

Schools Assessment

For Development at Castlepark, Castlelands (townland),
Mallow, Co. Cork

on behalf of Reside (Castlepark) Ltd.

October 2024



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants have been appointed by Reside (Castlepark) Ltd. to prepare a School Assessment to accompany a Large-Scale Residential Development application for 469 no. dwellings units and all associated development works at Castlepark, Castlelands (townland), Mallow, Co. Cork.

The proposed development is composed of an assortment of apartment and house types, which could generate the demand for school places. To assess the impact of the proposed development on the existing primary and post-primary school services the following metrics were considered:

- Potential alternative school sites in the area,
- The existing capacity of primary and post-primary schools and potential need for additional capacity;
- The existing and projected demand for primary and post-primary school places in the area;
- The estimated demand the proposed development will generate at full occupancy.

This report is split into 7 sections as follows:

- Section 2 provides the site context.
- Section 3 outlines the relevant planning policy context.
- Section 4 details the methodological approach of the primary and post-school assessments.
- Section 5 presents the findings for the primary and post-primary school supply and demand analysis.
- Section 6 estimates the projected school aged population that the proposed development could generate.
- Section 7 concludes the report.

2. Site Context

The proposed development site of 12.9ha is located within the townland of Castlelands and is located to the east of Mallow town centre. The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of the town, as designated by the Cork County Development Plan 2022. The site consists of undeveloped lands which were stripped as part of construction works associated with previously permitted schemes on site. These previously permitted schemes were not fully developed before the expiry of the permissions. The current application will therefore allow the development of this area as intended by the development plan and the planning history on site.

The subject site is immediately east of the existing Castlepark Estate, to the east of Mallow Town Centre. The recently constructed Scoil Aonghusa Community National School is located to the immediate north of the site. The lands to the east and south consist of greenfield lands.

