

Social & Community Infrastructure Audit

Including:

School Capacity Assessment

For a Proposed Large Scale Residential Development (LRD) at
Boreen Bradach, Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath

PREPARED BY MCG PLANNING
ON BEHALF OF JH KINNIE LIMITED
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Introduction

McGill Planning Limited, 9 Pembroke Street Upper, Dublin 2 is instructed by the applicant JH Kinnie Limited, Unit 4/5 Glenroyal Business Centre, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 KO32 to prepare this Social & Community Infrastructure Audit.

The audit relates to the development of lands at Boreen Bradach, Kinnegad. The site is situated adjacent to the town centre, less than 200 meters from Main Street. To the east and northeast, the surrounding area is primarily residential, including Riverside Lawns to the east, the Kingsbury development to the southeast, and the more recent Bun Daire housing development to the northeast. As these estates were built over the past 30 years, there is no dominant architectural style; however, most residences feature individual entrances and are predominantly two-storey structures. Commercial and community amenities are concentrated to the south within the town centre, encompassing a Eurospar, public houses, restaurants, takeaways, and places of worship along Main Street.

The purpose of this Social Infrastructure Audit is to address specific objectives set out in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

The Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (hereafter CDP) recognises the need to provide housing in tandem with community infrastructure. Community infrastructure, for the purposes of the CDP, includes community centres and halls; libraries and cultural facilities; places of worship and burial grounds; educational, healthcare and childcare facilities; and play, sports and recreational facilities including greenways

The Council recognises that the provision of good quality social and community facilities in existing and developing areas is a key element in placemaking and in the creation of sustainable and socially cohesive communities. Social / community infrastructure is a vital part of all neighbourhoods and contributes greatly to the social fabric and quality of life.

Of relevance to this assessment are the following CDP Policies:

CPO 4.3	<i>Encourage inclusive and active sustainable communities based around a strong network of community facilities.</i>
CPO 4.4	<i>Enhance the well-being and quality of life of the people of Westmeath through sustainable economic and community development.</i>
CPO 4.17	<i>Maintain and, where possible, improve the provision of community facilities in the County to ensure that facilities are adequate to meet the needs of the communities they serve, are physically integrated with residential and employment areas and are provided concurrently with new residential development.</i>
CPO 8.99	<i>Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.</i>
CPO 8.105	<i>Support the development of a looped walking/cycling routes within the locality, including the enhancement of "An Boreen Brádach", walking/cycle route and encourage increased connectivity to Kinnegad Town Centre.</i>

Table 1: Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027

This report will assess the social & community infrastructure in the area which includes a range of services that contribute to the quality of life of residents of an area. They form a key element for the fabric of the area in terms of the social, physical, and mental wellbeing of a community. This study has conducted a set of inventories that assess the availability and quality of services for a site in relation to the education, childcare, community facilities, healthcare, and other facilities. The services and facilities within a 1km buffer of the site have been mapped.

To establish the existing receiving environment/baseline for the subject site, a desk-based study included an analysis of the Central Statistics Office Census (CSO) data, the ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary, and national, regional and local planning policy, and school and creche enrolment figures. Some facilities such as education incorporate a wider buffer area of 7.5km, and nearby Mullingar.

Site Description and Context

The subject site is located within Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath. It is an irregular shaped, relatively flat site with a gentle slope towards the north. It is enclosed by field hedgerows, and with two running through the site. It is also bordered on three sides by existing built development with the town. Only the north west of the site fronts onto adjoining green fields.



Figure 1: Approximate Site Location. Please note the red line is shown for indicative purposes only. Please refer to the architect's drawings for an accurate red line boundary

It is located southwest of Bun Daire social housing development and northeast of St Etchen's National School, a Eurospar, and St Ethchen's Court residential estate and to the rear of commercial uses fronting onto the Main Street (R148) and the Church of the Assumption RC Church. The site is bounded by Boreen Bradach Road to the east which provides vehicular access to the site.

The site is located adjacent the town centre and short distance (<200m) from Main Street. In terms of existing character, the lands to the east and north east of the site are primarily residential, Riverside Lawns to the east, Kingsbury development to the south east and more recently the housing development to the north east Bun Daire. Being estates developed at different periods over the past 30 years, there is no prevailing residential design character, but with most dwellings being own door, and primarily consisting of a two storey construction. Commercial and community uses are predominantly to the south within the town centre, including Eurospar, public houses, restaurants, take aways and places of worship located along the Main Street.

The site is approximately a 20-minute drive from Mullingar (M4/N4), a 45-minute drive from Athlone (M6) and a 60-minute drive from Dublin City Centre via the M4 taking the Junction 10 exit. Kinnegad has benefitted from a significant increase in population in recent decades. In 2022, the population of the town was 3,064 rising by 11.6% from 2,745 in 2016. The town has a younger population than the county average, with only 7% of the population of Kinnegad over 65 compared to the county average of 19.7%.

There are good public transport services that operate in the surrounding area with Bus Eireann services 115 providing transport to Dublin and Mullingar. The Citylink 763 service provides connections to Dublin Airport and Galway City. There is also an intercity train station (Sligo to Dublin service) at Enfield, 15 minutes' drive to the east. Suburban train services into Dublin City Centre are also available at Maynooth, 30 minutes' drive to the east.

The site does not contain any protected structures or buildings of architectural merit as per the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The nearest protected structure is RC Church (RPS No. 027-101) located directly south of the subject site. We note the presence of early medieval burial ground located north of the subject site on agricultural lands.

The site is not located within or adjoining an Architectural Conservation Area or Zone of Archaeological Potential. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site and no protected views from adjoining roads across the site. The site is not located within a flood risk zone.

Accessibility

The image below highlights Kinnegad's accessibility to key services including education and childcare, retail, and healthcare, centred around the subject site. Using a 500m and 1km buffer (as the crow flies), as well as isochrones indicating 5, 10, and 15-minute walking times, it is evident that the town offers a good level of service proximity. Educational and childcare facilities (marked in purple) are distributed well within a 15-minute walk from the site, ensuring convenient access for families. Retail services (blue markers) are also clustered within walking distance, particularly near the central area of Kinnegad. Healthcare facilities (orange markers) are predominantly located closer to the subject site, providing accessible options for medical needs. Overall, Kinnegad is well-served by essential

amenities within reasonable walking distances, promoting an accessible and sustainable living environment.

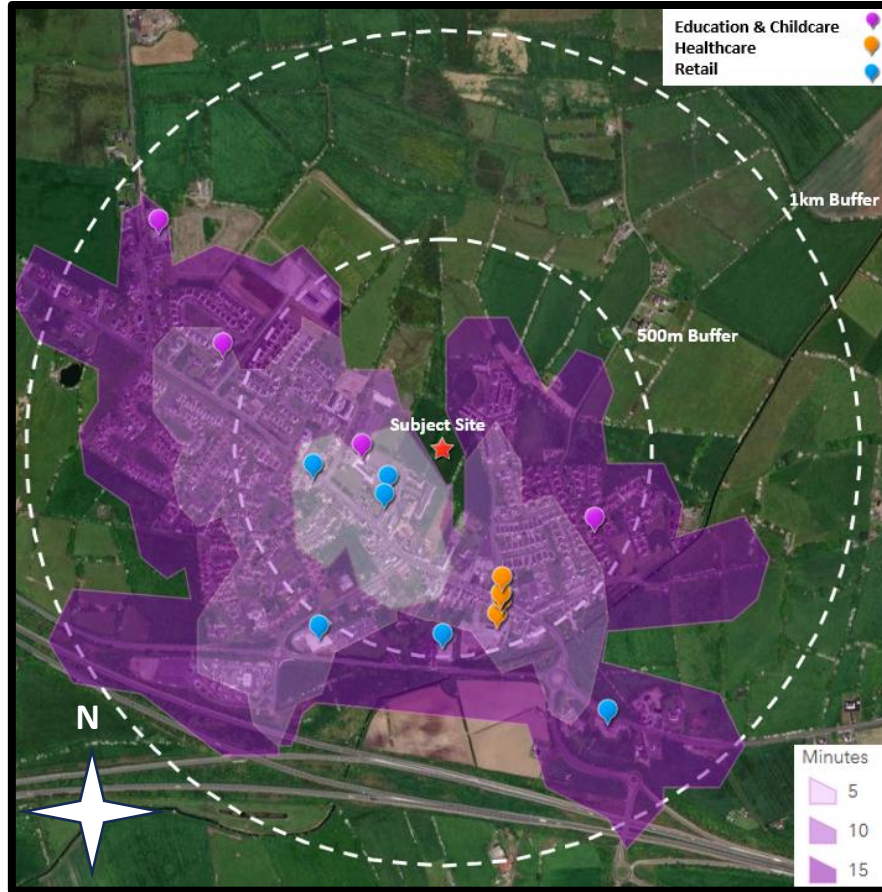


Figure 2: Essential Services within a 5, 10, 15-minute walking distance of the subject site

Transportation

Bus Routes, Road Networks & Public Transport

Road Networks

Kinnegad benefits significantly from its strategic location near the M4 and M6 motorways, which provide excellent connectivity to key urban centres and regions. The M4 motorway offers direct access to Dublin to the east (approximately a 60-minute drive from Dublin City Centre via the M4 taking the Junction 10 exit), making it a prime location for commuters and those requiring frequent access to the capital city. To the west, the M6 facilitates easy travel to major cities such as Galway (Galway is located c. 1 hour 30 minutes west of the site via the M6), connecting Kinnegad to economic, educational, and cultural hubs. This proximity to two major motorways enhances the town's accessibility for business, logistics, and leisure, making it an attractive location for residents and businesses alike. Additionally, the motorways allow for efficient travel to surrounding towns and amenities such as Mullingar, Athlone, Enfield and Tullamore, further integrating Kinnegad into the broader regional and national network.

