



COAKLEY O'NEILL
town planning

Schools Demand Assessment

Large-scale Residential Development at
Pope's Hill, Cork

Prepared in April 2026 on behalf of

Pontorac Limited

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We, Coakley O' Neill Town Planning Ltd, NSC Campus, Mahon, Co. Cork, have been instructed by Pontorac Limited to prepare this Schools Needs Assessment to accompany a Large-Scale Residential (LRD) planning application on a site at Pope's Road, Pope's Hill, Blackpool, Cork City.
- 1.2 The proposed development will consist of a Large-Scale Residential (LRD) on a site at Pope's Road, Pope's Hill, Blackpool, Cork City which will include the demolition of a terrace of 4 no. existing dwellings, 3 no. of which are derelict, and ancillary sheds and their replacement with 1 no. single-storey 3-bed detached bungalow accessed via a modified private driveway, and the construction of 103 no. dwellings (18 no. 1-beds, 9 no. 2-beds, 68 no. 3-beds and 8 no. 4-beds) between 2-4 storeys in height, to include 50 no. townhouses (3 no. 2-bed units, 39 no. 3-bed units and 8 no. 4-bed units); and 53 no. duplex apartments (18 no. 1-bed apartments, 6 no. 2-bed apartments, and 29 no. 3-bed apartments).
- 1.3 This Schools Needs Assessment examines the demand and details of the current and future capacity of existing and proposed schools in the area along with the demand for places likely to be generated by the proposed development.
- 1.4 In undertaking a review of the required school provision for the proposed development, this report will:
- Consider the demographic trends in the catchment area
 - Assess the capacity of existing schools within the catchment area
 - Estimate the future student yield
- 1.5 This Schools Need Assessment has been prepared in response to item no. 16 of Cork City Council's LRD Opinion Report .

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The subject site is located to the east of Blackpool Village and to the north of Cork City Centre while Collins' Barracks is located to the east and southeastern edge of the subject lands. The lands are approximately 2.581ha and are part brownfield and part greenfield, orientated on an east to west axis with extensive slope from east to west. The lands currently comprise of an existing residential property, garage and storage shed, with 2 no. further sheds located at the southern corner of the site.
- 2.2 The subject site has an existing vehicle access to its southwest corner from Popes Road, which travels west towards Assumption Road and onwards towards the North City Link Road. There is existing residential development on the western boundary of the subject site while the existing Military Cemetery, Glentrasna Crescent and Glentrasna Avenue bound the northern side of the subject lands. A large retaining wall defines the northern boundary of the subject site. Christian Brother's College sports ground and the car park for Collins' Barracks bounds the site to the south.



Figure 1 - Subject site generally outlined in red.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 This section outlines the relevant national and local policy context for the provision of school facilities.

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice

3.2 The Guidelines by the Department of Education and Science and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2008) for the provision of schools outline the following core objectives for the effective integration of schools and development planning systems:

- Schools provision should be an integral part of the evolution of compact sustainable urban development and the development of sustainable communities.
- 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
- Local authorities, as planning authorities, will support and assist the Department in ensuring the timely provision of school sites.

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

3.3 The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (hereinafter the Plan) states the following with regard to education in the City area.

3.4 Access to quality education is a key principle of the Plan which is highlighted through Strategic Outcome 2 (Delivering Homes and Communities) and Strategic Outcome 9 (Placemaking and Managing Development), which both seek to ensure access to quality childcare, education and health services.

- 3.5 Section 11.169 states that *“the provision of suitable and adequate educational facilities is an essential element of any community”*.
- 3.6 Section 3.72 of the Plan states that *“the provision of suitable and adequate schools (primary and post-primary) is an essential element of any community, and this will become more important as Cork City accommodates unprecedented growth between now and 2040”*.
- 3.7 According to the Plan, the Department of Education has prepared preliminary projections of requirements for school places in Cork City up to 2031, and the projections suggest a potential need of up to 26 new or expanded primary schools and up to 7 new or expanded post-primary schools. This preliminary assessment suggests that 5-6 new or expanded primary schools and 1 new or expanded post-primary school are envisaged as being required in the immediate vicinity of the catchment area of the proposed development over the next decade.