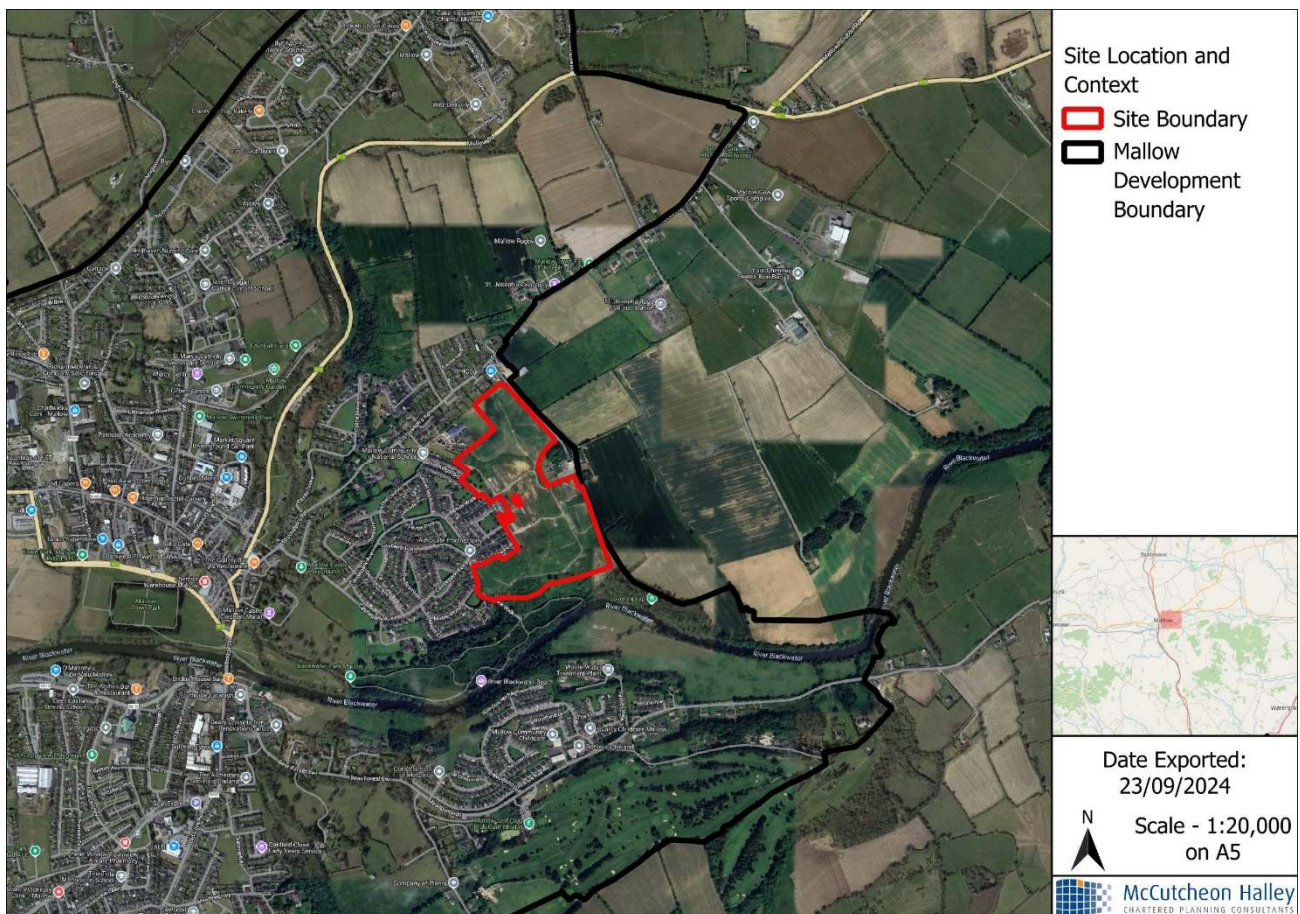


Figure 1: Location of site relative to the existing urban footprint of Cork City (Sources: CSO, 2023; Tailte Eireann, 2024; Transport Infrastructure Ireland, 2024)

3. Policy Context

The Department of Education (DoE) is responsible for the actual delivery of school facilities. Therefore, local authorities are responsible for long-term planning which makes provision for the delivery of education services that is aligned to population growth. The two sections below provide a brief review of the national and county level policies which affect the delivery of education services.

3.1 The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice 2008

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, the Department of Education and Science, and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government was published in July 2008 (hereafter referred to as the 2008 Guidelines) and sets out best practice approaches for ensuring that the planning system plays its full part in facilitating the timely and cost-effective roll-out of school facilities. It includes the following three core objectives:

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 should be driven by and emerge from an integrated approach between the planning functions of planning authorities and the Department of Education and Science; and*
3. *Local authorities, as planning authorities, will support and assist the Department in ensuring the timely provision of school sites.*

The 2008 Guidelines note that planning authorities should take due account of the most recent regional population projections prepared by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the DoE to forecast future demand for schools.

3.2 Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Cork County Development Plan (CCDP) 2022-2028 provides several policy objectives for the provision of educational facilities in Cork County.

Objective SC 6-5: Educational Facilities states that it is an objective to:

“Facilitate the provision of educational services in the community such as schools, creches and other educational and childcare facilities. Multiuse facilities which can accommodate both educational and childcare facilities are also encouraged.”

Objective SC 6-6 provides guidance on the provision of educational facilities in Large Residential Developments:

"a) Provide new educational facilities in accordance with the guidance set out in Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas.

b) Recognise that new residential communities can generate demand for additional school places and that it is vital to the process of supporting sustainable communities, that the necessary increased capacity in school facilities, either in the form of new schools, or the expansion of existing schools, is provided, including adequate provision for special needs education facilities, such as dedicated autism units, special schools, etc., where appropriate.

c) Work closely with the Department of Education to identify in the Plan, existing and future educational requirements, identify and reserve suitable sites for educational purposes and acquire, as appropriate and with the approval of the Department of Education, sites for future school provision in order to ensure that the necessary increased capacity in school provision is provided in a timely manner and as an integral part of the development of an area. Where a previously reserved site for educational purposes is no longer required the site will be capable of coming forward for alternative forms of development subject to the planning process.

d) Facilitate the development of primary, post primary, third level, outreach, research, adult and further educational facilities to meet the needs of the County.

e) Encourage, support and develop opportunities to open new and existing educational facilities to wider community use, subject to normal proper planning and sustainable development considerations.

f) Require that proposed new large scale residential developments, within existing residential or new residential areas, either as part of an individual development or a collective group of developments include an assessment of the demand for school places likely to be generated by the development and proposals to address any identified increase in demand which may arise. g) Where a designated school site forms part of a wider development it is critical that the granting of permission for that wider development be contingent upon the provision of infrastructure and services to the school site as part of that development and such infrastructure and services must be specified to the standard which is required for any future school provision at that location."

Table 6.1 of the CCDP 2022-2028 sets out requirements for new schools in the various settlements throughout Cork County. Furthermore, Vol. 3 of the

CCDP 2022-2028 states the following regarding the educational service offerings in Mallow:

“Mallow already has a good range of both primary and secondary level schools. Mallow College of Further Education offers QQI, Accounting Technicians Ireland and ITEC accredited courses in a wide range of subjects. There is also a college of design and tailoring in West End. There is opportunity to further expand the suite of third level options within the town, including a possible outreach campus associated with NUI Cork and/or Munster Technological University.”