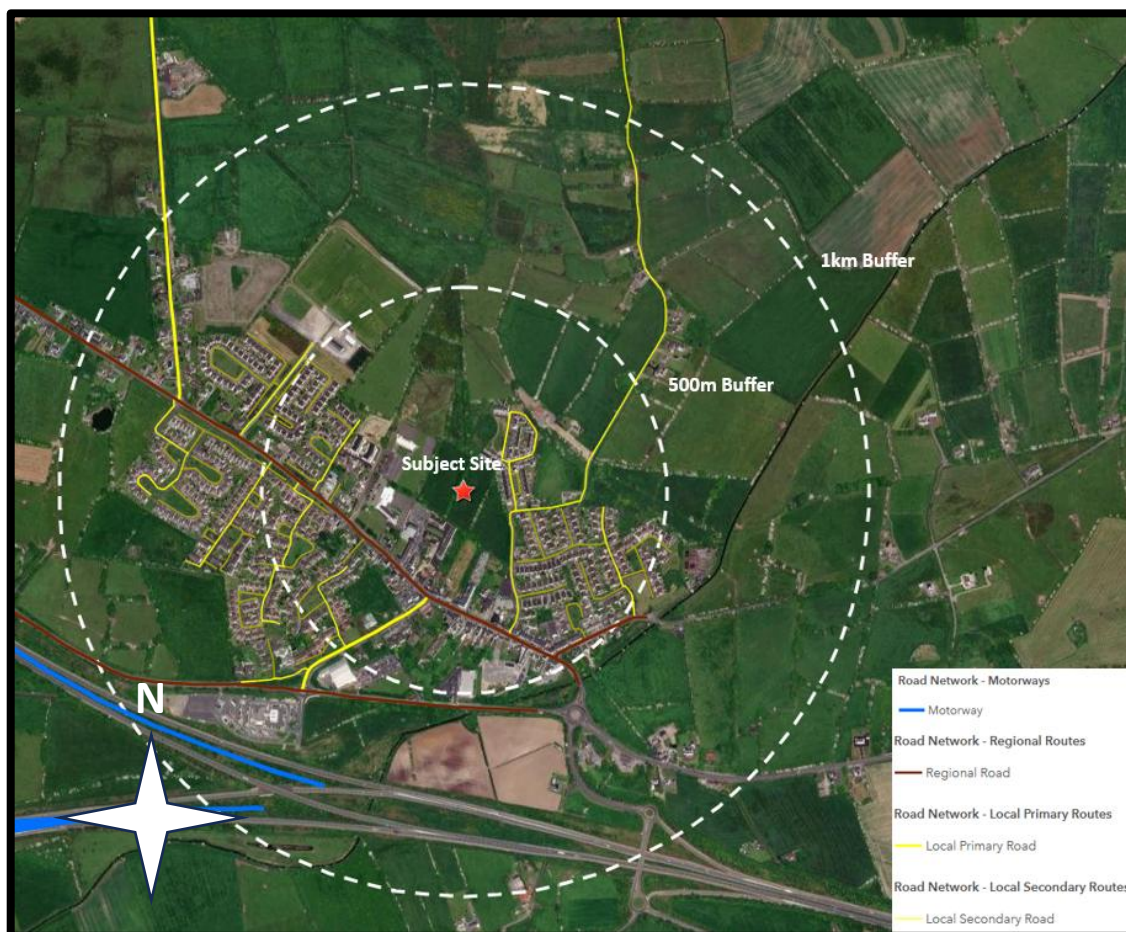


Figure 3: Illustration of Existing Road Network in Kinnegad

Bus Services

Bus stops (ID 135451, 135441) on Main Street within a 5-minute walk are served by a total of 5 no. bus routes, operated by Bus Éireann, City Link, and Kearns Transport, which primarily connect Kinnegad to Dublin/Galway and large towns such as Mullingar and Athlone. The most frequent service is the 115 bus route, which operates 22 buses daily running each way between Dublin and Mullingar. During peak hours there is a bus every 12 minutes (5 an hour) and can therefore be considered a good service at peak times for a town the size of Kinnegad.

Table 2 sets out the routes and frequency of the buses below.

Bus Route	Operator	Locations	Frequency
115	Bus Éireann	Dublin - Mullingar	22 buses daily
763	City Link	Galway City, Coach Station (Fairgreen Rd) - Dublin Airport	8 buses daily
845	Kearns Transport	Birr - Dubin	9 buses daily
847	Kearns Transport	Portumna - Dublin	2 buses daily
UM02	Kearns Transport	Birr -Maynooth	2 buses daily

Table 2: Bus Route destinations and frequency

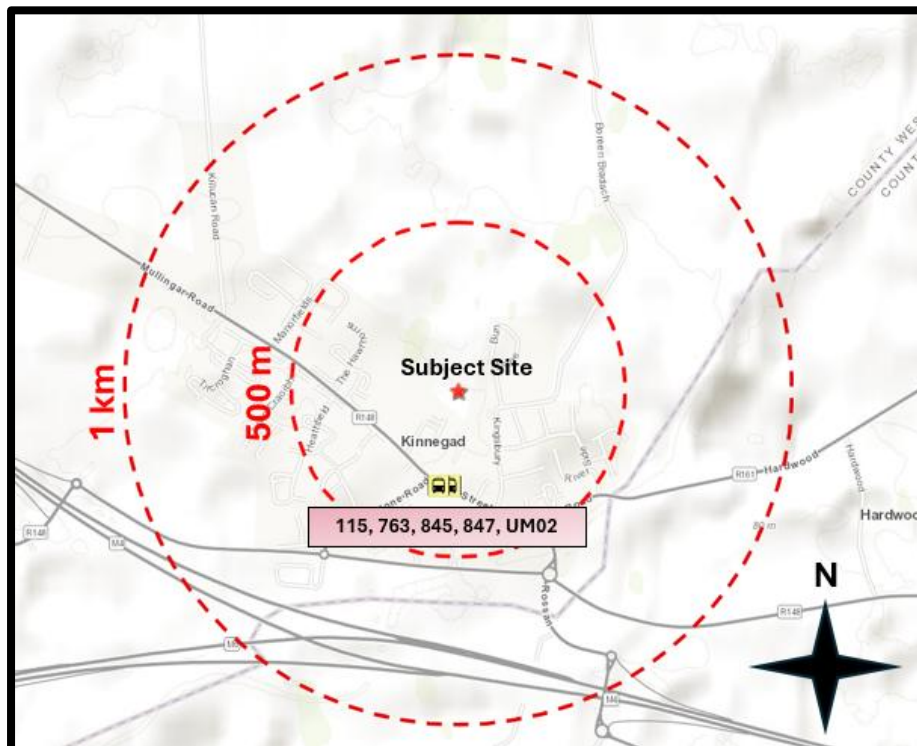


Figure 4: Location of Bus Stops on Main Street within a 500m buffer distance of the subject site

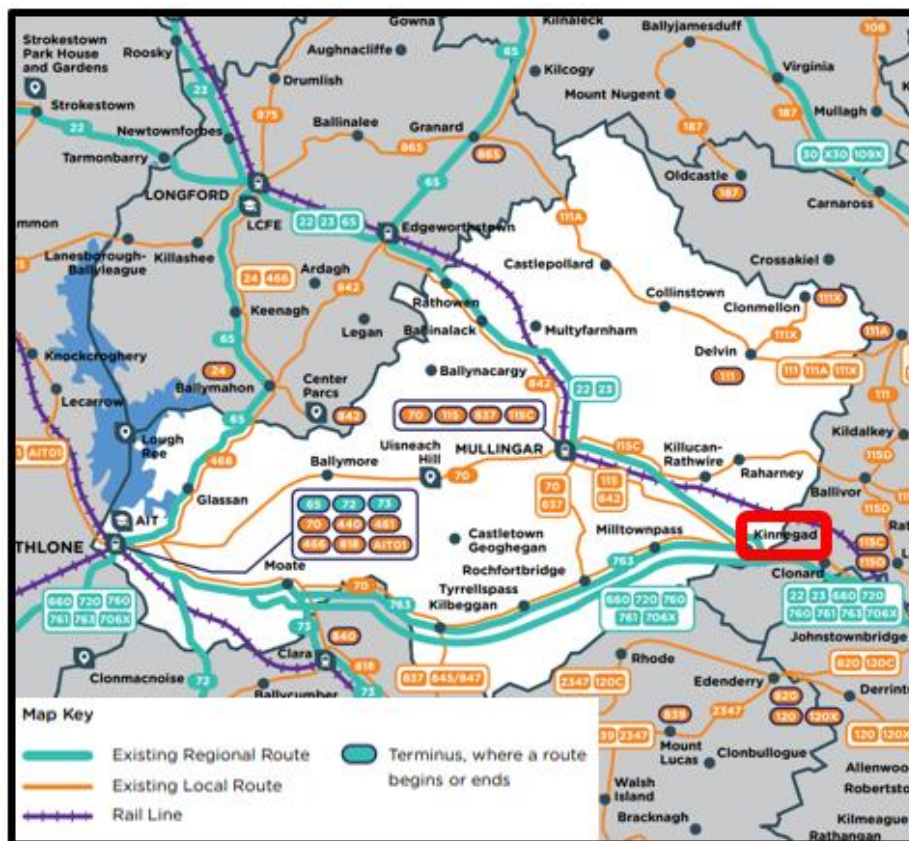


Figure 5: Westmeath Public Transport Network 2021

Cycle Infrastructure

The Westmeath CC proposed CycleConnects Network will consist of an urban cycle network for Athlone and Mullingar, with interurban connectors between the towns of Moate, Kinnegad, Kilbeggan and Castlepollard etc. These then extend into adjoining counties forming a comprehensive and connecting cycle network nationally. The selection of inter-urban routes was influenced by the location of schools/sports grounds on various parallel routes. This interurban route will run north of the M4 Motorway and south of the subject site. Once developed this route will form an easily accessible cycle network for future residents of the proposed development to engage with.

For Kinnegad, CycleConnects proposes an Inter-Urban route that aims to link the town with nearby areas and enhance local access to cycling infrastructure, shown in Figure 7. Specifically, this route would:

- Run along Main Street and connect with adjacent towns to encourage regional accessibility.
- Improve connections to local amenities such as schools, retail areas, and workplaces within Kinnegad.
- Potentially connect with larger cycling corridors across County Westmeath to support inter-town cycling.

The CycleConnects proposal is under review for Kinnegad, so the exact path details, such as specific road segments or dedicated lanes, are still in the planning stages.

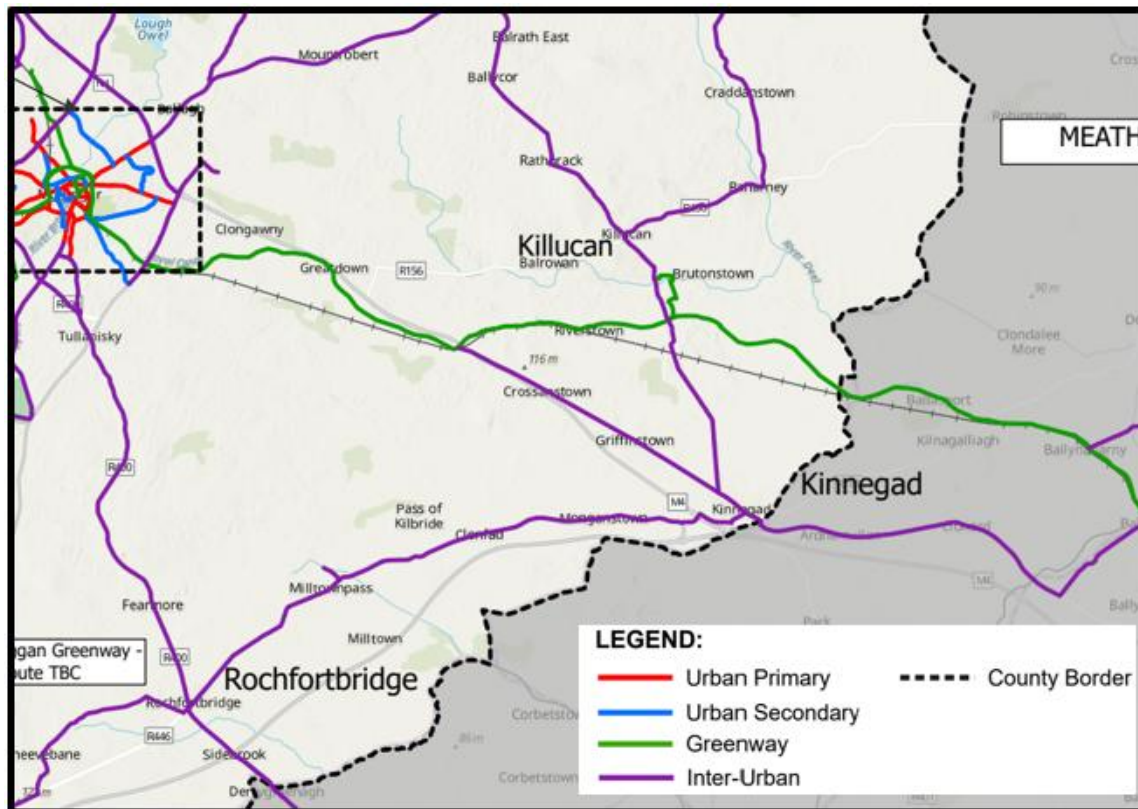


Figure 6: Proposed County Cycle Network Westmeath County Area

Proposed Development

The proposed development will comprise a residential scheme of 129 no. houses along with childcare facility (c.261.3 sq.m). The development will include 2 no. 1-bed houses, 11 no. 2-bed houses, 97 no. 3-bed houses and 19 no. 4-bed houses, ranging in height from one to two storey and including detached, semi-detached and terraced units.

Provision of vehicular, pedestrian/cyclist access from the L-5014 (Boreen Bradach Road) and associated upgrades to the local road.

All associated site development works, including 263 no. car parking spaces (including 30 no. EV spaces), 330 no. cycle parking spaces. Provision of public and private open spaces, landscaping, boundary treatments, waste management areas, and services provision (including 2 no. ESB substations). All associated works required to enable this development including connection to the Uisce Eireann network.

