

School Demand Report

For Development at

on behalf of Cumnor Construction Ltd.

March 2022



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1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants are appointed by Cumnor Construction Ltd. to prepare a School Demand Report which considers the existing primary and post-primary facilities in the settlement of Fermoy, Co. Cork. The report will inform the proposed Strategic Housing Development (SHD) of 336 no. residential units at a site located c. 1 km from Fermoy town centre.

This report provides details on 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.

In undertaking a review of the required school provision for the proposed development, this report will:

- Consider the current policy context for future school provision in the area;
- Determine an appropriate study area based on sustainable modes of transport;
- Consider demographic trends in the school area population;
- Assess the capacity of existing schools within the study area;
- Estimate the future student yield.



Figure 1: Site Location (site outlined in red)

A number of sources were consulted in the preparation of this report:

- www.education.ie and www.shooldays.ie were consulted to locate existing schools, enrolment figures and the number of classrooms;
- Projections of Full-Time Enrolment, Primary and Second Level, 2018 – 2036 report by the Department of Education and Skills, July 2018
- Census 2016 SAPMAP data;
- Various school websites; and

- Survey of existing schools undertaken by McCutcheon Halley Planning.

2. Policy Context

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

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 outlines 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; and*
- *Local authorities, as planning authorities, will support and assist the Department in ensuring the timely provision of school sites.*

2.2 Cork County Development Plan 2014

The Cork County Development Plan 2014 provides several policy objectives for the provision of educational facilities in Cork County.

Objective SC 4-1: 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. Multi-use facilities which can accommodate both educational and childcare facilities are also encouraged.”

Objective SC 4-2 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 the 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.

c) Work closely with the Department of Education & Skills to identify in the Local Area Plans, 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 & Science, 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 areas.

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 up 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, 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”.

2.3 Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017

The Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan (MDLAP) 2017 makes provision for a new 8 class primary school to accommodate planned future population growth in Fermoy.

The LAP states that projected population growth in Fermoy will require an expansion of primary and post-primary schools within the town. *“The Department of education has identified that implementation of the population growth target for Fermoy will give rise to a potential primary classroom requirement of 5 classes (which would require the delivery of an 8 class primary schill on 1.14 ha”.*

“Provision has been made within the residential zoning R-04 to allow for the construction of a 16 class school on site on the basis that this site is close to existing residential development and an area targeted for future residential development”.

Policy Objective FY-GO-12 proposes to *“support the expansion of primary and post-primary educational facilities in the town”.*

3. The Study Area

The study area consists of the settlement of Fermoy as defined in Census 2016. The settlement area has a Census 2016 population of 6,585. Fermoy is a medium size settlement with a substantial population allowing sufficient scope for the research.

The study area for the proposed development has been determined by applying a 2km radius or equivalent 10-20 minute travel time to ensure that schools can be accessed via a number of travel alternatives including walking, cycling and driving. Public transport is not considered given the relatively short distances from the subject site to the various school locations.

CSO data for the settlement outlines that c. 65% of the population aged over 5 travel between 0-30 mins each day for work, school or college. Based on this data, it is possible to argue that a 10-20 minute travel time is reasonable to access essential services such as education.

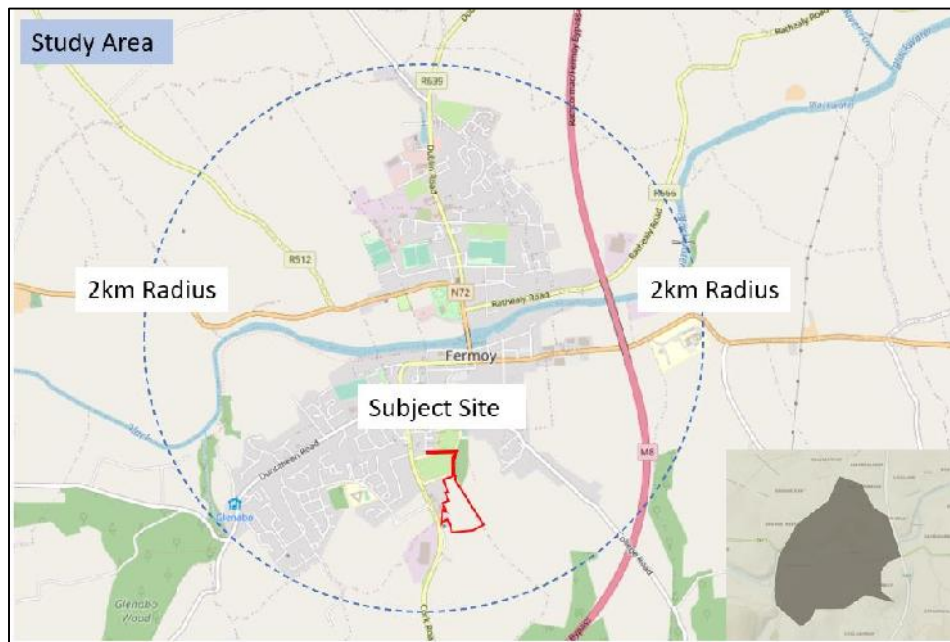


Figure 2: The Study Area (Insert – CSO Settlement Map)

The study area comprises the settlement of Fermoy. Table 1 outlines the pre-school and school age population breakdown for the settlement.

