TOM PHILLIPS + ASSOCIATES
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Suites 437+ 455
No. 1 Horgan's Quay
Waterfront Square
Cork
T23 PPT8
t +353 21 212 9840

**Head Office:**
80 Harcourt Street
Dublin 2
D02 F449
t +353 1 478 6055

e info@tpa.ie
w www.tpa.ie

# SCHOOLS DEMAND ASSESSMENT – LANDS AT SANDY ROAD, GALWAY

## FOR ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED MASTERPLAN AT SANDY ROAD, GALWAY

**PREPARED FOR:**
LAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
2nd Floor Ashford House
Tara Street
Dublin 2
D02 VX67

**PREPARED BY:**
TOM PHILLIPS + ASSOCIATES
80 Harcourt Street
Dublin 2
D02 F449

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Directors: Tom Phillips BA MRUP MA (Urb Des) MRTPI FIPI (Managing); Gavin Lawlor BSoc Sc MRUP MIPI; Jerry Lucey BA (Hons) MBS (MIMAS) ACMA; John Gannon BSc (Surv) MRUP MIPI; and Stephen Barrett BSc (Spatial Planning) Dip. ERM MIPI. Associates: Aoife McCarthy BA (Hons) MRUP (Hons) MIPI; Brian Minogue BSc (Spatial Planning Hons), MIPI; Julie Costello BA MRUP MIPI; Laura Finn BA(Hons)TP, Dip ERM, Dip EIA Mgmt, MIPI; Lizzie Donnelly BA (Hons), MA (Planning), MRTPI MIPI ; Órla Casey BA (Hons) MPlan MIPI; and Síne Kelly BAgriSc (Land Hort) MRUP Adv.Dip.PM MIPI AMILI.
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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Land Development Agency (LDA)[1] have requested Tom Phillips and Associates (TPA) to prepare a schools capacity audit in relation to lands at Sandy Road, Galway City, Co. Galway to be developed through a master planning scheme to determine the provision of school facilities within the study area.

### 1.1 Masterplan Site Context

The c. 8.8 ha subject site, spread across 5 no. individual blocks, is situated approximately 1.5 km to the northeast of Galway City Centre, within the Mervue area. Block A is c. 3.69 ha, Block B c. 2.95, Block C c. 0.65 ha, Block D c. 1.12, while Block E is c. 0.4 ha. The site is located within the existing built-up area of Galway City, along the Tuam Road, which is an important arterial route in and out of the City Centre. Sandy Road runs from the Joyce Roundabout to the roundabout at the junction of Headford Road and Bóthar na dTreabh, a distance of c. 700m. Access to Blocks A, B and D is along Sandy Road. Block D is can also be accessed along the Sean Mulvoy Road. Block C is accessed along the Tuam Road, while block E is accessed from with the Tuam Road or the Moneenageisha Road.

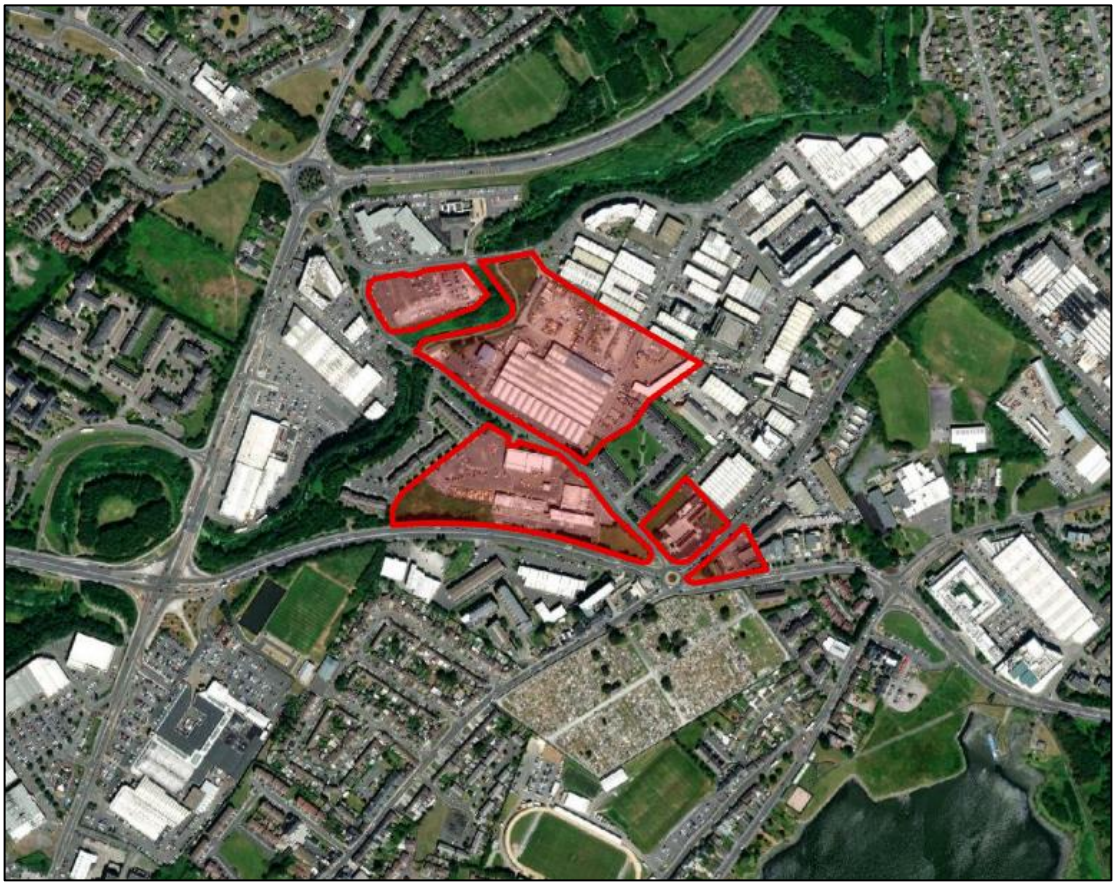

**Figure 1.1:** Indicative Site Location, aerial view. Source: Esri Satellite Basemap/TPA.

[1] Land Development Agency, 2nd Floor Ashford House, Tara Street, Dublin 2, Dublin, D02 VX67

The site comprises of an extensive mixture of zonings, although the Blocks A, B and E are generally characterised as commercial, and enterprise uses. Block D is largely characterised by open space, while Block C currently contains a vocational education centre. The Sandy Road site is of strategic importance and will have the potential to provide housing and places to work for thousands of people over the course of its development.

There are 2 no. bus routes which serve the site, numbers 405 and 407, which run along Headford Road and Tuam Road respectively. There are 2 no. schools which serve children and young adults with special needs situated c. 800m from the subject site (Lakeview School and Rosedale School). Scoil San Phrionsias lies c. 500m northwest of the site. Galway Shopping Centre lies c. 900m southwest of the subject site.