Methodology

In order to assess the context of the subject site, a geospatial survey was undertaken to determine the current population demographics and levels of relevant services in the study area. The following datasets were used during the survey:

- 2016 CSO Statistics
- 2022 CSO Statistics
- 2025 Google Maps
- Westmeath County Council website
- Department of Education
- HSE Facilities
- Pobal
- Building Information Ireland

For the purposes of analysing the existing facilities that serve the subject site, a general catchment area within 1km from the site (as the crow flies) has been identified.

RSES promote the concept of the '10-minute settlement'. 1km catchment areas are included as a 10-minute walk/cycle can be completed within these areas. Guiding Principles set out by RSES along with the NTA and Local Authorities refer to the Integration of Land Use and Transport in a region and illustrate the inclusion of:

"Planning at the local level should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools." (RSES, 2019).

“Support the ‘10 minute’ settlement concept, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or accessible by high quality public transport to these services in larger settlements.” (RSES, 2019).

Approximately 4,122 no. people were living within the determined Local Catchment Area at the time of the 2022 Census. The Local Area Catchment was determined by including all electoral divisions which are within 1km buffer distance of the subject site. A 1km buffer distance was applied, as on average it takes 10-12 minutes to walk 1km and is therefore consistent with the ideology of a 10-minute settlement. There are two Electoral divisions within this boundary.

Two electoral divisions are within a 1km buffer of the subject site. These electoral divisions are Kinnegad and Ardnamullan, as illustrated in Figure 08 below.

Policy Context

National Planning Framework

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

National Policy Objective 33 seeks to *“prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location”*.

The National Planning Framework outlines the broad national objectives for residential development in the State. This high-level objective is filtered downwards to be integrated into the RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region.

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

The RSES along with the NTA and Local Authorities have developed Guiding Principles for Integration of Land Use and Transport in the region. These include:

- For urban-generated development, the development of lands within or contiguous with existing urban areas should be prioritised over development in less accessible locations. Residential development should be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, **most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport – including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised.**
- The management of space in town and village centres should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes to **create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life.** Accessibility by car does need to be provided for, but in a manner, which complements the alternative available modes. Local traffic management and the location / management of destination car parking should be carefully provided.

- Planning at the local level should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of **people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres**, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools.
- Support the **'10 minute' settlement concept**, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or accessible by high quality public transport to these services in larger settlements.
- Cycle parking should be appropriately designed into the urban realm and new developments at an early stage to ensure that adequate cycle parking facilities are provided.

RPO 9.13, also states *"to ensure that new social infrastructure facilities are accessible and inclusive for a range of users"* is a regional policy objective (RPO) within the RSES which supports the provision of, and access to social infrastructure in a town setting. The RSES also outlines that *"Local authorities and relevant agencies shall ensure that new social infrastructure developments are accessible and inclusive for a range of users by adopting a universal design approach and provide for an age friendly society in which people of all ages can live full, active, valued and healthy lives"*.

The proposed development will benefit from its location close to significant social infrastructure, service, facilities, and employment opportunities within walking/cycling distance. These existing destinations in the area will support the '10-minute settlement' concept promoted by RSES.

Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027

The County Development Plan (CDP) sets out a strategic spatial framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Westmeath for the period between 2021 and 2027.

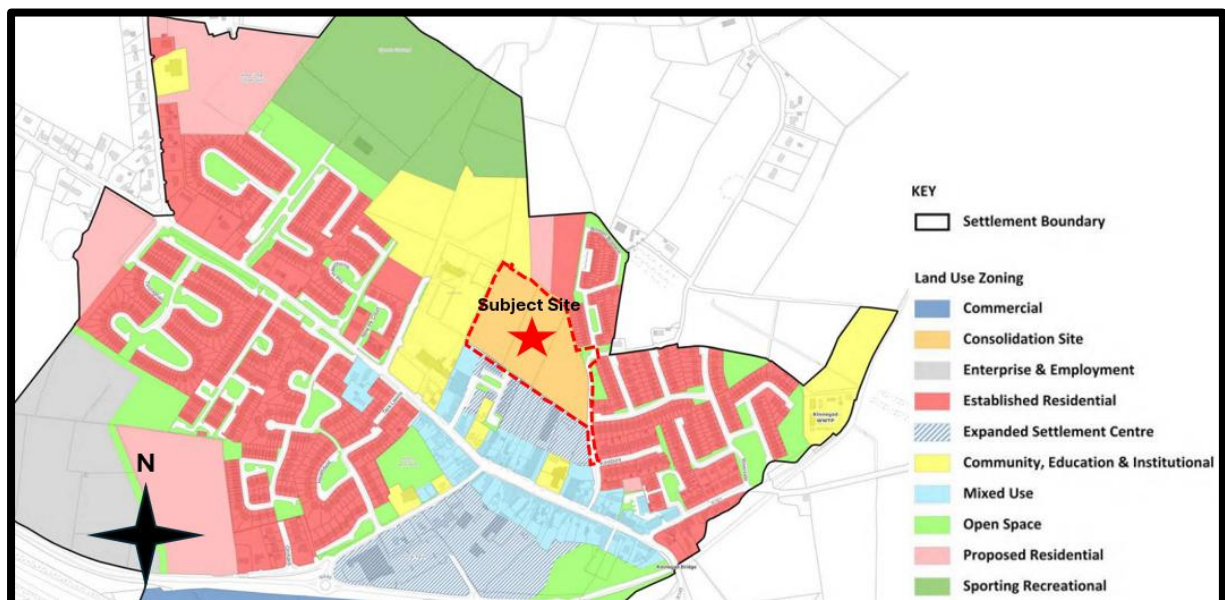


Figure 7: Map 08 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027

The site is zoned as ‘Consolidation Site’ with the objective CPO 15.5 *“Strengthen and consolidate existing settlements by encouraging the development of infill and brownfield lands through providing for a range of uses including residential development, retail, commercial and community uses.”*

The zoning seeks to promote the sustainable consolidation of town centres with a focus on the regeneration of infill and brownfield sites through the establishment of a mix of uses, including residential to encourage greater vibrancy outside of business hours. The zoning provides for a range of uses, making provision where appropriate for commercial, retail, residential, community, amenity and public realm development. Any development proposals on these lands must have regard to the Core Strategy, Retail Strategy and associated development management policies.

The proposed development is for a Large-scale Residential Development (Residential Multiple) and Creche (Childcare Facility) which are ‘Permitted in Principle’ as per Table 15.1 Land Use Zoning Matrix under the current CDP.

The CDP recognises the need to provide housing in tandem with community infrastructure. Community infrastructure, for the purposes of the CDP, includes community centres and halls; libraries and cultural facilities; places of worship and burial grounds; educational, healthcare and childcare facilities; and play, sports and recreational facilities including greenways

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Table 3; CPD 2021-2027

More locally, within Westmeath Council administrative area, the population increased by approximately 8.4% from 2016 to 2022, which is slightly above the national average for the same period.

Level	2016	2022	% Change
Local Catchment Area	3,779	4,122	+9.1%
Council administrative area	88,770	96,221	+9%

Table 4: Population Figures

Age Profile

As set out above approximately 4,122 no. people were living within the Local Area at the time of the 2022 Census, an 9.1% increase on the 2016 population.

2016 Population	2022 Population	Population Change 2016-2022	Percentage Change 2016-2022
3,779	4,122	+343	+9.1%

As per Table 05 below, this data reveals significant demographic shifts. The sharp decline in the 0-4 age group (-21.8%) signals a noticeable decrease in the number of young children, likely reflecting lower birth rates. In contrast, the school-age population (5-18) experienced only a slight decrease (-2.5%), suggesting a smaller reduction in the number of children entering schools, but still pointing to an overall downward trend in younger generations.

Meanwhile, both young adults (19-34) and middle-aged adults (35-64) saw significant growth, indicating an expanding working-age population. This could be due to factors such as increased participation in the workforce and longer life expectancy, which have contributed to these groups growing in size. The most noticeable trend, however, is the dramatic growth in the 65+ age group (+26.5%), signalling an aging population. This sharp increase suggests that the number of elderly individuals is rising rapidly, which has implications for healthcare, social services, and workforce demographics. Overall, while the data shows a shrinking younger population, there is a clear trend toward an aging society, with a larger proportion of people in older age groups, particularly those over 65.

Age	2016	2022	Change	Percentage Change
0-4 (Pre-school)	307	240	-67	-21.8%
5-18 (School Children)	1,026	1,000	-26	-2.5%
19-34 (Adults)	692	800	+108	+15.6%
35-64 (Adults)	1,467	1,719	+252	+17.2%
65+ (Adults)	287	363	+76	+26.5%

Table 5: Population breakdown for Electoral Divisions within 1km buffer of the subject site

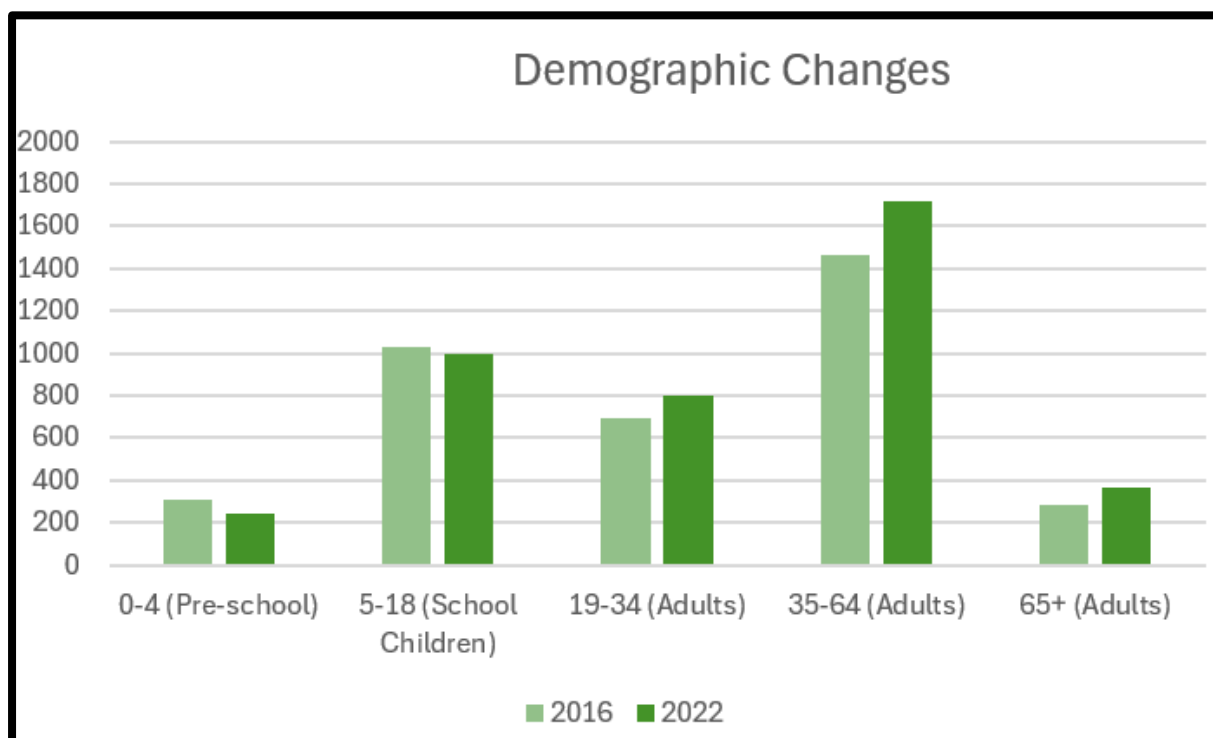


Figure 9: Demographic Changes Over Time

Social Infrastructure Overview

This Social Infrastructure Audit assesses a range of services and facilities that would be expected in a community, conducive to enabling a high-quality standard of living for the existing and future residents. This audit will address key themes that constitute community facilities as outlined below.

