

Naas Social Infrastructure Audit – July 2020

A supporting document of the Naas Local Area Plan 2021 - 2027

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1.0 Introduction

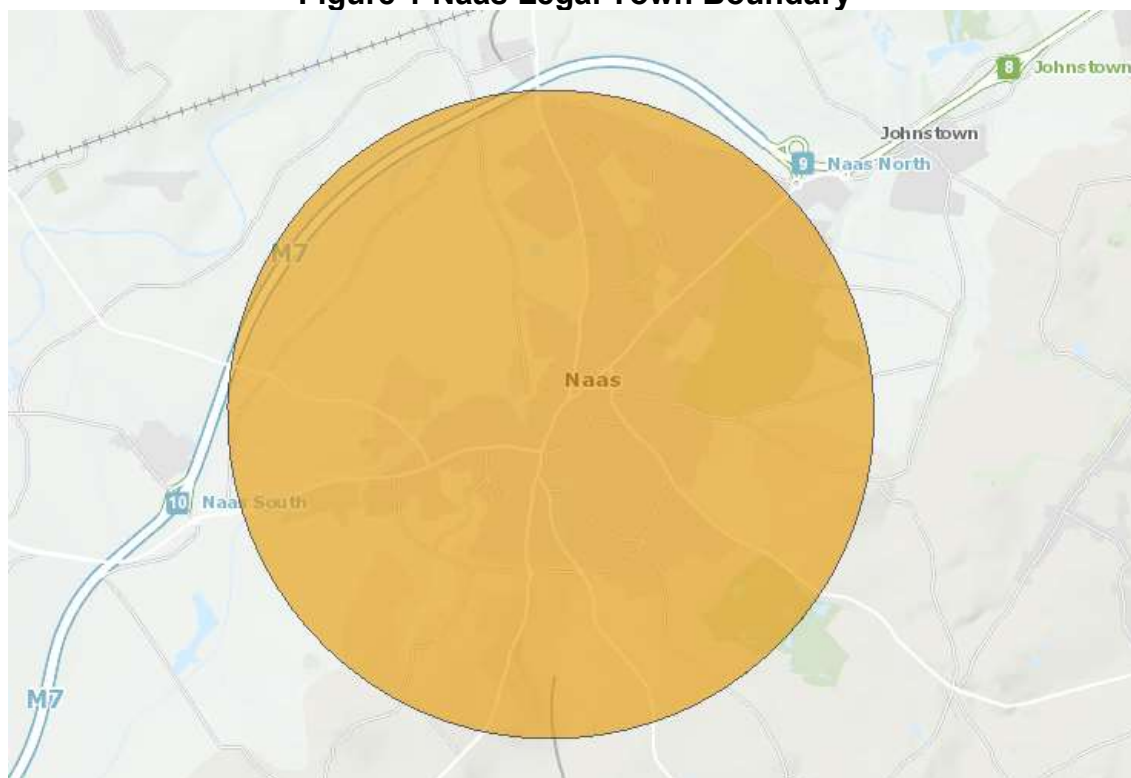
1.1 Study Purpose

The function of a Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) is to examine and analyse the availability and capacity of existing social infrastructure facilities, and to determine future requirements, and make recommendations based on anticipated settlement growth. The following SIA was prepared by Kildare County Council (KCC) for the purposes of informing the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027 (LAP). The document was prepared in the summer months of 2020 and presented to the SPC at the September meeting. This report is a statement of the outcome of the SIA.

Social Infrastructure relates to the provision of services and facilities which are essential for health, well-being and social development of a town / place. Social infrastructure facilities include for example education, health services such as schools' surgeries and community specific services as well as areas which can offer active sports and passive recreational activities. In addition, to the actual activity and function, social infrastructure facilities can provide an invisible platform of community and social interaction which some residents may rely upon for personal well-being. The provision of the requisite levels of social infrastructure within Naas is therefore important and vital to support the planned residential base in both physical facilities and social engagement.

The extent of the study area is shown in Figure 1 below which represents the Legal Town boundary of Naas.

Figure 1 Naas Legal Town Boundary



Source: www.census.cso.ie/sapmap/

1.2 Policy Context

The assessment of 'social infrastructure' has been considered in the context of spatial development objectives for Naas set out in statutory policy documents at national, regional and local level.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country to the year 2040. The Framework 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 Regional and Economic Spatial Strategy (RSES) prepared for the Eastern and Midland Region promotes and supports the strategic function of Naas as one of the Key Towns identified in the region. Key Towns are defined as large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres (Drogheda, Athlone and Dundalk). There are a number of regional policy objectives (RPO's) within the RSES which support the provision of and access to social infrastructure, including RPO 9.13, where local authorities shall ensure that new social infrastructure developments are accessible and inclusive for a range of users. RPO 9.19 states that the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) shall work collaboratively with stakeholders including the wide range of service providers through the Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP) to effectively plan for social infrastructure needs.

The importance of Naas at county level is emphasised in the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied) where the Settlement Strategy allocates the greatest population growth rate of 14.9% to Naas as the county town. This SIA is guided by demographic projections adopted by Kildare County Council which anticipates a population of 27,259 to 2026 (2,095 growth in units) as per CDP Variation No. 1. For the purpose of preparing the SIA (to inform the emerging Draft Naas LAP), the population growth figures have been annualised to cover the plan period 2021-2027 resulting in a population projection of 28,097 persons (2,394 units) to 2027.

Planning for an increased community, places demand for, and pressure on, existing community infrastructure services. This study seeks to rationalise the demand for community infrastructure having regard to the projected population increase, to determine need through application of national standards and best practice recommendations where possible.

1.3 Methodology

The Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) adopted a number of techniques to collate baseline information and undertake analysis thereby arriving at a number of informed recommendations. This included collation and analysis of qualitative and quantitative information in respect of community infrastructure.