Area	Age 0-4	Age 5-11	Age 12-18
Fermoy	483	680	604
Total Population	6,585	6,585	6,585
% of Population	7.3%	10.3%	9.1%

Table 1: Demographic Breakdown of Pre-school and School Age Population within the Study Area, Census 2016

There is 6 no. primary schools and 3 no. post-primary schools located with the study area, these are outlined in figure 3.

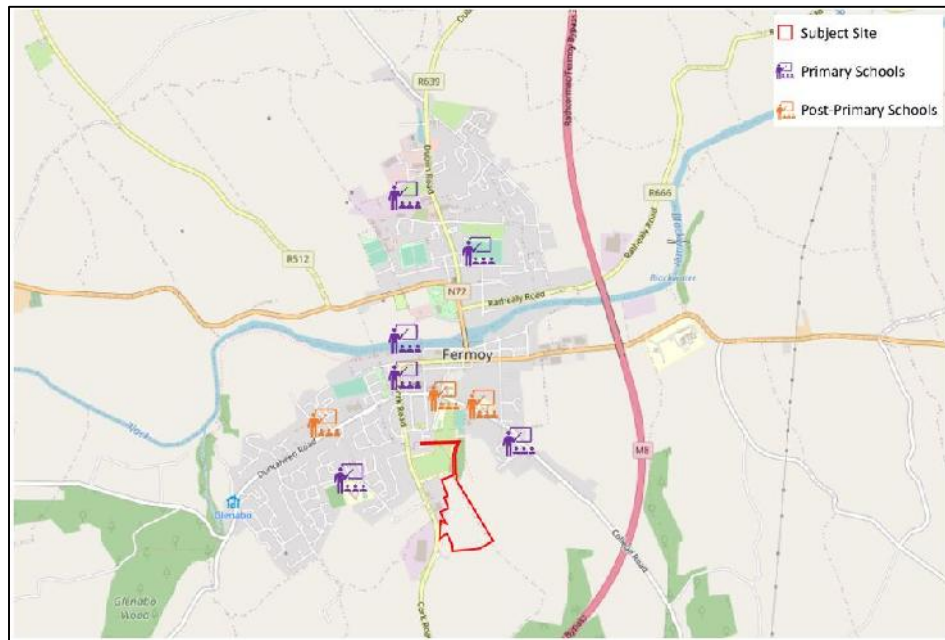


Figure 3: Location of Primary and Post-Primary Schools

The 6 no. primary and 3 no. post-primary schools located in the study area are all within a 10-20 minute travel time or 2km radius of the proposed development. Tables 3 and 4 below identify the distance from the subject site to the schools and indicate the various walking, cycling and driving times required to access these schools.

Primary School	Distance from Site	Walk	Cycle	Drive
Bishop Murphy Memorial School	1 km	10	4	2
Scoil Freastogail Muire	700 m	7	2	1
Iosef Naofa	1.9 km	19	7	3
Fermoy Adair National School	1.5 km	15	6	2
Gaelscoil de hÍde	700 m	7	2	1
Fermoy Educate Together	1 km	10	4	2

Table 2: Primary Schools and Distance from the Site (travel times in minutes)

Post- Primary School	Distance from Site	Walk	Cycle	Drive
Loreto Secondary School	800 m	8	3	2
Colaiste an Chraoibhin	1 km	10	4	2
Colaiste Cholmáin	800 m	8	3	3

Table 3: Post Primary Schools and Distance from Site (travel times in minutes)

4. Future Demographic Trends in School Age Population

In July 2018, the Department of Education and Skills published a report detailing future demographic trends that will impact the primary and post-primary student numbers. The ‘Projections of Full-Time Enrolment -Primary and Second Level, 2018 – 2036’ report assessed demographic trends which will impact the future population growth of school age children including fertility rates, births and net migration.

Based on their research the Department of Education and Skills has determined that the peak number of primary school age children was anticipated in 2018 and that this population will begin to decline from 2019.