The themes will be analysed with regard to their context within the defined study area, with several varying buffer radii from the subject site. All of the facilities are identified as being within 1 km from the site. This area is generated by a 1km “as the crow flies” buffer zone. Due to the existing urban layout, the walking/cycling distances to some facilities is slightly further than 1km. The tables below list the facilities within 1km as the crow flies and also provide an approximate walking/cycle route distance.

Table 6 Categories included in the Audit

Category	Description
Open Space	Parks, Pitches, Residential Green Areas, Playgrounds
Leisure, Sport and Recreation	Sports Clubs, Stadiums, Racetracks, Swimming Pools, Gyms
Education	Primary Schools, Post-Primary Schools, Special Schools, Third Level Universities, Other Educational Facilities
Community/Cultural Facilities	Community Centres, Libraries, Theatres, Museums/Galleries, Concert Halls, Memorials, Religious Facilities, Garda Station, Fire Station
Health Services	GPs, Pharmacies, Health Centres, Hospitals

Retail Services	Supermarkets, Convenience Shops, Speciality Services, Restaurants/Takeaways, Pubs
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Kinnegad serves as the retail centre for a larger rural catchment area and possesses a range of services, social and community facilities, including a Garda Station, Post Office, Bank, Credit Union, Primary Care Centre and health services, Creches and Churches, retail shops, public houses and a hotel within the town. St Etchen's Primary School is the sole school located within the town centre, with almost 600 pupils. There are also several active sporting and recreation clubs and facilities in the town. In recent years, the provision of a playground together with public realm improvement works in the vicinity of the church has increased both the amenity value of town and visually enhanced the existing streetscape.

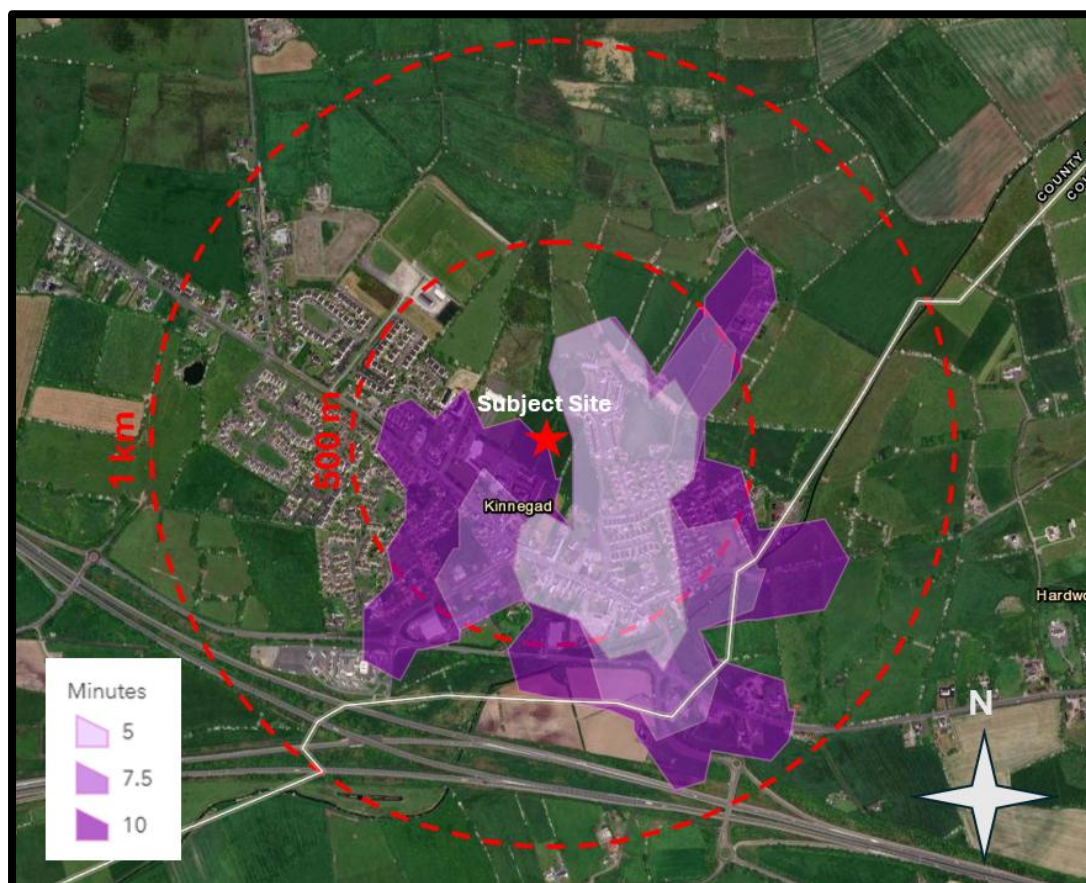


Figure 10: Walking Times from Subject Site

As illustrated within Fig 10 above, most of Kinnegad can be readily reached within 10 minutes walk from the site.

Recent Part 8 Developments within the Kinnegad

In recent years Westmeath County Council has been successful in securing €7.6M in Rural Regeneration and Development Funding to deliver the Kinnegad Regeneration Project. This project is funded under Project Ireland 2040. Westmeath County Council working in partnership with the

Longford Westmeath Education & Training Board (LWETB) and local voluntary and community groups has developed an ambitious and realistic strategic plan for the town of Kinnegad that is premised on strengthening the town's local economy and community.

This is a multi-faceted regeneration project for the core area of Kinnegad, including a Community Library, Education and Training Centre and Town Park and Community Facilities. Three schemes have recently secured planning permission via Part 8, two of which have already commenced works Community Library and Education & Training Centre and the Town Park scheme.

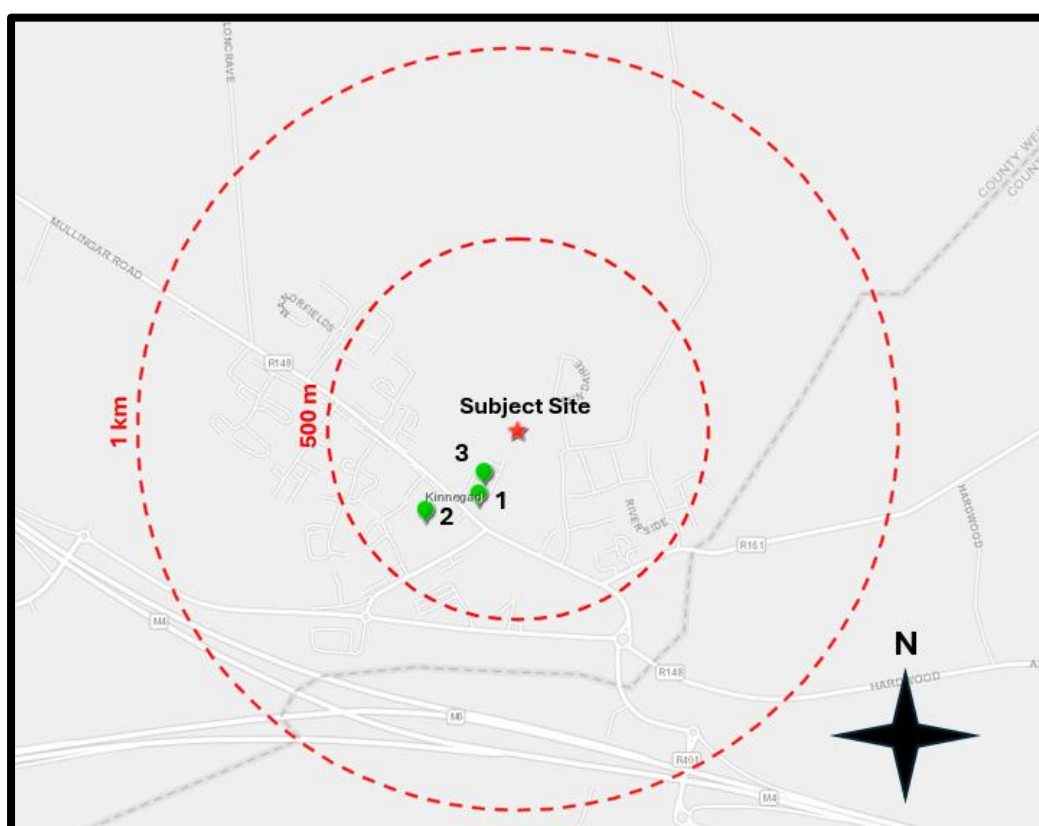


Figure 11: Recent Developments (Part 8) within Kinnegad

No. on Map	Recent Developments (Part 8)	Location	Distance
1.	Kinnegad Community Library and Education & Training Centre	Main Street, Kinnegad	c.210m
2.	Town Park and Community Facilities	Atlone Street/Mullingar Road, Kinnegad	c.320m
3.	Co-Working Hub and Enterprise Centre	St Etchens Court, Kinnegad	c.180m

Table 7: Recent Developments (Part 8) within Kinnegad

Kinnegad Community Library and Education & Training Centre

Permission was granted in December 2020 by Westmeath County Council through Part 8, for the development of a new Kinnegad Community Library and Education and Training Centre at the former National School, Main Street, Kinnegad.

The New Library and Educational Training Centre will provide much needed educational and social facilities in Kinnegad and provide a civic presence on Main Street. It creates an identifiable welcoming landmark addressing the public realm with a contemporary intervention. In summary the scheme will;

1. Deliver a modern Open Library facility and Education and Training facility, including multi-functional spaces to serve the needs of community groups, will address the unsustainable deficient socio-economic facilities, required to serve the community and groups, displaced due to the closure of the original premises in 2017.
2. Deliver a bespoke Town Park with community facilities to meet the needs for the wider community, young and old.
3. Enhance the town environment through positive placemaking and public realm interventions to assist in the socio-economic development of the area.
4. Restore a sense of identity and civic pride to Kinnegad and regain the attractiveness of Kinnegad as place to visit, work, study and live

This development will address the deficient social infrastructure and encourage economic growth in the town. The campus will provide a Community Library, Education & Training Centre and a shared space to facilitate the provision of other public services.



Figure 12: Artistic impression of proposed development. Source: Westmeath County Council

Working and Enterprise Centre, including site development works, landscaping and ancillary site works.



Figure 14: Artistic impression of proposed development. Source: Westmeath County Council

Retail Services

Kinnegad was the fastest growing of the main centres in the County over the period 2002 – 2011. This reflects its strategic location on the border of the GDA and at the nationally important interchange of the M4/N4 (Dublin – Sligo) and M6 (Dublin – Galway) motorways. The combination of population growth and location has attracted retail and commercial investment into the town. To date, this is wholly to locations outside the Main Street focus of Kinnegad Town Centre. This reflects the limited potential for any significant new retail floorspace in the heart of the town centre. There are, however, two significant backland development opportunity sites which, with the provision of direct physical links to Main Street, provide the potential for consolidation of the retail offer of the town centre. Both are located to the southeast of the Athlone Road and north of the R446.

There is a need to encourage investment in new retail and commercial space within the heart of the town centre. Underpinning this is the necessity to consolidate activities within the town centre as currently these are dispersed in the St Etchen's and Eastway schemes and the Tesco store. As part of this, the scope and potential for Kinnegad to host a Farmers' Market requires to be examined as part of a wider Markets Strategy for the County.

The subject site is easily accessible to a range of retail and entertainment services in the surrounding area. Surrounding areas include for neighbourhood centre and larger supermarkets such as Aldi and Tesco.

