction in respect of a number of residential units previously granted under Application Ref. 23/60842 and Appeal Ref. ABP-319009-24. The site is bound to the west, south and east by existing residential developments. The site is accessed via the Golf Links Road which bounds the site to the northwest and north of the site.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 This section outlines the relevant planning policy at national and local level as it relates to social and community facilities.

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008)

3.2 This Code of Practice sets out best practice approaches that should be followed by planning authorities in ensuring that the planning system plays its full part in facilitating the timely and cost-effective roll-out of school facilities by the Department of Education and Science and in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

3.3 Three core objectives are set out in the code of practice in relation to the future planning and delivery of schools:

1. *Schools provision should be an integral part of the evolution of compact sustainable urban development and the development of sustainable communities;*
2. *The provision of any new schools (both primary and post-primary) should be driven by and emerge from an integrated approach between the planning functions of planning authorities and the Department of Education and Science; and*
3. *Local authorities, as planning authorities, will support and assist the Department in ensuring the timely provision of school sites.*

Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities - Best Practice Guidelines (2007)

3.4 The aim of these Guidelines is to identify principles and criteria that are important in the design of housing in order to deliver sustainable, inclusive communities.

3.5 The Guidelines define sustainable neighbourhoods as being:

> *'areas where an efficient use of land, high quality urban design and effective integration in the provision of physical and social infrastructure such as public transport, schools, amenities and other facilities combine to create places people want to live in'.*

Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Growth Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)

3.6 These Guidelines (SRDCS) set out policy and guidance in relation to the planning and development of urban and rural settlements, with a focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements.

3.7 The Guidelines state that appropriate locations for higher density residential development that can deliver sustainable and inclusive communities are where there is good planning, good management and the necessary social infrastructure.

National Planning Framework First Revision (2025)

3.8 The *National Planning Framework* (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. It recognises the importance of quality of life and notes that how future development in Ireland is planned will continue to be a significant determinant of people's quality of life.

3.9 **National Strategic Outcomes** *1. Compact Growth, 4. Sustainable Mobility, 7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage,* and *10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services*, are all aimed at increasing people's quality of life.

3.10 **National Policy Objective 12** aims to ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.

3.11 **National Policy Objective 38** is as follows:

> *Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.*

3.12 **National Policy Objective 43** seeks to:

> *Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.*

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (2020)

3.13 The *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region* (RSES) is the regional level strategic plan prepared by the Southern Regional Assembly and promotes and supports the strategic function of the Southern Region to drive balanced regional development in line with the National Planning Framework 2040.

3.14 The RSES states that compact urban settlements, enhanced and efficient public transport networks and the provision of physical and social infrastructure is essential and required in tandem with achieving projected growth in the Southern Region. **Regional Policy Objective 175** is aimed at improving quality of life through infrastructure-led planning which includes social infrastructure.

Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

3.15 The Limerick County Development Plan 2022-2028 (hereafter the Plan) is the relevant statutory plans under which the regulation and development of the subject site is to be considered. Below, we set out policy provisions and objectives of the plans that are relevant to the consideration of this application.

3.16 The site is zoned as 'New Residential', 'Existing Residential' and 'Open Space and Recreation'.

3.17 The Core Strategy of the Plan identifies a planned population growth of 41,661 people over the plan period. Of this growth, 30,621 people are to live within Limerick City and its suburbs which includes Monaleen. To accommodate this population growth, the Plan identifies a housing delivery target of 11,442no. residential dwellings over the Plan period within Limerick Cities suburbs.

3.18 Objective SE O7 of the Plan sets out the objective in relation to the Provision of Social Infrastructure and states that:

> *It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the provision, improvement and expansion of community services in the settlements. Provision of play and recreation facilities will be required for new residential developments in line with all relevant Development Management Standards and Objective SCSI O16 of the Plan.*

4.0 CATCHMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE

4.1 The site is located to the east of Limerick City Centre. For the purposes of this SCA, it is practical to consider the existing population within the vicinity of the site and the various social and community facilities which support that population.

4.2 Presented in Figure 3 below is the catchment of the development site assessed for the purposes of this SCA. The defined catchment area encompasses 54no. Small areas defined in the 2022 Census Data published by the Central Statistics Office.