## *1.1 Schools Demand Assessment*

With respect to this development, the LDA have requested that a *Schools Demand Assessment* be undertaken for the local area to determine the existing level of school services provision and potential requirement for additional facilities at this location. An audit was undertaken by Tom Phillips + Associates utilising desktop methods in March 2022 and has been updated in May 2022 which can be summarised as follows:

- The subject site is located within the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area (SPA) identified by the Department of Education, where there are 43 No. primary schools and 12 No. post-primary schools currently in operation, with an enrolment of c. 11,320 No. primary students and c. 7,860 No. post-primary students.
    - The existing network of schools demonstrated slight growth at primary school level in the recent period (c. 2% from 2016-2021) and substantial growth at post primary level (c. 26% from 2016-2021). With respect to future enrolments, it is expected to experience decreased enrolment of c. 12.5% at the primary level and increased enrolment of c. 1.5% at post-primary level from 2021-2026 with respect to DoE projections for the West.
- The DoE has identified a requirement for 1 No. new post primary school within the Galway City and Oranmore SPA in the short-term establishment period (i.e., 2019-2022). Patronage for both the school was awarded to Educate Together by the DoE in 2019 and has opened in interim start-up accommodation as of September 2019. A temporary site has been acquired (former Mercy school) at the heart of the city to which the school Is expected to move to later this year. However, a permanent site has not yet been secured.
- However there still appears to be the need for additional secondary school places due to the baby boom in the late 2000s.

## 2.0 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

For the purposes of the demographic analysis, the study area comprises 2 No. distinct enumeration areas identified by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) of relevance to the subject development, as follows:

1) The local Electoral Districts; and
2) The larger Galway City local authority (LA) administrative boundary.

These enumeration areas (identified in Figure 2.1) provide demographic information for the local and regional populations which are likely to be impacted by the subject development.

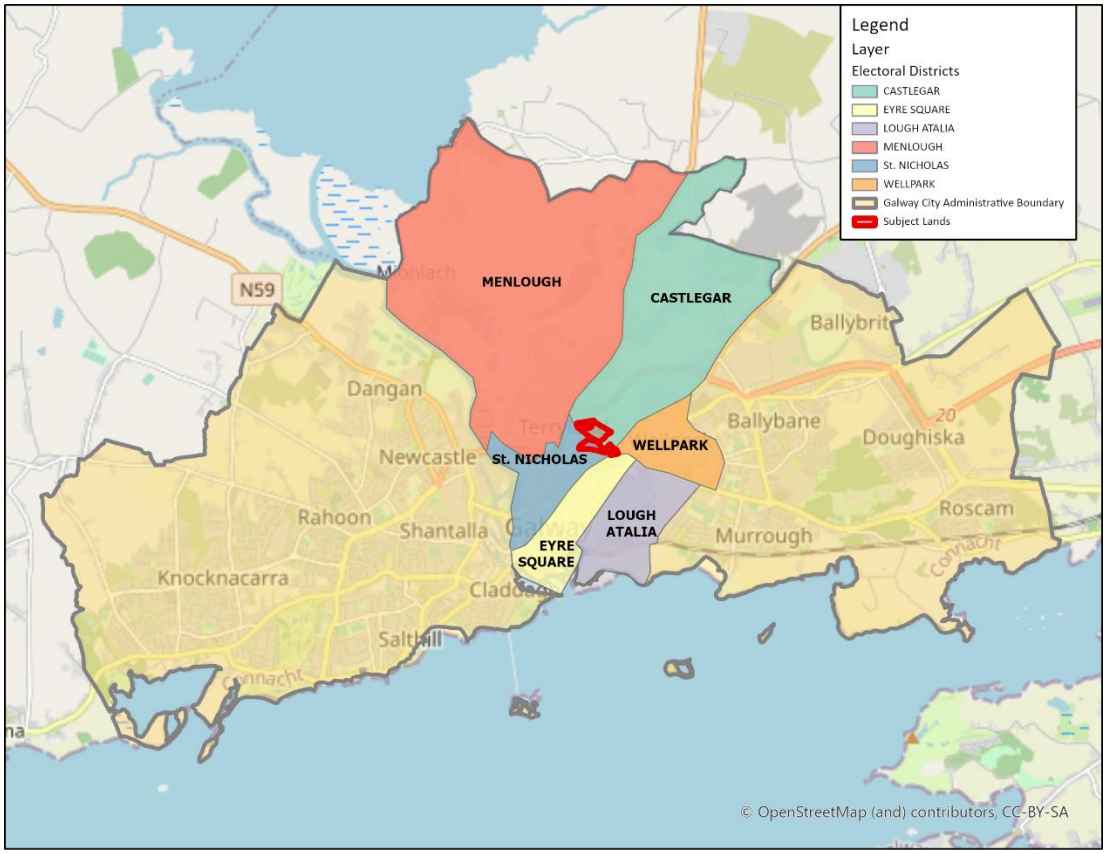


**Figure 2.1:** Extent of CSO enumeration areas utilised in demographic analysis. Location of subject site within the Castlegar and St. Nicholas EDs indicated by red polygon. Source: CSO/TPA, 2022.

The proposed development site is located partially within the 'Castlegar' Electoral Division (ED), Wellpark and the 'St. Nicholas' ED, which had a combined population of 8,115 No. persons at the time of the 2016 Census. Whereas the combined population of all EDs immediately adjacent to the subject site was 18,251 No. persons as of the 2016 Census. The population for this area appears to have been declining overall in the last 5 years compared to the rest of Galway City which has grown by 4.2%.

| Table 2.1: Recent Population Trends | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Level** | **Name** | **2006** | **2011** | **2016** | **5-yr** | **10-yr** |
| **ED** | Study Area | 18,810 | 18,947 | 18,251 | -3.70% | -3.0% |
| **LA** | Galway City | 72,414 | 75,529 | 78,668 | +4.2% | +8.6% |
| **State** | Ireland | 4,239,848 | 4,588,252 | 4,761,865 | +3.80% | +12.3% |

| Table 2.2: Population Trends at Local Electoral Division Level (Source: CSO 2011, 2016). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Local Electoral Divisions** | **2011** | **2016** | **% Change** |
| Castlegar | 4,135 | 4,053 | **-2.0%** |
| Mionlach | 4,990 | 5,118 | **2.6%** |
| St. Nicholas | 2,598 | 2,394 | **-7.9%** |
| Eyre Square | 4,461 | 4,108 | **-7.9%** |
| Wellpark | 1,843 | 1,668 | **-9.5%** |
| Lough Atalia | 920 | 910 | **-1.1%** |
| **Cumulative ED Study Area** | 18,947 | 18,251 | **-3.7%** |

The majority of the study area population falls within the 'Adult' (24-64 years) age cohort comprising 56.4% of the total population, which higher than the Local Authority average for this group (54.8%). The 'Preschool', 'Primary', 'Secondary' and 'Older Adult' cohorts form a slightly lower percentage of the overall population within the cumulative ED Area than the rest of Galway City, at 6.1%, 8.7%, 6.3% and 11.2% respectively.

| Table 2.3: Comparison of Age Profile of ED and LA Study Areas (Source: CSO 2016). | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age Cohorts** | **Combined ED Area** | | **Galway City** | |
| **Population** | **Population** | **% Total** | **Population** | **% Total** |
| Preschool (0-4 years) | 742 | **4.1%** | 4,772 | **6.1%** |
| Primary (5-12 years) | 1,007 | **5.5%** | 6,840 | **8.7%** |
| Secondary (13-18 years) | 797 | **4.4%** | 4,934 | **6.3%** |
| Young Adults (19-24 years) | 3,468 | **19.0%** | 10,173 | **12.9%** |
| Adults (25-64 years) | 10,286 | **56.4%** | 43,101 | **54.8%** |
| Older Adults (65+ years) | 1,951 | **10.7%** | 8,848 | **11.2%** |
| **Total** | 18251 | **100.0%** | 78,668 | **100.0%** |

## 3.0 CURRENT SCHOOLS' CAPACITY

The proposed development site is located within the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area (SPA) identified by the Department of Education, as shown in Figure 3.1. This SPA comprises 43 No. existing primary schools and 12 No. existing post-primary schools.