Neighbourhood Centre			
No. on Map	Retail/Shopping Centre	Location	Distance
1.	St Etchens Court	Etchens Court, Kinnegad	c.150m
Convenience Store/Supermarket/Petrol Filling Station			
No. on Map	Convenience Stores	Location	Distance
2.	EuroSpar	Etchens Court, Kinnegad	c.150m
3.	Euro World	Etchens Court, Kinnegad	c.160m
4.	Emo Oil – Weston Fuels	Mullingar Road, Kinnegad	c.300m
5.	Aldi	Dublin Road, Kinnegad	c.465m
6.	Tesco Superstore	Athlone Road, Kinnegad	c.530m
7.	Circle K	R148, Rossan, Kinnegad	c.740m

Table 8: Retail Facilities within 1km of subject site

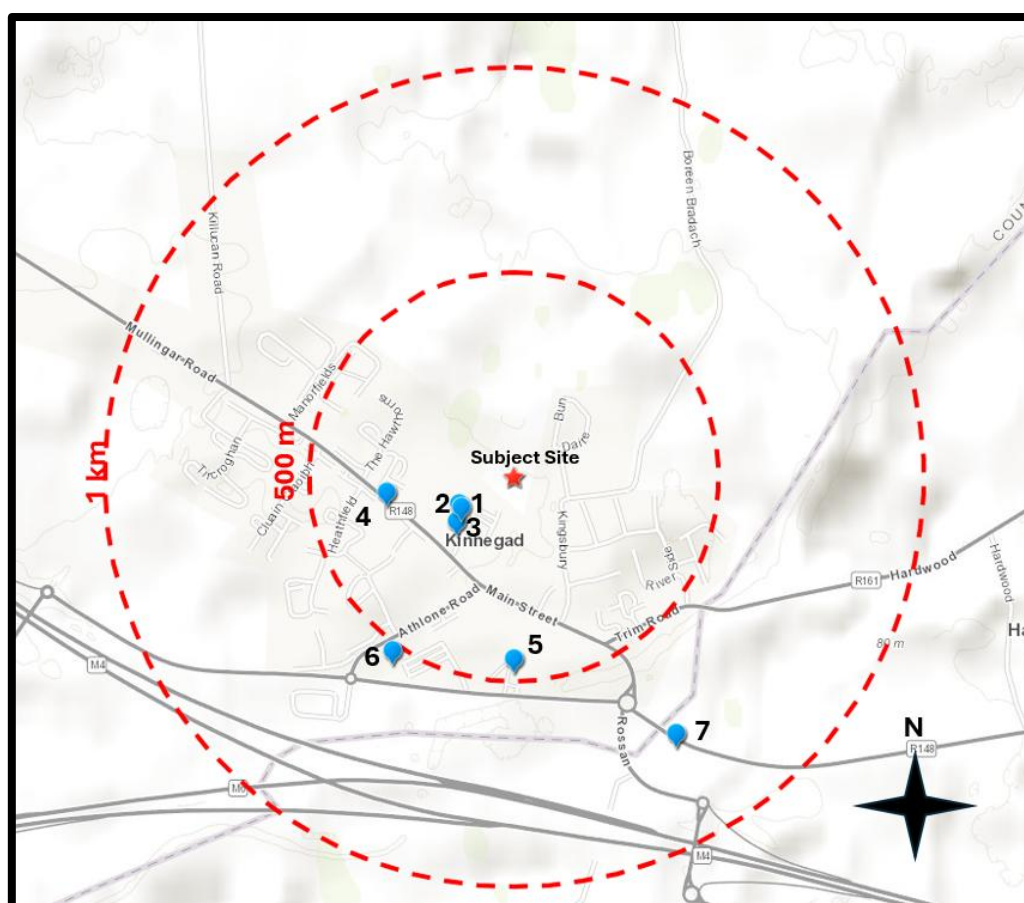


Figure 15: Retail Facilities within 1km of subject site

Health Services

The availability of, and access to, quality health services and facilities is a key element to creating sustainable neighbourhoods. There are numerous General Practitioners, Pharmacies and other health care services available within a 1km distance of the subject site.

No. on Map	Health Facility	Location	Distance
4.	Kinnegad Primary Care Centre	Main Street, Kinnegad	c.390m
5.	Kinnegad Dental	Main Street, Kinnegad	C.400m
6.	Haven Pharmacy	Main Street, Kinnegad	c.400m
7.	The Clinic (General Practice)	Main Street, Kinnegad	c.400m
8.	Ultra Sound Care	Primary Care Centre, Main Street, Kinnegad	c.420m
9.	Kinnegad Family Practice	Mullingar Road, Kinnegad	c.210m
10.	CarePlus Pharmacy	St Etchen's Court	c.200m

Table 9: Existing Health Facilities within a 1km distance of the subject site

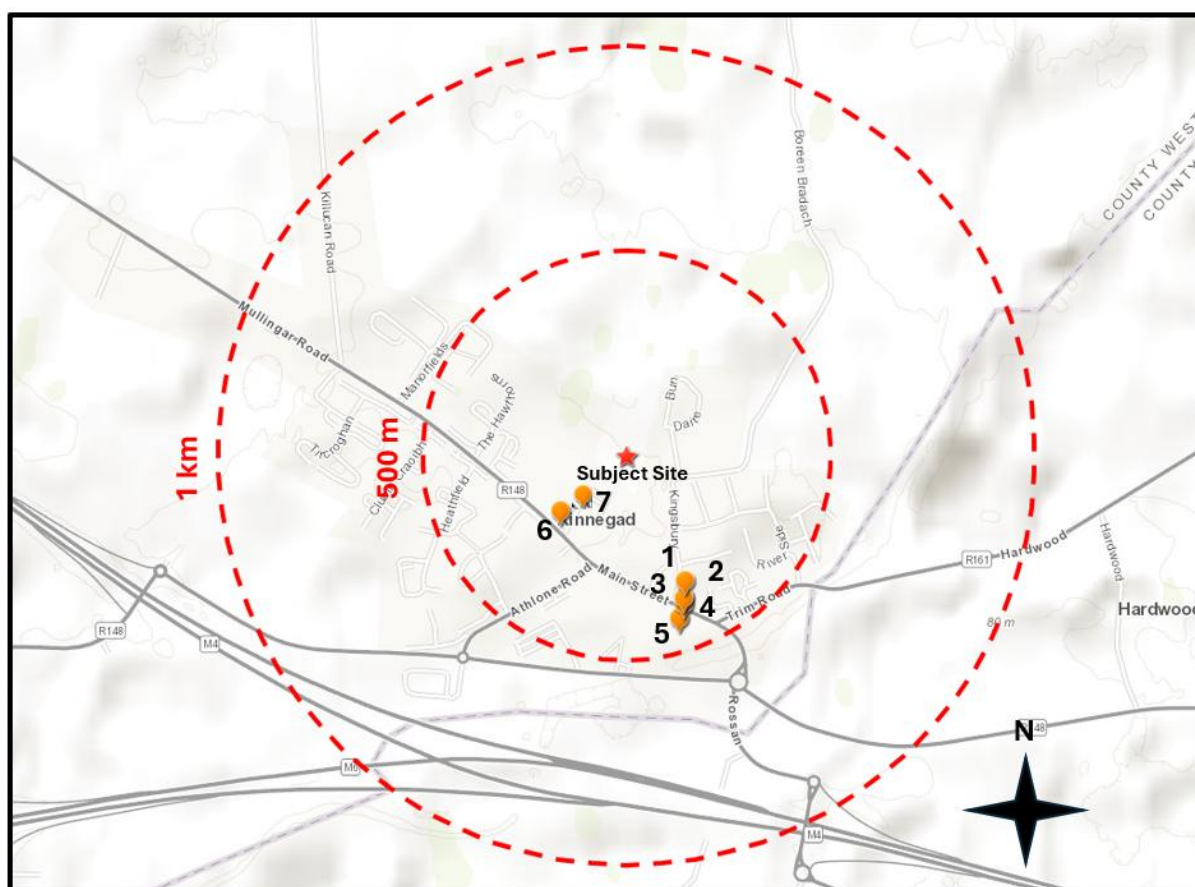


Figure 16; Existing Health Facilities within a 1km distance of the subject site

Childcare Facilities

The provision of childcare and preschool facilities is recognised by Westmeath County Council as an essential requirement for an equitable society, a thriving economy and sustainable communities and is a critical part of the County's infrastructure. Childcare is essential to enable parents to participate in the workforce and to obtain an income that provides an acceptable standard of living for both them and their children.

The timely provision of childcare and education facilities is vital to ensuring the needs of communities are met. Pobal, the government agency, maintains an up-to-date map of registered childcare facilities within Ireland, enabling more objective analysis of gaps in provision and the targeting of areas where facilities may be needed in the future. We have undertaken an analysis of existing facilities in the local area as detailed below using this data from Pobal.

The baseline study undertaken identified that within a 1km buffer there are 3 no. childcare facilities readily available.

No. on map	Existing Childcare Facilities within 1km of Subject Site	Location	Distance	Capacity ¹
	Childcare Facilities			
2	Kinnegad Montessori School and Crèche	24 Riverside, Kinnegad	c.1.1m	50
3	Magic Steps	37 Manorfield, Kinnegad,	c.1.1m	45
4	Cairdeas Childcare	Cairdeas Community Childcare Centre, Killucan Road,		100

Table 10; Existing Childcare Facilities within 1km of Subject Site

¹ Data obtained from https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Westmeath_FEB25.pdf

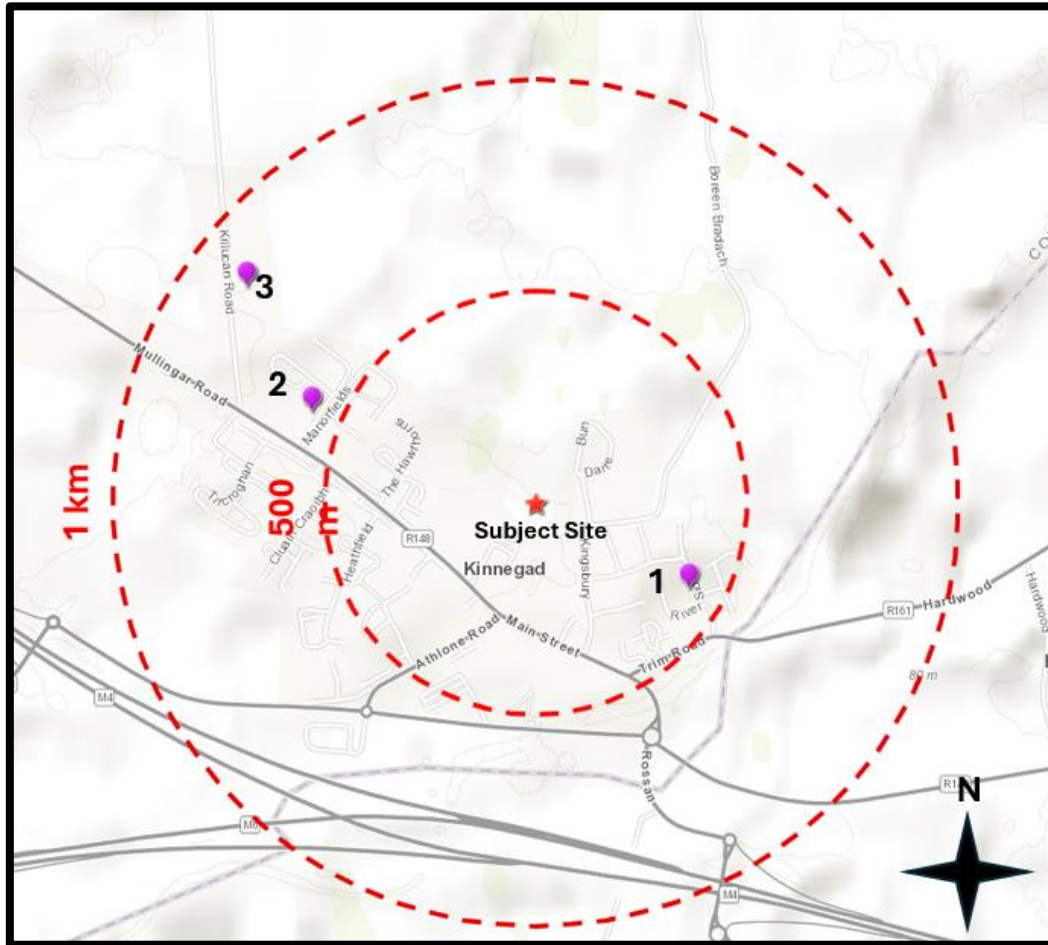


Figure 17: Existing Childcare Facilities within 1km of Subject Site

Creche Usage

Quarterly National Household Survey

The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) carried out by the Central Statistics Office includes a Special Module on Childcare. The most recent report on this module was published for Quarter 3 2016. What the figures indicate is that Crèche/Montessori attendance for pre-school age children nationally is 19%, with the Midland Region slightly lower at 14% (Source: CSO.ie).

