



THORNTON O'CONNOR
TOWN PLANNING

Social Infrastructure Audit (Incl. Schools and Childcare)

**Prepared in Respect of a Proposed Large-Scale
Residential Development at Greenfields,
Swords, Co Dublin**

**Prepared on Behalf of Jackie Green
Construction Limited**

July 2026

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Approach	1
1.2	Study Area and Accessibility	2
1.3	Proposed Development	6
1.4	Layout of this Report	8
2.0	RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE	9
2.1	National Planning Policy	9
2.1.1	National Planning Framework – First Revision - Project Ireland 2040	9
2.1.2	Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities	10
2.1.3	Planning Design Standards for Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities	11
2.1.5	Action Plan for Education (Statement of Strategy 2023-2025)	11
2.1.6	The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice	12
2.1.7	Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities	13
2.2	Regional Planning Policy	13
2.2.1	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region	13
2.3	Local Planning Policy	14
2.3.1	Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029	14
3.0	DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT	16
3.1	Population and Age	17
3.2	Household Composition	18
3.3	Education	19
3.4	Affluence and Deprivation	19
3.5	Employment	20
3.6	Religion, Transport and Diversity	20
3.7	Summary	20
4.0	FACILITIES AUDIT	22
4.1	Education and Training Facilities	24
4.1.1	Existing Infrastructure Analysis	24
4.1.2	Future Demand Analysis	31
4.1.3	Facilities Summary	36
4.2	Childcare	38
4.2.1	Evaluation	41
4.2.2	Justification for Proposed Crèche	43
4.3	Social and Community Facilities	45
4.4	Healthcare and Emergency Services	48
4.5	Open Space and Recreation	51
4.6	Faith Institutions	54
4.7	Retail Centres and Services	56
5.0	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	58

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This *Social Infrastructure Audit* (SIA) has been prepared by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning on behalf of Jackie Green Construction Limited in support of a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) proposed at Greenfields, Swords, Co. Dublin. The Report provides a detailed review of the statutory, strategic and policy context that relates to the provision of Social Infrastructure with the following aims:

- To provide a survey and audit of existing Community and Social Infrastructure, Open Space and Amenities serving the identified Study Area and the subject site;
- Catalogue all infrastructure under the facilities categories identified through policy guidance;
- Establish if suitable Social Infrastructure is provided in the area to support the needs of the existing population; and
- Assess the nature of the infrastructure and likelihood of the capacity of the existing facilities to support the needs of future residents.

This report, therefore, identifies existing community facilities in the local area and includes an analysis and identification of potential shortfalls in infrastructure

1.1 Approach

As part of this Planning Application, an assessment of the existing facilities in the area has been carried out in order to assess the need for Social and Community Infrastructure. A desktop study was used to collect the baseline information. The facilities in each category were recorded in an Excel Table, and then mapped using the ArcGIS Ecosystem. A large number of public and private geospatial datasets were used in the course of the survey, including but not limited to:

- 2026 Google Places Dataset;
- 2026 ESRI and Mapbox Ireland Basemaps;
- 2011, 2016 and 2022 Census Boundaries and Small Area Population Statistics;
- 2010-2026 Department of Education and Skills – Irish Schools;
- 2026 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Register of Private Higher Education Institutions in Ireland;
- 2026 Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Reports – Registered Childcare Facilities; and
- 2026 HSE – 'Find Your Local Health Service'.

Social Infrastructure (SI) includes a range of services and facilities that contribute to quality of life. SI is a key part of the fabric of an area, not just in terms of wellbeing, but also in terms of creating a sense of place for the population of the area and forming a part of the local identity. For the purpose of this Report, the array of services and facilities defined as Social Infrastructure have been categorised into a defined number of typologies that correspond to those set out in Chapter 4 and Chapter 14 of the *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029* (Table 1.1).

A radius of 1 km from the subject site was used as the focus for this assessment as it is considered a relatively short distance for residents to access via foot, bicycle or public transport. It is also aligned with the principles of the policy objectives for Social Infrastructure Assessments outlined in Section 14.14 of the *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029* (outlined in greater detail in Section 2.0).

Category	Facility Type
Education and Training Services	Primary, Post-Primary, Third Level, Further Education, Other Lifelong Training Centres
Childcare Facilities	Registered Childcare Facilities Incl. Full Day, Part-Time and Sessional Services
Social, Community and Cultural Facilities	Community Centres, Libraries, Senior and Youth Centres, Post Offices, Banks and Credit Unions, Museums, Galleries, Theatres, Cinemas, Music Venues, Historical Cultural Sites
Healthcare and Emergency Services	Hospitals, Health Centres, Primary Care Centres, Doctors and Specialty Clinics, Dental, Physiotherapy, Counselling, Optician, Pharmacy, Garda Stations, Fire Stations
Open Space and Recreation	Parks, Playing Pitches, Playgrounds, Sports Centres and Clubs, Leisure Centres, Gyms and Training Facilities, Swimming Pools
Religious Institutions	Areas of Worship, Churches, Cemeteries
Retail Centres and Services	Convenience Retailing, Other Relevant Retail

Table 1.1 Social and Community Infrastructure Categories Applied to Audit

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

1.2 Study Area and Accessibility

Swords town has grown considerably in recent years. It is identified as a 'Key Town' within the Dublin Metropolitan Area and the town has a broad range of uses, including residential, retail, offices, and logistics. Swords has a population estimated at 40,776 in the latest Census 2022, and the document *Your Swords: An Emerging City, Strategic Vision 2035* envisages Swords growing into a settlement of 100,000 people by 2035.

Geographically, Swords is located approximately 12km north of Dublin City Centre, and is within close proximity to the M1, which links to the M50, Dublin Airport and Dublin Port Tunnel while providing the main transport link to Louth and Northern Ireland. In addition to the broad range of uses located within Swords town centre, a number of large-scale shopping centres and retail parks operate within the Swords area, including the adjacent Airside Retail Park, Pavilions Shopping Centre and Swords Business Park, in addition to the myriad of employment generating uses at and around Dublin Airport.

The subject site, covering approximately 2.2 Ha, is situated toward the eastern side of Swords, less than 1 km from Swords Town centre (to the west) and approximately 4 km from the employment hub of Dublin Airport to the south. The site is currently undeveloped, located inside of Swords Business Park. Access to the site is provided via an entrance to the north of the site from the local access road.



Figure 1.1: Site Location

(Source: Bing Maps, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

The Study Area for this assessment is defined by a 1 km radius of the subject site, equivalent to a c. 12- to 14-minute walking distance considered accessible to future residents of the proposed development. A distance of 1 km has also been defined by Fingal County Council within the *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029* (Section 14.14) as the standard for future community and social audits. Given that the subject site is located at the edge of a rapidly growing settlement, an additional indicative catchment of approximately 2km has been included (in some exceptions) to capture, survey and include relevant infrastructure that lies tangent to, or immediately outside of this study area but is directly relevant to assessing future needs of the settlement of Swords.



Figure 1.2: Study Area (with Bus Stops)

(Source: Bing Maps, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

The site is well serviced by public transport with high capacity, frequent services, and is located directly adjacent to a major public transport corridor being the Swords Quality Bus Corridor (QBC). A number of bus stops are located within 500 m walking distance to the site, providing for a high capacity and frequent service to the city centre, along with direct links with Dublin Airport, and Dublin City Centre. This includes the Swords Express bus services (including routes 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, SOOX, and 501X), a range of Dublin Bus services and a GoAhead service (including routes the 33, 33a, 41, 41b, 41x and 43).

Future proposals for public transport in the area include BusConnects and a section of the Core Bus Corridor 2 (Swords to Dublin City Centre) preferred route passes near the site to the west, along the R132/Dublin Road. BusConnects aims to introduce 'next generation' bus services and corridors in Dublin. With the aim of significantly cutting existing journey times and ensuring that services are predictable and reliable. A section of the Core Bus Corridor 2 preferred route passes directly by the site to the west, along the R132/Dublin Road. These corridors will have continuous bus priority, along with segregated cycle lanes where possible. The route will run services to the City Centre every 10-15 minutes. This will provide significantly improved bus transport access to the subject site in the coming years.

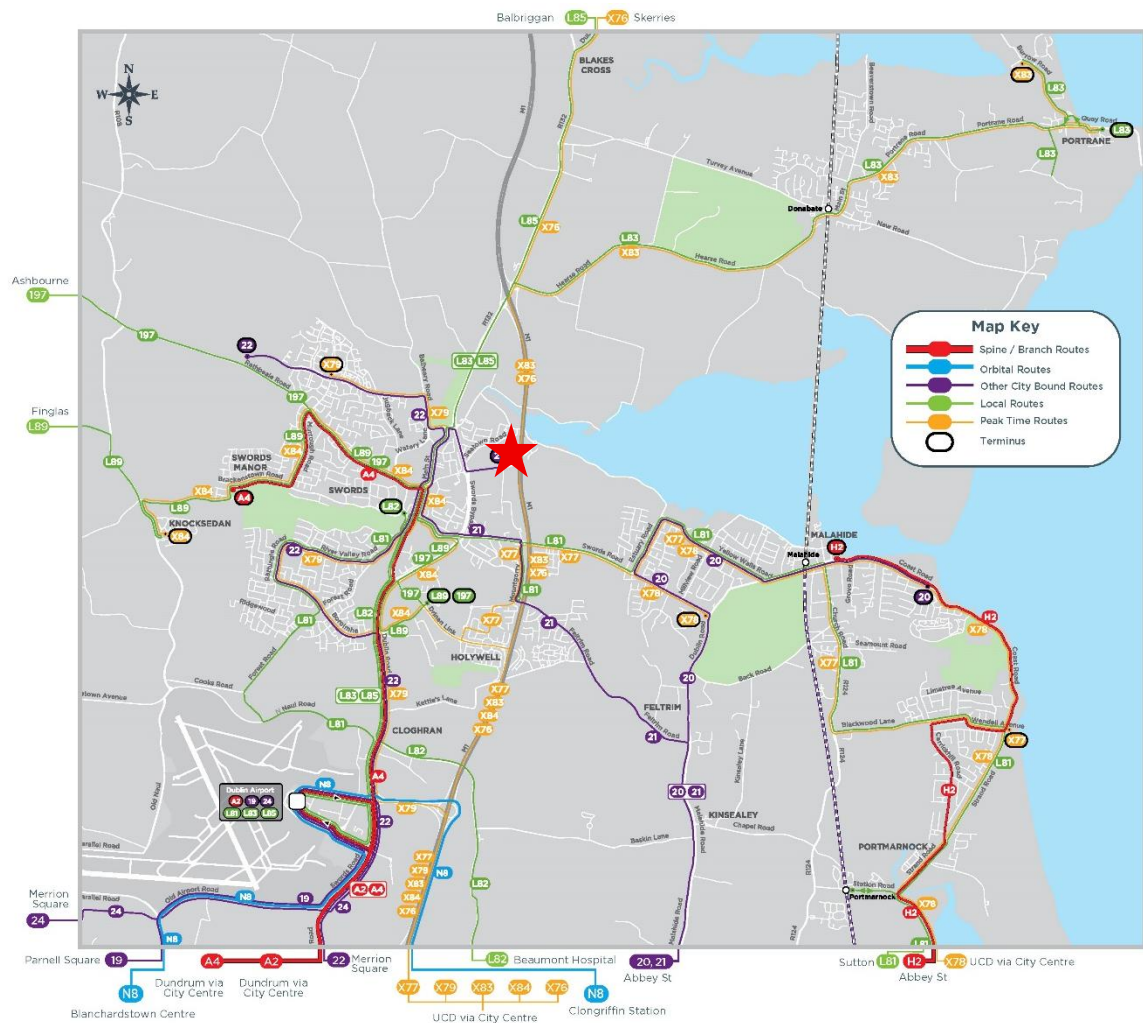


Figure 1.3: Bus Connects Network (Site Identified by Red Star)

(Source: BusConnects.ie, September 2020, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

The site will also benefit from the future MetroLink, which will run along a corridor connecting Swords, Dublin Airport and the City Centre, and will terminate at Charlemont. The route includes a stop to the site's west at Seatown (Figure 1.4).

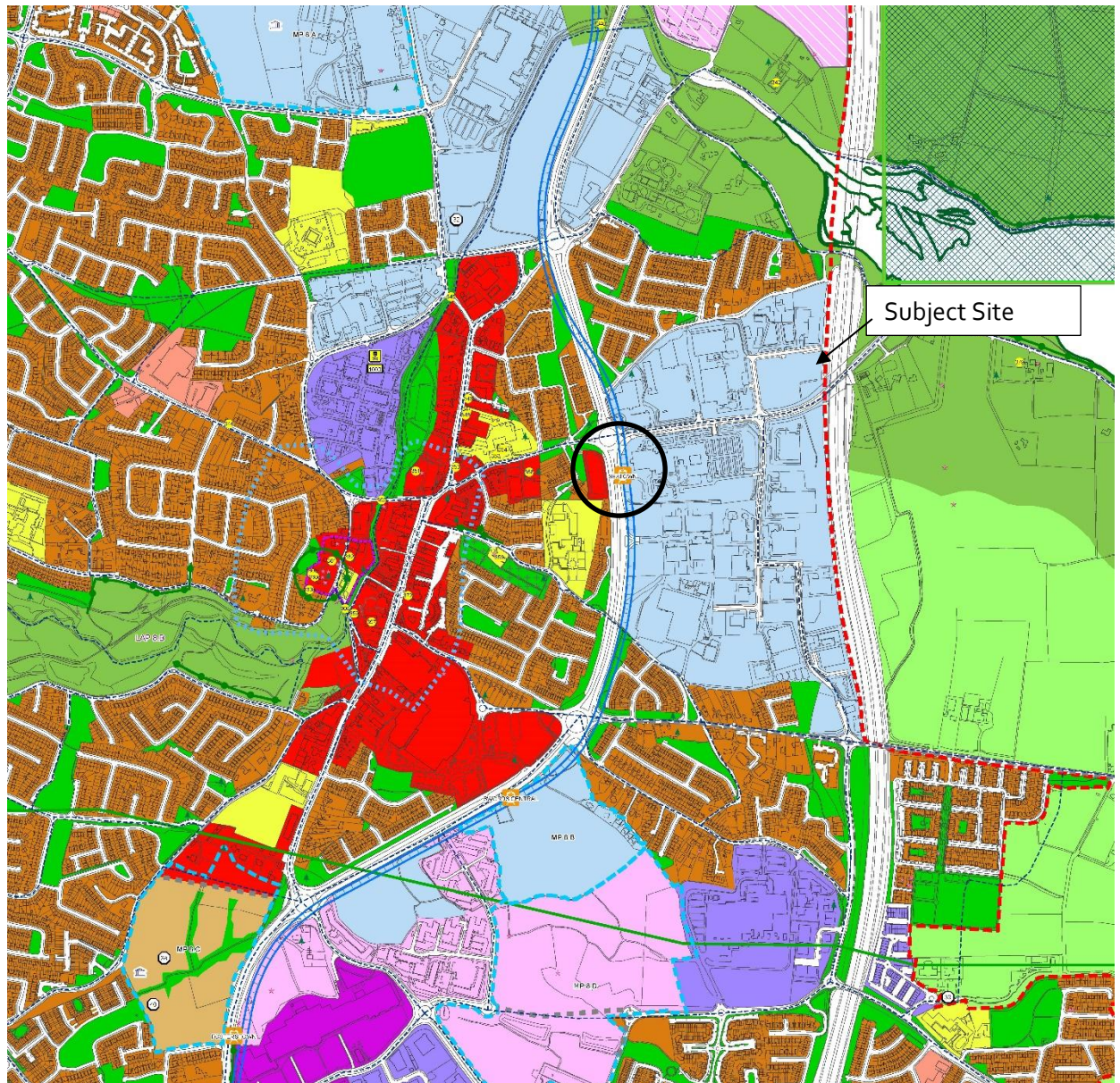


Figure 1.4: Future MetroLink stop proximate to the subject site (Outlined in Black)

(Source: *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029*, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

1.3 Proposed Development

"The proposed development consists of a mixed-use development that constitutes a 'Large-Scale Residential Development' (LRD) at this site of 2.22 Ha principally located at Swords Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin. The site is principally bound: to the north by an access road and ancillary car park to serve Swords Business Park; to the east by the M1 Motorway; to the south by Mantua Road; and to the west by an access road to serve Swords Business Park. The application site also extends to include parts of: the access road to the north and west for footpath, landscape and foul drainage connection works; Mantua Road to the west for foul drainage connection works; and the green strip to the south at Mantua Road for a pedestrian and cyclist connection.