Earlier in November 2021, in response to the provision of schools in the Galway City and Oranmore SPA, in the Minister for Education stated[2] that there is additional school space demand identified which are proposed to be met by either utilizing spare capacity in existing schools, expansion of existing schools or the establishment of new schools. The Department of Education identifies that there are a number of school building projects on the way in relation to a new school building for St. Joseph's College, a major extension to Colaiste Mhuire Mathair, new school buildings for Scoil Caitriona Junior and Senior Schools, a new school building for Cuian na Gaillimhe CNS, and a new school building for Rosedale Special School.

A more recent Connacht Tribune article also identifies that the Department of Education is in plans for a new home for the St. Joseph's College ('the Bish') as the school is currently under pressure in terms of capacity. It is noted in the article that there is the Presentation School campus that is currently vacant and could be a potential site for accommodation of schools.

In terms of demand for school spaces there is an identified demand for post primary spaces during this time due to the baby boom in the late 2000s as recognised by the Connacht Tribune Article[3] from February last year. There is also the added pressure as all post-primary schools in the Galway City and Oranmore SPA are identified to be operating at capacity as of March 2022 as recognised in the article.

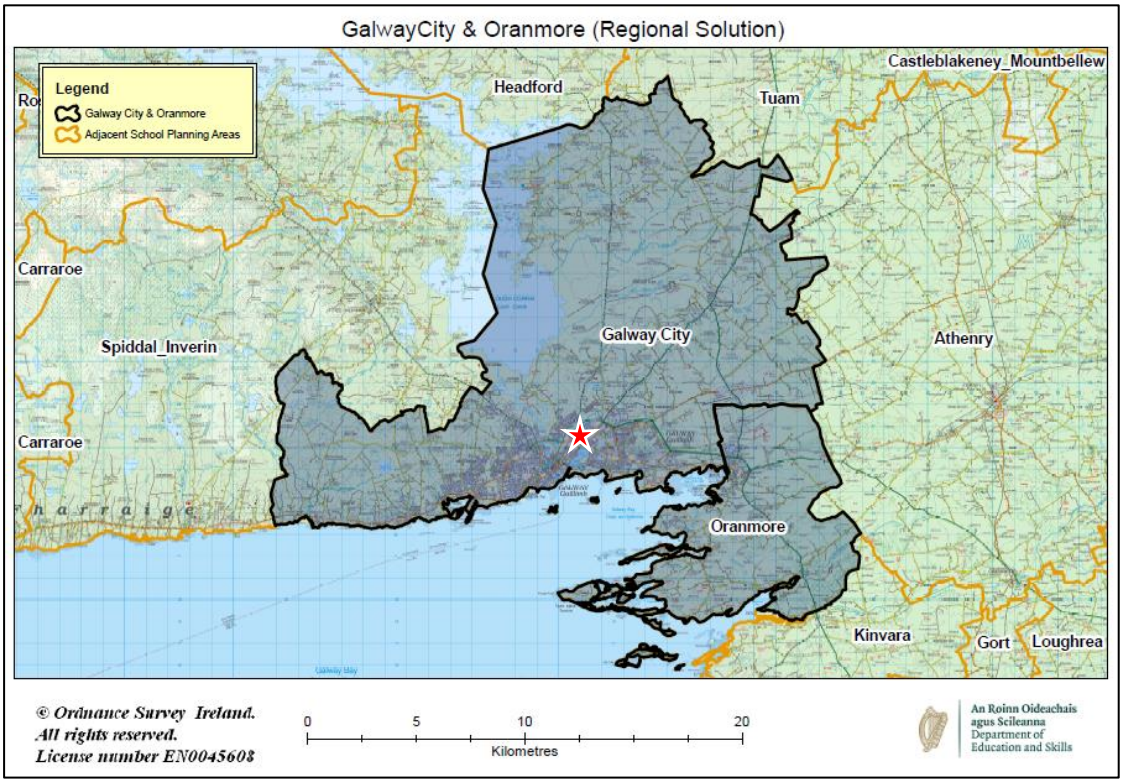


**Figure 3.1:** Extent of Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area identified by the Department of Education. Location of subject site indicated by red star. Source: DoE/TPA.

[2] Source: https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2021-11-23/146/#pq-answers-146
[3] Source: https://connachttribune.ie/baby-boom-puts-strain-on-galway-city-secondary-schools/

### *3.1 Primary Schools*

The 43 No. existing primary schools identified within the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area held a combined provisional enrolment of 11,320 No. students during the 2021/22 school year as per Department of Education (DoE) preliminary enrolment data records. We note that of this cohort, a majority of the schools were co-educational schools. The primary school located nearest to the subject site (Tirellan Heights National School) held an enrolment of 365 No. students in 2021/22.

**Table 3.1: Recorded Enrolments for Existing Primary schools within the Galway City and Oranmore SPA**

| No. | Roll No. | School Name | 2021/22 Enrolment[4] |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 01013N | Scoil Croi Iosa (Mixed) | 113 |
| 2 | 04506F | Scoil Na Ngasur (Boys) | 262 |
| 3 | 04515G | Scoil An Linbh Iosa (Mixed) | 218 |
| 4 | 09069L | S N An Bhain Mhoir (Mixed) | 143 |
| 5 | 16750J | Parochial N S (Mixed) | 79 |
| 6 | 16804G | Sn Chlair Na Gaillimhe (Mixed) | 314 |
| 7 | 16936A | S N Naomh Padraig (Mixed) | 245 |
| 8 | 16937C | S N Fhursa (Mixed) | 245 |
| 9 | 16943U | Niochlas N S (Mixed) | 262 |
| 10 | 17221K | Sn Colmcille (Mixed) | 81 |
| 11 | 12954F | S N Bhride (Mixed) | 247 |
| 12 | 17759J | S N Brighde (Mixed) | 140 |
| 13 | 17771W | S N Mhuire (Mixed) | 232 |
| 14 | 17782E | Scoil Bhride (Mixed) | 178 |
| 15 | 17784I | S N Padraic Naofa (Mixed) | 165 |
| 16 | 17845C | Scoil Mhuire (Mixed) | 241 |
| 17 | 18089S | Scoil Naomh Mhuire (Mixed) | 233 |
| 18 | 18163E | Sn N Breandain (Mixed) | 135 |
| 19 | 13365O | Scoil Mhuire (Mixed) | 409 |
| 20 | 13415D | Sn Tuairini (Mixed) | 80 |
| 21 | 13856K | Bushy Park N S (Mixed) | 364 |
| 22 | 13914V | Scoil Naomh Iosef (Mixed) | 237 |
| 23 | 15796F | S N Cor An Droma (Mixed) | 80 |
| 24 | 18634R | Scoil Ide (Mixed) | 279 |
| 25 | 18929N | Scoil Naomh Einde (Boys) | 111 |
| 26 | 20554I | Radharc Na Mara Primary School (Mixed) | 331 |
| 27 | 19241D | Scoil Náisiúnta Róis (Mixed) | 333 |
| 28 | 19371Q | S N Iognaid (Mixed) | 496 |
| 29 | 19401W | S N Caitriona Sois (Mixed) | 390 |