The SIA assessment comprises three parts: assessment of the existing situation, future demand analysis and social infrastructure recommendations.

- **Existing Infrastructure Provision** – The ‘baseline’ assessment was derived from; desk-top examination of available information, use of digital mapping techniques to identify spatial relationships between community infrastructure, demographic profile and population catchment. This assessment included:
 - (i) A social and demographic profile of the community who live within the study boundary (Naas Legal Town boundary as identified by CSO);
 - (ii) Identification and catalogue of existing community infrastructure features (including where relevant, their capacity) under a number of predefined themes including education / training, childcare, health, sports and recreation, social / community services, arts and culture, faith and other features.
 - (iii) A walkability analysis based on defined walking distances from specific community facilities in order to evaluate proximity, accessibility, and coverage of those facilities to target user groups. The walkability analysis is illustrated spatially relative to specific community facilities.

A walkability analysis was not undertaken of all community facilities, as not all facilities are intended to serve the entire community, whilst others may not necessarily be required within certain walk times or distances.
- **Future Demands Analysis** – Consideration of existing infrastructure provision relative to the existing and planned population and best practice provision.
- **Recommendations** – Recommendations for future social infrastructure provision will inform the preparation of the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027, and other social and community programmes. The spatial and demographic outputs and specifically those generated from unique walkability analysis will bring significant added value to the preparation of spatial development objectives.

2.0 Community Profile – Population Dynamic

2.1 Demographic Profile

Census 2016 recorded a population of 21,597 persons in Naas (Legal Town boundary) which represents a 4.2% (884 persons) increase in population from 2011 (20,713 persons). The population of Naas represents 9.7% of the county population (222,130) in 2016.

According to Census 2016, the age profile of Naas includes a high percentage of children, young people and those at work. The 0-19 age cohort makes up 29% of the population which is slightly higher than the national proportion of 27.5%, while the 20-64 age cohort is also slightly higher when compared nationally at 60.5% as opposed to 59.1%. However, there is a lower proportion of the population over 65 years with 10.5% compared to 13.4% nationally.

Table 1 Population Profile of Naas Legal Town

Age Group	Population	% of Total Population Naas	National Proportion %
0-4	1,577	7.3%	7.0%
5-12	2,626	12.2%	11.5%
13-19	2,049	9.5%	9.0%
20 - 64	13,074	60.5%	59.1%
65+	2,271	10.5%	13.4%

Source: Census of Population, 2016.

2.1.1 Household Composition and Family Cycle

Within the study area 5,555 families are recorded. The largest family type comprises two persons (35.3% of all families) followed by families comprising four persons (25.3%), three persons (23.2%), five persons (11.6%), and then those with more than five persons (4.6%).

Families with no children accounted for 26.9% of all families (1,499), while 36.4% (2,019) have a child or children under 15 years old. Families comprising of a single parent structure (mother or father) accounted for 12.5% (699) of the total families. The predominant categorisation of family by 'family cycle' is adult (25.7% of total family persons). This group is defined where the oldest child is 20 years or older and is slightly lower than the national figure of 27% of total persons.

Adolescent is the next largest group (16%) where the oldest child is aged 15-19 years, followed closely by pre-adolescent (15.8%) where the oldest child is aged 10-14 years. The retired group is the smallest cohort representing 4.6% of total persons comparable with the national rate of 6.2%. The 0-9 aged cohort which typically represent pre-schoolers and the early primary school years account for 25.9% of total persons which is above the national figure of 24.3%. Interestingly the pre-family group (married or cohabiting couple without children where the female is under 45 years) is also slightly above the national figure of 5.7% at 6.1%.

2.1.2 Accommodation and Home Ownership

Within the study area, houses are the predominant accommodation type, accommodating 89% of the population with 9% comprising apartment living. The

level of home ownership (outright ownership) is 29.7% and ownership with a mortgage accounts for 37.2%, these are comparable with the national rate of between 30-40% of households. Within the study area 31% of households are renting their accommodation. This is divided between 23.7% are rented from private landlords, 6.3% from local authority and 1.0% from voluntary housing bodies. The national rate in the rental sector, of housing rented from a local authority is 8.4% compared to within the study area the proportion is 6.3%.

2.1.3 Employment and Professional Qualification

The largest workforce group are employed as Professionals (23.3%) followed by those employed in the Managerial and Technical Sector (22.7%) and then the Non-manual group (19.5%). The smallest workforce group apart from farmers and agricultural workers are the unskilled group (3.2%) with the manual and semi-skilled groups accounting for 16.9%.

The level of educational attainment in the form of those holding professional qualifications including ordinary and higher bachelor's degrees (24%) is higher in Naas than the national figure of 18.29%. This trend is reflected also in those holding 'postgraduate' qualification (12.46%) over the national rate of 9.1%.

2.1.4 Mobility

Car ownership amongst households is high with only 9% of households recording no car. This high level of car-based mobility is comparative with a higher national rate of 15%, without car. Of those aged 5 years and over who travel to school, college or work 29% travel under 15 minutes and 30% travel between 15-30 minutes. This is broadly in line with national figures of 32% and 29% respectively. However, in the study area those whose travel times range between 60-90 minutes is significantly higher than the national rate at 9.8%. This is likely associated with travel time to / from the Dublin Metropolitan Area or the surrounding Core Region.

It is also observed that 16.2% of those aged 5 years and over walk to work, school or college. Whilst almost 30% of those travelling to school or college do so on foot, compared to 9.3% of workers.

2.1.5 Health and Deprivation

Within the study area, almost 90% of the town has evaluated its personal health to be either 'Very Good' or 'Good' with 1.6% considering themselves to be of 'Bad' or 'Very Bad' health. These figures are broadly similar with the national rate.