Based on this statement, it can be deduced that Cork County Council does not identify Mallow as a town in need of expanding primary or post-primary school capacity. However, it is worth noting that there is provision made for future education facilities in Mallow.

3.3 Existing Lands Zoned for Education

As per the CCDP 2022-2028, several parcels of land are designated for education facilities in Cork County. Two of these parcels are located within the School Planning Area (SPA) of Mallow. The locations of the two parcels within the Mallow SPA are presented in the CCDP 2022-2028 zoning plan (Figure 2). The ID, existing use, zoning description, and the area for each parcel within the Mallow SPA is presented in Table 1 below. The addition of schools on these parcels will complement the existing primary and post-primary schools in surrounding Mallow (Figure 2). One of the parcels zoned for education facilities is located to the west of the site boundary of the proposed development. Therefore, the proposed development is aligned with the future development plans of the council.

Table 1: Lands Zoned for Education Purposes in Mallow SPA (Source: Adapted from Cork County Council, 2024; DoE, 2024)

ID	Existing Use	Zone Description	Ha
Mallow	Greenfield – Vacant	Lands suitable for educational, institutional and civic uses.	4.88
Dromahane	Brownfield – Partially Developed		1.06

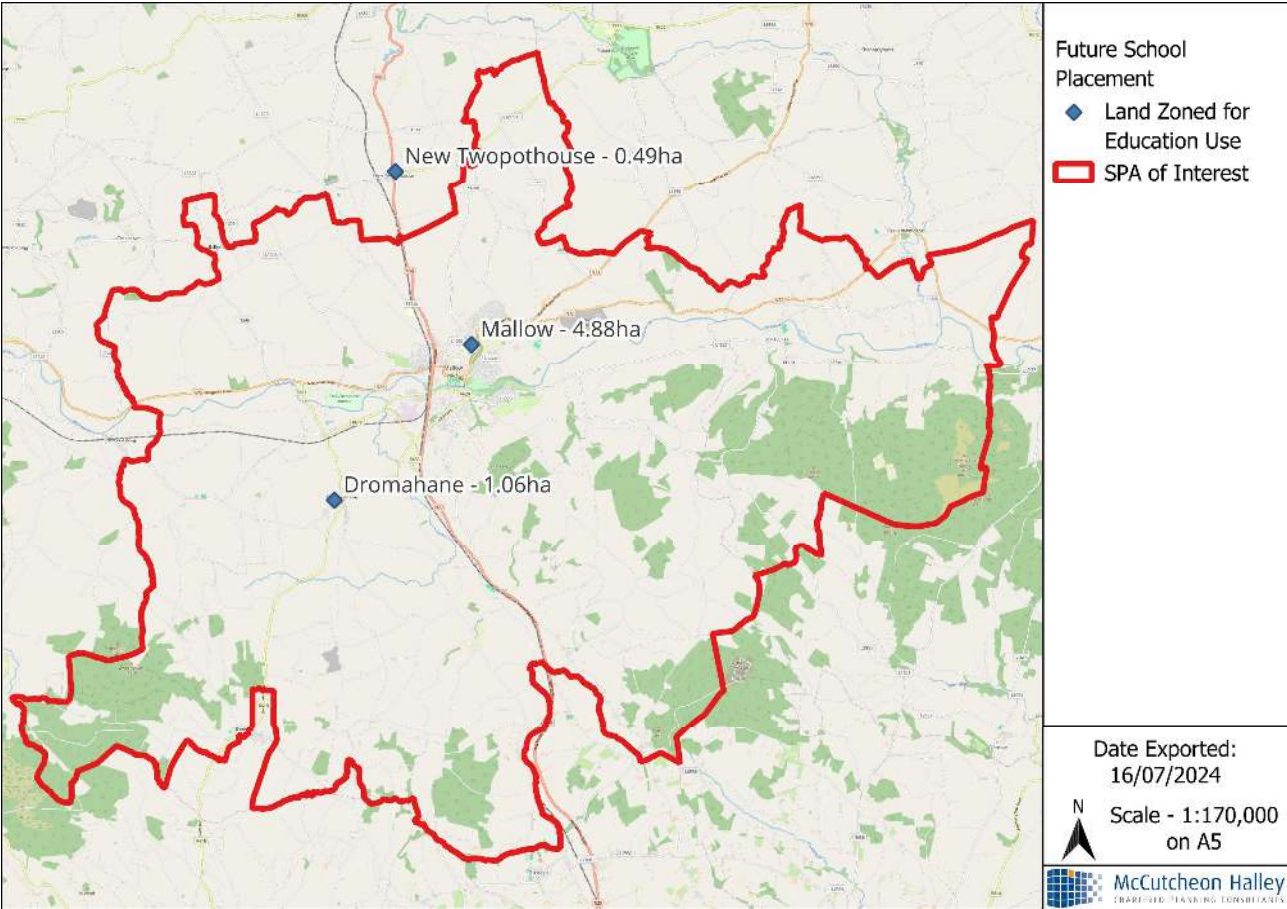


Figure 2: Land Zoned for Education Purposes in School Planning Area of Interest
(Source: Cork County Council, 2024)

4. Assessing the Need and Demand for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

The methodological approach outlined in this section consists of three broad stages. The first stage identifies the catchment area that confines the assessment of both primary and post-primary school services to a geographic area. The second stage outlines the supply of both primary and post-primary schools within the defined study area. The third stage examines the demand indicators for both primary and post-primary schools.

