

School Demand & Concentration Report

In respect of

**Proposed Strategic Housing Development at Lands at
Bridgegate, Rathgory and Mulladrillen,
Drogheda Road, Ardee, Co. Louth**

Prepared by

John Spain Associates

On behalf of

The Ardee Partnership

March 2022

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Client:	The Ardee Partnership
Project Title:	Bridgegate SHD
Document Title:	School Demand and Concentration Report
Document No:	18102_SDCR_Final

Rev.	Status	Author(s)	Reviewed By	Approved By	Issue Date
DV1	Draft	NR	IL	IL	16-4-21
Final	Final	NR	IL	IL	10-3-22

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
2.0	SITE CONTEXT	4
2.1	SITE DESCRIPTION	4
3.0	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	5
4.0	PLANNING CONTEXT	6
4.1	PROJECT IRELAND 2040 NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK.....	6
4.2	GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING AUTHORITIES ON SUSTAINABLE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN URBAN AREAS (2009).....	6
4.3	LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027	7
5.0	REVIEW OF EXISTING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION IN ARDEE.....	8
5.1	PRIMARY EDUCATION.....	8
5.2	SECONDARY EDUCATION.....	9
6.0	CONCLUSIONS	10

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 – Site Location of site outlined in red	4
Figure 5.1 – Map of Schools in the Area.....	8

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 – Overall Residential Development Mix.....	5
Table 5.1 – Primary Education Providers in the Area.....	8
Table 5.2 – Secondary Education Providers in the Area.....	9

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1 On behalf of the applicant, The Ardee Partnership, this School Demand and Concentration Report (SDCR) has been prepared to accompany a Strategic Housing Development application to An Bord Pleanála in relation to a proposed housing development located at Bridgegate, Ardee, Co. Louth.
- 2 The proposal relates to a residential development of 272 no. residential units comprising a mix of 206 no. 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses (2 and 3 storeys) and 66 no. 1, 2 and 3 bedroom duplex units (3 storeys), a c. 484 sqm two storey crèche and play area, a c. 165 sqm single storey community building and series of public open spaces (c. 1.8ha) including a realigned watercourse and riparian corridor, access, car parking, bicycle parking, bicycle and bin stores, landscaping and all associated infrastructure and site works; a c. 3.6ha public park on the northern part of the site, all on a c. 13.03 hectare site at Bridgegate, Rathgory & Mulladrillen, Drogheda Road, Ardee, County Louth.
- 3 This document has been prepared in response to the An Bord Pleanála opinion requesting;

“6. School Demand and Concentration Report, which identifies 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.”
- 4 This report therefore seeks to identify the identify the demand for school places likely to be generated by the proposal and the capacity of the existing schools in the vicinity to cater for this increased demand.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Site Description

- 1 The subject lands extend to approximately c. 13.03 hectares, to the south of Ardee town. The main street of the town is less than 1km from the subject site, along the N2.
- 2 The site is greenfield in nature, with residential to the north and west, and farmland to the south and east.

Figure 2.1 – Site Location of site outlined in red



Source: Google Maps

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1 The proposal relates to a residential development of 272 no. residential units comprising a mix of 206 no. 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses (2 and 3 storeys) and 66 no. 1, 2 and 3 bedroom duplex units (3 storeys), a c. 484 sqm two storey crèche and play area, a 165 sqm single storey community building and series of public open spaces (c. 1.8ha) including a realigned watercourse (with two crossing points) and riparian corridor, access, car parking (480 spaces), bicycle parking (278 spaces), bicycle and bin stores, landscaping and all associated infrastructure (including two ESB substations) and site works; a c. 3.6ha public park in the northern part of the site, all on a c. 13.03 hectare site.
- 2 In summary, the proposed development comprises the construction of 272 no. dwellings consisting of 206 no. houses and 66 no. apartments.

Table 3.1 – Overall Residential Development Mix

Proposed Units	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Overall	Percentage of Total
Duplex Apartments	17	24	25	0	0	66	24.3%
Houses	0	50	145	11	0	206	75.7%
Overall Total	17	74	170	11	0	272	
Percentage of Total	6.3%	27.2%	62.5%	4%	0%	100%	

Source: Darmody Architecture Schedule

4.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

1 The key provisions of national and regional planning policy as it relates to the proposed development and social infrastructure is set out in the following sections. The key policy and guidance documents of relevance to the proposed development are as follows:

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009);
- Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027.

4.1 Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework

2 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.

3 The framework outlines that the following objectives in relation to school needs:

NPC 31- *Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in:*

- *A childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting of investment needs, including identification of regional priorities;*
- *The provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations;*
- *The expansion and consolidation of Higher Education facilities, particularly where this will contribute to wider regional development, and*
- *Programmes for life-long learning, especially in areas of higher education and further education and training where skills gaps are identified."*

4 The framework highlights that investment in schools must keep pace with the demographic demands; providing sites and buildings for new schools in well located areas as well as refurbishing existing schools.

4.2 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)

5 These guidelines were published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in order to set out the key principles that should be adopted within developments and used by the Planning Authorities both in writing their Development Plans and in assessing new developments.