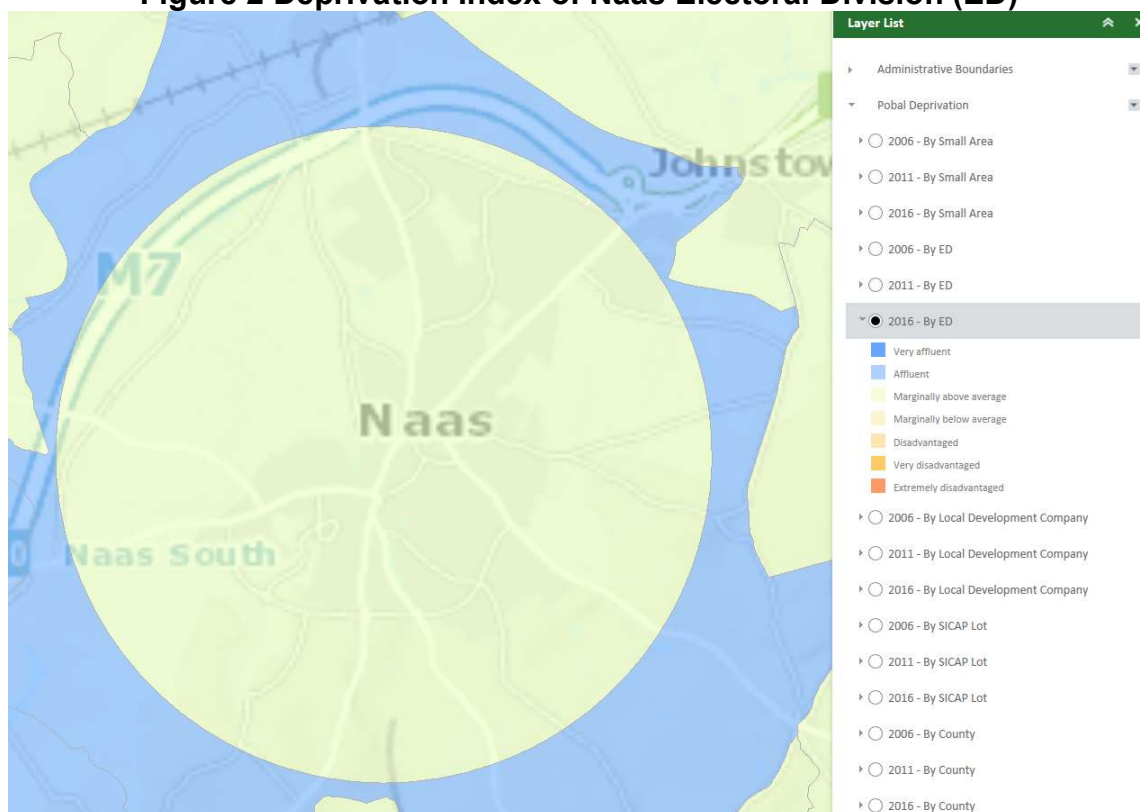
It is also notable that 12.6% of the population of Naas confirm that they have a disability, which is slightly lower than the national rate of 13.5%. Whilst 3% of those aged 15 and over are unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability.

The Pobal HP¹ Deprivation Index is a series of maps measuring the relative affluence or disadvantage of a particular geographical area in Ireland, using data compiled from various censuses. In compiling the 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index three dimensions of affluence/disadvantage are examined from census data including demographic profile, social class composition and labour market composition.

¹ HP – Trutz Haase and Jonathan Pratschke (HP) were the first authors to develop a census-based deprivation index for the Republic of Ireland.

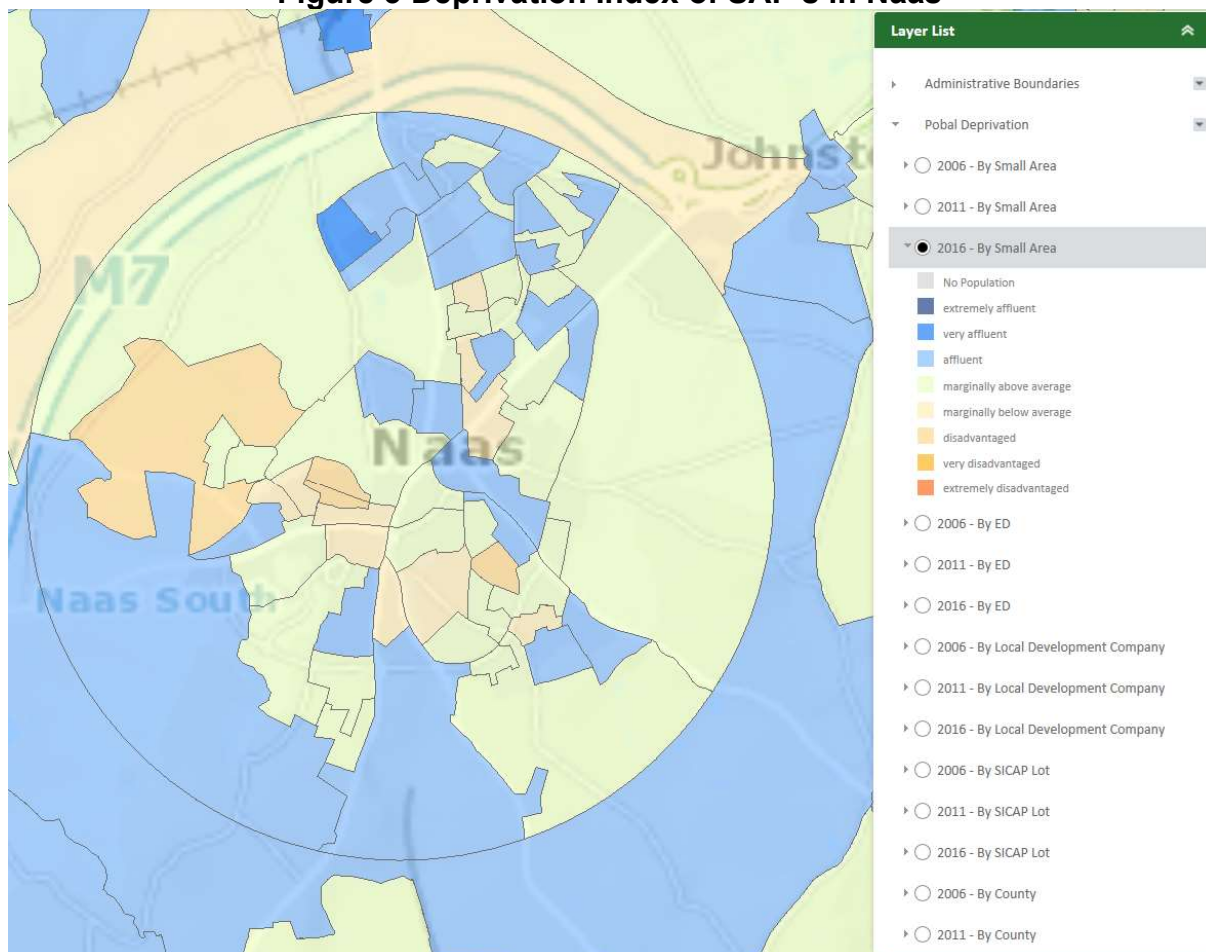
At national level this index revealed dramatic increases in deprivation between 2006 and 2011 following the economic collapse in 2008 and the partial recovery between 2011 and 2016. Despite this, the county of Kildare and the Naas Electoral Division (ED) has maintained a static deprivation index score of 'marginally above average' between 2006, 2011 and 2016. Within the Small Area Population's (SAP's) in the Naas ED a significant proportion is deemed to be affluent or marginally above average whilst a smaller proportion is deemed to be disadvantaged and marginally below average.