4.3 This catchment as defined by the CSO comprises of the built-up area of the east of Limerick City, including much of Groody, Castletroy and Annocotty. The use of this catchment allows for the accurate assessment of the population data for the immediate site environs which is of relevance to the proposed development.

4.4 As acknowledged in both in National and Local Planning Policy that there is a requirement for there to be sufficient community and social infrastructure within the Monaleen area to support the immediate day-to-day needs of existing and future residents.

4.5 As noted above, the catchment identified forms part of the built up area of the Limerick City Suburbs and as such, is well connected to the environs of Limerick City and its social and community infrastructure both by public transport and active travel infrastructure.

4.6 The Census 2022 boundary for the 54no. Small Areas, and the catchment of this SCA is illustrated below in relation to the subject site.



Figure 2. Site location outlined in red, SCA catchment area and Census 2022 Boundary outlined in white.

4.7 The total population of those living within Limerick City and County in 2022 was 209,536 people with a total of 17,149 within the catchment identified.

4.8 Census 2022 figures indicate that there are 6,709 households within the ED and indicates an average household size of 2.8 people per household.

4.10 Table 1 below presents the age profile of the population of the catchment according to the 2022 Census.

Age Bracket	Population 2022	% of Population
0-4	960	5.6%
5-9	1,074	6.3%
10-14	1,098	6.4%
15-19	1,357	7.9%
20-24	2,497	14.6%
25-34	2,680	15.6%
35-44	2,868	16.7%
45-54	2,000	11.7%
55-64	1,180	6.9%
65+	1,435	8.4%

Table 1 Age profile of Catchment, as per the 2022 Census.

4.11 A review of the age profile of the catchment reveals that the area has indicated a younger population base with 38.1% of the population between the ages of 15 – 34 in contrast to the 8.4% of the population which is aged 65+.

5.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE – EXISTING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

5.1 This SCA assesses the existing community and social infrastructure within the defined catchment area of the site of the proposed development, as outlined and discussed in Section 4 above, under the following headings:

1. Education/Training	**5. Social/Community Services**
2. Childcare	**6. Arts and Culture**
3. Health	**7. Faith**
4. Sports/Recreation and Open Space	**8. Other Features**

Education/Training

5.2 There are 3no. existing primary schools and 1no. existing secondary schools within the catchment area (see Tables 2 and 3 below).

Existing Primary Schools				
No.	**Name and Location**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Total**
1	Milford National School	241	238	479
2	Scoil Moin A Lin	386	461	847
3	Gaelscoil Castletroy	211	206	417

Table 2 Existing primary schools located within the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

Existing Post-Primary Schools				
No.	**Name and Location**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Total**
1	Castletroy College	637	692	1,329

Table 3 Existing post-primary schools located within the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.3 The provision of primary and post-primary school facilities in Ireland is determined on an area specific basis by the Department of Education, having regard to available school capacity, demographic projections, analysis of child benefit records, and local GIS travel pattern modelling. The Limerick City and County Development Plan does not identify the need for an additional school in Limerick City but does note that the council will protect existing and new school sites to ensure that schools can grow to meet future demand.

5.4 While the overall quantity of schools within the catchment could be considered to be somewhat limited, it is of note that the schools within the catchment have significant enrolment figures and can accommodate large volumes of students. Additionally, the Limerick City East Educate Together Secondary School is located just west of the catchment and has an enrolment of 1,131no. pupils.

5.5 The University of Limerick is also located within the catchment area with Mary Immaculate College also accessible via public transport.

5.6 The site of the development benefits from good access to these facilities from the site and catchment area due to the availability of public transport serving the area.

Childcare

5.7 Based upon the Census 2022 data for catchment area, it is calculated that there is c. 960no. children aged 0-4 living within the catchment area of the proposed development.

5.8 A review of the TUSLA Early Years Services Register has identified the following childcare provided within the catchment of the proposed development.