The catchment area for this report was identified as the SPA wherein the proposed development is located. The data for the SPA were sourced from the DoE. The SPA is used by the DoE to plan for the provision of schools across Ireland. Therefore, SPAs serve as an ideal catchment to assess the supply of and the demand for schools.

The location and the enrolment figures of a primary/post-primary school was sourced from the annual list of primary/post-primary schools compiled by the DoE. The primary/post-primary schools within the SPA of interest were selected and were used to calculate the total number of primary/post-primary schools, the total number of enrolments, and the estimated capacity of primary schools within the SPA of interest. The estimated capacity of primary schools was calculated using the DoE recommended Pupil to Teacher Ratios (PTR) of 26 pupils to 1 teacher. Whilst the estimated capacity of post-primary schools was sourced directly from the post-primary institutions.

The past and future demand for primary/post-primary schools within the SPA of interest were estimated. Historic enrolment figures served as the indicator for the demand for primary/post-primary schools in the past. Then, the projected school going populations by year based on the 2022 Census results served as the indicator of future demand for primary/post-primary schools within the SPA. Also considered in this assessment was the latest national population projections released by the CSO. These projections were used to evaluate the future trends in primary and post-primary school going population.

5. Assessment for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

This section will provide further detail on the supply and demand of/for existing school services in the defined catchment area. This section will define the catchment area, examine the supply figures, state the demand numbers, and conclude by considering the implications of the supply and demand indicators for school services in the catchment area.

5.1 Catchment Area

To define the catchment area for the assessment of primary/post-primary schools, a spatial query was performed to select the SPA wherein the proposed development is located. From this spatial query, Mallow was identified as the SPA wherein the proposed development is located. In total there are 3 post-primary schools and 14 primary schools within the SPA of Mallow (Figure 3). No special primary schools were found within the SPA of Mallow.