Figure 2 Deprivation Index of Naas Electoral Division (ED)



Source: Pobal

Figure 3 Deprivation Index of SAP's in Naas



Source – Pobal

2.1.6 General Employment Profile

The preparation of this SIA is framed in the context of a changing economic environment as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic which has had a sudden and drastic impact on the labour market. Kildare in early May, at the peak, had 26,293 persons receiving the Pandemic Unemployment Payment and by early July this was reduced to 17,626 persons. There is no up to date data on how the pandemic has impacted employment levels within Naas, therefore for the purposes of examining the employment details of the study area Census 2016 data will be used.

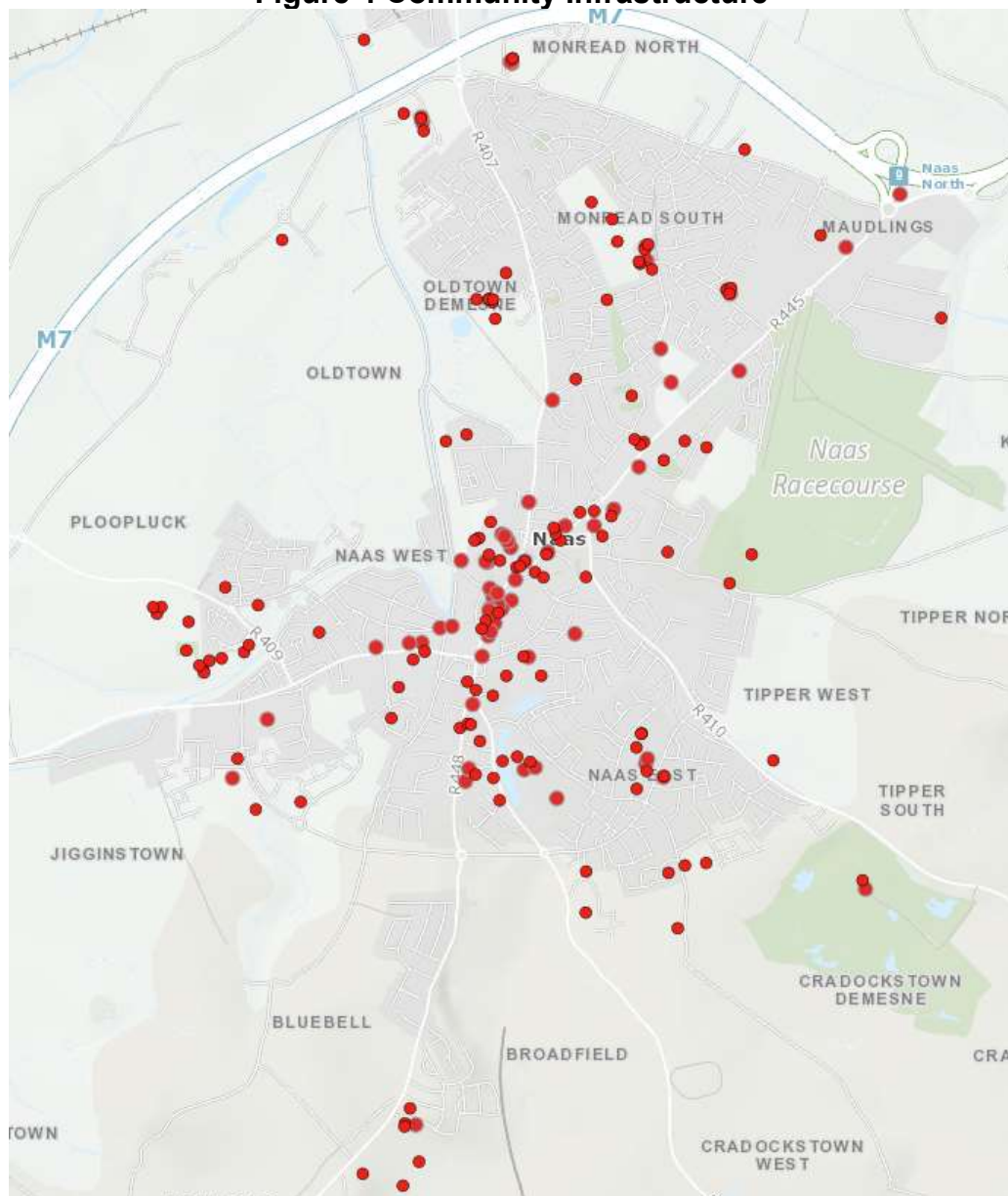
As per Census 2016, the general employment structure of those who are aged 15 years and over, reflects an active employment base with 59.6% of the population at work, with a low level of unemployment at 5.3%, moderately less than the national rate of 7%. Retirees account for 12% of the population, and less than 1% (131 persons) were recorded as seeking their first job.