	Facility Name and Location	Service Type	Maximum Capacity
1.	Tall Trees Childcare	Full Day/ Part Time and sessional	160
2.	Unikids	Full Day	120
3.	Silver Apples Creche	Full Day/ Part Time and sessional	45
4.	Karibu Montessori	Full Day/ Part Time and sessional	124
5.	Kool Kiddies Klub	Sessional	22

Table 4 Existing TUSLA Registered Early Years Childcare Facilities as of July 2024. (Source: Tusla, 2024).

5.9 The identified 5no. facilities within the catchment of the proposed development have a capacity to accommodate 471no. children. Additionally, the wider Limerick City environs are easily accessible via public transport from the development site.

5.10 In addition to the above, a childcare facility is proposed as part of the Large-Scale Residential Development, with the capacity to accommodate 102no. children.

Health

5.11 Desktop research and site visits were employed to provide an indication of the number of health facilities and services located within the catchment area of the proposed development. The results of this research are presented in Table 5 below.

5.12 There are no national, regional or local standards for health provision in Ireland relating to the provision of primary care centres or the number of doctors in an area.

Description of Health Service/Facility	Name and Location
4no. Medical Centres	1. Castletroy Park Medical Centre
	2. Newtown Medical Centre
	3. Kilmurry Medical Centre
	4. University of Limerick Medical Centre
1no. GP Practices	1. Griffin Daly GP Practice
4no. Dental Surgeries	1. Castletroy Dental Clinic
	2. Shields Dental and Orthodontic Clinic
	3. No.8 Dental and Cosmetic Clinic
	4. Limerick Braces
	5. Castletroy Orthodontics
6no. Pharmacies	1. Castletroy Park Total Health Pharmacies
	2. Castletroy Pharmacy
	3. Ann Grays Total Health Pharmacy
	4. McCabes Pharmacy Castletroy
	5. Halles CarePlus Pharmacy
	6. Scanlons Pharmacy
4no. Physiotherapists	1. Castletroy Physiotherapy Clinic
	2. Mid West Physiotherapy
	3. United Physiotherapy
	4. Reconnect Physio
2no. Opticians	1. Specsavers
	2. Castletroy Park Opticians

Table 5 List of health services and facilities in the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.13 The review of the health services and facilities in the defined catchment area indicates that the catchment is well served in respect of medical centres and GPs.

Sports/Recreation and Open Space

5.14 Sports and recreation infrastructure refers to parks and playgrounds, dedicated public open space and amenity areas, sports centres and formal club facilities. Desktop research and site visits were employed to ascertain the number and nature of sports/recreation facilities and open spaces located within the catchment area of the proposed development. The results of this research are presented in Table 6.

Description	Name and Details
3no. Playing Pitches/ Sports Clubs	1. Monaleen GAA and Tennis Club 2. Castletroy Golf Club 3. Aisling Annacotty Football Club
1no. Amenity Parks/ Playgrounds	1. Castletroy Neighbourhood Park and Playground.

Table 6 Existing recreational and sports facilities and clubs in the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.15 There are a number of sports, recreation and open space facilities within the defined catchment which cater to all cohorts. It is also of note that the University of Limerick is within the catchment. The University of Limerick is a significant asset as it provides sport and recreational facilities for use by members of the public including tennis courts, swimming pool, gym, playing pitches and athletics tracks.

5.16 The *Sustainable and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) state that the availability of accessible and high quality public open spaces within all settlements that are part of a wider Green and Blue Infrastructure network will be important in creating sustainable settlements.

5.17 The Guidelines further recommend that all residents within a settlement should have access to multifunctional public open space.

5.18 It is considered that the catchment area is well catered for in terms of open and recreational outdoor spaces in addition to the open space proposed on the subject site.

Social/Community Facilities

5.19 Social and community facilities are broad categories and can include general civic services as well as services targeted to specific sectors of the community. Desktop research was employed to ascertain the number and nature of social/community services located within the catchment area. The result of this research is presented in Table 7 below.

Description	Name and Location
2no. Civic Facilities and Social and Community Facilities	1. University of Limerick 2. Don Bosco Centre

Table 7 Social/community services located within the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.20 There are no national, regional, or local standards regarding the provision of social and community facilities and services. A simple standardisation which has been employed elsewhere in neighbourhood planning is: 0.3 community facilities per 1,000 head of population[1]. However, this approach is somewhat crude, being based on the number of buildings/ facilities provided and does not account for the size or quality of individual facilities.