6 The guidelines state that one of the fundamental questions to be addressed during the planning process is, *"New residential communities can generate a demand for a significant number of new school places, particularly where families are attracted to the area. In such cases, it is vital to the process of supporting sustainable communities that the planning system facilitates the timely provision of new school buildings."*

- 7 The guidelines specify that “*no substantial residential development should proceed without an assessment of existing schools’ capacity or the provision of new school facilities in tandem with the development.*” This is further clarified as applications for 200+ units should be accompanied by a report detailing the school capacity of the area and the impact of the development.

4.3 Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

- 8 Section 4 of the development plan outlines that Louth County Council will continue to work closely with the Department of Education under the 2012 nationally agreed Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the proactive identification and acquisition of school sites and in support of the Department’s schools building programme, into the future.
- 9 In addition, Policy Objective SC 25 seeks ‘*To ensure that adequate lands are zoned and reserved to cater for the establishment, improvement and expansion of all educational facilities in the County.*’
- 10 There are no specific school requirements or needs set out for Ardee.

5.0 REVIEW OF EXISTING SCHOOL PROVISION IN ARDEE

- 1 This assessment identifies and examines the school provision in the area in relation to maximum occupancy and any spaces currently available. Overall, there are 3 primary schools in the area (yellow) and 1 secondary school (orange). They are identified below:

Figure 5.1 – Map of Schools in the Area



Source: Google Maps

5.1 Primary Education

Table 5.1 – Primary Education Providers in the Area

Number	Name	Max. Capacity	Vacancies	Type
1	Ardee Educate Together National School	200	12	Mixed
2	Monastery National School	256	0	Boys
3	Scoil Mhuire Na Trocaire	295	23	Girls
	Total	751	35	

Source: Google and JSA Survey

- 2 In respect of identifying requirements for primary schools in the future, the Code of Practice outlines that the Department of Education and Science will assume that an average of 12% of the population is of primary school-going age.

- 3 The overall expected population of the proposed development is 748. This is due to the average household size being 2.75 and the total number of proposed units being 272. Of this 12% would be eligible for primary school which would equate to potentially c. 90 children. It is noted that the NPF expects the household size to decrease to 2.5 by 2040, with potential primary student numbers arising from the proposal possibly declining as a result in reality.
- 4 The capacity of the 3 primary schools in the area is 751. The number of vacancies from these areas is 35, based on a survey of local primary schools.
- 5 However, this does not account for the permitted new 8 classroom Ardee Educate Together National School permitted under LCC Application Reg. Ref.:1882. The new school will have a total capacity of 300, with plans allowing for an additional 300 space expansion in future, providing a potential maximum capacity of 600. Construction work on the new school is due to commence in Q1 2022.
- 6 This will mean space for c. 400 additional students. The proposed development may require a maximum of 90 spaces, which can be catered for in the first phase of the new Ardee Educate Together National School.
- 7 In addition, in July 2020 Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire was granted permission for the provision of 2 new classrooms, to the front of the existing school building (Ref. 20200). The school have advised that works are underway and are expected to be complete by April 2022. This will increase the existing capacity by c. 60 places.
- 8 On the basis of the above, there is considered to be more than adequate capacity for the potential c. 90 primary school places arising from the proposed development.

5.2 Secondary Education

- 9 The Department of Education and Skills, for the purposes of establishing requirements for new secondary schools, it assumes that 8.5% of the population of a settlement is of secondary school-going age.

Table 5.2 – Secondary Education Providers in the Area

<i>Number</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Enrolment</i>	<i>Vacancies</i>	<i>Type</i>
1	Ardee Community School	1,100 (Sept 2021)	0	Mixed

Source: Google and JSA Survey

- 10 The overall expected population of the proposed development is 748. This is due to the average household size in the area being 2.75 and the total number of proposed units being 272. Of this 8.5% would be eligible for secondary school, based on a pro-rata average, which equates to a potential requirement of approximately 63 children. It is noted that the NPF expects the household size to decrease to 2.5 by 2040, with potential post-primary student numbers arising from the proposal declining as a result, providing an anticipated figure of c. 58 students.
- 11 Ardee Community School is currently undergoing construction to increase the capacity of the school from 1,100 currently to 1,300 upon completion in the 2023/2024 academic year, permitted under Reg. Ref.: 15670. This increased capacity has been facilitated by the Department of Skills and Education having taken consideration of projected population

increase and residential development in Ardee. The anticipated number of secondary education students arising from the proposed development will be sufficiently accommodated by the enlarged Ardee Community School.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 1 There is currently capacity for 35 primary school aged children in Ardee. However, the Ardee Educate Together National School is due to begin works on a school in Q1 2022 to provide a potential maximum of 600 spaces, an increase of c. 400 to that existing at present. The Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire capacity will also expand by c. 60 places by 2022. In this regard, primary school capacity is well placed to absorb the potential demand arising from the proposed development.
- 2 An additional 64 places will be needed for secondary school children, which is a high estimate. Ardee Community School is currently being extending to cater for an additional 200 students by the 2023/2024 academic year. This extended capacity will cater for the potential need arising from the proposed development. Furthermore, secondary school places are not normally required immediately for a new development and that the catchment area for secondary schools can be significantly larger, as students will travel further for particular schools such as private schools and Gael Scoils as well as boarding schools. This may contribute to a lower actual need arising from Phase 4 at Bridgegate.
- 3 From the assessment above it is demonstrated that adequate capacity will exist at schools within Ardee to cater for the projected numbers of primary and secondary school students arising from the proposed development.