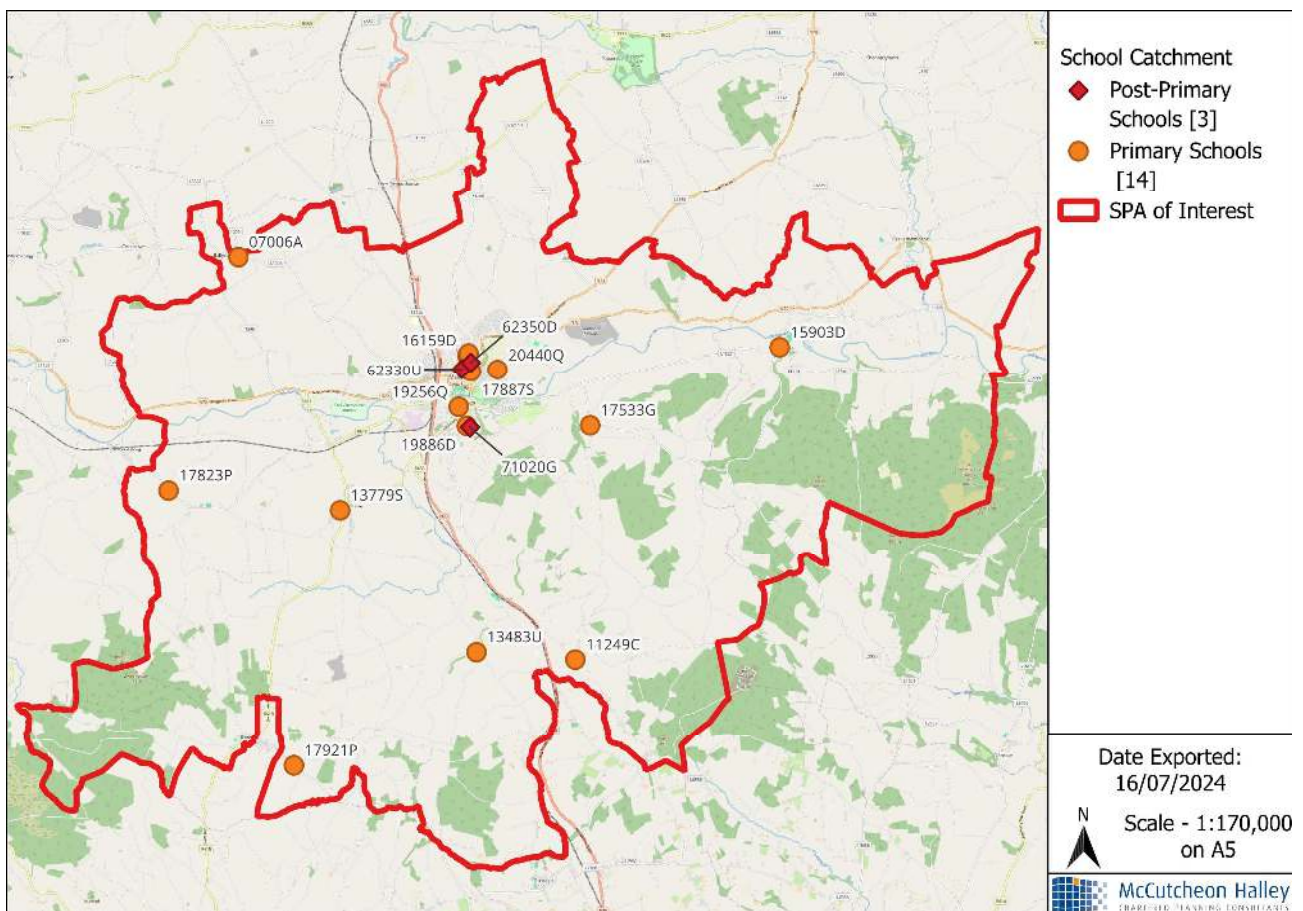


Figure 3: Catchment Area for Primary Schools (Source: CSO, 2023)

5.2 Supply Analysis

Primary Schools

During the 2023-2024 academic year there were a total 14 primary schools with enrolments totalling 2,719 (Table 2) within the catchment area. The total number of primary schools represented more than 5% of the 271 primary schools in Cork County Council for the 2023-2024 academic year. Whilst the total enrolments accounted for a 6.6% of the 41,322 total primary school enrolments for Cork County Council in the 2023-2024 academic year. This indicates that primary schools within the SPA are accommodating more pupils than what is the norm for a primary school in Cork County. The median number of enrolments per primary school in the local authority stood at 111 enrolments for the 2023-2024 academic year (Table 3). Therefore, the minimum size of a new primary school within Cork County should be at least 111 spaces. Using the PTR, as recommended by the DoE, of 26:1 and the enrolments figures the estimated capacity of primary schools in the catchment area was calculated as 2,917 enrolments.

Table 2: Primary Schools Enrolment Figures for the 2023-2024 Academic Year (Source: DoE, 2024)

Official Name	Enrolments	Estimated Capacity (1:26)	Available Capacity
BALLYCLOUGH MIXED N S	108	130	22
BURNFORT N S	93	130	37
SN Ath na Lionta	90	104	14
S N DHROM ATHAIN	219	219	0
KILLAVULLEN N S	122	130	8
Convent Girls Senior National School	251	260	9
S N RATHAIN	109	109	0
St. Abbey's National School	101	104	3
S N NAOMH PADRAIG BOYS SENIOR SCHOOL	224	260	36
S N Moing na Miol	125	156	31
S N IOSAGAIN	130	156	26
SCOIL GHOBNATAN	540	546	6

Official Name	Enrolments	Estimated Capacity (1:26)	Available Capacity
GAEL SCOIL THOMAS DAIBHIS	410	416	6
Mallow Community National School	197	197	0
Totals	2,719	2,917	198

Table 3: Key Enrolment Statistics and Estimates for Primary Schools within the Catchment Area (Source: DES, 2024)

Statistic	Enrolments 2023/24
Number of Schools	14
Median Enrolments per School – Local Authority	111
Enrolments	2,719
Number of Classes	111
Estimated Capacity	2,917
Estimated Available Capacity	198

Five of the 14 primary schools had enrolment figures below the median enrolments per school for Cork County Council which implies that these primary schools in the catchment area are accommodating lower enrolment figures than what is the norm for Cork County Council. The total estimated available capacity for the catchment was 2,917 which is 198 more than the total enrolments for the academic year 2023-2024. The 198 available capacity figure is 78.2% larger than the median enrolments per school (111) in the local authority. Therefore, the available capacity in the catchment represents a larger than average primary school in Cork County Council. Based on the enrolments and estimated capacity figures contained in Table 3, this report asserts there is an adequate supply of primary schools in the catchment area.