Type of childcare	Pre-school children								State
	Border	Midland	West	Dublin	Mid-East	Mid-West	South-East	South-West	
Parent / Partner	65	56	59	62	65	51	67	65	62
Unpaid relative or family friend	16	13	18	16	16	16	20	22	17
Paid relative or family friend	2	5	2	3	5	1	4	2	3
Childminder / Au Pair / Nanny	13	18	21	8	13	13	13	12	13
Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility	15	14	15	25	14	28	17	16	19
Other	1	<1	<1	1	<1	1	1	1	1
Total pre-school children using non-parental childcare	45	47	49	46	45	53	45	45	46
<i>Unweighted sample</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>136</i>	<i>234</i>	<i>525</i>	<i>244</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>230</i>	<i>316</i>	<i>2,072</i>

Figure 18: Extract from Quarterly National Household Survey, 2016 Special Module on Childcare

Census 2022

The Census 2022 provides more up to date and county specific data in relation to childcare usage. The Census identified that of the children aged 15 and under in Ireland almost one in three (331,783) were in some form of childcare. Just over four in 10 were in a crèche or similar facility (42%), while more than one in four were cared for by an unpaid relative or family member (28%). Of those in childcare, almost two-thirds attended on a part-time basis (up to 20 hours per week) while almost one in six attended for 31 hours or more each week.

For Westmeath County, it was found that the number of children in creche/ Montessori/ playgroup or afterschool is lower than the national average at 38.75%. It is noted, as demonstrated by the tables below, that this figure includes children being minded by a relative, childminder, au pair or nanny, a creche, Montessori, playgroup or afterschool facility.

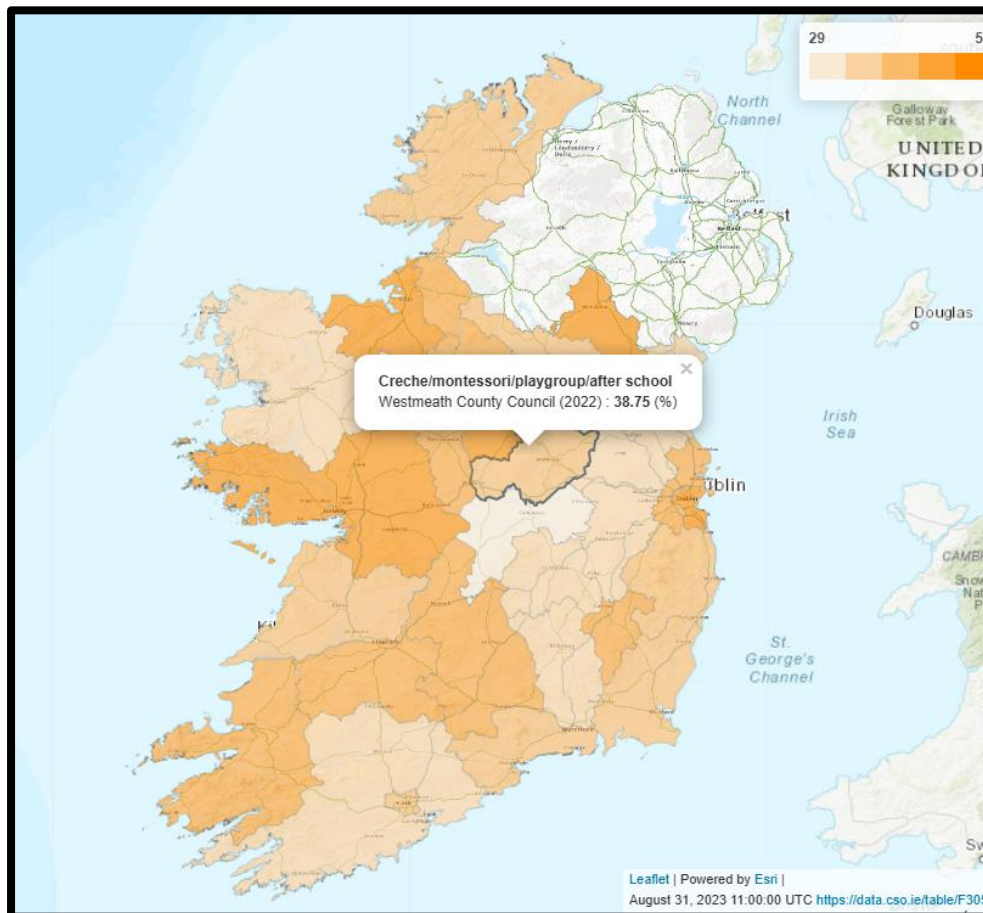


Figure 19: Census 2022 data indicating all children minded by people other than their parent

Demand for Childcare Places Likely to be Generated by Proposed Scheme

The proposed application consists of the following:

Proposed Development Unit Mix		
Type of unit	Amount provided	Percentage
1-Bed House	2	2%
2-Bed House	11	9%
3-Bed House	97	75%
4-Bed House	19	14%
Total	129	100%

Table 11: Unit Breakdown for proposed development

Based on an average household size of 2.74 (2022 CSO Census) then the estimated population of the overall development would be c.355 persons. Based on the 2022 Census figures for the area then the population estimate for the 0-4 age cohort (pre-school at 5.8% of total population for the 2 electoral divisions within 1km of the subject site) equates to c.21 children for the entire development.

It is noted that the 2023 Apartment Guidelines recommends, one bed units should be excluded when calculating childcare demand in new developments. Excluding the 1-bed unit leaves 127 units. The estimated 0-4 age cohort (5.8%) population for these future family households excluding 1 no. bed units would still equate to c.21 children (on the basis of a 2.75 average household size).

However, not all 0–4-year-olds are likely to require private childcare given that some will be cared for by parents, guardians, relatives and/or childminders.

	2001 Guidelines	2023 Apartment Guidelines
	All Units	Without 1 Units
Calculation based on 2001 Guidelines		
No. of units	129	127
2001 Guidelines (20 no. spaces/75 no. units)	35	34
Refined estimate based on population analysis as advised in the 2023 Apartment Guidelines (2.74 per household, assuming a higher household ratio)		
Total Population generated	355	350
Population 0-4 (5.8% of Pop)	21	21

Table 12: Calculations for the number of childcare spaces required for the proposed development

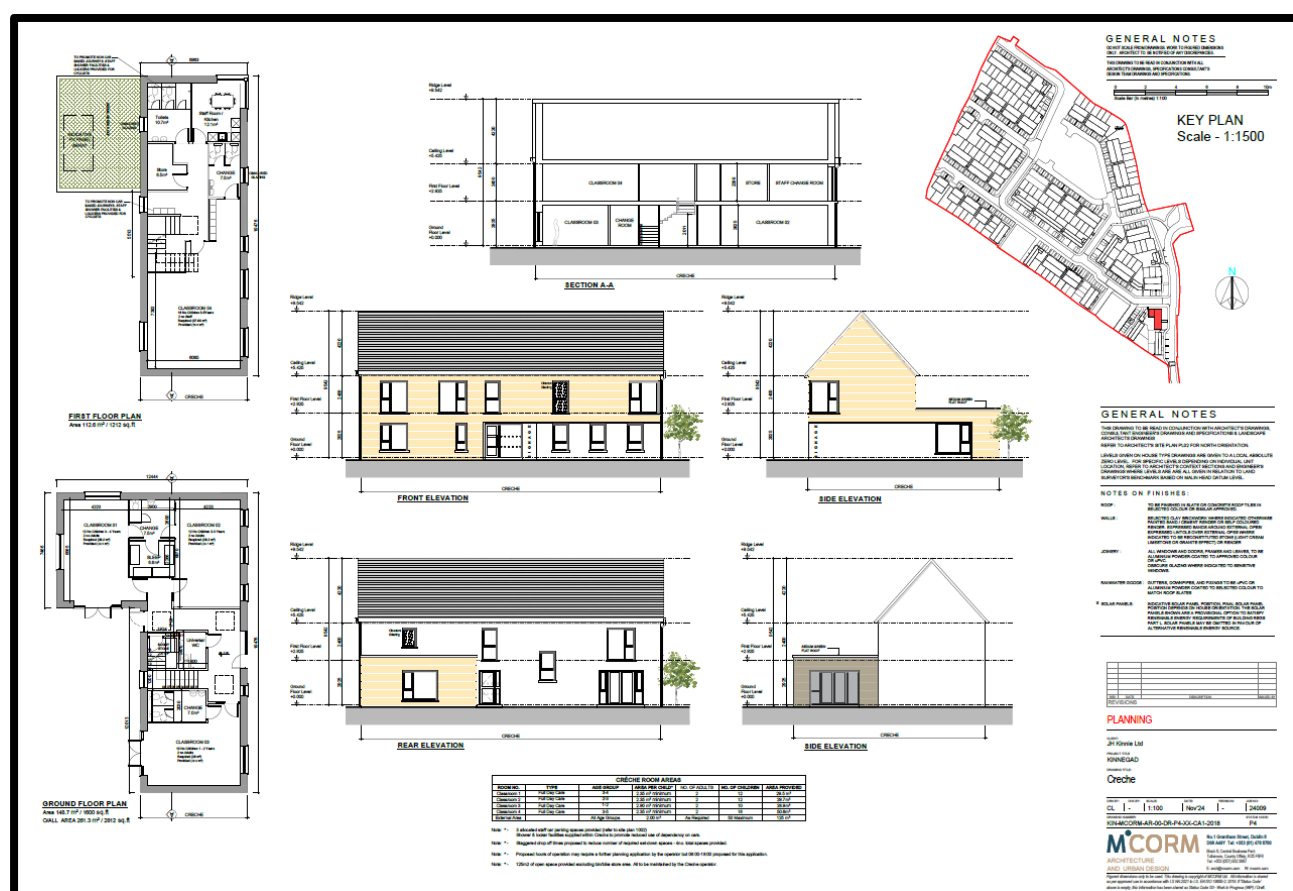


Figure 20: Proposed Creche Facility

Notwithstanding the above a creche is proposed as part of the development to provide for 47 childcare spaces, which will accommodate the full development and also provide capacity for the wider area. On this basis the sizing of the creche is considered appropriate for the development. This will have a positive effect on population and human health as the proposed creche will accommodate for the 47 no. childcare spaces required which is more than the need generated by the development.

In conclusion given the fact that there are only 3 no. childcare facilities in operation within 1km of the application site, the design team has incorporated a childcare facility measuring 261sqm to accommodate the future population given the facility will cater for 47 no. children.

Emergency Services

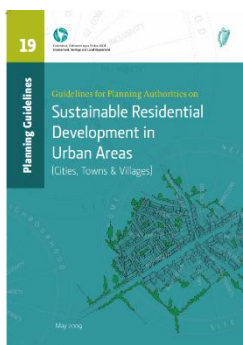
Kinnegad Garda Station located along Mullingar Road is approx. 250m from the subject site. Mullingar Fire Station is located c. 19km from the site, with Mullingar General Hospital located approx. 22km away.

School Capacity Assessment

This section of the report has been prepared to demonstrate school capacity in the Kildare Town Development Area. The report will assess the likely demand for school places resulting from the proposed development at the proposed site.