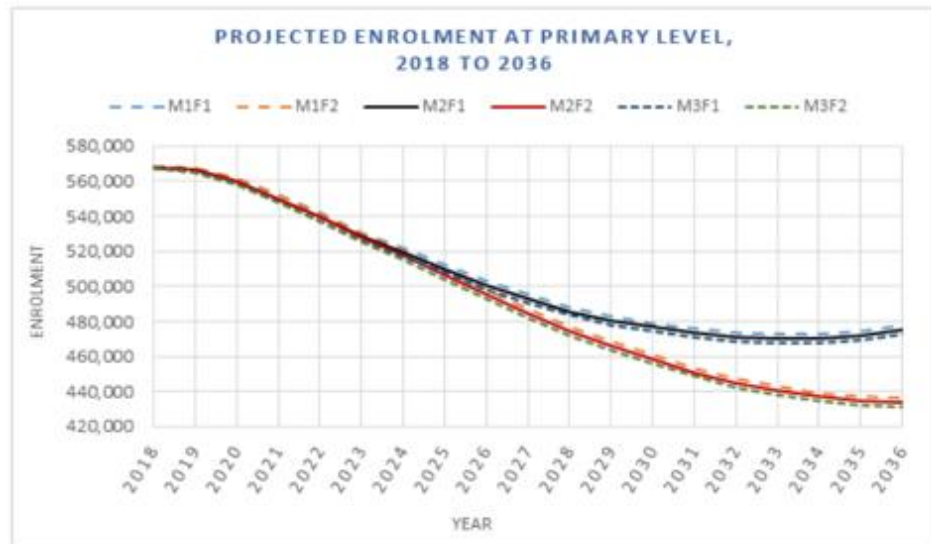


Figure 4: Projections of Enrolment at Primary Level

The Report indicates that the Department considers the M2F1, black line, to be the most probable scenario. Based on their projected primary student population, this would suggest that the number of primary students would peak in 2018 at 567,819 and then continuously decline to 474,968 by 2036.

This represents a 16% contraction of the primary school age population over an 18 year period.

The post-primary student projections are a continuation of the primary school population projection with the peak of post-primary enrolments anticipated in 2024.

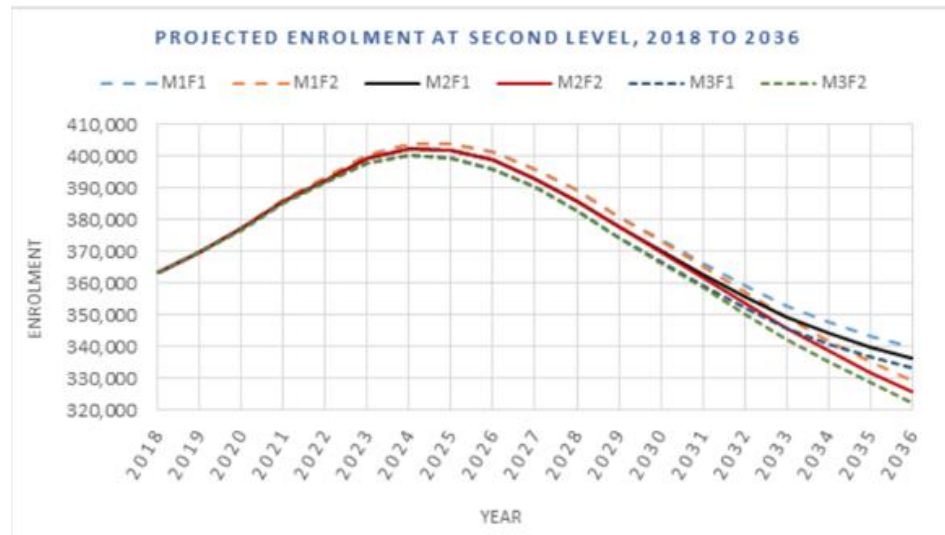


Figure 5: Projections of Enrolment at Post-Primary Level

As with the primary level projections M2F1 scenario is considered the most likely by the Department with the post-primary school population peaking at 402,176 in 2024. Enrolment would begin to decrease from 2025 to a level of circa 336,500 by 2036, a contraction of 16% during this time period.

5. Existing School Provision

5.1 Primary Schools

Enrolment figures for the 2020/21 academic year, published by the Department of Education and Skills, have been used for this assessment.

An estimation of the capacity of each primary school can be calculated by applying a Pupil to Teacher Ratio (PTR) to the number of classrooms in each school. The Department of Education and Skills recommends a PTR of 1:26. The number of classrooms was multiplied by 26 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.

	Primary Schools				
School Name	Enrolment 2020/21	Enrolment 2021/2022	No. of Classrooms	Estimated Capacity based on PTR	Available Capacity
Bishop Murphy Memorial School	131	136	5	130	-6
Scoil Freastogail Muire	279	261	11	286	25
Iosef Naofa	105	102	5	130	25
Fermoy Adair National School	34	37	2	52	15
Gaelscoil de hÍde	340	354	24	624	270
Fermoy Educate Together	22	33	4	104	71
Total	911	923	51	1,326	406

Table 4: Existing Primary School Capacity and Enrolment

The total enrolment of primary school children in the 6 no. existing schools is 923. Based on the study undertaken, the available capacity within these schools for the 2020/21 academic year was circa 406 pupils. As indicated earlier in this report, the Department of Education and Skills has outlined that the primary population will decline from 2018.