Post-Primary Schools

During the 2023-2024 academic year there were a total 3 post-primary schools with enrolments totalling 2,303 (Table 4) within the catchment area. The total number of post-primary schools represented 5.9% the 51 post-primary schools in Cork County Council for the 2023-2024 academic year. Whilst the total enrolments accounted for 7.7% of 29,835 post-primary school enrolments for Cork County Council in the 2023-2024 academic year. The median number of enrolments per post-primary school in Cork County Council thus stood at 538 enrolments for the 2023-2024 academic year (*Post-primary school did not provide enrolment information, therefore, the largest historic capacity enrolment figure for the post-primary school was used.

Table 5). Using the maximum recorded enrolment figure per school, the estimated capacity of post-primary schools in the catchment area is 2,633.

Table 4: Post-Primary Schools Enrolment Figures for the 2023-2024 Academic Year (Source: DES, 2024)

Roll Number	Enrolments	Capacity	Available Capacity
Patrician Academy*	556	587	31
St Mary's Secondary School	755	900	145
Davis College	1010	1040	30
Total	2,321	2,527	206

*Post-primary school did not provide enrolment information, therefore, the largest historic capacity enrolment figure for the post-primary school was used.

Table 5: Key 2023/24 Enrolment Statistics and Estimates for Post-Primary Schools within the Catchment Area (Source: DES, 2024)

Statistic	Enrolments
Number of Schools	3
Median Enrolments per School – Local Authority	538
Enrolments	2,321
Capacity	2,527
Available Capacity	206

The total estimated available capacity figure was 206, which infers that schools in the catchment are operating below their capacity levels. The 206 available capacity figure represents 38.2% of the median enrolments per post-primary school (536) in the local authority. Therefore, the available capacity in the catchment is representative of a smaller than average post-primary school in Cork County Council. Based on the estimated capacity figures contained in *Post-primary school did not provide enrolment information, therefore, the largest historic capacity enrolment figure for the post-primary school was used.

Table 5, there is a sufficient supply of post-primary schools in the catchment area.

5.3 Demand Analysis

Primary School

The demand for primary school services is determined by the change in past enrolment figures and the projected primary school population. Figure 4 displays the historic primary school enrolment figures for the catchment area and serves as the indicator of past demand for primary school services. The overarching trend in the historic enrolment figures for the catchment area is downward (Figure 4). With the catchment area recording decreases in the total number of enrolments for 4 out of the last 5 academic years. The largest decrease was recorded between the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years (Figure 4). The future demand indicator for primary schools is represented by the projected primary school population in the catchment area. The future primary school population is projected using the age cohorts

that precede the primary school population as of 2022. Figure 5 provides a breakdown of the projected primary school population by year and shows that the primary school population peaked in 2022 and is set to decrease every year until 2027. Furthermore, the latest national population projections released by the CSO project the primary school population to decrease by almost 10% based on the 2022 population figures (CSO, 2024).

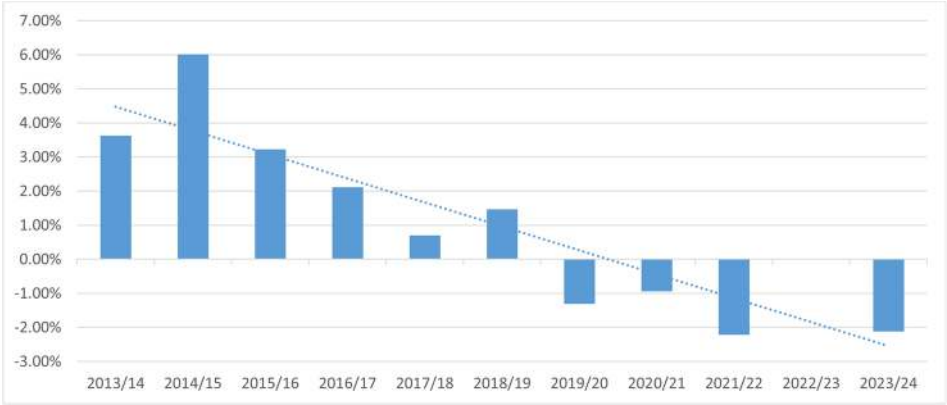


Figure 4: Historic Primary School Enrolment Change Figures for the Catchment Area (Source: DoE, 2024)