Permission is sought for a mixed-use development with a gross floor area of 30,358 sq m and

principally comprised in 5 No. blocks (A–E), with heights ranging from 1 No. to 9 No. storeys. The proposed block heights are as follows: Block A is 6 No. to 7 No. storeys; Block B is 6 No. to 7 No. storeys; Block C is 6 No. to 7 No. storeys; Block D is 6 No. to 9 No. storeys; and Block E is 1 No. to 9 No. storeys. The development consists of: 289 No. residential apartments (60 No. 1-bed, 200 No. 2-bed and 29 No. 3-bed); retail/commercial unit (701 sq m); and crèche (418 sq m) with outdoor play area (42 sq m).

Permission is also sought for: new multi-modal site entrance to the west; minor relocation of existing northern site entrance to the east; internal road, cycle and footpath network; 132 No. car parking spaces; 13 no. motorcycle parking spaces; cycle parking; hard and soft landscaping, including public open space, communal amenity space (at-grade and as roof gardens atop Block D and Block E) and incidental open space; private amenity space as balconies and terraces facing all directions; public lighting; bin stores; plant rooms; 2 No. sub-stations; green roofs; rooftop plant, PV panels, telecommunications infrastructure, lift overruns and automatic opening vents; and all associated works above and below ground.”

Unit Type	Units	% of Total
1-Bedroom Units	60	21%
2-Bedroom Units	200	59%
3-Bedroom Units	29	10%
4-Bedroom Units	0	0%
Total No. of Units	289	100%

Table 1.2: Schedule of Accommodation

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

(Source: MCORM, 2026)

The remaining Sections of this Report will follow the approach outlined in Section 1.1 as a structural framework with the identification and categorisation of all current Community, Recreational and Social Infrastructure in the area, followed by a demographic analysis that provides valuable insight into the characteristics of the population of the Study Area, prior to determining the potential demand impacts of the proposed development. The Report will comprise a further four Sections:

- 8 | Page

2.0 RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE

For the purposes of this SIA, a range of national, regional and local planning policies relating to SI have been reviewed, including those within the *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029*. These documents provide guidance with respect to the provision of new social and community facilities in residential development areas in a number of categories, including education and childcare services, healthcare facilities, cultural institutions, recreational facilities and other key services. The key points relating to this study, as derived from each policy document, will be highlighted in this Section.

2.1 National Planning Policy

2.1.1 National Planning Framework – First Revision - Project Ireland 2040

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 includes Social and Community development within its outlined National Strategic Outcomes, in terms of access to social infrastructure as the marker of a successful settlement.

A key focus of the NPF is on sustainable and compact development within pre-existing urban areas and the provision of accessible services and facilities for all communities. Chapter 6 of the NPF states that the *"ability to access services and amenities, such as education and healthcare, shops and parks, the leisure and social interactions available to us and the prospect of securing employment"* is intrinsic to providing a good quality of life for new and existing communities.

The NPF includes National Strategic Outcome 10 which seeks to provide access to quality childcare, education and health services. This requires an evidence-led planning approach. While there is no guidance on what infrastructure is required to service developments of different sizes, the NPF does provide a hierarchy of settlements and related infrastructure.

Chapter 4 'Making Stronger Urban Places' makes reference to the importance of community in urban places alongside adequate access to services. 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.'*

In relation to the elderly in particular, NPO 40 states: *'Local planning, housing, health facilities and services, transport/ accessibility and leisure policies will be developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population along with the inclusion of specific projections, supported by clear proposals in respect of ageing communities as part of the core strategy of city and county development plans.'*

In relation to children and young people, the NPF states that *'The number of people aged 15 or under will continue to increase until the mid-2020's and decline only slowly thereafter. This means that the continued provision and enhancement of facilities and amenities for children and young people, such as early learning and childcare services, schools, playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds, remains necessary and will need ongoing investment to ensure alignment with future needs.'* Under this section the NPF makes reference to the support for national policy including 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures'. Despite a predicted decline in the number of children in Ireland in the coming years, the NPF stresses that *'childcare provision in Ireland is reaching capacity for some age groups and in some parts of the country, and new planning approaches and sustained investment*

will be required, particularly in areas of disadvantage and population growth, and noting the promotion of infill and brownfield housing development in existing settlements as set out in this Framework, to increase capacity and enable existing services to meet regulatory and quality requirements.' It also infers that 'childcare' includes school-age childcare and early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

With the lack of alternative guidance and in order to provide a policy and evidence-based approach to the Assessment, within this Report we use the *NPF* hierarchy to assess the infrastructure but defer to catchment specification prescribed in Local Development Plan Policy.

2.1.2 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities

The *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* provide national planning policy and guidance on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements in both urban and rural areas in Ireland. The aim is to promote environmentally friendly practices, efficient land use, and community-focused development. The guidelines recognise the importance of compact growth in urban areas and the importance of walkable well-designed neighbourhoods that can meet day-to-day needs of residents within a short 10 to 15 minute walk of homes. These day-to-day needs refer to social infrastructure, including access to educational facilities and childcare, as essential to good quality of life, and state that new development should take into consideration the SI needs of the community and the existing provision of same. Under the chapter titled 'Sustainable and Compact Settlements', the process for the delivery of successful quality placemaking is reviewed and the provision of key community facilities such as amenities, schools, crèches and other community services are referenced as forming essential elements. In applying this methodology, the guidelines note it will be necessary to make an *"informed estimate of net developable area taking account of factors such as the need for roads and parks, schools"* and planning for same.

The Guidelines promote a move away from segregated land use areas (residential, commercial and employment) that have reinforced unsustainable travel in favour of mixed-use neighbourhoods. Ensuring that there is a good mix and distribution of activities around a hierarchy of centres has many benefits in terms of reducing the need to travel and creating active and vibrant places. It states that specific key principles (noted below) should be applied in the preparation of local plans and in the consideration of individual planning applications:

- a) *"In city and town centres and at high capacity public transport nodes and interchanges (defined in Table 3.8), development should consist of high intensity mix-use development (residential, commercial, retail, cultural and community uses) that responds in scale and intensity to the level of accessibility. At major transport interchanges, uses should be planned in accordance with the principles of Transport Orientated Development.*
- b) *In city and town centres, planning authorities should plan for a diverse range of uses including retail, cultural and residential uses and for the adaption and re-use of the existing building stock (e.g. over the shop living). It is also important to plan for the activation of outdoor spaces and the public realm to promote more liveable city and town centres. Much of this can be achieved through the implementation of urban enhancement and traffic demand management measures that work together to free up space for active travel and create spaces that invite people to meet, mingle and dwell within centres.*
- c) *In areas that are less central, the mix of uses should cater for local services and amenities focused around a hierarchy of local centres that support residential communities and with opportunities for suitable non-residential development throughout.*

- d) *In all urban areas, planning authorities should actively promote and support opportunities for intensification. This could include initiatives that support the more intensive use of existing buildings (including adaption and extension) and under-used lands (including for example the repurposing of car parks at highly accessible urban locations that no longer require a high level of private car access).*
- e) *It will be important to align the integration of land uses and centres with public transport in order to maximise the benefits of public transport.*
- f) *The creation of sustainable communities also requires a diverse mix of housing and variety in residential densities across settlements. This will require a focus on the delivery of innovative housing types that can facilitate compact growth and provide greater housing choice that responds to the needs of single people, families, older people and people with disabilities, informed by a Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA) where possible. Development plans may specify a mix for apartment and other housing developments, but this should be further to an evidence-based Housing Needs and Demand Assessment."*

This audit has regard to these Guidelines which set out the distribution of uses and community infrastructure as being most relevant in the development of new residential areas. These criteria were considered in the development of the comprehensive infrastructure categories applied during the course of the study area audit.

2.1.3 Planning Design Standards for Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities

Planning Design Standards for Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025) also includes specific guidance with respect to childcare provision in the design and development of apartment schemes, 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."

The document specifies the provision of 1 No. childcare facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 No. child places) for every 75 No. proposed residential units. The application of this standard is however informed by the demographic profile of the area and the existing capacity of childcare facilities.

In line with the above National Guidelines, any one-bedroom units within the proposed development would have been discounted in estimating the total number of minors (children aged 0–4 years) and school going children (5–18 years) expected to reside within the development. Instead, the 229 No. two, and three bedroom units have been included. The estimation of children population and the likely demand for childcare services arising from them has been further detailed in the Audit in Section 4.0.

2.1.5 Action Plan for Education (Statement of Strategy 2023-2025)

The Department of Education has operated an *Action Planning Framework* to provide an overview

of the activity associated with the strategic progress of the 2021-2023 strategy and priorities since 2021. The plan sets out key priorities on an annual basis, with the most recent Plan published in September 2023. This Plan translates the strategic priorities to actions and makes progress towards achieving the high-level goals for the Department and the sector. The high-level roadmap of how to achieve the Department's priorities over 2023–2025 are:

1. Enable the provision of high-quality education and improve the learning experience to meet the needs of all children and young people, in schools and early learning and care settings;
2. Ensure equity of opportunity in education and that all children and young people are supported to fulfil their potential;
3. Together with our partners, provide strategic leadership and support for the delivery of the right systems and infrastructure for the sector;
4. Organisational Excellence and Innovation

The *Action Plan for Education (Statement of Strategy 2023–2025)* provides useful insights into the requirements for new schooling infrastructure and the standards to ensure high-quality learning for all students.

2.1.6 The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice is part of a wider package of initiatives designed to facilitate the provision of schools and schools-related infrastructure within the planning system and in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The following core objectives aim to provide an effective integration of schools in relation to the planning system:

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,
3. Local Authorities, as Planning Authorities, will support and assist the Department in ensuring the timely provision of school sites.

The document provides guidance when assessing future development potential of certain areas and establishing demand for schools. This document states that in some cases it *"may be more complex as it involves not just an assessment of likely population growth but also an appraisal of the capacity of existing post-primary schools, coupled with an assessment of the enrolment patterns in existing and anticipated 'feeder' national schools."*

The Code of Practice stipulates the methodology for forecasting future education demand. Identification of future primary school demands should be based upon:

- *"The anticipated increase in overall population for the city/county plan area over the next nine years (as set out in relevant development or local area plans);*
- *The current school-going population based on school returns;*
- *The increase in school going population, assuming that an average of 12% of the population are expected to present for primary education; and*
- *The number of classrooms required in total derived from the above."*

The Report addresses reasonable estimates of future demand based on the influx of population arising from the proposed development in a manner that is consistent with national and regional estimates sourced by CSO results.

2.1.7 Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities

Appendix 2 of the *Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)* produced by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government state the following with respect to the provision of new communities/larger new housing developments (Paragraphs 2.4 and 3.3.1 also refer to this standard):

"Planning authorities should require the provision of at least one childcare facility for new housing areas unless there are significant reasons to the contrary for example, development consisting of single bed apartments or where there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments. For new housing areas, an average of one childcare facility for each 75 dwellings would be appropriate [...]"

"The threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas."

This document establishes an indicative standard of 1 No. childcare facility per 75 No. dwellings in new housing areas, where the facility provides a minimum of 20 No. childcare places. However, the guidance acknowledges that other case-specific insights may lead to an increase or decrease in this requirement. Appendix 2 of the Guidelines states that the threshold and level of potential provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of an area.

The results of any childcare needs analysis carried out as part of a County Childcare Strategy should also be considered.

2.2 Regional Planning Policy

2.2.1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region

The *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy* (Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly) ('RSES') states that Social Infrastructure plays an important role in developing strong and inclusive communities. Section 9.1 of the RSES details that the availability of, and access to, services and facilities, inclusive of healthcare services, education facilities and community/recreational facilities is key to creating healthier places. The RSES includes the following Regional Policy Objectives which relate to access to Social Infrastructure and its overall improvement:

RPO 9.14 – *"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 needs of the communities they serve."*

RPO 9.18 – *"Support the implementation of local authority Local Economic and Community Plans, in collaboration with Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and through the use of spatial planning policies, to seek to reduce the number of people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the Region."*

RPO 9.19 – *"EMRA shall work collaboratively with stakeholders including the wide range of service*

providers through the LECs to effectively plan for social infrastructure needs."

Regarding childcare facilities and schools, the *RSES* states that Local Authorities should consider demographic trends and patterns when carrying out an assessment of the need for Social Infrastructure.

RPO 9.20 – *"Support investment in the sustainable development of the Region's childcare services as an integral part of regional infrastructure to include:*

- *Support the Affordable Childcare Scheme.*
- *Quality and supply of sufficient childcare places.*
- *Support initiatives under a cross Government Early Years Strategy.*
- *Youth services that support and target disadvantaged young people and improve their employability."*

RPO 9.27 – *"In areas where significant new housing is proposed, an assessment of need regarding schools provision should be carried out in collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills and the statutory plans shall designate new school sites at accessible, pedestrian, cycle and public transport friendly locations."*

Section 9.7 highlights that SI should be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. Shared use and co-location of facilities should be encouraged, in order to align service provision, use land more efficiently and facilitate opportunities for further inclusion and community participation.

The *RSES* has been consulted in this Social Infrastructure Audit to ensure the range of services, community facilities, and standards deemed to improve quality of life are considered.

2.3 Local Planning Policy

2.3.1 Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029

The *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029* was adopted on 22nd February 2023 and came into effect on 5th April 2023. The *Development Plan* provides the statutory planning policy framework for the growth and development of the County during its lifetime, with an underlying and cross-cutting theme promoting the creation of sustainable, healthy communities where people can access jobs, housing, and services, and enjoy a high-quality of life. A key priority of the *Development Plan* is to create sustainable neighbourhoods, with a range of household types and tenures located in close proximity to community facilities and services. The following Policies and Objectives set out below are in relation to proposed developments and Community and Social Infrastructure Audits.

"Objective DMSO78 – Community and Social Infrastructure Audit: *Planning applications for large scale residential and mixed-use developments of 50 or more residential units, shall include a Community and Social Infrastructure Audit. This audit shall assess the provision of community and social infrastructure within the vicinity of the site and shall identify existing shortcomings in terms of these facilities and assess whether there is a need to provide additional facilities to cater for the proposed development.*

A Community and Social Infrastructure Audit shall include the following:

- *An assessment of existing community and social infrastructure facilities within 1*

km of the subject site.

- An assessment of the need in terms of necessity, deficiency, and opportunities to enhance/share existing facilities based future population projections for the area.
- A justification as to whether or not a new community facility will be provided as part of the proposed development based on the findings of the audit.