Relevant Policy

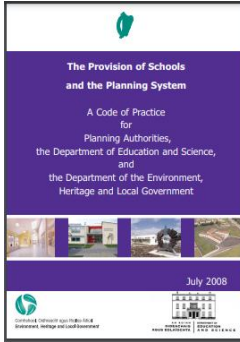
Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)



The guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) states that: *“Within the development management process, it is recommended that planning applications for 200+ dwelling units should be accompanied by a report identifying the demand for school places likely to be generated by the proposal and the capacity of existing schools in the vicinity to cater for such demand. In very large-scale residential developments (say, 800+ units), planning authorities must consider whether there is a need to link the phased completion of dwellings with the provision of new school facilities.”*

The proposed development comprises 139 no. units and whilst it falls below the ‘200+ dwelling units’ category, a school capacity audit has been requested by Westmeath County Council as part of the LRD Opinion. This report will assess the capacity of schools, social and community context in the Kinnegad town area in line with the above policy.

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



This code of practice sets out the guidance for planning authorities in ensuring that the planning system fulfils its role in facilitating the roll out of school facilities by the Department of Education and Skills in line with the principle of proper planning and sustainable development.

The provision of schools and the Planning System state that the effective integration of the schools and development planning systems has three core objectives:

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

Desktop research of the schools in the area was carried out using the available information from The Department of Education and other mapping sources. A 7.5km catchment area was chosen on the basis for examining the schools in relation to the subject site.

Within this catchment area there are seven primary schools and one post-primary school. The locations of these schools are shown in figure below and in the following tables. The Department of Education provides enrolment information for all primary and post primary schools in the country. The 2023/2024 enrolment figures for the schools within 1km of the subject site.

These education facilities 2023/2024 enrolment figures for each education facility are displayed in the table below.

No. on map	Primary School	Enrolment (23/24)	
		Boys	Girls
1.	St Etchens National School	255	188
2.	St Finians National School	22	17
3.	Castlejordan Central National School	43	43
4.	St Josephs National School	146	145
5.	Coralstown Primary School	28	32
6.	Killyon National School	39	39
7.	Raharney National School	32	43
	Post Primary School		
8.	Columba College	184	122

Table 13: Schools within 7.5km buffer of subject site

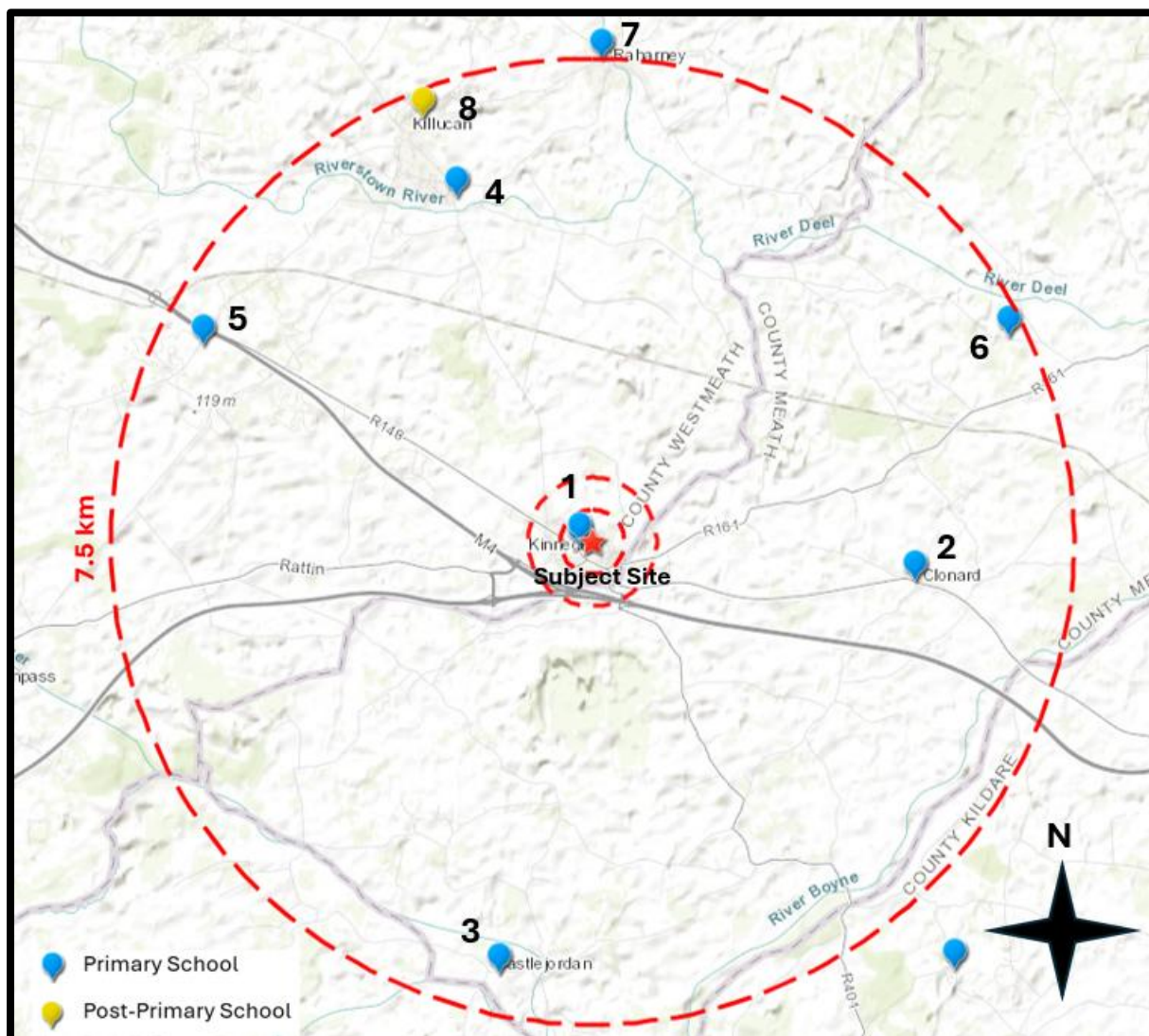


Figure 21: Schools within 7.5km buffer of subject site

It is acknowledged that only one post primary school falls within the 7.5km buffer, this study opted to include post primary schools in nearby Mullingar/Longwood/Rochfortbridge/Edenderry/Enfield which can all be reached within c. 20mins via bus/car.

Post Primary School	Enrolment (23/24)		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Enfield Community College	215	197	412
St Mary's, Edenderry	494	506	1000
Oaklands Community College, Edenderry	444	387	831
Coláiste Clavin, longwood	280	199	479
St Joseph's, Rochfortbridge	536	513	1049
Mullingar Community College	222	141	363
Colaiste Mhuire, Mullingar	841	-	841

Loreto College, Mullingar	-	841	841
St Finian's College, Mullingar	412	437	849

Table 14: Post Primary School

School Capacity

This section of the report has been prepared to demonstrate school capacity in the catchments Development Area. The report will assess the likely demand for school places resulting from the proposed development at the proposed site.

Primary School (within 7.5km)	Enrolment (19/20)		Enrolment (20/21)		Enrolment (21/22)		Enrolment (22/23)		Enrolment (23/24)		% change from 2019 to 2024
	Boys	Girls	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
St Etchens National School	236	299	221	288	199	248	192	255	188	255	-30.3%
Total	535		509		447		447		373		
St Finians National School	33	64	18	29	15	27	17	25	17	22	-59.8%
Total	97		47		42		42		39		
Castlejordan Central National School	38	85	45	40	44	41	46	41	43	43	-30.1%
Total	123		85		86		87		86		
St Josephs National School	138	144	131	145	137	146	143	143	145	146	+3.2%
Total	282		276		283		288		291		
Coralstown Primary School	55	47	47	42	43	43	40	36	32	28	-41.2
Total	102		89		86		76		60		
Killyon National School	50	41	47	47	47	42	45	41	39	39	-14.3%
Total	91		94		89		86		78		
Raharney National School	62	55	59	52	46	41	44	43	43	32	-36.8%
Total	117		111		87		87		74		
Post Primary School (within 7.5km)	Enrolment (19/20)		Enrolment (20/21)		Enrolment (21/22)		Enrolment (22/23)		Enrolment (23/24)		% change from 2019 to 2024
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Boys	Girls	
Columba College	118	126	115	141	122	156	113	182	184	122	+25.4%
Total	244		256		278		295		306		

Table 15: School Capacity within 7.5km of subject site

Post Primary School	Enrolment (19/20)	Enrolment (20/21)	Enrolment (21/22)	Enrolment (22/23)	Enrolment (23/24)	% change from
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	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	2019 to 2024
Enfield Community College	-	-	22	16	61	77	120	140	197	215	+984%
Total	-		38		138		260		412		
St Mary's, Edenderry	441	434	441	463	459	468	477	473	506	494	+14.2%
Total	875		904		927		950		1000		
Oaklands Community College, Edenderry	394	414	375	442	380	441	417	430	387	444	+2.84
Total	808		817		821		847		831		
Coláiste Clavin, Longwood	142	229	168	248	205	258	202	258	199	280	+29.11%
Total	371		416		463		460		479		
St Joseph's, Rochfortbridge	452	433	455	465	473	497	499	515	513	536	+18.53%
Total	885		920		970		1,014		1,049		
Mullingar Community College	119	182	118	172	114	195	138	195	141	222	+20.6%
Total	301		290		309		333		363		
Colaiste Mhuire	20	766	-	774	-	794	-	837	-	841	+9.8%
Total	766		744		794		837		841		
Loreto College	852	-	876	-	876	-	858	-	841	-	-1.3%
Total	852		876		876		858		841		
St Finian's College	396	418	408	410	415	424	421	417	437	412	+4.3%
Total	814		818		839		838		849		

Table 16: Highest Pupil Populations at Primary and at Post Primary School Level

The tables below set out the highest pupil populations at primary and at post primary school level. The tables also indicate the enrolment numbers for 23/24 and what the difference/ capacity is overall in each school.

Primary School	Highest pupils since 2019/2020	23/24 Enrolment	Capacity in 2024
St Etchens National School	535 (2019/2020)	373	162
St Finians National School	97 (2019/2020)	39	58
Castlejordan Central National School	123 (2019/2020)	86	37
St Josephs National School	291 (2023/2024)	291	0
Coralstown Primary School	102 (2019/2020)	60	42
Killyon National School	94 (2020/2021)	78	16
Raharney National School	117 (2019/2020)	74	74

Total capacity	1,359	1,001	358
Post Primary School	Highest pupils since 2019	23/24 Enrolment	Capacity in 2024
Enfield Community College	412 (2023/2024)	412	0
St Mary's, Edenderry	1,000 (2023/2024)	1,000	0
Oaklands Community College, Edenderry	847 (2022/2023)	831	16
Coláiste Clavin, longwood	479 (2023/2024)	479	0
St Joseph's, Rochfortbridge	1049 (2023/2024)	1049	
Columba College	306 (2023/2024)	306	0
Mullingar Community College	363 (2023/2024)	363	0
Colaiste Mhuire	841 (2023/2024)	841	0
Loreto College	876 (2020/2021 & 2021/2022)	841	35
St Finian's College	849 (2023/2024)	849	0
Total capacity	7,022	6,971	51

Table 17: Highest Pupil Populations at Primary and at Post Primary School Level

Overall, primary school enrolment has seen a significant decline, with most schools experiencing reductions in student numbers. The largest decreases were in St Finian's National School (-59.8%), which dropped from 97 to 39 students, Coralstown Primary School (-41.2%), which declined from 102 to 60, and Raharney National School (-36.8%), which fell from 117 to 74. Other notable decreases include Castlejordan Central National School (-30.1%), down from 123 to 86, and St Etchen's National School (-30.3%), which fell from 535 to 373. The smallest decline was in Killucan National School (-14.3%), dropping from 91 to 78, while St Joseph's National School (+3.2%) was the only primary school to see an increase, growing from 282 to 291 students.