[4] Department of Education – This data is provisional and was published in December 2021. The source for this data is the National School Annual Census for 2021/2022, which is returned via the Primary Online Database (POD). This includes both the Mainstream Census and the Special School Annual Census. Data is anchored on the census date of 30th September 2021. Note that only schools aided by the Department of Education are included in this list.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30 | 19468I | Sn Caitriona Sinsear (Mixed) | 360 |
| 31 | 20350P | Merlin Woods Primary School (Mixed) | 409 |
| 32 | 20410H | Knocknacarra Educate Together Ns (Mixed) | 215 |
| 33 | 20462D | Galway Steiner National School (Mixed) | 89 |
| 34 | 19795A | Tirellan Heights N S (Mixed) | 365 |
| 35 | 19803T | Sn Seamus Naofa (Mixed) | 241 |
| 36 | 19828M | Sn Cearn Mor (Mixed) | 160 |
| 37 | 19858V | Gaelscoil Dara (Mixed) | 443 |
| 38 | 19994G | Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh (Mixed) | 644 |
| 39 | 19997M | Scoil Bhrige Agus Bhreandain Naofa (Mixed) | 274 |
| 40 | 19998O | Gaelscoil De Hide (Mixed) | 440 |
| 41 | 20000L | Galway Educate Together N.S. (Mixed) | 404 |
| 42 | 20108I | St. John The Apostle, Knocknacarra NS (Mixed) | 424 |
| 43 | 20211B | Claregalway Educate Together N S (Mixed) | 209 |
| | | **Total** | **11320** |

There are 5 No. special education schools located within the SPA which held a combined enrolment of 225 No. students in 2021/22. The 2 No. special education schools within a 15 minute walking distance are Rosedale School and Lakeview School which held a combined enrolment of 119 No. students in 2021/22.

We note that 2 no. schools St. Michael's Boys School (Roll no. 19225F) and Holy Trinity School (Roll no. 19226H) have amalgamated into a co-educational school named Radharc Na Mara Primary School.

**Table 3.2: Recorded Enrolments for Existing Special Education schools within the Galway City and Oranmore SPA**

| No. | Roll No. | School Name | 2021/22 Enrolment[5] |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 20070J | Rosedale School (Mixed) | 69 |
| 2 | 19201O | Lake View School (Mixed) | 50 |
| 3 | 19567K | Scoil Aine | 15 |
| 4 | 19047H | St Josephs Special Sch | 73 |
| 5 | 20371A | Ábalta Special School | 18 |
| | | **Total** | **225** |

## *3.2 Post-Primary Schools*

The 12 No. post-primary schools identified within the Galway City and Oranmore SPA held a combined provisional enrolment of 7,860 No. students during the 2021/22 school year, as per Department of Education records. Of this cohort, there were 2 No. all-girls schools, and 2 No. all-boys schools and 10 No. co-educational schools.

[5] Department of Education – This data is provisional and was published in December 2021. The source for this data is the National School Annual Census for 2021/2022, which is returned via the Primary Online Database (POD). This includes both the Mainstream Census and the Special School Annual Census. Data is anchored on the census date of 30th September 2021. Note that only schools aided by the Department of Education are included in this list.

The 2 No. post-primary schools located nearest to the subject site (Galway Community College and Coláiste na Coiribe) reported a combined 927 No. students in 2021/22.

| Table 3.3: Existing Post Primary schools within the Galway City and Oranmore SPA | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **No.** | **Roll No.** | **School Name** | **2021/22 Enrolment[6]** |
| 1 | 71400Q | Galway Community College (Mixed) | 312 |
| 2 | 71330V | Coláiste Na Coiribe (Mixed) | 615 |
| 3 | 62970K | Coláiste Iognáid S.J. (Mixed) | 625 |
| 4 | 62960H | St Joseph's College (Boys) | 763 |
| 5 | 62990Q | Dominican College (Girls) | 634 |
| 6 | 62981P | Coláiste Einde (Mixed) | 805 |
| 7 | 76096S | Coláiste Mhuirlinne/Merlin College (Mixed) | 695 |
| 8 | 63100I | Calasanctius College (Mixed) | 858 |
| 9 | 76233C | Coláiste Bhaile Chláir (Mixed) | 1247 |
| 10 | 63001G | Jesus & Mary Secondary School (Girls) | 681 |
| 11 | 68347V | Galway City & Oranmore Educate Together Secondary School (Mixed) | 135 |
| 12 | 68405J | Coláiste Muire Máthair (Boys) | 490 |
| | | **Total** | **7860** |