Where new community facilities are required, they shall have regard to Objective DMS079 above and the following:

- Community facilities shall be flexible in their design and promote optimum/multi-functional usage, for users of all age and abilities.
- Community facilities shall not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of traffic, parking, noise or loss of privacy of adjacent resident.
- Community facilities shall be provided in conjunction with residential/mixed use development.
- Community facilities shall be accessible by a range of travel modes with an emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport use, while providing appropriate car parking facilities to meet anticipated demand of non-local visitors to the centre."

"Objective CLOSOS – Residential Developments and Community Facilities: Ensure proposals for large scale residential developments include a community facility, unless it can be established that the needs of the new residents can be adequately served within existing or committed community facilities in the area."

"Policy SPQHP1 – Healthy Placemaking: The Council will support the development and creation throughout Fingal of successful and sustainable settlements which endorse the principles of healthy placemaking and which through a multi-faceted approach to planning, design and management continue to ensure the development of attractive high quality places to live, work, recreate, visit and invest in, served by a range of local services, provision of quality public realms, diverse and accessible community facilities for all genders, non-binary or none and open spaces for the benefit of the community."

With respect to new significant development and social infrastructure provision, the Development Plan states that it should only take place where sufficient schools, parks and other resources are already in place or are proposed for development. The proposed development is consistent with the abovementioned Policy Objectives. It provides for high-quality housing, on lands zoned for residential use, in accordance with the Core Strategy of the Development Plan, and in close proximity to the full range of Social and Community Infrastructure. The proposed development will provide much needed housing development to support the existing and future population of Swords.

Each of the relevant National, Regional and Local Guidelines and Policy Documents outlined above have been consulted in the development of this Social Infrastructure Audit to review the existing capacity of community facilities within the Study Area.

3.0 DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

To fulfil the strategic priorities of Fingal County Council, it is essential that all areas have a strong sense of community, provide access to natural surroundings, and are well integrated with essential services, public amenities and open spaces. This will contribute to fostering a healthy, resilient and sustainable community. To gain insights into the specific requirements of the local residents, an in-depth examination of the demographic features of both the Study Area and the broader Fingal County has been conducted using data from the Census of 2016 and 2022. This analysis aims to identify the significant traits of the local population.

The scope of the assessment is determined by overlaying the 2km radius buffer zone over the application lands and assessing the relevant spatial unit in demographic analysis. For the subject site, the CSO Small Area Statistics (as outlined in purple in Figure 3.1) were selected as the optimal statistical unit to measure local levels of demand. Moreover, it better represented local demand outside of the immediate area of the subject site taking account for wider settlement of Swords. The Study Area selected refers to the aggregated data of 102 Small Area statistical units. Specifically, the study provides insight into the composition of the local population and relevant demographic trends, age profile, travel patterns.



Figure 3.1: Extent of Demographic Study Area Comprising 102 No. of the CSO Defined Small Area Boundaries relevant to the Subject Site

(Source: CSO, 2022, and Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

Some larger Small Areas to the north and west of the site have been included in the analysis as the majority of residential development within those Small Areas are contained within 2km of the subject site. This Study Area (based on the CSO Settlement Area) is also compared to wider trends within Fingal County.

3.1 Population and Age

According to the 2022 Census, Ireland's population reached 5,149,139 in April 2022 – representing growth of 8.1% from the previous Census in 2016. Fingal's population stood at 330,506 at the time, an increase from 2016 of 11.6%, or just over 34,000 people. The County hence accounts for 6.4% of Ireland's population, with only Dublin City and Cork City and County accounting for higher proportions. Fingal's population is expected to continue to grow, with the *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029* forecasting that the County's population will increase by approximately 73,000 people by 2031 (+22.1% versus 2022). Between 2016 and 2022, Fingal was the third fastest growing County in Ireland, with only Longford (+14.4%) and Meath (+13.2%) growing at faster paces.

Further breakdowns show that 26.7% of the Fingal population was under 18 years old in 2022, while 134,264 people (40.6%) were under 30. This compares to 28.3% of the population under 18 years old and 42.2% under 30 years old in 2016. The proportion of the population under 30 years of age in Fingal was higher than the national average, where 38% of the population was under 30. Fingal had the youngest average age in 2022 at 36.2 years, with some 63% of its population below the age of 44, compared to 58.3% nationally.

Area	Population, 2016	Population, 2022	2016-2022 Change (Number)	2016-2022 Change (%)
Fingal County	296,214	330,506	34,292	11.6%
Study Area - 2 kilometres	30,745	31,087	342	1.1%

Table 3.1: Population Change 2016-2022

(Source: CSO, 2022)

Over the same period, the population within the Study Area grew at a significantly slower rate of 1.1% (342 No. additional persons). The analysis of the CSO data illustrates a strong representation of working age population within the 20–65 age groupings, with 62.1% of the total resident population classified within these age cohorts. The 20–49 age cohort further highlights this concentration of young professionals, with 43.4% of the total population classified in this group. The area has a low average age at 37.3 years with a lower proportion of population older age cohorts. Some 20.1% of the population is aged under 14 years old, while 12.0% of the population are aged over 65 years old.

Age Cohort	Study Area 2016 (Number)	Study Area 2016 (% Total)	Study Area 2022 (Number)	Study Area 2022 (% Total)
0-4	2,352	7.65%	1,830	5.89%
5-9	2,353	7.65%	2,115	6.80%
10-14	1,832	5.96%	2,299	7.40%
15-19	1,797	5.84%	1,805	5.81%
20-24	1,961	6.38%	1,749	5.63%
25-29	2,170	7.06%	2,022	6.50%
30-34	2,745	8.93%	2,219	7.14%

Age Cohort	Study Area 2016 (Number)	Study Area 2016 (% Total)	Study Area 2022 (Number)	Study Area 2022 (% Total)
35-39	2,931	9.53%	2,512	8.08%
40-44	2,383	7.75%	2,680	8.62%
45-49	2,092	6.80%	2,325	7.48%
50-54	2,110	6.86%	1,995	6.42%
55-59	1,910	6.21%	1,975	6.35%
60-64	1,302	4.23%	1,816	5.84%
65-69	1,059	3.44%	1,262	4.06%
70-74	785	2.55%	1,016	3.27%
75-79	469	1.53%	742	2.39%
80-84	264	0.86%	404	1.30%
85+	230	0.75%	321	1.03%
Total	30,745	100.00%	31,087	100.00%

Table 3.2: Number and Percentage of the Total Population each Age Cohort 2016-2022

(Source: CSO, 2022)

In terms of cohort stability, the working age population has remained static in the period since 2016, decreasing by just 1.7% or 303 persons. The proportion of population over 65 years of age has increased significantly since 2016, with 938 more persons in the catchment, representing 12.0% of total population. By contrast, the population under the age of 14 has decreased from 21.3% to 20.1% of total population, decreasing by 293 persons since 2016. Lowering concentrations of population in younger age groups would indicate an decreasing demand for facilities and services such as childcare and sport and recreation. It also indicates reduced demand for schooling and childcare infrastructure into the future. A higher than average proportion of population in older age groups indicates potential increased demand for health facilities and aged care in the Study Area. The population over 65 years of age has seen the largest demographic growth, indicating an increased need for more health and community infrastructure for retired cohorts into the future.

The Swords area would be classified as a major employer, given the proximity to Dublin Airport, large shopping destination, significant technology and logistics employers, as well as key community and sporting infrastructure. Given these employment opportunities the Study Area, with its proximity to Dublin City Centre and Dublin Airport, will continue to attract population of working age.

3.2 Household Composition

The Study Area predominantly consists of family houses with 85.2% of dwelling units in 2022 registered as such. Some 67.2% of households are owner-occupied, with 19.9% of households privately rented, and the remaining a further 8.5% socially rented. The average household size in 2022 was 2.89 persons per household, which was below the average for Fingal County (3.02 persons per household). Some 16.9% of all households consist of 1 No. person, with a further 28.3% consisting of 2 person households, and over a third of all households (33.8%) consisting of 4 No. or more persons living together (Table 3.3). Both Fingal County and the Study Area have a similar profile of persons per household.

Household Type	Study Area Households 2022	Fingal County Households 2022
1 Person Households	16.9%	15.9%
2 Person Households	28.3%	26.9%
3 Person Households	21.1%	20.1%
4 Person Households	21.0%	21.4%
5+ Person Households	12.8%	15.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3.3: Persons Per Household in the Study Area and Fingal County – 2022

(Source: CSO, 2022)

The majority (71.7%) of all households in the area contain children headed by either a single or dual-parent household. Compositional data indicates that 16.9% of all households contain Single persons living alone, with a further 7.1% consisting of 'non-related' persons living in Group Accommodation (Shared). Some 19.4% of all households are classified as 'retired' or 'empty nest' indicative of mature neighbourhoods. Taken collectively, the data suggests that the unit typology of the catchment area are persons living in family houses, predominantly families with children or retired households.

3.3 Education

The largest proportion of residents had completed 'Third Level' education (42.9%) in 2022. This is comparable to the levels of educational attainment in Fingal County, with 43.2% of the population having completed 'Third Level' education, and is significantly higher than the national average. It should be noted that a further 12.3% of the population have also completed 'Post-Graduate Education or Higher' at the time of the Census, compared to 14.7% in Fingal County, and just 1.5% were recorded as having 'No Formal Education'. Taken together, these figures indicate an extremely well educated population in the Study Area, that surpasses attainment in the wider nationally.

Education Level	Study Area	% of Total	Fingal County	% of Total
No Formal Education	297	1.5%	3,368	1.7%
Primary Education	1,009	5.0%	9,576	4.7%
Secondary Education	6,564	32.3%	58,791	29.0%
Third Level Education (Any Level)	8,710	42.9%	87,485	43.2%
Postgraduate or Higher	2,505	12.3%	29,725	14.7%
Not Stated	1,207	5.9%	13,685	6.8%
Total	20,292	100.0%	202,630	100.0%

Table 3.4: Population Aged 15+ Years by Highest Level of Education Completed

(Source: CSO, 2022)

3.4 Affluence and Deprivation

The purpose of an affluence and deprivation index is to assess social conditions using a single indicator. The Pobal HP Deprivation Index (2022) is used by public bodies across Ireland to identify potentially disadvantaged communities and target investment/policy to improve the quality of life and access to opportunities for those living in them. The subject site is located in

an area (based on Small Areas) that is classified in aggregate as 'Marginally Above Average'. This catchment area includes the areas around Swords Business Park. Index scores vary greatly within the 2km catchment, from 'Very Affluent' in areas like Seatown, to 'Disadvantaged' in areas of Swords Village. Taken as a whole the Pobal HP Deprivation Index (2022) indicates that the area is very prosperous with higher than average educational attainment, low unemployment, low age dependency, lower rates of disability, etc. relative to other parts of the country.

3.5 Employment

The economic profile, based on Census 2022, suggests a relatively young population within the active workforce age bracket, with a higher percentage at work, and lower retired and student percentages. The majority of the population over 15 years of age are categorised as 'At Work' in 2022 (61.3%). The percentage of people unemployed in the area is marginally higher (5.2%) than Fingal County (5.1%). The number of people retired in the Study Area is also marginally higher (13.9%) than Fingal County (12.6%). The percentage of students (9.6%) in the Study Area is lower than the percentage of students in Fingal County (11.5%).

The daytime population of the Study Area was registered at 35,142 No. persons in 2016. This refers to those persons that are typically located within the area during the daytime hours for school, work or living and not leaving for work. Some 18,468 No. persons are employed within the Study Area, classifying it a larger employment destination in Fingal County. Those working in the area largely do so in either 'wholesale, retail trade' (32.6%), or 'information, communication or financial activities' (25.9%).

3.6 Religion, Transport and Diversity

Within the Study Area, 18.3% of the population identify as 'Not Religious' with the remaining 63.1%¹ identifying as religious and likely have some need for religious place of worship. Equally, ensuring there is adequate SI to help diverse communities feel included and empowered is critical. The Study Area has a comparably large international community with 23.1% of the local population born outside of Ireland.

A minority (34.1%) of the resident population rely on green modes of transport for daily activities, with 'Bike' (2.3%), 'Walking' (14.1%), and 'Public Transport' (17.7%) making up a small portion of total transportation trips. Daily commuting patterns show 52.1% of trips to work/school are under 30 minutes, with just 10.8% indicating a travel time of over an hour. Trips by 'Private Car (Driver or Passenger)' constitute the majority (48.3%) of all daily movements indicating a car-dependent community. Only 10.8% of households do not access to a Car with 41.3% of all households having 2 or more Cars.

3.7 Summary

The majority of the population in the catchment of the Study Area are living in lower density family housing estates. They are more likely to live in owner-occupied family houses, rather than private or socially renting, than recorded nationally. Population growth in the catchment was stagnant between 2016 and 2022, growing by 1.1% No. persons, largely living within the 266 No. new units recorded as completed since 2016. The population has a comparably high ethnic diversity, with an above average number of residents from EU accession countries and countries outside of Europe, aligning with a lower than average proportion of persons stating their country

¹ 6.0% of the population did not state their religion in 2022, which constitutes the remaining percentage value.

of birth as Ireland.

The population of the Study Area is characterised by an aging population with a strong active workforce with families and children, but a large and growing retired community. Jobs in the catchment reflect the major employers in the area (retail, and ICT office employment) requiring a mix of lower skilled residents and those with higher educational attainment. The resident population of the catchment is very highly educated with a plurality commuting outside of Swords to Dublin City for employment. The area is classified as 'Marginally Above Average' in terms of affluence and deprivation, signifying higher than average rates employment, in higher skilled occupations, within more cohesive family structures, and usually indicate higher disposable income, and high demand for social infrastructure, but also higher social mobility and means to travel.

The demographic assessment indicates that a higher proportion of health and community facilities may be required for the older populations, in addition to the continued demand by families with school-aged children in this area for social infrastructure, sporting, school and childcare facilities.

4.0 FACILITIES AUDIT

The subject site, covering approximately 2.2 Ha, is situated toward the eastern side of Swords, less than 1 km from Swords Town centre (to the east) and approximately 4km from the employment hub of Dublin Airport to the south. The site is currently undeveloped, located inside of Swords Business Park. Access to the site is provided via an entrance to the north of the site from the local access road.

The Study Area for this Assessment is defined by a 1 km radius of the subject site, equivalent to a c. 12- to 14-minute walking distance, which is considered accessible to future residents of the proposed development. A distance of 1 km has also been defined by Fingal County Council within the *Fingal Development Plan 2023–2029* (Section 14.14) as the radius for future Community and Social Audits. Given that the subject site is located within a more suburban context, an additional indicative catchment of 2 km has been included (in some exceptions) to capture, survey and include relevant infrastructure that lies tangent to, or immediately outside of this Study Area but is directly relevant to assessing future needs of the Swords catchment area.

The survey identified a large range of community facilities within the Study Area. A total of 7 No. categories of facilities that align with the Policies set out in the Development Plan were utilised for this Audit. Some 45 No. social infrastructure facilities were identified as part of this Audit within a radius of 1 km of the subject site, with that figure increasing to 176 No. social infrastructure facilities located within 2 km of the subject site.