3.0 Community Profile – Existing Infrastructure

3.1 Existing Infrastructure

An audit of social infrastructure within Naas was undertaken using a series of pre-defined themes including education / training, childcare, health, sports and recreation, social / community services, arts and culture, faith, and other features. For illustration purposes, all physical social infrastructure features identified and assessed in the study area are illustrated in Figure 4 below. Larger scale maps for each defined theme are provided at the end of the document.

Figure 4 Community Infrastructure



Source: Kildare County Council Social Infrastructure Portal

The following analysis seeks to categorise these infrastructure features by typology of use and to determine where possible, the level of their sufficiency based upon recognised national / international thresholds (where possible), or from consideration of spatial coverage.

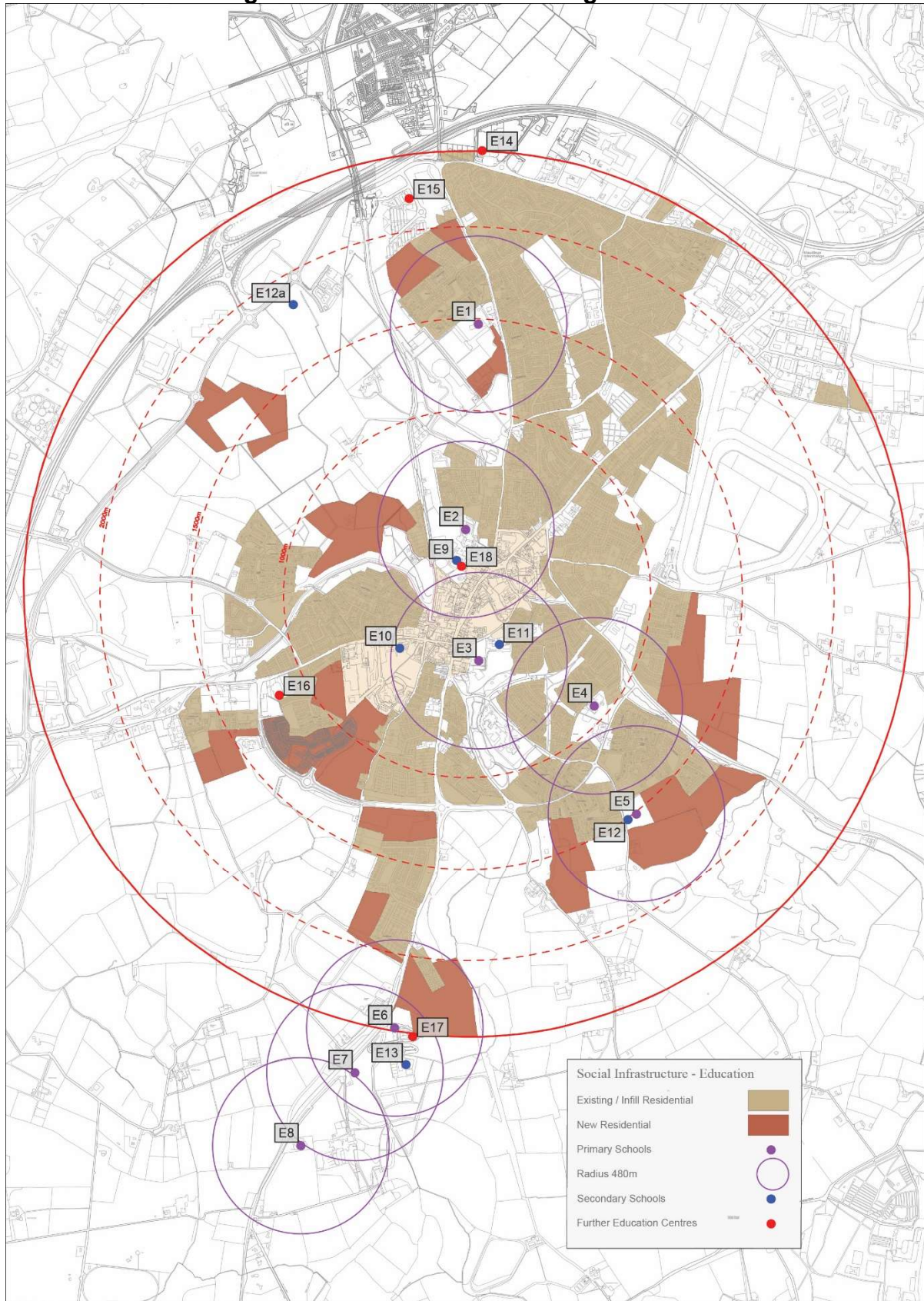
Each theme contains a '*demand analysis*'. The examination is based on the infrastructure, its capacity and coverage under each theme.