Arts and Culture

5.21 Desktop research was employed to ascertain the number and nature of arts and culture facilities located within the catchment area of the proposed development. The result of this research is presented in Table 8 below.

Description	Name and Location
3no. General/ Culture/ Music Facilities	1. Odeon Cinema 2. University of Limerick Concert Hall 3. Kilmurry Church Arts and Community Centre

Table 8 Existing arts and culture facilities located within the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.22 Limerick has a long-established reputation as being a thriving centre for the arts and culture, with multiple festivals and initiatives taking place. There are number of theatres and music venues within Limerick City which is accessible from the site of the development.

Faith

5.23 There are 2no. centres of religious worship located within the catchment area. They are listed below in Table 9.

Details of Centres of Worship
1. Church of Our Lady 2. Mary Magdalene Church

Table 9 Existing centres of religious worship located within the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.24 There are no known national or other benchmarking standards for the provision of religious faith and worship social infrastructure. However, the area is currently served by 2no. places of worship across faiths, given number of residential units proposed and the existing population base in the town, it can be concluded that the town has sufficient places of worship to support the existing and future population base.

Other Social and Community Infrastructure

5.25 The Monaleen and Castletroy area offers a number of additional social and community assets including and not limited to a Post office, Credit Union and banks.

[1] See: Barton, H., Grant, M., and Guise, R. (2021). *Shaping Neighbourhoods: For Local Health & Global Sustainability*, *3rd edition*. London:

5.26 Further to this, the catchment benefits from a significant retail presence in the Castletroy Shopping Centre. This includes a number of comparison retail uses such as clothes and bookstores. The area additionally hosts a number of hospitality uses including Cafes, restaurants and hotels.

6.0 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 There are 3no. existing primary schools and 1no. existing secondary school within the catchment of the proposed development.

6.2 Having regard to the number of primary and post primary schools located within the catchment of the proposed development, it is considered that there will be satisfactory levels of access to primary and post-primary places for future residents of the area if the proposed development is granted permission and developed.

6.3 There are 5no. childcare facilities within the catchment of the proposed development have a capacity to accommodate 471no. children. Additionally, the wider Limerick City environs are easily accessible via public transport from the development site.

6.4 With regard to access to health services, it is considered that the area is currently well served in relation to primary health care facilities. This SCA finds the catchment is served by a total of 4no. medical centres. This is in addition to a number of GP practices and dental practices.

6.5 In terms of sports/recreation and open space, it is the finding of this audit that there is sufficient provision of sports grounds, parks, amenity walks and equipped play areas/ playgrounds in the catchment area.

6.6 The area in which the site of the proposed development is located has reasonable access to social and community services and places to practice faith and worship.

6.7 The area is served by existing small scale convenience retail and retail services, with the nearest convenience retail store being located a 15-minute walk to the northeast of the subject site.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 Social and community infrastructure is essential to achieving a balanced approach to sustainable local communities. It is also of critical importance to the economic as well as social development of a city/town/place.

7.2 This Social and Community Audit examined the current context with respect to social and community infrastructure provision within the defined catchment area of the site of the proposed Large-Scale Residential Development at the Golf Links Road, County Limerick.

7.3 The SCA findings highlight the presence of some excellent social infrastructure facilities in the area to serve the proposed Large-Scale Residential Development.

7.4 The role of social and community infrastructure in integrating new and existing communities is critical. A mix of land uses can provide opportunities for community activity and places for people to meet and connect, which can thus reinforce a sense of community identity and strengthen social solidarity. Local facilities within easy walking distance of where people live can also help to reduce transport requirements and thus reduce carbon emissions.

7.5 It is therefore considered that the population increase in the area brought about by the proposed development, together with a crèche, can be adequately supported by existing social and community infrastructure in the area and will also enhance the offering of such, benefitting not just the future residents of the proposed development but those of the wider catchment area also.

7.6 The proposed development therefore has the potential to positively contribute towards the local sense of community.