5.2 Post-Primary Schools

Estimation of capacity for post primary schools is more complex due to the range of courses available at this level. To determine the available capacity in these schools, a survey of the schools was undertaken. The available capacity figures are based on the responses from the individual schools.

	Post- Primary schools			
School Name	Enrolment 2020/21	Enrolment 2021/2022	Available Capacity	Estimated Capacity of School

	Post- Primary schools			
Loreto Secondary School	640	658	-	0
Colaiste an Chraoibhin	900	904	-	0
Colaiste Cholmáin	559	580	-	0
Total	2,099	2,142	-	0

Table 5: Existing Post-Primary School Capacity and Enrolment

Despite efforts to contact the 3 no. of post primary schools by phone and email, no contact was made. Therefore, these figures were found through general school databases. There are approximately 2,142 places available in the existing secondary schools within the study area. As indicated earlier in this report, the post-primary student population is projected to increase up to 2024 before beginning to decline. This will potentially create a short term need for additional secondary school student places within the study area.

5.3 Future Demand

The future demand for school places as a result of the proposed development will be assessed here. The development consists of 336 no. units, a creche and all ancillary site development works. The breakdown of units types is outlined in table 5. The 1-bedroom units will be discounted as these are determined to be unsuitable as family dwellings.

Unit Size – House / Duplex / Simplex	Total
2 bed	65
3 bed	182
4 bed	46
4+ bed	4
Total	297

Table 6: Houses

5.3.1 Assumptions

- All 1 bedroom units will be omitted for the school assessment (consistent with the accepted approach to the delivery of creches);
- Average Persons per Household of 2.6 has been applied, this represents an average within the settlement of Fermoy;
- The Primary Age Cohort considers 5-11 year olds. This is 7.3% of the study area population;

- The Post Primary Age Cohort considers 12-18 year olds which is 10.3 % of the catchment population.

The Forward Planning Unit of the Department of Education and Skills recommends that the estimated student population is determined using the following percentages:

- Primary School: 12%;
- Post-Primary School : 8.5%.

As noted above the primary school cohort within the study area is less than this and the post-primary cohort is higher.

5.4 Primary Student Population Estimate

Based on the assumptions outlined, an estimate of the school demand to be generated from the proposed scheme is outlined as follows:

Total 2+ Bedroom Units	Avg PPH	% Population	No. Students
297	2.6	12	93
Total			93

Table 8: Primary Student Population Estimate

It is estimated there will be circa 18 new students generated every year over the 5 year timeframe of the permission. It should be acknowledged that the 93 students anticipated will not necessarily appear on first occupancy and it will likely take several years before the mature student yield is met.

The existing primary schools within the catchment area currently have capacity to accommodate 406 no. additional students and based on population trends, there will be additional capacity available in the future. Even if the primary population does not decline at the rate anticipated by the Department of Education, there is adequate capacity within these schools to cater for the initial stages of the proposed development.

5.5 Post-Primary Student Population Estimate

Based on the assumptions outlined, an estimate of the school demand to be generated from the proposed scheme is outlined as follows:

Total 2+ Bedroom Units	Avg PPH	% Population	No. Students
297	2.6	8.5	66
Total			66

Table 9: Post-Primary Student Population Estimate

It is estimated there will be circa 13 new students generated every year over the 5 year timeframe of the permission. It should be acknowledged that the 66 students anticipated will not necessarily appear in early occupancy and it will likely take several years before the mature student yield is met.

The existing post-primary schools within the catchment area currently does not have capacity to accommodate additional students. However, based on population trends, there will be additional capacity available in the future.

6. Conclusion

This School Demand Report relates to a proposed SHD development of 336 units at Coolcarron, Fermoy, Co. Cork.

As demonstrated in the assessment, there is capacity within the existing primary schools to accommodate the proposed development. The proposed development is likely to generate 93 no. primary age students. According to the Department of Education report discussed in this assessment, the primary age cohort peaked in 2018 and is now in decline. This, along with the availability of school places within the study area indicates that existing primary schools can accommodate the projected growth.

The Department of Education report indicates that the post-primary student age cohort will peak in 2024 before beginning to decline. The initial phase of development will coincide with this anticipated peak in post-primary enrolment. This assessment found that 66 no. post-primary age students will be generated over the 5-year lifetime of the permission.

Therefore, it is considered that the school demand generated by the proposed development can be accommodated within existing primary and post-primary schools in the short to medium term.