Category	Facility Type
Education and Training Services	Primary, Post-Primary, Third Level, Further Education, Other Lifelong Training Centres
Childcare Facilities	Registered Childcare Facilities Incl. Full Day, Part-Time and Sessional Services
Social, Community and Cultural Facilities	Community Centres, Libraries, Senior and Youth Centres, Post Offices, Banks and Credit Unions, Museums, Galleries, Theatres, Cinemas, Music Venues, Historical Cultural Sites
Healthcare and Emergency Services	Hospitals, Health Centres, Primary Care Centres, Doctors and Clinics, Dental, Physiotherapy, Counselling, Optician, Pharmacy, Garda Stations, Fire Stations
Open Space and Recreation	Parks, Playing Pitches, Playgrounds, Sports Centres and Clubs, Leisure Centres, Gyms and Training Facilities, Swimming Pools
Religious Institutions	Areas of Worship, Churches, Cemeteries
Retail Centres and Services	Convenience Retailing, Other Relevant Retail

Table 4.1: Community Infrastructure Categories Applied to Audit

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)



Figure 4.1: Map of Subject Site, and Catchment Area

(Source: Google Maps API, Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

Context Map

Legend

- Subject Site
- Study Catchment Area (2 kilometre)
- 1 Kilometre Catchment

4.1 Education and Training Facilities

A Schools Demand Assessment has been carried out to examine the capacity of existing primary and post-primary school facilities located in the vicinity of the subject site, alongside the demographic demands, to understand the direction of demand and the resulting need for additional schooling infrastructure in the future.

A methodology for the assessment of educational facilities and schools has been developed in accordance with the directions provided in planning policy, and it involves the following steps:

1. Defining a Study Area using relevant School Planning Areas (SPA) as developed by the Department of Education (DES);
2. A demographic and socio-economic evaluation of the composition of population within the Study Area;
3. Determining the extent and provision of existing educational facilities and schools within the Study Area; and
4. Estimating the level of demand for schools that may arise from the development proposal.

In accordance with current guidelines, the following Section provides an examination of local need for educational facilities at the subject site and its wider surroundings. Accordingly, the latest data was obtained from the Department of Education and Skills, Primary Online Database (POD)² and the National School Census, for existing educational facilities in the locality. Reporting also provides detail on the current and future capacity of existing and planned schools in the area. The aim of this assessment is to establish projected demand for school places within the existing schools network generated by the proposed development.

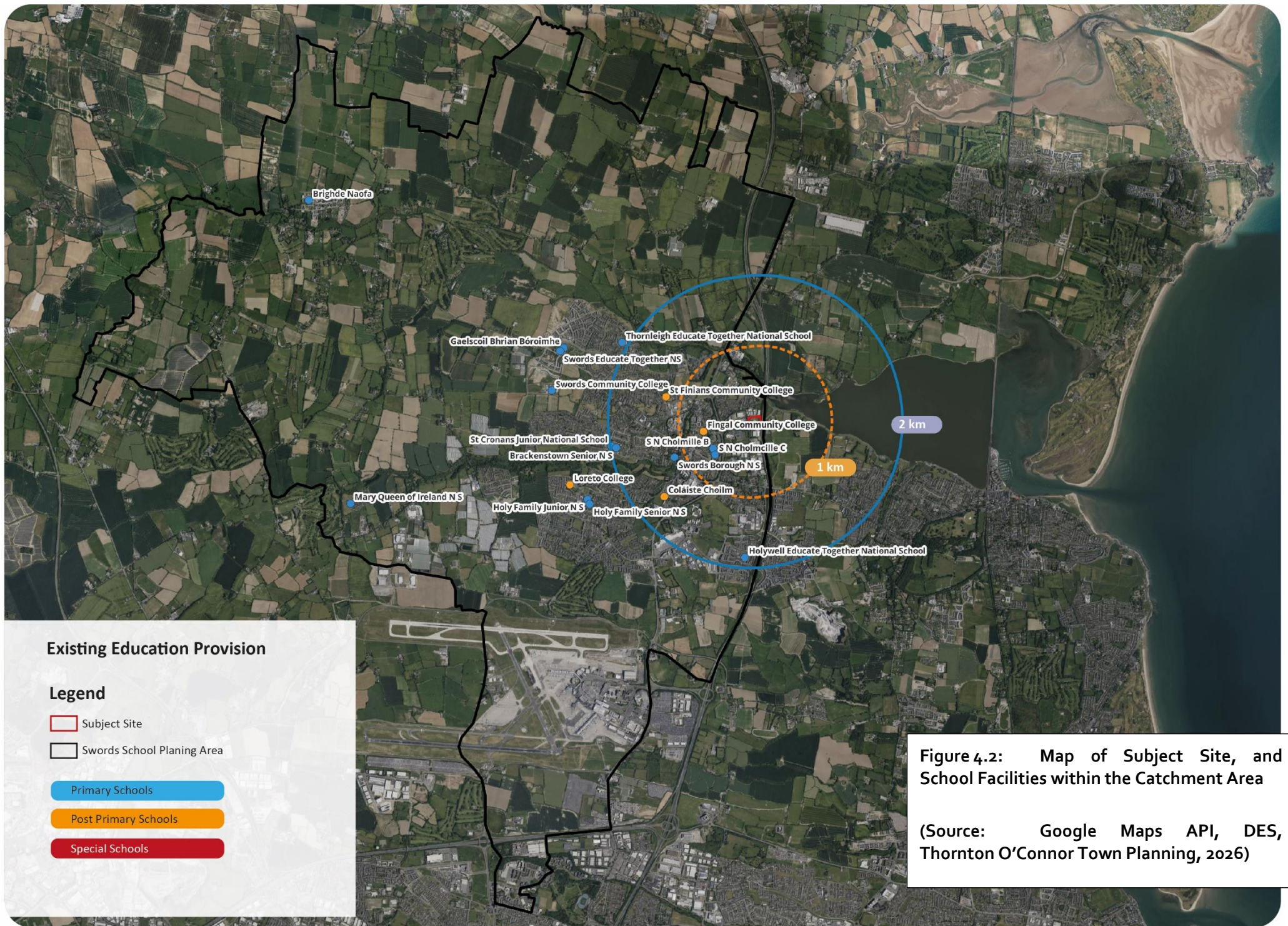
4.1.1 Existing Infrastructure Analysis

4.1.1.1 School Catchment Area

The proposed development site is located within the Swords School Planning Area (SPA) identified by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) as shown in Figure 4.2, which is adjoined by the feeder areas of Ashbourne SPA to the west, the Rush/Lusk SPA to the north, the Whitehall/Santry SPA to the south and the Malahide/Nevinstown SPA to the east.

This SPA comprises 14 No. existing primary schools, and 5 No. post-primary schools.

² Department of Education and Skills – National School Annual Census for 2024/2025, which is returned via the Primary Online Database (POD). This includes both the Census and the Special School Annual Census. Only schools aided by the Department of Education and Skills are included in this list. Data was published January 2026 and is the latest available as of April 2026.



4.1.1.2 Primary Schools

The 14 No. existing primary schools identified within the Swords SPA held a combined provisional enrolment of 5,240 No. students during the 2025/2026 school year as per the Department of Education and Skills (DES) records. The majority of the schools identified are co-educational (mixed) schools. Cholmille Girls and Boys National Schools (highlighted in blue in Table 4.2) is located nearest the subject site and an enrolment of 646 No. students in 2025/2026.

Supplementary to the enrolment information acquired from the DES, a review of the schools' websites and the 2026/2027 Schools' Admission Notice was carried out in April 2026 by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning to ensure that available spaces in classes are captured in this audit. Table 4.2 provides a detailed breakdown of this available capacity per school. As per Section 63 of the Education (Admissions to School) Act³, in 2018, the schools are required to publish an Annual Admissions Notice each year with key information about the annual admissions process.

This review helped determine the trend in schools for admitting students into the classes each year. For the 2026/2027 academic year, the admissions notices for primary schools indicated a total enrolment capacity of 924 No. students in the catchment (896 No. spaces for Junior Infants, and 28 spaces for Other Years). These 924 No. places refer to the places made available each academic cycle resulting from graduating students, rather than any additional capacity to the overall schooling infrastructure. Where schools have not provided sufficient information on their intake for the next academic year, these have been assumed to be zero.

No.	Roll No.	School Name	Distance from Site (km)	Females	Males	2025-2026 Enrolment	Available Capacity per School Websites (2026/27)		
							Junior Infants	Other Years	Total
1	12358M	SWORDS BOROUGH N S	1.1	40	44	84	15	0	15
2	17820J	BRIGHTENAOFA	7.0	177	180	357	0	0	0
3	18976W	S N CHOLMILLE B	0.6	0	320	320	46	1	47
4	18977B	S N CHOLMILLE C	0.6	326	0	326	46	1	47
5	19456B	ST CRONANS JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL	1	226	272	498	104	6	110
6	19535U	BRACKENSTOWN SENIOR N S	1	254	276	530	130	2	132
7	19693P	MARY QUEEN OF IRELAND N S	2.0	38	57	95	12	0	12
8	19721R	HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR N S	2.5	273	292	565	144	0	144
9	19877C	HOLY FAMILY SENIOR N S	2.5	319	305	624	153	0	153
10	20095C	GAELSCOIL BHRIAN BÓRIMHE	2.8	234	207	441	56	0	56
11	20145O	Swords Educate Together NS	2.8	184	210	394	48	0	48
12	20302E	Thornleigh Educate Together National School	2.1	158	155	313	34	0	34
13	20348F	Holywell Educate Together National School	1.8	272	341	613	78	18	96
14	20529J	Broadmeadow Community National School	2.8	31	49	80	30	0	30
Total				2,532	2,708	5,240	896	28	924

**Note: Where there was no information on the number of spaces made available, we have assumed that the capacity is 0*

Table 4.2: Recorded Enrolments for Primary Schools
(Source: DES, 2026, and Individual School Admission Notices, 2026)

³ Section 62 of this Act requires that, from 1 February 2020, boards of management have 3 months to revise their Admission Policies in line with the commenced provisions of the Act.

Table 4.3 below provides information on each of the primary schools, inclusive of their enrolment numbers for the previous 5 No. academic years (2021–2022 to 2025–2026). The overall enrolment figure associated with the 5 No. primary schools within the catchment has decreased significantly over the past 5 No. years (412 No. fewer children, -7.3%), and has continued to shrink despite the overall increases in population in and around Swords. Cholmille Girls and Boys National Schools (identified in blue in Table 4.3), have decreased by 179 No. students over the same 5 year period indicating the school would have enough capacity to grow with increases in the population of the area into the future, and would indicate that there is available capacity within the existing primary schools.

School	Roll No.	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2025–2026
SWORDS BOROUGH N S	12358M	107	106	102	90	84
BRIGHDE NAOFA	17820J	333	333	364	358	357
S N CHOLMILLE B	18976W	371	374	352	335	320
S N CHOLMCILLE C	18977B	390	397	380	371	326
ST CRONANS JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL	19456B	512	520	503	499	498
BRACKENSTOWN SENIOR N S	19535U	586	573	552	569	530
MARY QUEEN OF IRELAND N S	19693P	91	88	97	105	95
HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR N S	19721R	634	621	589	581	565
HOLY FAMILY SENIOR N S	19877C	672	642	637	627	624
GAELSCOIL BHRIAN BÓROIMHE	20095C	460	452	442	444	441
Swords Educate Together NS	20145O	438	425	416	405	394
Thornleigh Educate Together National School	20302E	342	341	317	299	313
Holywell Educate Together National School	20348F	686	677	663	644	613
Broadmeadow Community National School	20529J	30	50	56	71	80
Total		5,652	5,599	5,470	5,398	5,240

Table 4.3: Existing Primary Schools' Enrolment Figures 2021-2022 to 2025-2026

(Source: DES, 2026)

Historic Enrolment Statistics (Primary Schools)

Historic enrolment trends for the catchment show consistent fluctuations in enrolments at primary school level for the historic 10-year interval, with an overall decrease of 336 No. students (6.0% decrease) from 2015/2016 to 2025/2026. Over the past 10 No. years, Cholmille Girls and Boys National Schools experienced decreases in student numbers of 176 No. students or 21.4%. The analysis of student population change indicates a recently decreasing demand for additional primary school places within the town coming from a peak enrolment in the SPA in 2018-2019 of 5,930 students.

Catchment		Enrolment Year			Historic Change	
Roll No.	School Name	15/16	20/21	25/26	5-year	10-year
12358M	SWORDS BOROUGH N S	105	108	84	-24	-21
17820J	BRIGHDE NAOFA	318	362	357	-5	39
18976W	S N CHOLMILLE B	410	404	320	-84	-90
18977B	S N CHOLMCILLE C	412	421	326	-95	-86
19456B	ST CRONANS JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL	635	540	498	-42	-137
19535U	BRACKENSTOWN SENIOR N S	565	604	530	-74	-35
19693P	MARY QUEEN OF IRELAND N S	76	107	95	-12	19
19721R	HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR N S	694	642	565	-77	-129
19877C	HOLY FAMILY SENIOR N S	622	704	624	-80	2
20095C	GAELSCOIL BHRIAN BÓROIMHE	474	484	441	-43	-33
20145O	Swords Educate Together NS	441	439	394	-45	-47
20302E	Thornleigh Educate Together National School	325	353	313	-40	-12
20348F	Holywell Educate Together National School	499	675	613	-62	114
20529J	Broadmeadow Community National School	-	13	80	67	80
Total		5,576	5,856	5,240	-616	-336

Table 4.4: Historic Change in Enrolment (Primary) in Recent 5- and 10-year Period

(Source: DES, 2026)

No special education facilities were identified within the Swords SPA, however, the area appears to be served by 1 No. special education facility to the south-east in Hacketstown – St Michaels House Special School which provides a comprehensive range of services and supports to men, women, and children with intellectual disabilities and their families in 170 locations in the greater Dublin Area. It supports approximately 2,300 people and this has an impact on thousands of family members. St. Michael's House is a company funded by the HSE, TUSLA and the Department of Education and Skills. This facility recorded a provisional enrolment of 56 no. students during the 2025/2026 school year as per Department of Education and Skills (DES) records. It was not possible to determine the enrolment capacity in the 2026–2027 academic year from Admissions Notices.

No.	Roll No.	School Name	Females	Males	2025-2026 Enrolment	Available Capacity per School Websites (2026/27)
1	18210K	St Michaels House Special School	24	32	56	-
Total					56	No Data

Table 4.5: Recorded Enrolments for Special Education School

(Source: DES, 2026, and Individual School Admission Notices, 2026)

Table 4.6 indicates that the enrolment figures for the special education school at this location has remained generally consistent from the 2021–2022 academic year to the 2025–2026 academic year.

School	Roll No.	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
St Michaels House Special School	18210K	58	58	57	56	56
Total		58	58	57	56	56

Table 4.6: Existing Special Education School: Enrolment Figures 2020–2021 to 2024–2025

(Source: DES, 2026)

4.1.1.3 Post-Primary Schools

There were 5 No. post-primary schools identified within the Swords SPA which held a co-educational enrolment of 3,563 No. students during the 2025–2026 school year, as per the Department of Education and Skills (DES) records. The post-primary school, Fingal Community College, is a mixed/co-educational school located near the subject site with a combined enrolment of 864 students in the 2025–2026 academic year.

Supplementary to the enrolment information acquired from the DES, a review of the schools' website and the 2026/2027 Schools' Admission Notice was carried out in April 2026 by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning to ensure that available spaces in classes are captured in this Audit. Table 4.7 provides a detailed breakdown of this available capacity. As per Section 63 of the *Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018*, schools are required to publish an Annual Admissions Notice each year with key information about the annual admissions process.

This review helped determine the trend in the school for admitting students into the classes each year. For the 2026/2027 academic year, the Admissions Notice for the post-primary school indicated a total enrolment capacity of 682 No. students (678 No. spaces for First Years, and 4 No. spaces for Other Years). These 682 No. places refer to the places made available each academic cycle resulting from graduating students, rather than any additional capacity to the overall schooling infrastructure.