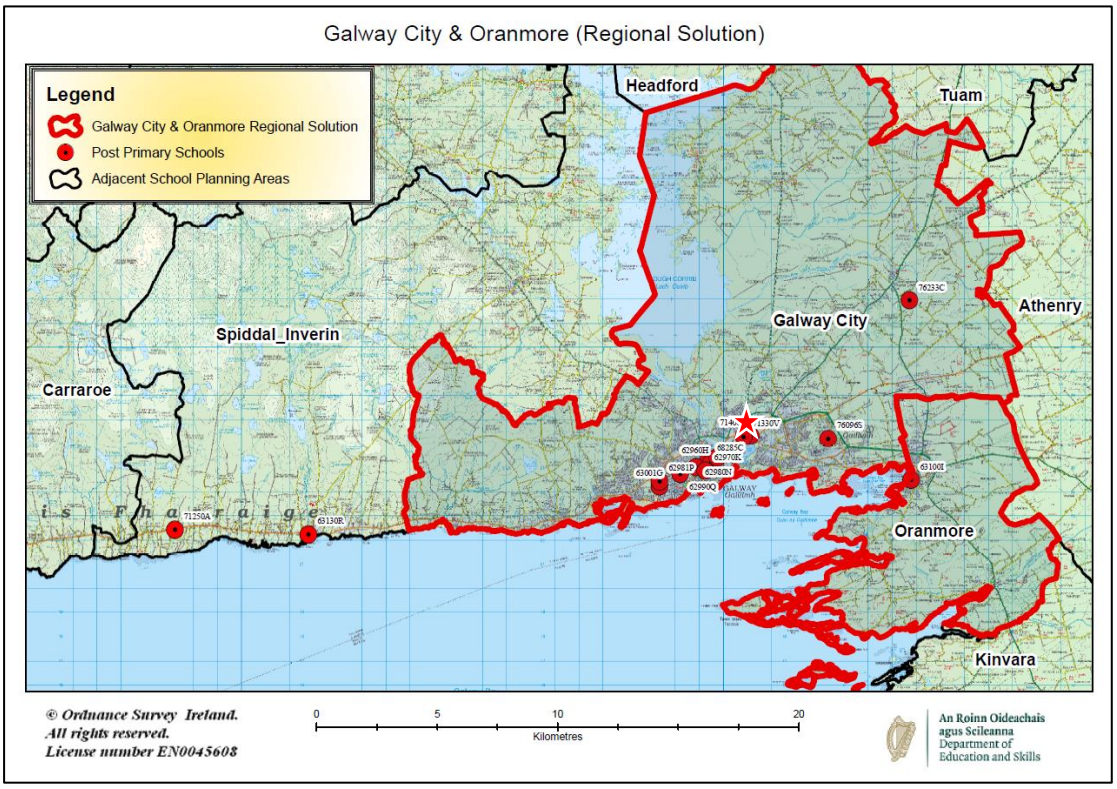


**Figure 3.2:** Location of post-primary schools within Galway City and Oranmore SPA. Location of subject development indicated by red star. Source: DoE/TPA.

[6] Department of Education – This data is provisional and was published in December 2021. The source for this data is the National School Annual Census for 2021/2022, which is returned via the Post-Primary Online Database (P-POD). Data is anchored on the census date of 30th September 2021. Note that only schools aided by the Department of Education are included in this list.

We note that 2 No. post primary schools (Our Lady's College (Roll no. 68285C) and St. Mary's College (Roll no. 62980N)) have amalgamated into in all boys school Coláiste Muire Máthair.

## 4.0 HISTORIC ENROLMENT STATISTICS

Historic enrolment trends for the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area show slight growth at the primary school level for the historic 5-year interval (c. 2% increase), with an overall increase in enrolments of 240 No. students from 2016/17 to 2021/22. Over 50% of these primary schools reported a decline in enrolments for this period, including Tirellan Heights N S located in close proximity from subject lands.

**Table 4.1: Historic Change in Enrolment (Primary) in Recent 5-year Period**

| Galway City and Oranmore SPA | | Enrolment Year | | | Historic Change | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Roll No. | School Name | 11/12 | 16/17 | 21/22 | 5-year trend | 10-year trend |
| 01013N | Scoil Croi Iosa (Mixed) | 91 | 105 | 113 | +8 | +22 |
| 04506F | Scoil Na Ngasur (Boys) | 260 | 263 | 262 | -1 | +2 |
| 04515G | Scoil An Linbh Iosa (Mixed) | 190 | 178 | 218 | +40 | +28 |
| 09069L | S N An Bhain Mhoir (Mixed) | 154 | 183 | 143 | -40 | -11 |
| 16750J | Parochial N S (Mixed) | 94 | 83 | 79 | -4 | -15 |
| 16804G | Sn Chlair Na Gaillimhe (Mixed) | 349 | 336 | 314 | -22 | -35 |
| 16936A | S N Naomh Padraig (Mixed) | 241 | 245 | 245 | 0 | 4 |
| 16937C | S N Fhursa (Mixed) | 249 | 267 | 245 | -22 | -4 |
| 16943U | Niochlas N S (Mixed) | 341 | 291 | 262 | -29 | -79 |
| 17221K | Sn Colmcille (Mixed) | 100 | 99 | 81 | -18 | -19 |
| 12954F | S N Bhride (Mixed) | 185 | 231 | 247 | +16 | +62 |
| 17759J | S N Brighde (Mixed) | 146 | 171 | 140 | -31 | -6 |
| 17771W | S N Mhuire (Mixed) | 217 | 231 | 232 | +1 | +15 |
| 17782E | Scoil Bhride (Mixed) | 314 | 223 | 178 | -45 | -136 |
| 17784I | S N Padraic Naofa (Mixed) | 284 | 204 | 165 | -39 | -119 |
| 17845C | Scoil Mhuire (Mixed) | 259 | 227 | 241 | +14 | -18 |
| 18089S | Scoil Naomh Mhuire (Mixed) | 200 | 213 | 233 | +20 | +33 |
| 18163E | Sn N Breandain (Mixed) | 153 | 144 | 135 | -9 | -18 |
| 13365O | Scoil Mhuire (Mixed) | 432 | 426 | 409 | -17 | -23 |
| 13415D | Sn Tuairini (Mixed) | 95 | 95 | 80 | -15 | -15 |
| 13856K | Bushy Park N S (Mixed) | 405 | 381 | 364 | -17 | -41 |
| 13914V | Scoil Naomh Iosef (Mixed) | 112 | 217 | 237 | +20 | +125 |
| 15796F | S N Cor An Droma (Mixed) | 87 | 96 | 80 | -16 | -7 |
| 18634R | Scoil Ide (Mixed) | 291 | 308 | 279 | -29 | -12 |
| 18929N | Scoil Naomh Einde (Boys) | 100 | 148 | 111 | -37 | +11 |
| 20554I | Radharc Na Mara Primary School (Mixed) | - | - | 331 | - | - |
| 19241D | Scoil Náisiúnta Róis (Mixed) | 430 | 352 | 333 | -19 | -97 |
| 19371Q | S N Iognaid (Mixed) | 550 | 573 | 496 | -77 | -54 |
| 19401W | S N Caitriona Sois (Mixed) | 388 | 419 | 390 | -29 | 2 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19468I | Sn Caitriona Sinsear (Mixed) | 400 | 369 | 360 | -9 | -40 |
| 20350P | Merlin Woods Primary School (Mixed) | 58 | 367 | 409 | +42 | +351 |
| 20410H | Knocknacarra Educate Together Ns (Mixed) | - | 74 | 215 | +141 | - |
| 20462D | Galway Steiner National School (Mixed) | - | 9 | 89 | +80 | - |
| 19795A | Tirellan Heights N S (Mixed) | 487 | 436 | 365 | -71 | -122 |
| 19803T | Sn Seamus Naofa (Mixed) | 268 | 285 | 241 | -44 | -27 |
| 19828M | Sn Cearn Mor (Mixed) | 170 | 175 | 160 | -15 | -10 |
| 19858V | Gaelscoil Dara (Mixed) | 370 | 431 | 443 | +12 | +73 |
| 19994G | Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh (Mixed) | 437 | 536 | 644 | +108 | +207 |
| 19997M | Scoil Bhrige Agus Bhreandain Naofa (Mixed) | 276 | 298 | 274 | -24 | -2 |
| 19998O | Gaelscoil De Hide (Mixed) | 267 | 433 | 440 | +7 | +173 |
| 20000L | Galway Educate Together N.S. (Mixed) | 226 | 365 | 404 | +39 | +178 |
| 20108I | St. John The Apostle, Knocknacarra NS (Mixed) | 322 | 442 | 424 | -18 | +102 |
| 20211B | Claregalway Educate Together N S (Mixed) | 84 | 151 | 209 | +58 | +125 |
| | | **10082** | **11080** | **11320** | **+240** | **+1238** |

With respect to post-primary schools in the area, enrolment rates have broadly increased in the recent 5-year period (c. 25% growth), as shown in Table 4.2, with all but 1 No. school (Coláiste Iognáid S.J.) recorded as having decreased enrolments from 2016/17 to 2021/22. The 2 No. secondary schools closest to the subject site, Galway Community College and Coláiste Iognáid S.J., both showed an increase in enrolments and held a combined enrolment of 111 No. Students in 2021/22.