In contrast, post-primary schools have generally experienced growth. Coláiste Clavin, Longwood saw the highest increase with a 29.11% rise, followed by Columbia College, with 25.4%. Mullingar Community College and St Mary's, Edenderry also experienced notable growth, at 20.6% and 14.2%, respectively. St Finian's College had a moderate increase of 4.3%, while Colaiste Mhuire grew by 9.8%. Loreto College (-1.3%) was the only secondary school to see a slight decline, dropping from 852 to 841 students. Overall, primary school enrolment has declined by an average of 30%, while secondary schools have grown by approximately 12% over the same period. In terms of gender, many schools had a balanced enrolment, but some, like Oaklands Community College and Mullingar Community College, had a higher number of boys. Overall, the trend shows a mix of steady growth and a small decline at Loreto College.

The Department of Education issued a report in December 2021 which discusses 'Education Indicators for Ireland.' This report is established based upon goals set out in the Department of Education 'Statement of Strategy 2021-2023.' Goal 3 of this strategy demonstrates an aim of providing "strategic leadership and support for the delivery of the right systems and infrastructure for the sector." School buildings, new capacity and school transport are educational indicators which fall under this goal. Within the 'Enrolments and Capacity' section of this report it is illustrated that the number of pupils in primary schools is on a downwards trajectory since 2018.

The below table illustrates the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools from 2016 to 2020.

Table 18 No. of pupils enrolled in primary schools 2016 to 2020

Indicator	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of pupils in primary school	558,314	563,459	567,772	567,716	561,411
of which in DEIS schools	104,014	110,273	110,969	110,625	108,449
of which in Non-DEIS schools	454,300	453,186	456,803	457,091	452,962

In relation to post-primary schools the report indicates a sharp rise in post-primary school enrolments which reflects the opening of 19 additional post primary schools since 2016.

Table 19 No. of pupils enrolled in post primary school 2016 - 2020

Indicator	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of pupils in post-primary school	352,257	357,408	362,899	371,450	379,184
of which in DEIS schools	68,183	73,415	74,142	75,967	77,756
of which in Non-DEIS schools	284,074	283,993	288,757	295,483	301,428

The report identifies additional permanent places provided for both primary and post-primary schools. The table below reflects the downward trajectory in the number of primary school enrolments, additional places have decreased drastically since 2016 for primary schools. Post-primary school places remain at a similar trend, and it is projected that this steady increase will continue. The finding of this school capacity audit would correlate with the DOE Report, in that, the number of pupils in primary schools is on a downwards trajectory since 2019.

Impact of the Development

An analysis of the 2022 Census information shows that the total population for the local area (2 electoral divisions) was 4,122 people, of which were of primary school age (5-12) and 866 were of post-primary school age (13-18). This equates to approximately 24.2% of the population as school age.

Table 20 Census 2022 school population data

Local Area Catchment	Number of People	% Total 2022 Population
School Age (5-18)	1,000	24.2%
Total 2022 Population	4,122	24.2%

Table 13 Breakdown of 2016 Local Population

The national household size, according to the 2022 census, is 2.74 people. The proposed residential development contains 129 no. units and will have an expected population of c. 355 when mature. Using the percentages explained above, the estimated maximum school going population that would be generated by the development is c.86.

Table 21 Proposed development potential population and school population

Projected School Aged Population of Development	Projected Population when Mature
Total Population	357
School Age (5-18)	86

Table 14 Projected School Aged Population of Development

Assuming the highest figures based on all the units proposed included in the school population forecast there is sufficient spaces in the existing schools based on data provided by the schools themselves to accommodate the proposed development.

Based on the assessment of the primary school capacity in the 1km catchment, an estimated total capacity of 162 no. spaces available, while if extended to 7.5km catchment there is an estimated total capacity of 196 no. spaces available.

It is noted, post-primary schools have generally experienced growth, based on the assessment of the post primary school capacity within 7.5km and the proposed catchment area, an estimated total capacity of 51 no. spaces available.

Therefore, it is considered that there will be sufficient capacity within the schools in the area to cater for the increased demand expected from the proposed development by the time of occupation and over the intervening years. It is noted enrolment levels in schools change over time and national enrolment projections estimate decreasing enrolment numbers first at primary school and 5 years later at post primary school. These national projections are carried out by the Department of Education. This is likely to be reflected in the coming years in this ED area given the reduction in population of 0–4-year-olds in the 2022 which decreased by -21.8%.

The Department of Education published *Projections of Full-Time Enrolment Primary and Second Level 2020-2038* in November 2020 which outlined the results of 3 possible scenarios for the future enrolment in schools. Enrolment projections show that primary school enrolment numbers reached their peak in 2018 and that a continuous decline in enrolment until 2036 is expected. The projected enrolment for post-primary schools is not expected to peak until 2024 or 2025, which is then expected to be followed by a continuous decline until 2039.

It is noted that these national projections may not be precisely applicable to each local area, although as a general guidance they are informative. Following these projections, it can be assumed that the increase in school aged children caused by the development will be lower than the c. 86 as projected above, at any one time.

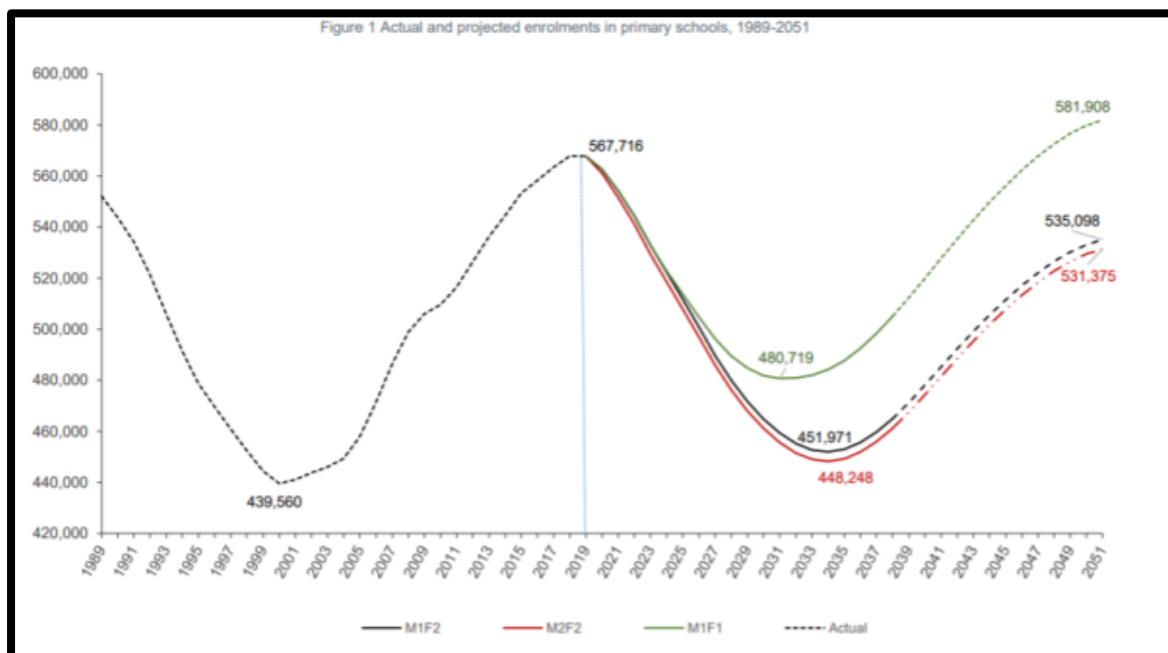


Figure 22 Projected Primary School Enrolment. Source: Dept. of Education

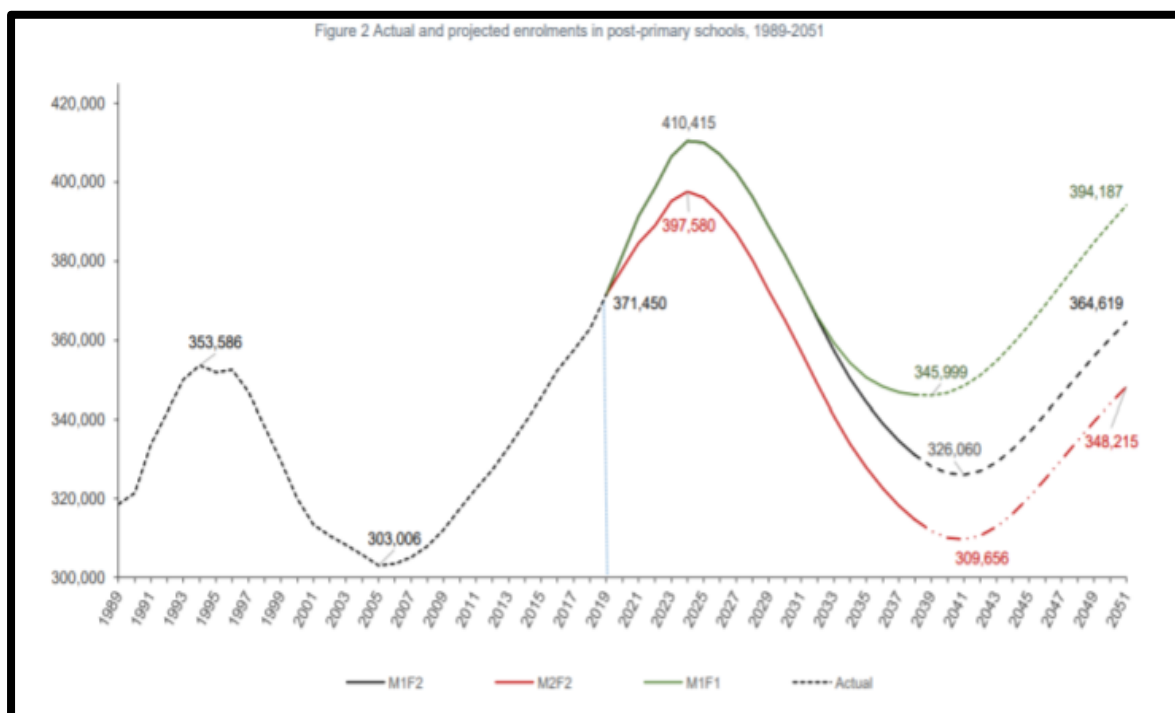


Figure 23 Projected Post-Primary Enrolment. Source: Dept. of Education

We note that the CDP acknowledges the enrolment figures within Kinnegad,

“St. Etchens Primary School occupies a central and considerable landbank along the Mullingar Road. The plan supports the consolidation of future educational facilities at this location. Given current

enrolment levels, it is anticipated that a need may arise for a Secondary School to serve the town. Lands have been suitably zoned in this regard.”

Whilst there are currently no extant permissions to built a post primary school in Kinnegad, as acknowledged within the CPD, The plan supports the consolidation of future educational facilities at this location. Given the above, it is considered that there would be sufficient capacity within the schools in the area to cater for the increased school place demand expected from the current proposed development in the short term.

The proposed additional population which will be delivered as a result of this development will enable these schools to maintain their pupil numbers and continue to be viable.

Conclusion

This Social Infrastructure Audit has highlighted both the existing strengths and future priorities for Kinnegad’s social & community infrastructure network. It is considered that there is a sufficient provision of existing social infrastructure within Kinnegad to cater for the proposed development and future populations.

The Kinnegad Regeneration Projects (Part 8 schemes) stands out as a leading example of positive, community-driven investment—demonstrating what can be achieved through strategic planning, collaboration, and sustained funding. With projects like the new Community Library, Education and Training Centre, and Town Park already underway, Westmeath is well-positioned to build a more inclusive, connected, and vibrant future for all residents.

It has been demonstrated that there is existing capacity within both primary and secondary level schools to accommodate this increase in student population. It is also important to note that these demands will not be generated instantaneously given that the scheme will be developed over several phases and will likely consist of many couples and starter families in the first instance who won’t initially have children of school going age.

The proposed development includes a childcare facility c261sq.m and has the capacity to accommodate 47 no. children. Therefore, any deficit in childcare facilities in the area has been adequately addressed in the development. The subject site is also well served by healthcare facilities within a short distance from the site. In addition, there are an extensive range of GP clinics and pharmacies located in the area which will serve the needs of future residents at the subject site.