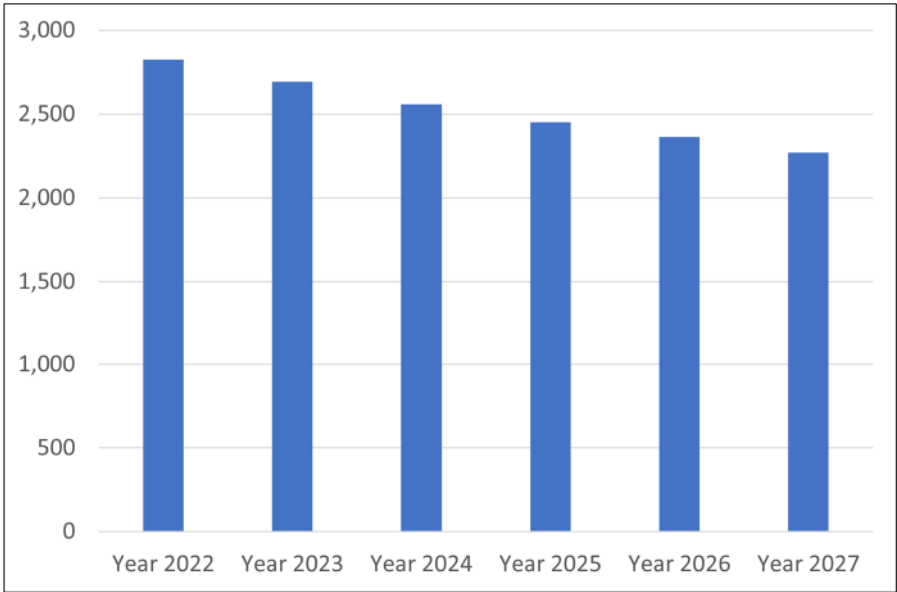


Figure 5: Future Primary School Population in Catchment (Source: CSO, 2023)

The past and future enrolment indicators presented above point to a catchment area where the demand for primary school services is likely to decrease. The historic enrolment figures show that the total enrolments are declining. This downward trend is unlikely to change as the projected primary school population is set to decline for the catchment area. Evidence of this is that the demand for primary school services within the catchment area is estimated to decrease by almost 20% by 2027. Furthermore, this decline is compounded by the national primary school population which is projected to decrease by almost 10% during the same period.

Post-Primary Schools

The demand for post-primary school services is dependent on the change in past enrolment figures and the projected post-primary school population. Figure 6 displays the historic post-primary school enrolment figures for the catchment area and serves as the indicator of past demand for post-primary school services. The overarching trend in the historic enrolment figures for the catchment area is upward (Figure 6). With the catchment area recording increases in enrolments for 6 out of the last 7 academic years. However, a large decrease of more than 15% was recorded between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years (Figure 4). The future demand indicator for post-primary schools is represented by the projected post-primary school population in the catchment area. The future primary school population is projected using the age cohorts that precede the primary school population as of 2022. Figure 7 provides a breakdown of the projected post-primary school population by year and shows that the post-primary school population will peak in 2025 and then decrease until 2027. Furthermore, the latest national population projections released by the CSO project the post-primary school population to decrease by almost 9% from the 2022 figure by 2032 (CSO, 2024).

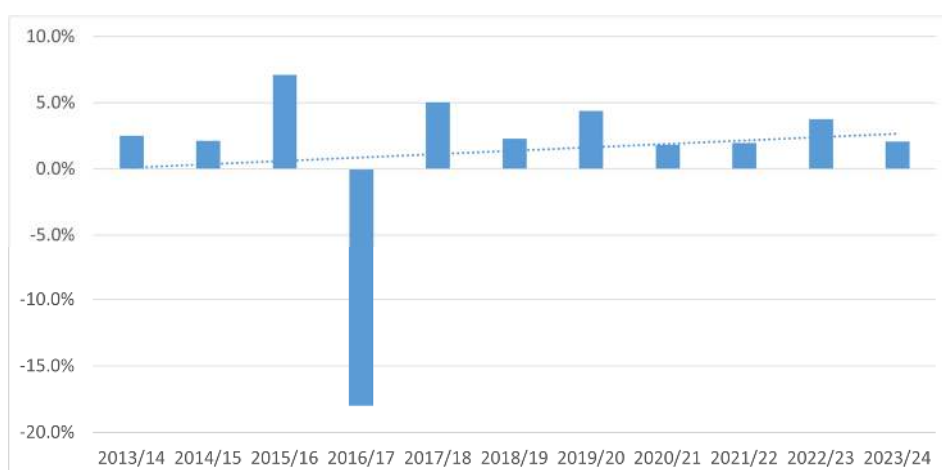


Figure 6: Historic Post-Primary School Enrolment Change Figures for the Catchment Area (Source: DoE, 2023)