No.	Roll No.	School Name	Distance from Site (km)	Females	Males	2025-2026 Enrolment	Available Capacity per School Websites (2026/27)		
							First Years	Other Years	Total
1	60383I	Coláiste Choilm	1.5	0	421	421	120	1	121
2	60810B	Loreto College	2.7	655	0	655	120	0	120
3	70120F	St Finians Community College	1.2	321	350	671	120	3	123
4	70121H	Fingal Community College	0.6	423	441	864	150	0	150
5	76475D	Swords Community College	2.8	406	546	952	168	0	168
Total				1,805	1,758	3,563	678	4	682

**Note: Where there was no information on the number of spaces made available, we have assumed that the capacity is zero.*

Table 4.7: Recorded Enrolments for Post-Primary Schools

(Source: DES, 2026, and Individual School Admission Notices, 2026)

Table 4.8 provides an overview of the post-primary school within the catchment, inclusive of their enrolment numbers according to data published by the DES for the academic years 2021–2022 to 2025–2026. As highlighted in Table 4.8, the overall enrolment figure associated with the 5 No. post-primary school in the catchment area has increased during this period from 3,222 No. to 3,563 No. pupils; 293 No. additional pupils (9.1%). This indicates recent growth in demand for post-primary school infrastructure within the catchment.

School	Roll No.	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2025–2026
Coláiste Choilm	60383I	504	470	423	425	421
Loreto College	60810B	621	641	619	632	655
St Finians Community College	70120F	642	644	658	661	671
Fingal Community College	70121H	876	867	861	866	864
Swords Community College	76475D	579	738	894	931	952
Total		3,222	3,360	3,455	3,515	3,563

Table 4.8: Existing Post-Primary Schools' Enrolment Figures 2020-2021 to 2024-2025

(Source: DES, 2026)

Historic Enrolment Statistics (Post-Primary)

Historic enrolment trends for the catchment show increases at post-primary school level for the historic 5-year interval, with an overall increase of 524 No. students (c. 17.2% increase) from 2020/2021 to 2025/2026, and 50.9% or 1,202 No. students over the past 10 years. Over the past 10 years, Fingal Community College has experienced rapid growth in student numbers, and has an enrolment of 864 students in the latest academic year.

Catchment		Enrolment Year			Historic Change	
Roll No.	School Name	15/16	20/21	25/26	5-year	10-year
60383I	Coláiste Choilm	542	532	421	-111	-121
60810B	Loreto College	632	628	655	27	23
70120F	St Finians Community College	562	634	671	37	109
70121H	Fingal Community College	625	879	864	-15	239
76475D	Swords Community College	-	366	952	586	952
Total		2,361	3,039	3,563	524	1,202

Table 4.9: Historic Change in Enrolment (Primary) in Recent 5- and 10-year Period

(Source: DES, 2026)

The analysis of student population growth over the past 5- and 10 No. year periods indicate a continued demand for additional post-primary school places within the School Planning Area.

4.1.1.4 Existing Third Level Education and Training Centres

Swords is well served by further and higher education facilities in the surrounding area. Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education, located approximately 7km to the south in Coolock, offers a wide range of post-leaving certificate courses and training opportunities.

Dublin City University (DCU), one of Ireland's leading universities with over 18,000 students, is situated around 8km from Swords and provides comprehensive 3rd level education across a variety of disciplines. In addition, Dublin City Centre is readily accessible by bus and future rail connections, offering access to Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, Technological University Dublin, and other major institutions.

Train services from nearby Malahide and Donabate stations provide direct commuter links to the Docklands and wider city, further enhancing accessibility to Dublin's universities and training centres.

4.1.2 Future Demand Analysis

4.1.2.1 Demographic Growth Projection

In November 2021, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) reported that enrolment figures for primary schools in Ireland were likely to have reached peak levels in 2019, and will fall gradually to a low point in 2033 (see Figure 4.3), in line with revised migration and fertility assumptions for the country as a whole. The latest statistical release⁴ by the DES in this respect states:

"Enrolments in primary schools in Ireland in 2020 stood at 561,411 down by almost 6,000 on 2019 (567,716). Enrolments are now projected to fall over the coming years under all scenarios, and under the M1F2⁵ scenario will reach a low point of 440,551 by 2033. This is 120,860 lower than today's figure. Enrolments will rise again thereafter and are projected to stand at 474,888 by 2040, a rise of some 34,300 over the seven years 2033 to 2040."

The study also concluded that post-primary school enrolments, however, will continue to rise in the short-term and will likely reach peak enrolment levels in 2024 (see Figure 4.4). The DES Report⁶ states:

"Enrolments in post-primary schools have risen by 26,923 (8%) over the past five years and are projected to continue rising over the short term. Under M1F2 they are projected to peak in 2024 with 408,794 pupils, some 29,610 higher than in 2020."

⁴ Source: *Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021–2040* (DES, November 2021), pg. 6.

⁵ The CSO's Regional Population Projections utilise six variant scenarios with relative assumptions in relation to regional fertility, mortality trends and external migration from and to each region. The Department of Education and Skills anticipates that M1F2 is the most likely scenario regarding migration and fertility, which encompasses the assumption of high migration and low fertility falling from 1.8 to 1.6 by 2031.

⁶ Source: *Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021–2040* (DES, November 2021), pg. 11.

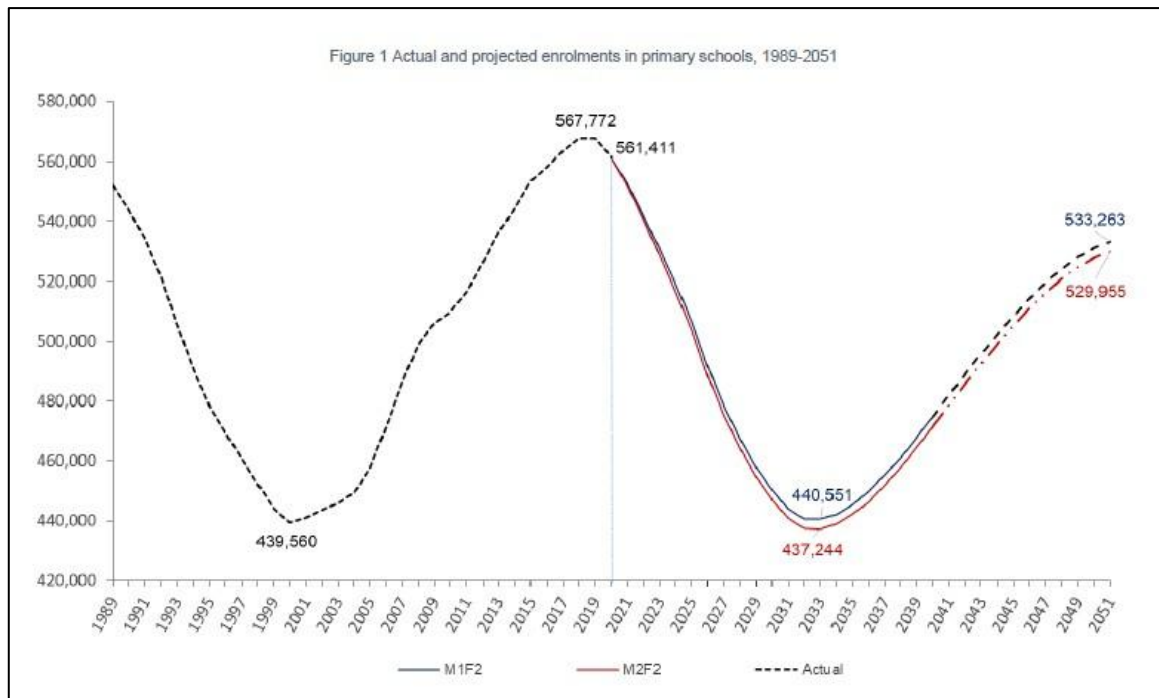


Figure 4.3: Actual and Projected Enrolments in Primary Schools, 1989–2051, Organised by Growth Projection Scenarios Created by the CSO

(Source: DES, 2021)

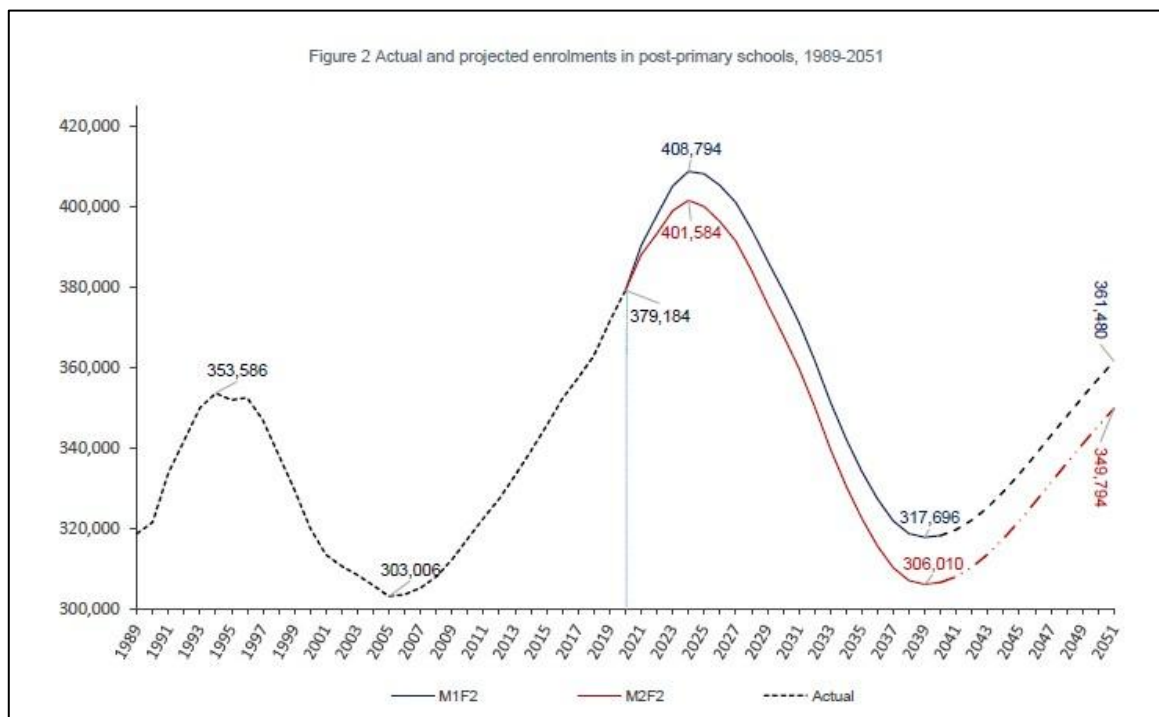


Figure 4.4: Actual and Projected Enrolments in Post-Primary Schools, 1989–2051, Organised by Growth Projection Scenarios Created by the CSO

(Source: DES, 2021)

4.1.2.2 Potential Impact on Swords SPA Schools

Using the projected enrolment figures⁷ for the Dublin Region, as set out in the Department of Education and Skills' *Projections for Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021–2040*, the study can extrapolate future enrolment for the 2029/2030 academic year for Swords. The 2029/2030 academic year has been selected in this study as the year the proposed development should be completed and occupied. The Report projects the enrolment figures in primary schools within the Dublin Region to drop by 9.6% between the academic years 2025/2026 and 2029/2030 (5 year period). Applying this future projection figure to the current enrolment figures within Swords it is estimated that enrolments in the 14 No. primary schools identified in the Assessment are set to reduce by 518 No. spaces by the 2029/2030 academic year.

At the post-primary level, the Report projects the enrolment figures to decrease marginally by 3.0% between the 5 academic years from 2025/2026 to 2029/2030. This would result in a decrease of 39 No. children in the 5 No. post-primary school identified within the catchment by the 2029/2030 academic year. We note that the indicative change figures provided are an estimate of potential enrolments is based on the regional population projections included in the DES Report⁸ and do not represent localised values.

Catchment	Enrolment Year		% Change Estimate	Change
	25/26	29/30		
Primary Schools (14)	5,398	4,880	-9.6% decrease	-518
Post-Primary Schools (5)	1,301	1,262	-3.0% increase	-39

Table 4.10: Projected Enrolment Trends – 2026 to 2030

(Source: DES, 2026)

4.1.2.3 Projected Demand Generated by Proposed Development

The proposed development will comprise 289 No. units, of which 229 No. units can reasonably accommodate families with children (with 1-bedroom units being excluded). The average household size in the Study Area recorded by the 2022 Census was 2.89 No. persons per household, which generates a total indicative population of 836 No. persons when applied to the proposed development.

The average number of children per family recorded in the State in Census 2022 was 1.34 No. children⁹, which generates an indicative population of 307 No. children (between the ages of 0–18 years) when applied to the number of units that can accommodate families within the proposed development. Of this figure, an estimated 238 No. children would be considered school age (including 140 No. primary school children and 98 No. post-primary school children), as per the age cohorts recorded for Fingal County¹⁰ in the Census 2022 (Table 4.11).

⁷ Source: *Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021–2040* (DES, 2021), Table 4.

⁸ Source: *Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021–2040* (DES, 2021), Table 7.

⁹ Source: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpp3/censusofpopulation2022profile3-householdsfamiliesandchildcare/>

¹⁰ Source: <https://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=E3003&PLanguage=0>

Age Group	Pre-School Children (0–4 years)	Primary School Children (5–12 years)	Post-Primary School Children (13–18 years)	All Children (0–18 years)
Fingal County 2022 Population	21,017	42,248	29,301	92,566
% of Total Cohort	22.70%	45.64%	31.65%	100.00%

Table 4.11: Breakdown of 0–18 Year Age Cohort for Fingal County

(Source: CSO, 2022)

Having regard to the foregoing, the development has the potential to generate an additional 836 No. persons within the area, including an estimated 307 No. children (including 140 No. primary school children and 98 No. post-primary school children), when fully occupied.

4.1.2.4 Completed and Planned Infrastructure

Fingal County Council is the youngest Local Authority in the State (at 33.8 years) which is 3.7 years lower than the State, 2.2 years lower than the region and 2.5 years lower than Dublin averages. As such, the demand for school places and new schools is high in the County. Fingal County Council continues to work collaboratively with the Department of Education in relation to the identification of schools and associated facilities. Over the past 8 No. years, 4 No. new schools have opened in Swords (3 No. within the Swords SPA) (Table 4.12).

School Name	Location	School Type	Opening Year
Rivervalley Community National School	Swords	Primary	2019
Broadmeadow Community National School	Swords	Primary	2020
Malahide & Portmarnock ETSS	Kinsealy	Post Primary	2018
Swords Community College	Swords	Post Primary	2018

Table 4.12: New Primary and Post-Primary Schools opened in Fingal since 2018

(Source: Fingal Development Plan, 2023)

We note that there is 1 No. additional post-primary schools which is omitted from the analysis above (as it lies outside of the SPA area). Malahide/Portmarnock Secondary School opened in 2018, hence its low enrolment figures at present (this school has a co-educational enrolment of 696 students in 2025-2026), is envisaged to cater for up to 1,000 secondary school students when fully occupied.

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) announced in April 2018 that more than 40 No. new primary and post-primary schools are to be established throughout the country by 2022 with subsequent additions to the list announced in 2023, 2024 and 2025. As of the latest School Building Programme Release by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) (April 2026) there were 6 No. pipeline expansions planned for primary schools and post-primary schools at varying stages of development (Table 4.13).