**Table 4.2: Historic Change in Enrolment (Post-Primary) in Recent 5-year Period**

| Galway City and Oranmore SPA | | Enrolment Year | | | Historic Change | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Roll No.** | **School Name** | **11/12** | **16/17** | **21/22** | **5-year trend** | **10-year trend** |
| 71400Q | Galway Community College (Mixed) | 682 | 274 | 312 | +38 | -370 |
| 71330V | Coláiste Na Coiribe (Mixed) | 359 | 542 | 615 | +73 | +256 |
| 62970K | Coláiste Iognáid S.J. (Mixed) | 627 | 631 | 625 | -6 | -2 |
| 62960H | St Joseph's College (Boys) | 784 | 758 | 763 | +5 | -21 |
| 62990Q | Dominican College (Girls) | 684 | 624 | 634 | +10 | -50 |
| 62981P | Coláiste Einde (Mixed) | 710 | 760 | 805 | +45 | +95 |
| 76096S | Coláiste Mhuirlinne/Merlin College (Mixed) | - | 366 | 695 | +329 | - |
| 63100I | Calasanctius College (Mixed) | 759 | 850 | 858 | +8 | +99 |
| 76233C | Coláiste Bhaile Chláir (Mixed) | - | 774 | 1247 | +473 | - |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63001G | Jesus & Mary Secondary School (Girls) | 574 | 673 | 681 | +8 | +107 |
| 68347V | Galway City & Oranmore Educate Together Secondary School (Mixed) | - | - | 135 | - | - |
| 68405J | Coláiste Muire Máthair (Boys) | - | - | 490 | - | - |
| | | **5179** | **6252** | **7860** | **+1608** | **+2681** |

## 4.1 Future Growth Projections

The Department of Education (DOE) reported in November 2021[7] that enrolment figures for primary schools in Ireland were likely to have reached peak levels in 2018 and are now projected to fall gradually to a low point in 2033, in line with revised M1F2 migration and fertility assumptions for the country prepared in 2020 (see Figure 4.1 overleaf).

At a primary school level, the latest statistical release[8] by the DOE in this respect states:

> *"While the results are presented for all six scenarios the Department believes that **the M1F2 scenario is the most likely outcome**. This assumes slightly higher than current rates of migration, and fertility to remain at 1.6. A return to higher fertility, the F1 assumption, is now thought to be highly unlikely while the low migration assumption, M3 (zero net migration) is presented for completeness only.*
>
> *… **Enrolments in primary schools in Ireland in 2020 stood at 561,411 down by almost 6,000 on 2019 (567,716). Enrolments are now projected to fall over the coming years under all scenarios, and under the M1F2 scenario will reach a low point of 440,551 by 2033.** This is 120,860 lower than today's figure. Enrolments will rise again thereafter and are projected to stand at 474,888 by 2040, **a rise of some 34,300 over the seven years 2033 to 2040.**''*
>
> *[DOE Enrolment Projections – **Our emphasis**.]*

It is anticipated that post-primary enrolments, however, will continue to rise in the medium-term and will likely reach record levels in 2024 (see Figure 4.2 overleaf). The DOE report[9] states:

> *"**Enrolments in post-primary schools have risen by 26,923 (8%)** over the past five years and are projected to continue rising over the short term. **Under M1F2 they are projected to peak in 2024 with 408,794 pupils, some 29,610 higher than in 2020**.*
>
> *Under the M2F2 scenario (whereby inflows are set at a current rate) enrolments will **peak with in 2024 with 401,584 pupils,** 7,210 less pupils than under the high migration scenario."*
>
> *[DOE Enrolment Projections – **Our emphasis**.]*

[7] *Source: Projections of full-time enrolments Primary and Secondary Level, 2021-2040*
[8] *Source: Projections of full-time enrolments Primary and Secondary Level, 2021-2040 p.6*
[9] *Source: Projections of full-time enrolments Primary and Secondary Level, 2021-2040 p.11*

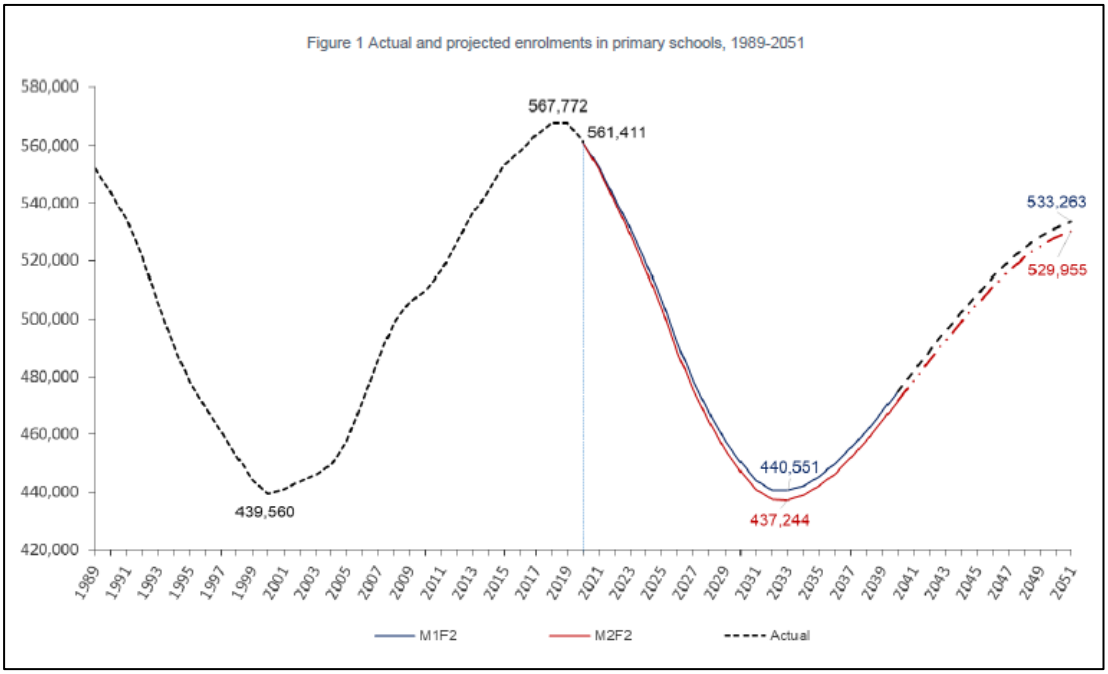


**Figure 4.1:** Actual and projected enrolments in primary schools, 1989 - 2051, organized by growth projection scenarios created by the CSO. Source: DOE, November 2021.