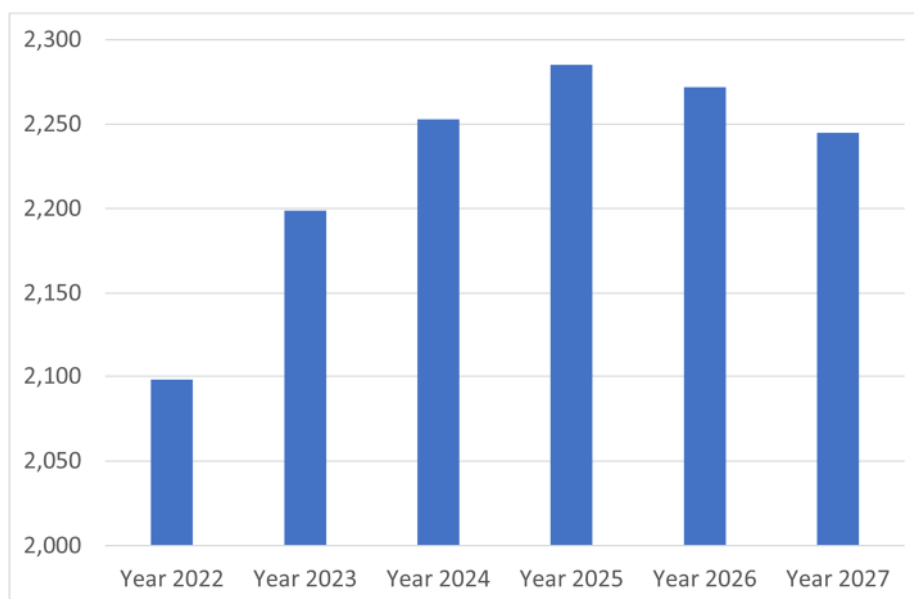


Figure 7: Population in Catchment Aged 5 to 12 (Source: CSO, 2023)

The past and future enrolment indicators presented above point to a catchment area where the demand for post-primary school services is likely to increase in the short term but decrease in the long term. The historic enrolment figures show that the total enrolments are increasing annually. However, this upward trend will not persist, as the post-primary school population in the catchment area will peak in 2027 and then decline. Therefore, the demand for post-primary school services is estimated to increase by 9% in the short-term. However, using the CSO population projections, the demand for post-primary school services is forecasted to decline in the long-term with the national post-primary school population dipping below the 2022 figure by 2032.

5.4 Conclusion

The supply and demand analysis of primary/post-primary schools in the catchment area allows this report to draw three broad conclusions. The first conclusion is that the current supply of both primary and post-primary schools in the catchment area is sufficient. This finding is based on capacity figures for primary and post-primary schools that were above the current enrolment figures. The second trend is that the demand for primary schools will continue to decrease as the primary school population in the catchment area and nationally are projected to decline. The third trend is that the growth in the demand for post-primary schools will slow in the short term and decline in the long term. This is due to the future post-primary school population set to peak by 2025 and then start to decrease annually until 2027 in the catchment area. However, if there is an unforeseen increase in the school-going population in the catchment, provision has been made by the safeguarding of two sites within the SPA of Mallow for the purpose of educational use.

6. School Demand Generated by Proposed Development

Accompanying this report is a development yield report, which calculates the estimated population that a proposed development could generate. The methodology used to calculate the figures are provided in the development yield report. For the sake of brevity, this section will only present the results from the development yield report related to the estimated primary and post-primary school population.

The estimated primary school population that the proposed development could generate is presented in Table 6, the maximum figure is 179 enrolments. This figure is within the 198 estimated available capacity within the primary school catchment area.

Table 6: Estimated Primary School Population of the Proposed Development.

Unit type	Number of Units	Catchment based	County Based	State Based
2 Bedroom units	124	16	12	14
3 Bedroom units	192	108	92	94
4 Bedroom units	68	55	52	51
Total	384	179	156	159

The estimated post-primary school population that the proposed development could generate is presented in Table 7, with a maximum enrolment figure of 126. This figure is within the 205 estimated available capacity within the post-primary school catchment area.

Table 7: Estimated Post-Primary School Population of the Proposed Development.

Unit type	Number of Units	Catchment based	County Based	State Based
2 Bedroom units	124	11	9	11
3 Bedroom units	192	76	68	70
4 Bedroom units	68	39	39	38
Total	384	126	116	119

7. Conclusion

The report concludes that there is sufficient existing capacity of the primary and post-primary schools within the catchment area. Furthermore, the review of land zoned for educational use found that there are 2 parcels of land zoned for education purposes with both parcels near to the site of the proposed development. Therefore, if the proposed development does generate a demand above the estimated figures, there is provision to accommodate this overflow. This report thus finds that the proposed development does not necessitate the provision of a primary or a post-primary school in the short term. However, the parcels of land zoned for education close to the proposed development must be safeguarded to ensure that there are available locations for the addition of primary schools and primary schools to accommodate the long-term growth of Mallow.

8. References

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