Roll No.	School Name & Address	Current Status
19456B	Brackenstown Jnr & Snr NS (St Cronans), Swords	Stage 2b (Detailed Design)
19535U	Brackenstown Senior NS, Swords	Stage 2b (Detailed Design)
20528H	Rivervalley CNS, Swords	Pre Stage 1
20529J	Broadmeadow Community National School, Mooretown, Swords	Stage 2a (Developed Sketch Scheme)
60810B	Loreto College, Swords, Rivervalley	Stage 2a (Developed Sketch Scheme)
70120F	St Finian's CC, Swords	Stage 1 (Preliminary Design)

Table 4.13: Upcoming Primary and Post-Primary Schools developments within Swords

(Source: DES, 2026)

As regards post-primary planning, we note that there are two further post-primary capital projects planned in the Swords school planning area and when completed, will cater for the post-primary demand for school places in the area:

Loreto College, Swords (Roll No: 60810B)

Brief: 1,000 pupil school plus 2 Class SEN base (Net gain of 300+ places)

Project Stage: Stage 1 - Preliminary Design Stage where the Design Team in conjunction with the school authorities, will analyse all the constraints of the site, develop a preferred design option and ensure that the preferred option is the best option for the delivery of the brief.

St Finian's CC, Swords (Roll No: 70120F)

Brief: 1,000 plus 2 Class SEN base (Net gain of 300+ places)

Project Stage: Stage 1 - Preliminary Design Stage

While the provision of new schools is the responsibility of the Department of Education, Fingal County Council has and will continue to work collaboratively with the Department and with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in relation to the identification of suitable sites for the delivery of new and expanded educational facilities in Fingal.

Notwithstanding the existing schools in the area, the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* identifies 2 No. other strategic locations for additional schools within the settlement of Swords (Figure 4.5). The Fosterstown Masterplan 2019 identifies the requirement of a primary school to be delivered as part of the overall proposals for the masterplan lands. Equally, another school is to be provided at Estuary West in the north of the settlement.

It is judged that the proposed level of educational infrastructure can support the ongoing residential development occurring in Swords, and that the Department of Education will progress the sustainable development of new schooling infrastructure to meet future demand.

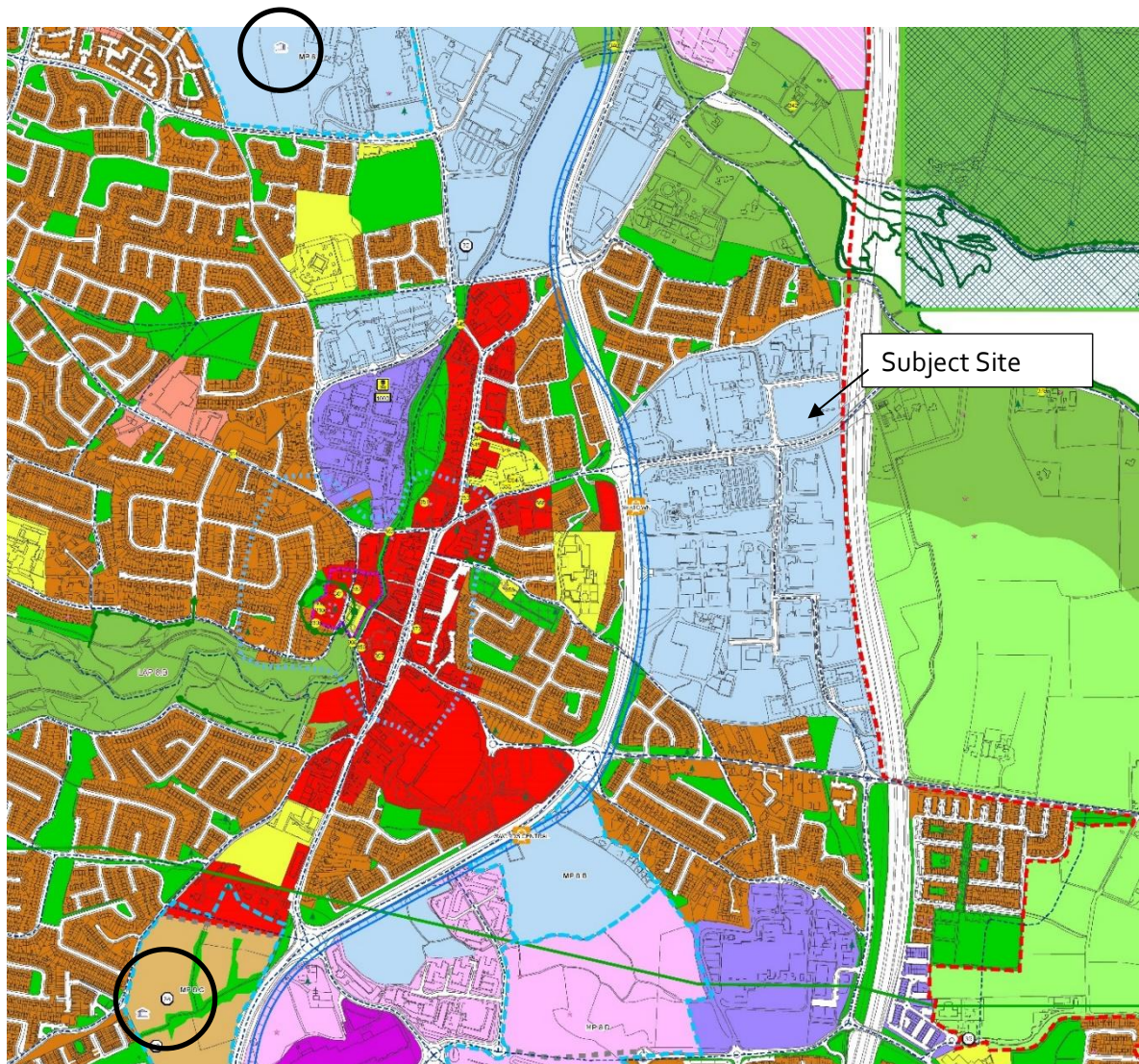


Figure 4.5: Proposed School Locations within the Swords Settlement (Outlined in Black)

(Source: Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

4.1.3 Facilities Summary

There are 14 No. existing primary schools and 5 No. existing post-primary school in the catchment area to which the subject site belongs. These facilities cater to a student population of 5,398 No. primary school students and 3,515 No. post-primary school students and have demonstrated varying levels of enrolment change in the recent 5-year period, with primary school enrolments decreasing by 8.6% and post-primary school enrolments increasing by 23.5% over the same period.

With respect to future enrolments, it is projected within the latest Department of Education and Skills' *Projections for Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021–2040* that the region will experience an approximate 9.6% decrease in primary school enrolments and an approximate 3.0% decrease in post-primary school enrolments between the academic years 2024/2025 and 2029/2030, and will continue to fall gradually to a low point by 2039, with respect to the most recent regional population projections published by the DES. The visible decline in enrolments at

primary school level is in line with government demographic projections, and is expected to continue to 2033. Post-primary school enrolments were expected to peak in 2024/2025, and it is thus likely that Fingal and the Swords SPA area will see a significant reduction in the need for places into the remainder of the decade.

There are a number of extensions to existing schools currently proposed within the Swords SPA. We note that as of the latest School Building Programme Release (April 2026), there were 6 No. pipeline expansions planned for primary schools and post-primary schools at varying stages of development. Notwithstanding the existing schools in the area, the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* also identifies 2 No. other strategic locations for additional schools within the settlement of Swords. The *Fosterstown Masterplan 2019* identifies the requirement of a primary school to be delivered as part of the overall proposals for those lands. Equally, another school is to be provided at Estuary West in the north of the settlement. It is judged that these schools would provide adequate space to cater for future enrolment demand based on forecasted population increases.

Admissions Notices from schools within the catchment indicate a healthy combined total of 1,631 No. spaces available for incoming Junior Infants/First Years, of which 959 No. spaces are available in primary schools and 672 No. spaces are available in post-primary schools. We also note that there is 1 No. additional post-primary schools which is omitted from the analysis above (as it lies outside of the SPA area). Malahide / Portmarnock Secondary School opened in 2018, hence its low enrolment figures at present (this school has a co-educational enrolment of 607 students in 2024-2025) is envisaged could cater for 1,000 secondary school students when fully occupied.

The proposed scheme has the potential to generate 301 no. school going children between 5-18 age group once the development is fully occupied and established. **This includes 140 no. primary and 98 no. post primary school children.** Combining this demand with the wider demographic trends, and the planned future capacity (particularly at post-primary level), it is likely that the potential school demand generated by the development can readily be absorbed.

4.2 Childcare

In order to establish a baseline of existing capacity within and bordering the Study Area it is necessary to first identify each of the existing childcare facilities. This assessment identifies 24 No. TUSLA registered childcare facilities within a 2km radius of the subject site, it illustrates their reported capacities based on the latest TUSLA inspection data, and their levels of accessibility with respect to walkable distances from the subject lands. These facilities were reported as having a combined total capacity of 821 No. childcare places at the time of the survey (February 2026). Table 4.14 below provides facility-level detail for each of childcare providers considered in the study alongside indicative capacity, including full day, part-time and sessional services.

The demographic profile of this area provided in Section 3.0 also provides a baseline for understanding the pre-school age population and the emerging demand for childcare facilities in the area.

TUSLA ID	Childcare Facility	Distance from Site (km)	Service Type	Latest Reported Capacity
TU2020FL021 SA	Kids Inc Swords	0.62	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	14
TU2015FL135	Rivervalley Early Learning Centre	0.62	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	71
TU2015FL160	Fhionns Afterschool	0.72	Sessional	19
TU2015FL236	Oaklands Creche & Montessori	0.85	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	62
TU2015FL132	Kid-e-Winks Montessori	1.00	Part Time / Sessional	19
TU2020FL001	Kids Den 2	1.00	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	65
TU2015FL324	Tigin Montessori	1.10	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	86
TU2015FL328	TLC Childcare	1.11	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	71
TU2020FL004	St Brigids Montessori School	1.15	Sessional	9
TU2017FL507	Mighty Oaks Pre-School	1.27	Sessional	20
TU2016FL025	Little Ruggers	1.30	Sessional	16
TU2019FL001	Clever Cats Montessori School	1.54	Standalone	39
TU2015FL227	Naionra Cholmcille	1.70	Sessional	27
TU2015FL031	Bo-Peep Crèche & Montessori	1.78	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	19
TU2015FL030	Bo Peep's Montessori	1.78	Sessional	19
TU2015FL004	ABC Playgroup	1.79	Sessional	15
TU2015FL233	Natural Start	1.81	Sessional	6
TU2015FL155	Little Apples Ltd - Applewood	1.85	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	83
TU2017FL500	Little Harvard Creche and Montessori	1.89	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	86
TU2015FL116	Holywellies (Holywell Childcare Ltd)	1.92	Sessional	19

TUSLA ID	Childcare Facility	Distance from Site (km)	Service Type	Latest Reported Capacity
TU2015FL125	Jonix Educational Services	1.92	Part Time	4
TU2015FL301	The Cottage Montessori School	1.97	Sessional	17
TU2015FL288	Sunshine Playschool	2.00	Full Time / Part Time / Sessional	5
TU2015FL133	Kids Care	2.00	Part Time / Sessional	30
			Total (1 km)	250
			Total (2 km)	821

* Source: Combination of: Tusla Inspections (based on AM) and Tusla listing (February 2026) provided by TUSLA.

Table 4.14: Current Capacity of Existing Childcare Facilities in a 1–2km Study Area

(Source: TUSLA Inspections (based on AM) and TUSLA listing (February 2026), Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

Figure 4.6 identifies each of these facilities on a map as they relate spatially to the subject site.

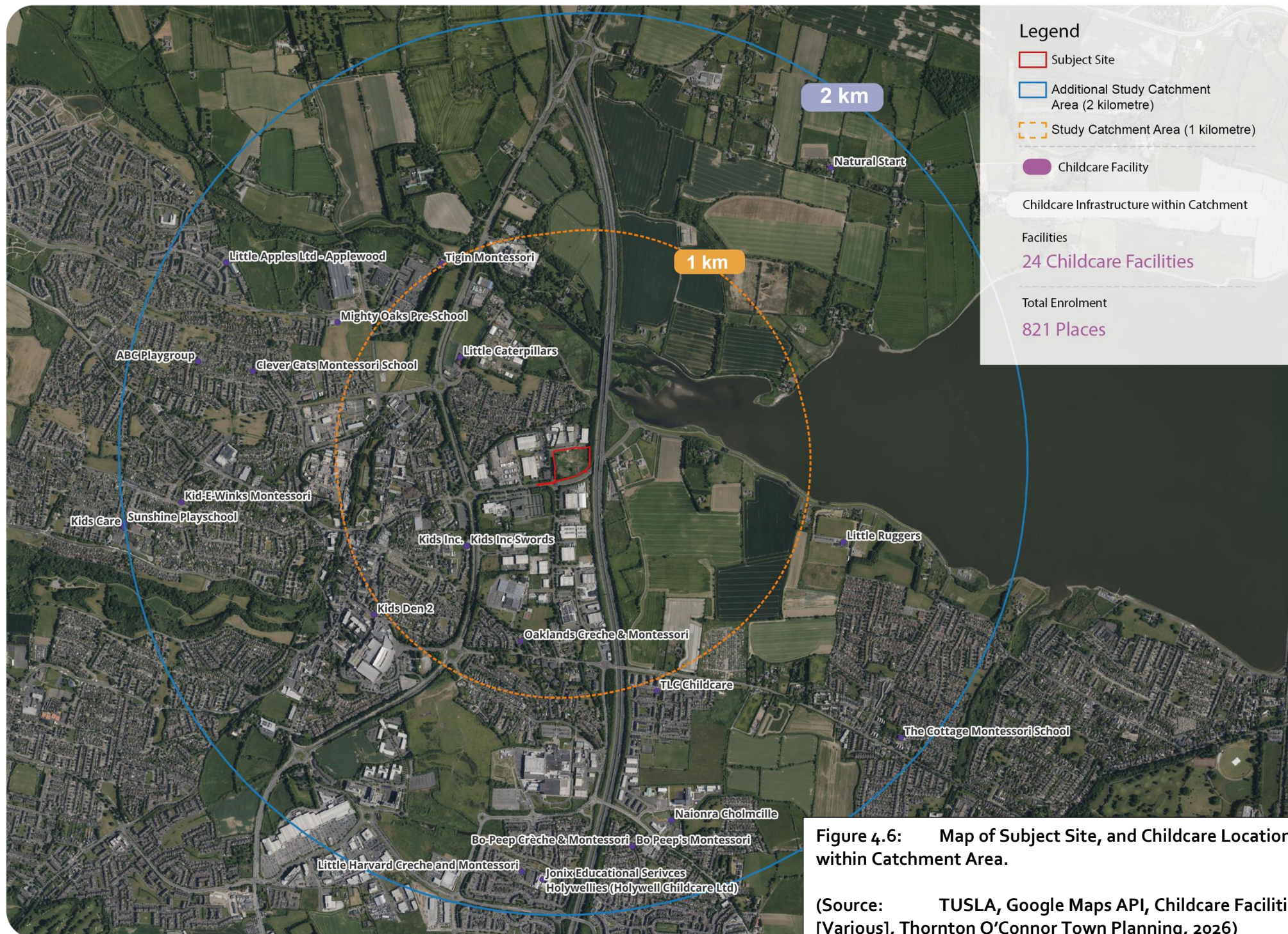


Figure 4.6: Map of Subject Site, and Childcare Locations within Catchment Area.

(Source: TUSLA, Google Maps API, Childcare Facilities [Various], Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

An examination of Fingal County Council's Online Planning Register showed the planning and development pipeline consisted of 6 no. planning applications in the Swords area (Table 4.15) as of April 2026. If all of the developments currently within the planning pipeline are delivered, they will create a considerable additional childcare capacity of 513 No. childcare spaces to the Study Area, and the wider settlement of Swords.