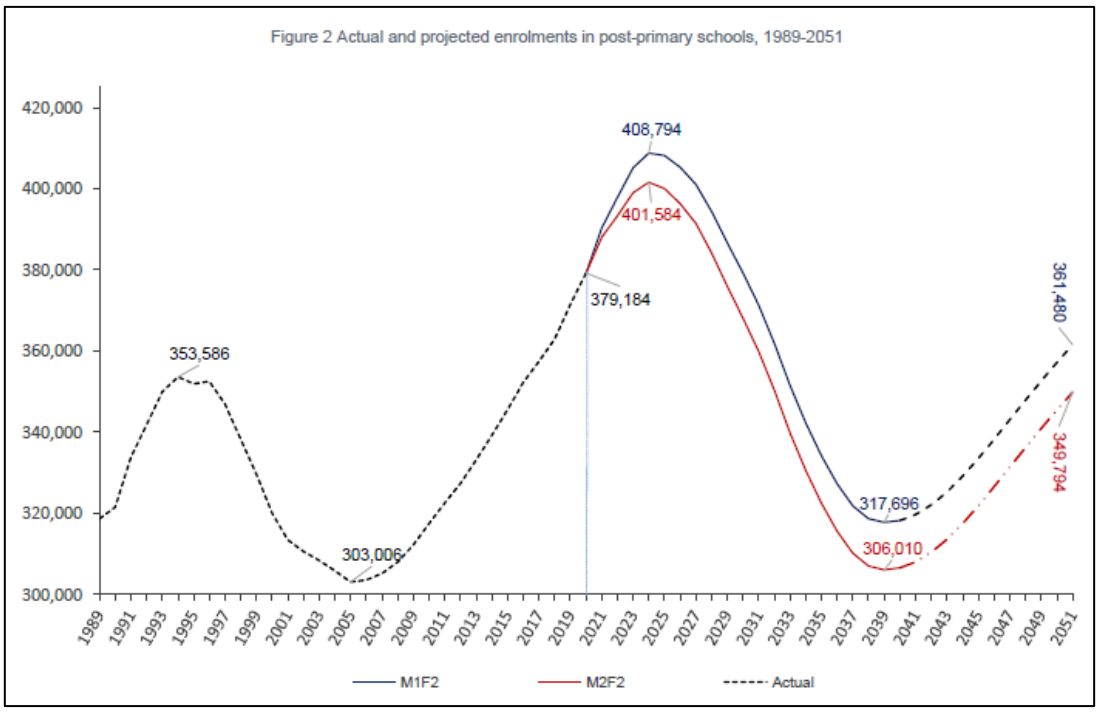


**Figure 4.2:** Actual and projected enrolments in post-primary schools, 1989 - 2051, organized by growth projection scenarios created by the CSO. Source: DOE, November 2021.

### *4.1.1 Potential Impact on Local Schools*

If the regional population projection from the 'M1F2' scenario[10] for primary schools is applied to the current enrolment figures within the study area a decrease of c. 12.5%[11] could be expected at the primary level by the 2026/27 enrolment year, resulting in an estimated reduction of 1,415 No. students across the 43 No. existing schools. At the post-primary level, an increase of c. 1.5%[12] could be expected by 2026/27, equivalent to 118 No. students across 12 No. schools, as shown in Table 4.3. We note that the indicative change figures provided are an estimate of potential enrolments at each school level based on the national population projections included in the DoE report for the West[13] and do not represent localised values.

**Table 4.3: Projected Enrolment Trends – 2021 to 2031**

| Galway City and Oranmore SPA | Enrolment Year | | | Future Trends (5-year) | | Future Trends (10-year) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2021/22 | 2026/27[14] | 2031/32[15] | % Change | Est. Change | % Change | Est. Change |
| Primary Schools (43 No. schools) | 11320 | 9905 | 8660 | **-12.5%** | **1415** | **-23.3%** | **2660** |
| Post-Primary Schools (12 No. schools) | 7860 | 7978 | 7428 | **+1.5%** | **118** | **-5.5%** | **432** |

## 5.0 RELEVANT POLICY AND PLANNED SCHOOL PROVISION

### 5.1 Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

The CDP identifies that with regard to future school provision, the recommendations outlined in the following guidance documents will be followed:

- The Provision of Schools and the Planning System,
- A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities,
- DECLG (2008) and Local Area Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities DECLG (2013) and
- Technical Guidance Documents on school site identification and suitability assessment, published by the Department of Education (DOE).

[10] The CSO's Regional Population Projections utilise six variant scenarios with relative assumptions in relation to regional fertility, mortality trends and external migration from and to each region. The Department now anticipates that M1F2 is the most likely scenario regarding migration and fertility, which encompasses the assumption of high migration and low fertility falling from 1.8 to 1.6 by 2031. This is a change from the previous reporting, which utilised the M2F2 scenario (2019) and M2F1 scenario (2018).
[11] Source: *Regional Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021-2036 (DoE, November 2021) p.8*
[12] Source: *Regional Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021-2036 (DoE, November 2021) p.15*
[13] Source: *Regional Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2020-2036 (DoE, November 2021)*
[14] Figure estimated using the projected decrease of c. 12.5% at primary level and increase of c. 1.5% at post-primary level from 2021 to 2026 as per M1F2 scenario. See Footnote No. 10 above for reference.
[15] Figure estimated using the projected decrease of c. 23.3% at primary level and decrease of c. 5.5% at post-primary level from 2021 to 2026 as per M1F2 scenario. See Footnote No. 10 above for reference.

The Development Plan suggests that the Council will aim to support the DOE in the identification of school sites and the protection and expansion of existing schools in the city while promoting 'carbon-neutral urban schools' which seeks to reduce onsite parking and states that,

> *''In order to encourage sustainable travel, maximise the sharing of facilities and ensure the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods, the Council will encourage the location of schools adjacent to residential areas, public transport routes and community, cultural and recreational facilities.''*
>
> *[CDP, Ch 7]*