The outputs of that analysis present the greatest possible detail on the locational characteristics of certain social infrastructure which is then used to inform future recommendations.

3.2 Education and Training

Facilities examined under this theme include primary schools and post-primary schools along with third-level evening classes and skills development programmes. Within the study area (Naas Legal Town boundary) there are eight primary schools, five post-primary schools and six further education / training centres. The location of these facilities is illustrated in Figure 5 below with further analysis of each type set out under the following sections.

Figure 5 Education and Training Facilities



Source: Kildare County Council Social Infrastructure Portal²

² Zoning map as per Naas Town Development Plan 2011-2017

3.2.1 Primary Schools

Five of the eight primary schools are located within the existing built up area of the town, while the other three schools are clustered south of the town outside the settlement boundary identified by the Central Statistics Office under Census 2016, but within the Naas Legal Town boundary. The geographical location of primary schools is close to / within existing and new residential neighbourhoods (defined by the land-use zoning objectives) and illustrated in Figure 5. A capacity audit of primary schools is presented in the table below.

Table 2 Capacity of Primary Schools

Map Label	Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating level	Places available
E1	Scoil Bríd	666	668	100%	0
E2	Mercy Convent	616	561	91%	55
E3	Scoil Chorbain	430	518	120%	0
E4	Holy Child NS	468	468	100%	0
E5	Naas Community NS	262	256	97%	6
E6	Gaelscoil Nás Na Riogh	409	420	102%	0
E7	St David's NS	94	94	100%	0
E8	Killashee NS	241	241	100%	0
	TOTAL	3,186	3,226		61

Source: Data obtained from schools directly in January 2020

Direct consultation with each school confirmed that the primary school infrastructure can accommodate 3,186 children. However, there are 3,226 pupils enrolled in the eight primary schools for the 2019/20 academic year. Six of the eight schools are operating at or above capacity, while the other two are operating at 91% and 97%. At present Naas is oversubscribed for primary school places with many schools operating waiting lists.

The Mercy Convent advised that a new school is under construction and will accommodate 896 students when construction is complete, while Scoil Chorbain are in the process of designing a new school building to accommodate their overflow and possibly increase the capacity even further.

Census 2016 indicates that within the study boundary 2,626 children are of primary school going age – i.e. 5 to 12 years inclusive. The number of pupils enrolled in primary schools within Naas (Legal Town boundary area) is 600 (22.8%) above the number of those within the primary school going age bracket (5 to 12 inclusive). This would indicate that schools in Naas are serving a wider catchment with a significant number of students from outside the study area.

3.2.2 Post Primary Schools

The location of the five post-primary schools are illustrated in Figure 4 and the capacity audit of same is set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Capacity Audit of Post Primary Schools

Map Label	Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating level	Places available
E9*	St. Mary's College	500	1,042	208%	0
E10	Gaelcholaiste Chill Dara	372	372	100%	0
E11	Meánscoil Iognáid Ris	900	1,014	112%	0
E12**	Naas Community College	476	476	100%	0
E12a	Naas Community College (Under construction)	1,000			
E13	Piper's Hill College	1,000	950	95%	50
	TOTAL	3,248	3,854		

Source: Data obtained from schools directly in January 2020

E9 - Advised by principal they are catering for two times its capacity by using specialist rooms and assembly areas.*

*E12** - Will have capacity for 600 pupils in September 2020, once prefab rooms are installed. New school under construction at Millennium Park. Due to move there in 2021. School will have capacity for 1,000 pupils.*

The capacity analysis confirms that post-primary schools in Naas are oversubscribed with four of the five operating at or above their capacity. There are 3,854 students enrolled for the 2019/20 academic year within schools that are built to accommodate 3,248. Notwithstanding this there are 50 student places available in Piper's Hill College to the south of the town.

Population analysis indicates that there are 2,049 people of post-primary school going age (13-19 years inclusive) in the study area, which therefore suggests that a large proportion of students attending post primary schools in Naas are from outside the town (46.8%). This is not uncommon given that there is a tendency for secondary school pupils to travel further for secondary education often due to necessity and in some cases personal preference. It should be noted that areas in the environs of Naas such as Sallins, Kill and Johnstown have no post primary schools and are therefore serviced by Naas due to their proximity to the town. Data from the Census 2016 indicates there were 1,003 students of post primary school age (13-19) residing within the three settlements of Sallins (540), Kill (303) and Johnstown (160). Data extrapolated from small area population statistics (Census 2016) shows that 10% of people in Naas over 5 years of age, walk to school or college.

3.2.3 Further Education and Training Facilities

There are six adult / further education facilities in the area with courses available from FETAC Level 3 up to Level 9. Many of these are located within existing secondary school facilities. Table 4 below outlines the level and type of courses available.

Table 4 Further Education and Training Facilities

Map Ref	Name	Description of courses	Level attainment
E14	Pitman Training	Range of courses available including administration, IT, business, communications & management	Up to diploma level
E15	Irish Institute of Training & Development	Human resource training and development	Foundation and level 6 up to level 8. Continued Professional Development training.
E16	Naas Further Education & Training Centre	Adult basic education, apprenticeship programmes (full & part-time)	
E17	ETB Ireland / Piper's Hill College	A large range of evening adult education classes.	QQI Accredited courses.
E18	St Mary's College	Finance, languages, dance, music, photography & first aid	

Analysis of CSO data shows that 18.5% (2,579) of those aged 15 and over in Naas have not completed their leaving certificate, when they ceased education. While 7.6% (1,055) have not completed the junior certificate. It should be noted a further 3.4% (478) did not state the level of education completed. Further education facilities are not limited to those with lower levels of education however, within the study area there are a number of options to obtain additional education, training and skills.