Department of Education Preliminary Assessment of Additional Education Capacity		
School Planning Area	Number of new or expanded Primary Schools (baseline figure)	Number of new or expanded Secondary Schools (baseline figure)
Ballintemple	5-7	1-2
Montentotte	2-3	1
Glasheen	1-3	0
Gurranabraher	5-6	1
Ballincollig	2	1
Blarney	1-2	1
Glanmire	1	1
South Suburbs	2	1

Table 1 - Department of Environment Preliminary Assessment of Additional Education Capacity. (Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028).

- 3.8 Objective 3.24 ‘Schools Facilities’ of the Plan outlines the following:
- a) *To work closely with the Department of Education in planning the delivery of new schools in-step with new housing development in the City.*
 - b) *To ensure that new school sites are made available in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education*
 - c) *To encourage the co-location of schools as part of education campuses and with other community uses to create community hubs. This could facilitate the sharing of halls, playing fields and courts where feasible.*
 - d) *Work closely with the Department of Education and Skills and landowners to ensure that new schools are provided to meet the needs of new residential neighbourhoods at: City Docks, Tivoli Docks, Ballincollig Maglin, Ballyvolane, South Glanmire, Blarney (Stoneview), Kilbarry/Blackpool Neighbourhood, and Douglas (Castletreasure).*

4.0 CATCHMENT AREA

Demographic Trends

- 4.1 Initially, the demographic profile of Cork City and its Suburbs were examined, as the subject site is within the defined settlement area as per the 2022 Census. The Census noted that the population of Cork City and its Suburbs increased from 208,669 people in 2016 to 224,004 in 2022. This represents an increase of 15,335 people, or a 6.8% increase in population over the same period.
- 4.2 The total population within this 2km radius was 61,201 people in 2016, which represented an increase of 3,876 people, or 6.76% since 2011. There was a further increase in population growth seen between 2016 and 2022 of 7.92% with the catchment area reaching a population of 66,048 people.
- 4.3 A review of the Census 2022 data for Cork City and Suburbs show that approximately 40% of the population that travel to school, college or childcare, use a form of public transport or active travel to reach their destination. Of which approximately 38% travel for a ¼ hour to under ½ hour.

Distribution of Schools

- 4.4 The subject site is located within the northern Cork City inner suburban area of Blackpool, which is situated at the heart of the Cork Metropolitan Area. For the purpose of this Schools Needs Assessment, an approximate 2km catchment radius was considered appropriate for this study, as such an area generally comprises school locations approximately 30-minutes walk/15-minute cycle from the subject site.
- 4.5 A total number of 21 (12no. Primary Schools and 9no. Secondary Schools) schools were identified within the catchment area. The location of these facilities is identified in the Table 2 below; this table identifies the approximate distance of each school from the site.

School Name and Location	Primary/Secondary	Approximate Distance
Scoil Aiseirí Chríost, Knockpogue Avenue, Farranree	Primary	1.2km
Saint Patrick's Girls National School, Gardiner's Hill, Montenotte	Primary	970m
Cork Educate Together, Grattan Street	Primary	1.4km
North Presentation Catholic Primary School, Gerald Griffin Street, Blackpool	Primary	720m
Saint Mark' Boys National School, Glen Avenue, The Glen	Primary	700m
Saint Patrick's Boys Primary School, Gardiners Hill, Montenotte	Primary	880m
Saint Lukes School, O' Mahony's Avenue, Montenotte	Primary	920m
Saint Vincents National School, Saint Mary's Road	Primary	935m