Specific policies for the development of schools within the *CDP* include:

| **Table 5.: Schools Facilities Policies included in *GCDP 2022-2028*** | |
|---|---|
| **Policy** | **Description** |
| **Policy 7.6 Education** | |
| **1** | Ensure that sufficient land is reserved for the establishment, improvement or expansion of education facilities within the city in accordance with the settlement strategy, targeted population and in collaboration with the Department of Education (DoE) |
| **2** | Support the ongoing development and provision of third level education, further education and lifelong learning in the city. |
| **3** | Facilitate the upgrade and expansion of existing education facilities and the provision of new education facilities as required, including to:<br>• Support the future improvement and sustainable expansion of NUI Galway;<br>• Support the development of GMIT and the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) approved designation as a Technological University<br>• Support the role of the GTI in the delivery of education;<br>• Support the role of the GRETB in the delivery of Further Education and Training in the city. |
| **4** | Ensure that the design and layout of all educational establishments incorporate facilities for sustainable transport measures and public transport. |
| **5** | Ensure that safe and easy access for people with disabilities is incorporated in the design of all education developments. |
| **6** | Support the further development and diversification of third level education institutions in the city, including the promotion of knowledge based industry linked research and innovation hubs and facilities. |
| **7** | Encourage the multi-use of school facilities for other community uses outside of school hours to maximise community benefit and use of resources. |
| | |

In addition to the above there are certain specific objectives in the CDP in relation to the provision of schools in Galway City. Specific objectives outlined in section 7.7 state that the Council will,

> *''12. Work with relevant stakeholders and service providers to investigate the delivery of community facilities to serve the* ***community of Ballybane*** *including: A Family Resource Centre in conjunction with TUSLA;*
> *• A community crèche and early years education service;*
> *• Outdoor and indoor amenities for all age groups;*
> ***• A Primary and secondary school in conjunction with the Department of Education (DoE)***
> *13. Support the development of a permanent site for a* ***post primary school in the East of the city.***
> *14.. Support the development of a permanent site for* ***a primary school in the West of the city.****''*
>
> *[Our Emphasis, CDP, Ch 7]*

Furthermore, the RSES (NWRA) recognises that,

> *'The National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) and Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) are huge assets to the city, with the latter having the potential to develop as a Technological University as part of the Connacht /Ulster Alliance.'*

We note that GMIT is located in close proximity to the subject lands, just over a 15-minute walking distance.

## 5.2 New Schools to be Established from 2019 to 2022

The Department of Education announced in April 2018 that more than 40 No. new primary and post-primary schools are to be established throughout the country by 2022[16]. We note that 1 No. new post-primary school (1,000 pupils) was identified for development within the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area at this time, however, the requirement for new schools will be subject to on-going review. Patronage for this school was awarded to Educate Together in 2019. No new primary school was proposed as part of school building programme.

**Table 5.1: New Schools to Be Established 2019-2022 in Galway City and Oranmore SPA (DOE)[17]**

| Type | School Planning Area | Size | To Open |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Post-Primary** | Galway City and Oranmore | 1000 pupils | 2019 |

[16] Source: https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2018-press-releases/PR18-04-13.html
[17] Source: https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2018-press-releases/PR18-04-13.html

With respect to other large-scale education projects in the vicinity of the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area, there were 3 No. school facilities identified under the DoE school building programme currently under development (see Table 5.2), including major works/expansions to 3 no. existing schools in the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area (i.e., Scoil Caitrona Senior and Junior Schools (Renmore) and Rosedale Special School (Renmore)).

The new post-primary school (i.e., Galway ETSS) also opened in interim accommodation in September 2019. According to an article published on the 21st of March 2022[18] by the Connacht Tribune, it was confirmed that the Galway Educate Together School will move to the former Mercy School building in Newtownsmyth (at the heart of the city) for two years. However, a permanent base is yet to be confirmed.

Earlier in November 2021, in response to the provision of schools in the Galway City and Oranmore SPA, in the Minister for Education stated[19] that there is additional school space demand identified which are proposed to be met by either utilizing spare capacity in existing schools, expansion of existing schools or the establishment of new schools. The Department of Education identifies that there are a number of school building projects on the way in relation to a new school building for St. Joseph's College, a major extension to Colaiste Mhuire Mathair, new school buildings for Scoil Caitriona Junior and Senior Schools, a new school building for Cuian na Gaillimhe CNS, and a new school building for Rosedale Special School.

A more recent Connacht Tribune article also identifies that the Department of Education is in plans for a new home for the St. Joseph's College (the Bish) as the school is currently under pressure in terms of capacity. It is noted in the article that there is the Presentation School campus that is currently vacant and could be a potential site for accommodation of schools.

**Table 5.2: Status of Large-Scale Projects in Galway City and Oranmore SPA[20]**

| Ref. | Roll No. | School Name & Address | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| 173 | 19401W & 19468I | Scoil Caitriona Senior and Junior Schools, Renmore | Pre Stage 1 |
| 176 | 20070J | Rosedale Special School, Renmore | Stage 3 (Tender Stage) |
| 185 | 68347V | Galway City & Oranmore Post Primary - Galway ETSS | School opened in September 2019 in interim start-up accommodation. Site Acquisition Process |

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

There are 43 No. existing primary schools and 12 No. post-primary schools currently operating in the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area to which the subject site belongs. These facilities cater to a student population of c. 11,320 No. primary school students and c. 7,860 No. post-primary students and have demonstrated slight levels of growth at the primary school level and substantial growth at the post primary school level in the recent 5-year period.

[18] Source: https://connachttribune.ie/clarity-sought-on-new-home-for-the-bish-in-galway/
[19] Source: https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2021-11-23/146/#pq-answers-146
[20] Source: *Current status of large-scale projects being delivered under the school building programme* list published 28th November 2022. Source: https://www.gov.ie/en/service/c5b56b-major-projects/#current-status-of-large-scale-projects

With respect to future enrolments, we note that a c. 12.5% decrease in enrolments at the primary school level and a c. 1.5% increase in enrolments at the post-primary school level is anticipated nationally from 2021 to 2026, with respect to the most recent projections for the West published by the Department of Education (DOE).[21]

At a national level, 1 No. new post primary school (Galway City and Oranmore ETSS) was proposed to be delivered within the Galway City and Oranmore School Planning Area in the short term under the *2019-2022 DoE School Building Programme*. However, no new primary schools were proposed as part of this programme.

We note that patronage for the post primary school was awarded to Educate Together in 2019 has opened in interim accommodation in 2019 with site acquisition in progress as of February 2022. Additionally, 2 No. existing schools within the Galway City and Oranmore SPA are undergoing major works as of February 2022.

Earlier in November 2021, in response to the provision of schools in the Galway City and Oranmore SPA, in the Minister for Education stated[22] that there is additional school space demand identified which are proposed to be met by either utilising spare capacity in existing schools, expansion of existing schools or the establishment of new schools. A more recent article by the Connacht Tribune identified that there are vacant schools in the City which could be used to accommodate the demand.

The completion of the Galway City and Oranmore ETSS facilities, and an additional 2 no. primary and 2 no post primary schools as proposed in the *CDP* will increase the availability of places for future students in the short- to medium-term for new primary and post primary enrolments within the subject SPA.

We note that there seems to be a projected increased demand for secondary school places at this time firstly due to the 'baby boom' in the late 2000s as stated by the Connacht Tribune Article on February 2021 but also due to the projected population increase for Galway City in the NPF.

[21] Source: *Regional Projections of Full-Time Enrolment: Primary and Second Level, 2021-2036 (DoES, November 2021)*
[22] Source: https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2021-11-23/146/#pq-answers-146