3.2.4 Demand Analysis

There is no guiding population benchmark for the provision of primary or secondary school facilities in Ireland. Instead, these are determined on an area specific basis by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) having regard to available school capacity, demographic projections, an analysis of child benefit records, and local GIS travel pattern modelling.

The DES approach includes a general standard that for every 1,000 dwellings in an area, circa 12% of the population will require primary school places and 8.5% will require post-primary school places.

In Naas the demand is slightly higher than 12% for primary school places with 12.1% of the population eligible for primary school compared to 11.5% nationally.

Furthermore, it should be noted that primary schools within the town are currently catering for 14.9% which indicates they are serving areas outside of the town.

The demand for secondary school places within the town appears to be above DES guidance with the proportion of post-primary school going age (13-19) at 9.5%, which is also higher when compared to the national rate of 9.0%.

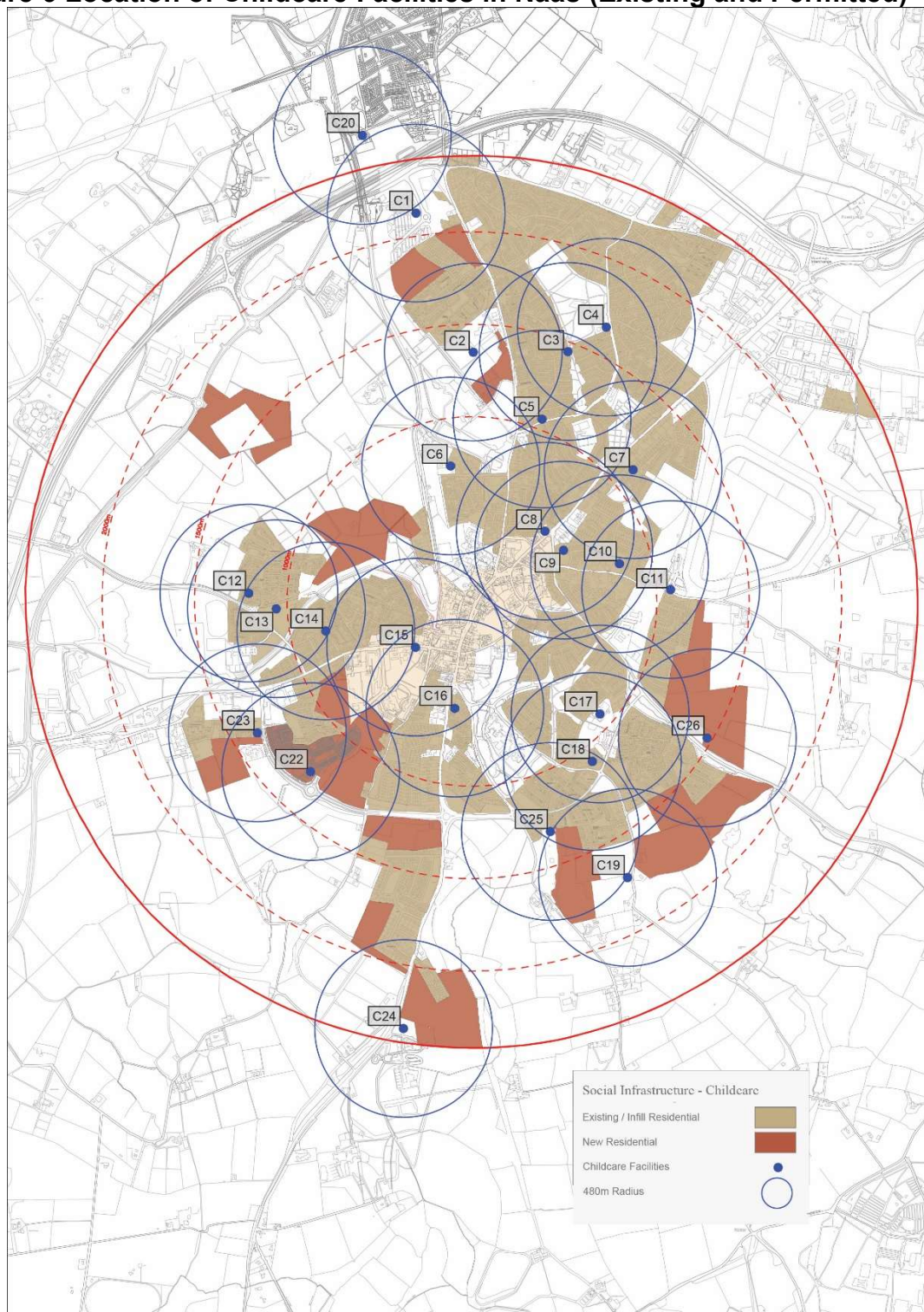
The figure of 9.5% is somewhat misleading as the demand for post-primary school places in Naas is considerably higher with 3,854 enrolled for the 2019/20 academic year. This represents 17.9% of the population in the study area which is over double the 8.5% figure indicated by the DES.

Significant pressures are coming on post-primary schools due to demand from outside of the study area with some schools already over capacity. It is anticipated the development of Naas Community College in Millennium Park (map label E12a) currently under construction with capacity for 1,000 pupils will relieve some of the existing pressure on post-primary schools. However, with additional population growth the pressure on a system that is already operating at capacity will continue to mount.

3.3 Childcare

The childcare social infrastructure audit was carried out in January/February 2020. Childcare facilities are well represented spatially in Naas with 21 facilities spread throughout the area, pre-dominantly located close to or within existing residential development. Figure 6 illustrates the location of each childcare facility in Naas as noted by Tusla, Pobal or Kildare County Childcare Committee.