As illustrated in Table 4.15 below, the proposed childcare facilities largely relate to new facilities in large residential developments. Whilst it is acknowledged that many of these spaces will be occupied by residents of planned and existing developments, it is not unreasonable to assume that there will be sufficient capacity in both the existing and planned network to accommodate the minor uplift in demand generated by the proposed development.

Plan Ref.	Status	Location	Description	Residential Units	Operator Estimated Capacity
ABP-313362-22	Granted	Lands to the south of Rathbeale Road, Celestica/Motorola site, Swords	1 no. childcare facility (512 sq.m)	650	102
F24A/0133	Granted	Miller's Glen, Oldtown, Swords, Co. Dublin	1 no. childcare facility (547 sq.m)	0	95
ABP-313223-22	Granted	The Lord Mayor's Public House, Main Street, Swords, Co Dublin, K67 W8N4	1 no. childcare facility (424 sq.m)	146	106
F21A/0550	Granted	Kinsealy, Swords, Co Dublin	1 no. childcare facility (190 sq.m)	0	40
F23A/0676	Granted	Oldtown, Swords, Co. Dublin	1 no. childcare facility (200 sq.m)	224	52
ABP-323029-25	Granted	Estuary West Lands at Holybanks, Swords, Co Dublin.	1 no. childcare facility (537 sq.m)	640	118
				Total Granted	395
				Total Pipeline	513

Table 4.15: Childcare Planning and Development Pipeline – April 2026 in the Study Area

Source: Fingal County Council (April 2026)

4.2.1 Evaluation

As stated previously in Section 2.0, the *Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)* recommend that a crèche or childcare facility with capacity for 20 No. children should generally be provided for every 75 No. dwellings within new residential developments. However, both the Guidelines and Fingal County Council further advise that regard should be had to existing childcare provision when considering the delivery of new facilities as part of residential development in order to avoid overprovision.

This Assessment aims to determine what the nature of local supply and demand is within the catchment, in parallel with the estimation of 0–6-year-old residents that may reside in the proposed development. The total number of units in the development which are included in this

estimation amounts to 229 No. (omits 1-bed units, a permitted by the Apartment Design Guidelines). In order to calculate the number of 0–6-year-old residents in the proposed development, the study utilises 3 No. key number of indicators:

1. The proposed unit mix of the development;
2. Persons per unit proposed (this is calculated by using the average household size within the Study Area, established as 2.89 No. persons per unit¹¹ using the Census 2022); and
3. Proportion of the Study Area's population within the 0–6 years age cohort (determined as 8.55 % using Census 2022 data).

Analysis of these factors allows for a determination of the total number of 0–6-year-old residents in the proposed development. As highlighted in Table 4.16, it is estimated that 57 No. children aged 0–6 years may reside in the proposed development (rounded from 56.6).

Description	No.	Value	Method
Units in Proposed Development ¹²	a	229	a
Average Household Size	b	2.89	b
Potential Residents (Number)	c	662	a * b = c
0–6 Years (% of Total Population)	d	8.55%	d
Potential 0–6 Years (Number)	e	56.6	d * c = e

Table 4.16: Estimation of Children Aged 0–6 Years in the Proposed Development

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

In 2023, the Central Statistics Office, as part of the latest Census release, provided a detailed statistical module¹³ on the rates of take-up for childcare at a national and county level for 2022. This analysis highlighted that almost one-third (331,783) of children under the age of 15 in the State were in some form of formal childcare. This release is relevant for this Assessment as it indicates the extent to which childcare facilities are utilised by the general population. An adaption of a table found within this module (Table 4.17) shows the range of methods parents use for the purposes of childcare for their pre-school attending children in the State and at Fingal county level.

Type of Childcare	Parent/ Partner	Unpaid Relative/Friend	Paid Relative/ Friend	Childminder/ Au-Pair/Nanny	Childcare Facility	Other
Fingal	59%	9%	2%	7%	22%	1%
State	55%	10%	2%	10%	22%	1%

Table 4.17: Type of Childcare Utilised By Parents of Pre-School Children

(Source: CSO, 2023)

The Study indicates that the vast majority of pre-school children across Ireland are cared for by their parents or partners of their parents, while 22% of pre-school children attend a childcare facility nationally, and 22% in Fingal County. This module from the CSO is not an approximation or a random sample survey, but a direct representation of the population in 2022. Since the previous analysis carried out in 2016, the level of pre-school children attending a childcare facility has not

¹¹ CSO statistics record a total of 30,617 No. residents in 10,528 No. households within the catchment in 2022.

¹² In line with Policy, a figure of 229 No. units was used in the calculations, discounting those units with only 1-bedroom.

¹³ CSO Census of Population, 2022. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpp3/censusofpopulation2022profile3-householdsfamiliesandchildcare/childcare/> Specific code @ <https://data.cso.ie/table/FY014>

materially increased (increased in raw numbers, decreased in proportion). Table 4.18 applies the CSO's 22% figure to the estimated number of residents aged 0–6 years old¹⁴ in the proposed development, as determined under the quantitative demographic analysis above. The results indicate a potential need for c. 12 No. childcare places to be available to support the additional local need (value rounded from 12.0).

Description	Ref.	Value	Method
Units in Proposed Development	a	229	A
0–6 Years (Number)	b	56.6	B
0–6 Years Total at 22%	c	12.0	b * 22% = c

Table 4.18: Number of Pre-School Children Requiring Access to Childcare Facilities

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2025)

The subject development comprises 289 No. units, of which 229 No. units can reasonably accommodate families. The potential childcare uptake of the proposal is likely to be 12 No. places, and the local childcare network will have an indicative maximum capacity of 821 No. spaces based on existing provision within 2km. Demographic cohort demand in the catchment area is higher than Dublin and National averages (~9%), while the existing childcare per capita capacity is currently high (with existing capacity for 30.9% of all children aged 0-6 years old).

Moreover, consultation with childcare facilities in the catchment area indicated no notable spare capacity for new enrolments as of April 2026 in the majority of facilities. Moreover, certain childcare facilities have waitlists indicating a pent up demand for childcare that is not currently being met by existing services in the area. It was also identified in the audit that 13 No. childcare facilities¹⁵, identified within the catchment area, have closed in recent years.

Taken together, the analysis of existing capacity indicates a robust demand for additional childcare places. **Given the childcare demand generated by the proposed development, its unit typology, alongside the shifting age and demand profile, it is considered that an additional childcare facility would be a favourable addition to the area. While demand from the proposed scheme could potentially be absorbed by the existing and planned facilities network, it is judged that given the location of the site, the scale of residential development occurring around Swords, that an additional purpose built modern childcare facility would offer huge community benefit to the local area and future populations.**

4.2.2 Justification for Proposed Crèche

As outlined in Section 4.2.1, based on the proposed development consisting of 289 No. residential units (of which 229 No. could reasonably supporting families with children), it is estimated that the unit mix would create a derived potential demand of c. 12 No. places once the development is fully occupied. The results of the survey identified a shortfall in available childcare places to meet the existing demands of the area in April 2026.

¹⁴ This analysis adopts the rate of formal childcare utilisation for children aged 0–8 years old for Fingal County. While a like-for-like analysis of those aged 0–6 would be ideal, the CSO only provides outputs for specific cohorts (specifically, 0–2, 3–4, 5–8, 9–14, and under age 15 cohorts). In order to capture the key demographic of formal childcare take-up for those children aged 5–6, the percentage rate of take-up for all children aged 0–8 was selected and applied to the study.

¹⁵ Local TULSA facilities closed in recent years: A to Z Playschool, Being, Belonging & Becoming Preschool, Breeda's, Playschool, Bubbles Too Creche, Children's House Montessori School, Cowboys & Angels, First Steps, Grow Montessori, Little Treasures, Playdays Montessori, Seatown Montessori, Swords Early Education Centre, Watergrasshill Playschool Ltd.

Considering the findings above, there is a clear need to provide additional capacity to cater for childcare related to the proposed development. Moreover, the audit identified a pent-up demand for additional childcare facilities in the wider area, especially in the context of forthcoming increases in residential populations. Therefore, it was considered appropriate to include a childcare facility within the proposed development to meet and support a very clear community need.

The scale of provision was estimated using the methodology outlined within the Planning Guidelines for Childcare Facilities (2001) which recommend the delivery of one child-care facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units. Using this standard, an estimate of providing c. 60 No. childcare places would be required for the 289-unit scheme (229 No. units excluding 1-bedrooms). While this figure of c. 60 No. childcare places was significantly above the projected demand from the proposed development (c. 12 No. childcare places), it is judged that the overflow capacity could be utilised to supplement existing childcare provision in the area with a modern, well-equipped, purpose-built childcare facility with secure outdoor play spaces, perfectly situated near forthcoming housing developments in the area.

The proposed crèche has floor area of 418 sq m and has the potential to accommodate between 60–84 No. children, depending on the service offering provided and the age of enrollees. This ensures that it was sufficiently sized to meet the demand and requirement estimations for the proposed development, with additional capacity to meet wider community needs.

4.3 Social and Community Facilities

Access to quality community services and facilities can have a significant bearing on the quality of life and health and well-being of a community, by encouraging social interaction, promoting learning and providing support services for those living, working and visiting an area. An urban neighbourhood should be big enough to support a range of services and small enough to foster a sense of belonging and community; it should be sufficiently dense to enable all of its essential facilities to be within easy walking distance of the urban centre.

The baseline study undertaken identified 28 No. community and social services and facilities in the 2km Study Area. The proposed development is supported by a number of local social and community service facilities, including the Liam Rodgers Community Centre and Holywell Community Centre, the Riasc Centre, Swords Library, Malahide Allotments and the Swords Youthreach. Study Area is served by a small number of Arts & Culture facilities, including The Drama House Ireland, The Chalk Venue, and other attractions like the Swords Castle and Swords Round Tower.

Both the Liam Rodgers Community Centre and Holywell Community Centre, as well as the Riasc Centre provides for a diverse range of community activities including arts and culture. Many of these services can expand to accommodate future demand from the proposed developments. Moreover, the changing cultural profile of Ireland and Swords means that Local Authorities may need to facilitate the development of additional places to accommodate the diversity of ethnic backgrounds in the town. The centre is a multi-purpose facility catering for a wide range of community needs, including:

- Kids and community activities including – Childcare, Gymnastics, Taekwondo, Ballet, Pilates, Choir, Speech and Drama School, Youth Theatre.
- Community meeting hub – The hub encourages new groups to use the centre to hold small meetings free of charge during their set-up phase.
- Meeting Rooms – Rooms are suitable for arts and crafts, training, meetings and activities for all ages.

In addition to key community facilities, sustainable communities require a range of ancillary facilities and services such as state or local authority provided services e.g. credit unions, retail centres, recycling facilities, post offices and general community facilities. Swords has a post office, credit union and recycling facility.

Although a range of community assets were identified as part of this Audit, there is need to emphasise the ongoing and continued demand for new and improved community infrastructure in the area. Participation in community activities contributes to social cohesion, reduces isolation and enriches the lives of residents. As such, community infrastructure is a key social asset, and Audits such as this provide visibility on current assets, as well as potential gaps for the local area.

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
1	Swords Fire Station - Dublin Fire Brigade	Social and Community
2	Swords Fire Station	Social and Community
3	Swords Garda Station	Social and Community
4	Liam Rodgers Community Centre	Social and Community
5	Holywell Community Centre	Social and Community
6	The Riasc Centre	Social and Community

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
7	Swords Post Office	Social and Community
8	Estuary Recycling Centre	Social and Community
9	Malahide Allotments	Social and Community
10	Swords Castle	Social and Community
11	Swords Round Tower	Social and Community
12	St. Colmcille's Well	Social and Community
13	The Chalk Venue	Social and Community
14	Intreo Centre Swords	Social and Community
15	Fingal County Council	Social and Community
16	Central Internet Cafe Swords	Social and Community
17	Swords Library	Social and Community
18	Carnegie Free Library	Social and Community
19	The Drama House Ireland	Social and Community
20	Swords Youthreach	Social and Community
21	Prosper Fingal - Seatown Road	Social and Community
22	Member First Credit Union Swords	Social and Community
23	PTSB	Social and Community
24	PTSB, Swords Village	Social and Community
25	Bank of Ireland	Social and Community
26	AIB Bank	Social and Community
27	Lissenhall Medieval Bridge	Social and Community
28	Brackenstown Adult Scene of Education	Social and Community

Table 4.19: Social and Community Infrastructure within c. 1–2 km Radius of the Subject Site

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

In relation to the provision of community services and facilities, the Fingal County Development Plan outlines that large scale residential developments should include a community facility, unless it can be established that the needs of the new residents can be adequately served within existing or committed community facilities in the area. Having regard to the quantum, quality and range of community services and facilities in the area, it is considered that the marginal population increase that would occur as a result of the proposed development could be adequately served by the wide range of existing services and facilities.

Figure 4.7: Map of Subject Site, and Social, and Community Assets

(Source: Google Maps API, OSi, and Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)



4.4 Healthcare and Emergency Services

Supported and facilitated by Local Authorities, access to quality health services and facilities is a key element to creating sustainable neighbourhoods. A total of 46 No. health services and facilities, including 14 No. General Practitioners and Health Centres, 5 No. Counselling and Resource Centres, 7 No. Pharmacies, and 8 No. Dental Care facilities, 1 No. Nursing Home were identified within and bordering the Study Area during the baseline survey.

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
1	365 PHYSIOTHERAPY	Healthcare and Emergency Services
2	Airside Medical Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
3	Applewood Medical, Centric Health	Healthcare and Emergency Services
4	CareChoice Swords	Healthcare and Emergency Services
5	Carnegie Counselling Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
6	Castle Medical Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
7	City Smile - Teeth Whitening Clinic	Healthcare and Emergency Services
8	Council for Hypnotic Psychotherapy & Counselling	Healthcare and Emergency Services
9	David Mc Gettigan: Pain & Movement Specialist	Healthcare and Emergency Services
10	Fingal House Nursing Home	Healthcare and Emergency Services
11	Foley's Pharmacy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
12	Gilsenan's Allcare Pharmacy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
13	Hidden Hearing Dublin Swords	Healthcare and Emergency Services
14	Kinsealy Medical Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
15	Laya Health and Wellbeing Clinic – Swords	Healthcare and Emergency Services
16	Lir Pharmacy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
17	MacNamara's Life Pharmacy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
18	MacNamara's Pharmacy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
19	McCabes Pharmacy Pavilions SC	Healthcare and Emergency Services
20	McCabes Pharmacy Rathbeale	Healthcare and Emergency Services
21	MedWise Occupational Health Swords	Healthcare and Emergency Services
22	O'Neill Dental Care	Healthcare and Emergency Services
23	Optimal Therapy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
24	Patton Kennedy Dental	Healthcare and Emergency Services
25	Primehealth Medical Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
26	Pure Pharmacy Swords	Healthcare and Emergency Services
27	Remedial Room - Massage & Post Surgical Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
28	Resource Counselling and Psychotherapy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
29	Salus Medical Clinic	Healthcare and Emergency Services
30	Sarah O'Connor - Psychotherapy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
31	Seabury Medical	Healthcare and Emergency Services
32	Smiles Dental Swords	Healthcare and Emergency Services
33	StayWell Kinsealy Pharmacy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
34	Swords Counselling Service	Healthcare and Emergency Services
35	Swords Dental	Healthcare and Emergency Services
36	Swords Dental Clinic	Healthcare and Emergency Services
37	Swords Family Practice Surgery	Healthcare and Emergency Services
38	Swords Health Center HSE	Healthcare and Emergency Services

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
39	Swords Hyperbaric Oxygen Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
40	Swords Orthodontics	Healthcare and Emergency Services
41	Swords Physiotherapy	Healthcare and Emergency Services
42	Swords Senior Citizens Day Care Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
43	Swords Village Dental - Mongeys	Healthcare and Emergency Services
44	The Down Syndrome Centre	Healthcare and Emergency Services
45	The Lighthouse Clinic	Healthcare and Emergency Services
46	The Plaza Clinic, Centric Health	Healthcare and Emergency Services

Table 4.20: Health and Emergency Infrastructure within c. 1–2 km Radius of the Subject Site

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

A significant concentration of health facilities and infrastructure are located close to the centre of the town, within walking distance to the subject site. These centres provide for an extensive range of services, including general medical, surgery and physiotherapy services. For specific specialist services, individuals may be willing to travel further. The proposed development is located in close proximity to Dublin's wide range of health facilities (30-minute drive to the city centre) and is close to the national motorway network and public transport provision either by bus or by rail. This provides access to national public hospitals, private hospitals, high-tech hospitals, accident and emergency services, psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation centres, orthopaedic hospitals and hospices.