North Monastery Primary School, North Monastery Road	Primary	1km
Saint Brendan's Catholic School, Thomas Kent Park, The Glen	Primary	270m
Scoil Oilibhéir, Dublin Hill, Ballyvolane	Primary	1.5km
Scoil Cholmcille, Blarney Street	Primary	1.4km
Cork Educate Together Secondary School, Griffith College, Wellington Road	Secondary	720m
North Monastery Co-Educational Secondary School, North Monastery Road	Secondary	890m
Gaelcholáiste Mhuire A.G, North Monastery Road	Secondary	920m
Saint Vincent's Secondary School, Saint Mary's Road	Secondary	800m
Scoil Mhuire Cork, Sidney Place, Wellington Road, Victorian Quarter	Secondary	750m
Nano Nagle College, Knockpogue Avenue, Farranree	Secondary	1.2km
Saint Angela's College, Saint Patrick's Hill	Secondary	700m
Saint Patrick's College, Gardiner's Hill, Montenotte	Secondary	850m

Table 2 - Distribution of primary and secondary schools in the catchment area

4.6 There are also 3 no. Special Schools in the catchment area, these include, Scoil Eanna, St. Paul's School and St. Kevins School.

5.0 FUTURE DEMAND CREATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT

5.1 This report assesses the likely demand for schools created by the proposed development of 104no. residential units comprising of 50no. townhouses, 53no. duplex apartments and 1 no. bungalow dwelling. The mix of dwellings is broken downs as follows:

- 18 no. 1-bed dwellings
- 9 no. 2-bed dwellings
- 69 no. 3-bed dwellings
- 8 no. 4-bed dwellings

Total = 104 no. dwellings

5.2 18no. of the proposed units are 1-bed dwellings, these have been omitted in the evaluation of the proposed development and the demand it will create for schools, this is also consistent with the approach to the delivery of childcare facilities.

5.3 This assessment has been restricted to the likely demand arising from the proposed development in respect of the 2-bed, 3-bed and 4-bed proposed units, which comprises a total of 86no. units.

5.4 Using the most up to date CSO figures, based on the average national household size of 2.7 people per household, it can be estimated that the proposed development of 86 no. units could result in a population of c. 232no. people residing in them.

5.5 In 2022 enrolments in primary schools stood at 558,143 (11% of the population), while enrolment in post primary schools was 406,392 (8% of the population). Using these percentages as the number of primary school going age and post primary school going aged children, the likely demand this proposed development will generate, can be demonstrated (11/8% of the potential population of the development).

5.6 The proposed development could potentially generate the following demand for primary school spaces:

11% of 232 no. people = **25 potential primary school spaces**

5.7 The proposed development could potentially generate the following demand for primary school spaces:

8% of 232 no. people = **18 potential post primary school spaces**

5.8 It is important to note that the demand and need for the school places as a result of this proposed development will be staggered.

6.0 EXISTING SCHOOL PROVISION

6.1 Enrolment figures for the 2024/2025 academic year, published by the Department of Education have been used for this assessment.

6.2 An estimation of the capacity of each primary school can be calculated by using the average national class size and the number of classrooms in each school. The Department of Education shows that as per the *Education Indicators for Ireland July 2025* the average primary school class size in Ireland is 22.5 students per class. To find the available capacity, the number of classrooms was multiplied by 23 to determine the capacity of the school. The available capacity in each school was determined by subtracting the capacity of the school from the enrolment figures.

School Name	Enrolment 2024/2025	No. of Classrooms	Estimated Capacity based on average students per class	Estimated Available Capacity
Scoil Aiseirí Chríost	233	14	322	89
Saint Patrick's Girls National School	134	8	184	50
Cork Educate Together National School	199	8	184	-15
North Presentation Primary School	292	15	345	53
Saint Mark's Boys National School	88	5	115	27
Saint Patrick's Boys primary School	166	9	207	41

Saint Lukes School	94	4	92	-2
Saint Vincents National School	211	13	299	88
Scoil Cholmcille	250	13	299	49
North Monastery Primary School	195	10	230	35
Saint Brendan's Primary School	110	6	138	28
Scoil Oilibheir Primary School	495	24	552	57
Total	2,467	129	2,967	500