Local Fire Station and Garda Station were identified inside the Study Area during the baseline survey. Both of these facilities would provide necessary emergency provisions as needed and are sufficient to support the needs of current and future residents.

As the demographic profile of the Study Area continues to change, it will be critical to ensure that the provision of health services and facilities takes into consideration not only the needs of the existing population but future demand for such services and facilities. As illustrated above, a range of health services and facilities are available within the Study Area. Irrespective of demographic change, the population increase that would occur as a result of the proposed development is unlikely to place any undue stress on the extensive range of health services and facilities available within and bordering the Study Area.

With regard to the provision of health services and facilities, the Fingal County Development Plan outlines that new or extended health care facilities should be provided where new residential development is proposed. However, having regard to the extensive range of health services and facilities available within the Study Area and the marginal population increase that would occur as a result of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposed development would not place any undue stress on the health services and facilities available in the area.



Figure 4.8: Map of Subject Site, and Health and Emergency Assets

(Source: Google Maps API, OSi, and Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

4.5 Open Space and Recreation

The town of Swords has a wide range of open space areas suitable for cycling, running and walking. For the purposes of this Study, open space and recreation facilities are considered to include parks, playgrounds, multi-use games areas, gyms, golf courses and sports pitches. These range from large linear parkways with natural planting and meadows to small, highly managed pocket parks at more urban locations. The key open space and park facilities that are located within the Swords catchment area, and in the vicinity of the subject site are identified in this audit.

The availability of, and access to, affordable sports and recreation facilities that are within easy reach by walking, cycling and public transport is of considerable importance. In total, 44 No. sports and recreation facilities were identified in and around the Study Area during the baseline survey which include a wide range of sports clubs, playgrounds, gyms, tennis club, skatepark, and golf courses.

Given the population and age profile of the Study Area there will be a continued requirement to provide a variety of sports and recreation facilities to cater for the needs of children, adults and the elderly. All of the facilities identified in the Audit seem to be of good quality and there are no known capacity issues at present.

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
1	Waterside Playground	Open Space and Recreation
2	Ward River Valley Park	Open Space and Recreation
3	Swords Community Park	Open Space and Recreation
4	Swords Playground	Open Space and Recreation
5	Malahide Park, Off Estuary Road	Open Space and Recreation
6	Swords Town Park	Open Space and Recreation
7	Balheary Park	Open Space and Recreation
8	Mount Drinan Park	Open Space and Recreation
9	Leader Gymnastic Club	Open Space and Recreation
10	The Pilates Club	Open Space and Recreation
11	Swords Lawn Tennis Club	Open Space and Recreation
12	Intelligent Fitness	Open Space and Recreation
13	UNIT 17: Health & Fitness	Open Space and Recreation
14	Alan Dunne Fitness	Open Space and Recreation
15	Swords Fitness Hub	Open Space and Recreation
16	Integrity Fitness	Open Space and Recreation
17	Image Fitness Training	Open Space and Recreation
18	Balheary Outdoor Basketball Court	Open Space and Recreation
19	Balheary Skatepark	Open Space and Recreation
20	St. Colmcille's GAA Club	Open Space and Recreation
21	Fingallians GAA Club	Open Space and Recreation
22	Irish Karate Kyokushinkai	Open Space and Recreation
23	Swords Boxing Club	Open Space and Recreation
24	yogahub	Open Space and Recreation
25	Swords Sailing & Boating Club	Open Space and Recreation
26	Malahide Rugby Club	Open Space and Recreation
27	Seabury Park Basketball Court	Open Space and Recreation

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
28	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Open Space and Recreation
29	Contrology Pilates	Open Space and Recreation
30	Seabury Park Childrens Playground	Open Space and Recreation
31	Broadmeadow Estuary	Open Space and Recreation
32	Ward River Valley	Open Space and Recreation
33	Swords Celtic Football Club	Open Space and Recreation
34	St. Colmcilles GFC Pitches	Open Space and Recreation
35	164th Brackenstown Scouts	Open Space and Recreation
36	Applewood Play Area	Open Space and Recreation
37	Football Pitch Brackenstown Rd	Open Space and Recreation
38	DOWN DOG HOT YOGA	Open Space and Recreation
39	Gym Plus Swords/Swimming pool	Open Space and Recreation
40	Swords Tennis Club	Open Space and Recreation
41	Swords Celtic FC - All Weather Pitches	Open Space and Recreation
42	Swords A.F.C	Open Space and Recreation
43	St Finians' Tennis Court	Open Space and Recreation
44	KF Martial Arts	Open Space and Recreation

Table 4.21: Open Space and Recreation Infrastructure within c. 1–2 km Radius of the Subject Site

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

Figure 4.9: Map of Subject Site, Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assets

(Source: Google Maps API, OSi, and Thornton O'Connor Town



4.6 Faith Institutions

The predominant religion in the Republic of Ireland is Christianity, with the largest denomination being the Catholicism. The second largest Christian denomination, the Church of Ireland (Anglican) has more recently experienced an increase, as have other small Christian denominations.

Within the Study Area 75.6% of the population identify as religious, and 63.5% within the Catholic faith. The timely provision of faith facilities is of considerable importance to ensuring the religious needs of the existing and future population is met. Swords has a diversity of religious facilities catering to many different faiths and beliefs. A total of 7 No. places of worship were identified within the Study Area during the baseline survey. Specifically;

- St Columba's Church of Ireland
- St Colmcille's Catholic Church
- Creative Life Church
- Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, Malahide
- Swords Elim Church
- Irish Society For Christian Civilisation
- Islamic Cultural Centre Swords

All of these faith facilities appear to be in good condition and there are no reported capacity issues and no specified unmet needs of note at present. However, the changing cultural profile of Ireland means that Local Authorities may need to facilitate the development of additional places of worship to accommodate different religions in the future.

No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
1	St Columba's Church of Ireland	Faith
2	St. Cronan's Catholic Church	Faith
3	Creative Life Church	Faith
4	Swords Elim Church	Faith
5	Islamic Cultural Centre Swords	Faith
6	St. Colmcille's Catholic Church	Faith
7	Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, Malahide	Faith

Table 4.22: Faith Infrastructure within c. 1–2 km Radius of the Subject Site

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)



Figure 4.10: Map of Subject Site, and Faith Assets

(Source: Google Maps API, OSi, and Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

4.7 Retail Centres and Services

Analysis of convenience retailing indicates that there is adequate provision within the study area. The offering within 2km is extensive with a full diversity of uses noted within the town centre. This retail is classified as smaller top-up shopping, restaurants, take-aways, butcher, chemists and personal services like hairdressers and post offices serving a localised catchment population (within walking distance of the site), but also includes a large Lidl, Aldi, and Tesco stores for a full convenience retail experience. The Swords Pavilions Shopping Centre is accessed via Swords main street and is large facility, which contains over 90 retail units. Notwithstanding the development of the Pavilions Shopping Centre, Swords Main Street has remained vibrant and still offers a wide range of smaller units and shops. These are in addition to the uses that are located within the nearby Airside Retail Park, which provides for a broad range of large scale offerings, including electrical goods, DIY, furnishings, sports, Toys and car sales and services.

There was very little retail vacancy identified and there is no deficit of retail facilities in the area. Moreover, it is considered that increasing the level of residential development in the area would contribute to the sustainability and viability of local businesses in the area.

The baseline study undertaken identified 2 No. retail destinations within the 1km Study Area. Some 18 No. assets were identified within a 2km radius of the subject site.

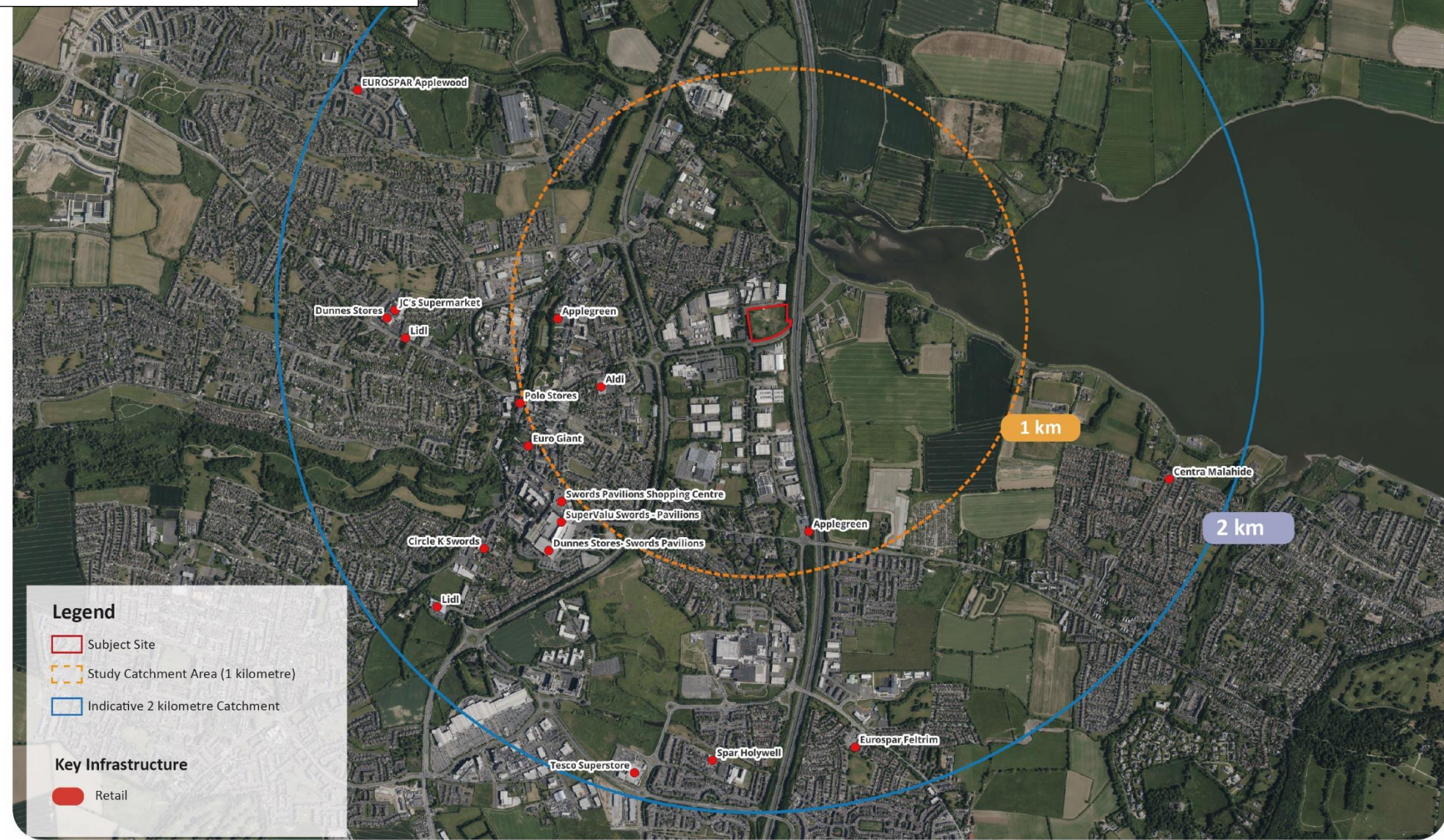
No.	Name of Asset	Facility Type
1	Lidl, Rathbeale	Retail Centres
2	Lidl, Dublin Road	Retail Centres
3	ALDI	Retail Centres
4	Tesco Superstore	Retail Centres
5	SuperValu Swords - Pavilions	Retail Centres
6	Dunnes Stores- Swords Pavilions	Retail Centres
7	JC's Supermarket	Retail Centres
8	Dunnes Stores	Retail Centres
9	Spar Holywell	Retail Centres
10	Eurospar Feltrim	Retail Centres
11	Applegreen	Retail Centres
12	Circle K Swords	Retail Centres
13	Applegreen	Retail Centres
14	Polo Stores	Retail Centres
15	Euro Giant	Retail Centres
16	Centra Malahide	Retail Centres
17	Swords Pavilions Shopping Centre	Retail Centres
18	EUROSPAR Applewood	Retail Centres

Table 4.23: Retail Centre Infrastructure within c. 1–2 km Radius of the Subject Site

(Source: Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)

Figure 4.11: Map of Subject Site, and Retail Assets

(Source: Google Maps API, OSi, and Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2026)



5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In our opinion, there is sufficient existing provision of social infrastructure in the vicinity of the subject site (i.e. within c. 1-2 km radius) to support the proposed development. As the above survey demonstrates, there is an adequate supply of education, healthcare, and community facilities within reasonable walking distance of the subject lands, as well as a number of parks and amenity areas, playing pitches and sporting facilities available to local residents. The area has a frequent public transport link to quickly connect the subject site directly to a wider range of facilities located in nearby Swords town centre and Dublin City Centre. The proposed development will stitch into an already established neighbourhood with adequate local facilities.

The survey identified a large range of community facilities within the Study Area. Some 45 No. social infrastructure facilities were identified as part of this Audit within a radius of 1 km of the subject site (38 No. excluding schools and childcare), with that figure increasing to 176 No. social infrastructure facilities located within 2 km of the subject site (143 No. excluding schools and childcare). The Study Area is particularly well served in terms of healthcare provision, faith infrastructure, and retailing amenities.

Overall, healthcare, sports and recreation, community, education, and other facilities are all well-represented within the area and cater for the existing and proposed new residential community. While a current shortage in childcare spaces was identified in the childcare survey, it is expected that the significant granted pipeline of new childcare facilities will address this shortfall into the future, alongside the childcare facility proposed as part of this scheme. The proposed development also includes passive and active open spaces as well as pedestrian links throughout the site. Having regard to the above we submit that the Swords area provides a wide-range of existing social and community infrastructure to support the development and this is an ideal location for the residential scheme.

This *Social Infrastructure Audit* has been completed with regard to national, regional and local policy relating to the provision of suitable community facilities. Consideration has also been made to the policies on social and community infrastructure in the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029*. The recommended types of facilities have been examined and the result of this Social Infrastructure Audit has identified that there is adequate existing capacity of these services and facilities within a reasonable catchment of the subject site. It is concluded that the existing school provision in the area is sufficient to cater for the needs of the current and future population of the area and the proposed development will be adequately catered for both in terms of school and childcare provision.

Despite this, it is important to continually ensure good accessibility to quality services and facilities, inclusive of but not limited to health services and facilities, education facilities, community facilities and sports and recreation facilities. **The size of the proposed development is unlikely to impact on the quality of services and facilities currently available in the locality.**