Table 3 - Primary School Capacity

- 6.4 The total amount of enrolled primary school children in 2024/2025 in the 12no. existing primary schools in the catchment area was 2,467 pupils. Based on the study undertaken above the estimated available capacity within these schools is 500 additional spaces for pupils.
- 6.5 The Department of Education has indicated in its *Projections of Full-Time Enrolment for Primary and Post Primary Level 2023-2042* that the primary school population will continue to fall to 478,152 in 2036 until it begins to rise once again beyond this point to 2042. Within this period of the falling primary population, the development will be fully constructed.
- 6.6 The existing primary schools within the catchment area currently have considerable capacity and based on population trends, there will be additional capacity available in the immediate future. Even if the primary population does not decline at the rate projected by the Department of Education, there is adequate capacity within the schools in the catchment area to support the proposed development.
- 6.7 Estimation of the capacity available for post-primary schools is more complex due to the range of classes available at this level, which differs from primary level. To determine the available capacity in these schools, a survey was conducted. The capacity and available capacity figures below are based on the responses we received from the individual schools.

School Name	Enrolment 2024/2025	Capacity of Secondary School	Available Capacity of Secondary School
Cork Educate Together	409	No Answer	No Answer
North Monastery CBS	283	No Answer	No Answer
Gaelcholáiste Mhuire	690	690	0
Saint Vincent's Secondary School	256	450	194
Christian Brothers College	912	No Answer	No Answer
Nano Nagle College	136	No Answer	No Answer
Saint Angela's College	608	608	0
Saint Patrick's College	201	No Answer	No Answer
Scoil Mhuire Cork	429	450	0
Total	3,917	-	194

Table 4 - Secondary School Capacity

- 6.8 It is noted that information was not available in relation to a number of post-primary schools within the catchment area, upon inspection. Given that this information was not available, a worst-case scenario has been adopted, and it is assumed that these post-primary schools are at full capacity.
- 6.9 The total number of enrolments in the 9no. Post-Primary Schools in 2024/2025 in the catchment area was 3,917 pupils. Based on the research conducted and the responses received from the above secondary schools, it can be estimated that there are an available 194no. spaces available in the catchment area.
- 6.10 However, Gaelcholáiste Mhuire, is set to have an increased capacity of 60 no. students when the new extension is completed in late 2027, which was permitted under Planning Reg. Ref: 22/41153.
- 6.11 Of the 9no. post-primary schools in the catchment area, 2no. are fee paying schools, these include Scoil Mhuire Cork and the Christian Brothers College.
- 6.12 The Department of Education has indicated in its *Projections of Full-Time Enrolments for Primary and Post Primary Level 2023-2042* that the level of enrolments in post-primary schools would peak in 2025 at 433,268 and steadily decrease to 357, 839 by 2042, a decrease of 17.4%, just over 1% per year.
- 6.13 The existing post-primary schools within the catchment area currently have sufficient capacity to support the proposed development and the generated demand for post-primary school places. This will continue to be the case even if the population of post-primary school enrolments does not drop as indicated by the Department of Education's projections.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The research in this Schools Needs Assessment has identified 12no. Primary Schools and 9no. Post Primary Schools within a 2km radius of the subject site (30-minute walk and 15-minute cycle). The proposed development has the potential to generate demand for an additional 25no. primary spaces and 18no. post-primary spaces.
- 7.2 Out of the 12no. primary schools in the catchment area, there is a current estimated capacity of 500 spaces in the direct vicinity of the proposed development. Therefore, there is sufficient capacity in the area to cater for the potential demand created from the proposed development
- 7.3 Out of the 9no. Post-Primary Schools, we received feedback from 4 no. schools, which show that there is a current capacity of 194no. spaces in Post-Primary Schools in the area. This indicates that there is ample capacity in the immediate vicinity to support the success of the proposed development.
- 7.4 It is also noted that there is a number of primary and post-primary schools located adjacent or just outside the defined catchment area that are accessible via public transport.
- 7.5 It is therefore considered that the Primary and Post-Primary school place demand generated by the proposed development can be accommodated within the existing school provision in the immediate vicinity of the subject site.