Figure 6 Location of Childcare Facilities in Naas (Existing and Permitted)



Source – Kildare County Council Social Infrastructure Portal

There are two facilities which are located marginally outside the Naas Legal Town boundary. The capacity audit of each childcare provider is set out in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Capacity of Childcare Facilities

Map Label	Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating level	Places Available	Note
C1	Cocoon Childcare	66	66	100%	0	Full time
C2	First Steps	22	22	100%	0	Sessional ³
C3	Little Haven	18	18	100%	0	Full time
C4	Tir Na nÓg Childcare	121	118	97.5%	3	Full time
C5	Monread Kindergarten	14	14	100%	0	Sessional
C6	Mill Lane Pre-School	16	16	100%	0	Sessional
C7	Margaret Reynolds	20	20	100%	0	Sessional
C8	Sticky-fingers Childcare Centre	86	86	100%	0	Sessional
C9	Sandra Daly	16	16	100%	0	Sessional
C10	Hill House Pre-School	55	20	36.3%	35	Sessional
C11	Naas Racecourse Pre-School (Specialist facility for children with autism)	12	4	33.3	8	
C12	Caragh Court Montessori	15	15	100%	0	Sessional
C13	Tender Years	65	65	100%	0	Full time
C14	Barneys Playschool	13	13	100%	0	Sessional
C15	Inspire Child Development Centre	16	16	100%	0	Sessional
C16	Saints & Scholars Kindergarten	55	55	100%	0	Full time
C17	Ballycane Pre-School	22	22	100%	0	Sessional
C18	Apple Tree Creche & Montessori	90	89	98.8%	1	Sessional

³ Sessional – Pre School Service offering for no more than 3.5 hours per day

C19*	Friendly Faces Creche	22	22	100%	0	Full time
C20*	Acorn Montessori	75	75	100%	0	Full time
C21	Butterfly Childminding Services	5	5	100%	0	Full time
	TOTAL	824	777	94.3%	47	

C19* & C20* - Located marginally outside the study area.

Table 6 Extant Permission for Childcare Facilities

Map Label	Name	Planning Ref.	Proposed Capacity (circa)
C22	Elsmore	ABP 305701	120
C23	Castle Farm	16/1145	50
C24	Pipers Hill	16/635	80
C25	Craddockstown	16/1117	55
C26	Tipper West	15/1060	140
	TOTAL		445

Figures obtained from these facilities show that 777 children were enrolled for the 2019/20 year. Within the Naas area facilities can cater for up to 824 children, leaving only 47 places available in the 21 facilities surveyed. The majority of these are for sessional care (44 places) therefore there is significant under provision of full-time childcare in Naas. This situation will only be further exacerbated through an increase in demand from new residential developments unless adequate childcare facilities for all ages, are also provided in tandem with all new residential schemes.

Overall childcare facilities are operating at 94.3% capacity in Naas. However, it should be noted that Hill House Pre-School (C10) which indicates they have 35 places available is somewhat misleading as they are due to close in June 2020. It should also be noted that smaller facilities with three children or less are not required to register with Tusla and therefore could not be surveyed due to the informal arrangement of those facilities.

Census 2016 shows that 1,577 children are eligible for childcare (under school going age i.e. 0 - 4 years inclusive.) This would indicate c.49% of children eligible for childcare in Naas avail of childcare services.

The audit revealed that 17 of the 21 facilities noted are at capacity. Responses from a variety of these facilities confirmed they also have long waiting lists. Furthermore, it was noted that a Gael Scoil service closed recently due to rental issues while three other services advised they are due to close in June 2020 as they are yet to secure alternative premises. Two of these facilities provide full-time childcare services. In total there are eight full-time services in Naas that can accommodate up to 427 children, which are currently accommodating 424 children. If the two full time services cannot secure new premises the number of full-time places will be reduced to 350.

There are thirteen sessional services (generally 3.5 hours per day 9:00am to 12:30 for children aged between 2 and 6 years) in the area with a total capacity for 397 children. Currently, 353 are enrolled indicating that there are 44 places available. However, given that Hill House Preschool is due to close in June 2020 the figure of 44 is slightly mis-leading as it indicates that there is more capacity available than in reality, as a number of children were removed from the service last year due to the possibility of it closing in 2020. Therefore, the 35 places not taken presently within this facility are unlikely to be available and the 20 children currently enrolled may need to be accommodated elsewhere. To conclude demand is very likely to exceed capacity in the coming year.

3.3.1 Demand Analysis

In 2018, Kildare County Childcare Committee commissioned a study to conduct a childcare needs analysis. The report titled, 'Needs Analysis of Early Years Childcare in County Kildare' found that services for children under the age of two were inadequate in Naas with parents relying on relatives and childminders. The results of the childcare social infrastructure audit would also support the findings of this report. Appendix 2 of the Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) establishes an indicative standard of one childcare facility providing for a minimum 20 childcare places per approximately 75 dwellings. The Guidelines state that any modification to the indicative standard should have regard to the proposed residential mix and the childcare needs analysis.

The projected housing units to cover the plan period to 2027 is 2,394 units. To comply with the Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) the study area requires the provision of 32 facilities, with a minimum capacity of 20 children each. Whilst the viability of providing 32 small facilities may be questioned, the fact remains that a total of 640 additional childcare spaces is required to accommodate the projected housing growth for a standard residential mix. Of course, each existing and new childcare facility is not restricted to 20 children and such provision, for example, could be in the form of an additional eight facilities with capacity for 80 children.

However, it should be noted that there are five extant permissions (illustrated in Figure 6 above and detailed in Table 6) which have been permitted in new residential areas for new childcare facilities which can accommodate circa 445 places (based on floor area where number of places are not indicated). In the event that all five permissions are implemented the number of places required to 2027 can be reduced to 193 places.

Based on the existing situation (including three facilities due to close in June 2020) and the projected growth, the capacity and number of childcare facilities needs to be increased significantly to meet demand. The location of these facilities should follow in new residential areas or beside schools. Gaps have been in the southwest and northeast of the town or beside schools.

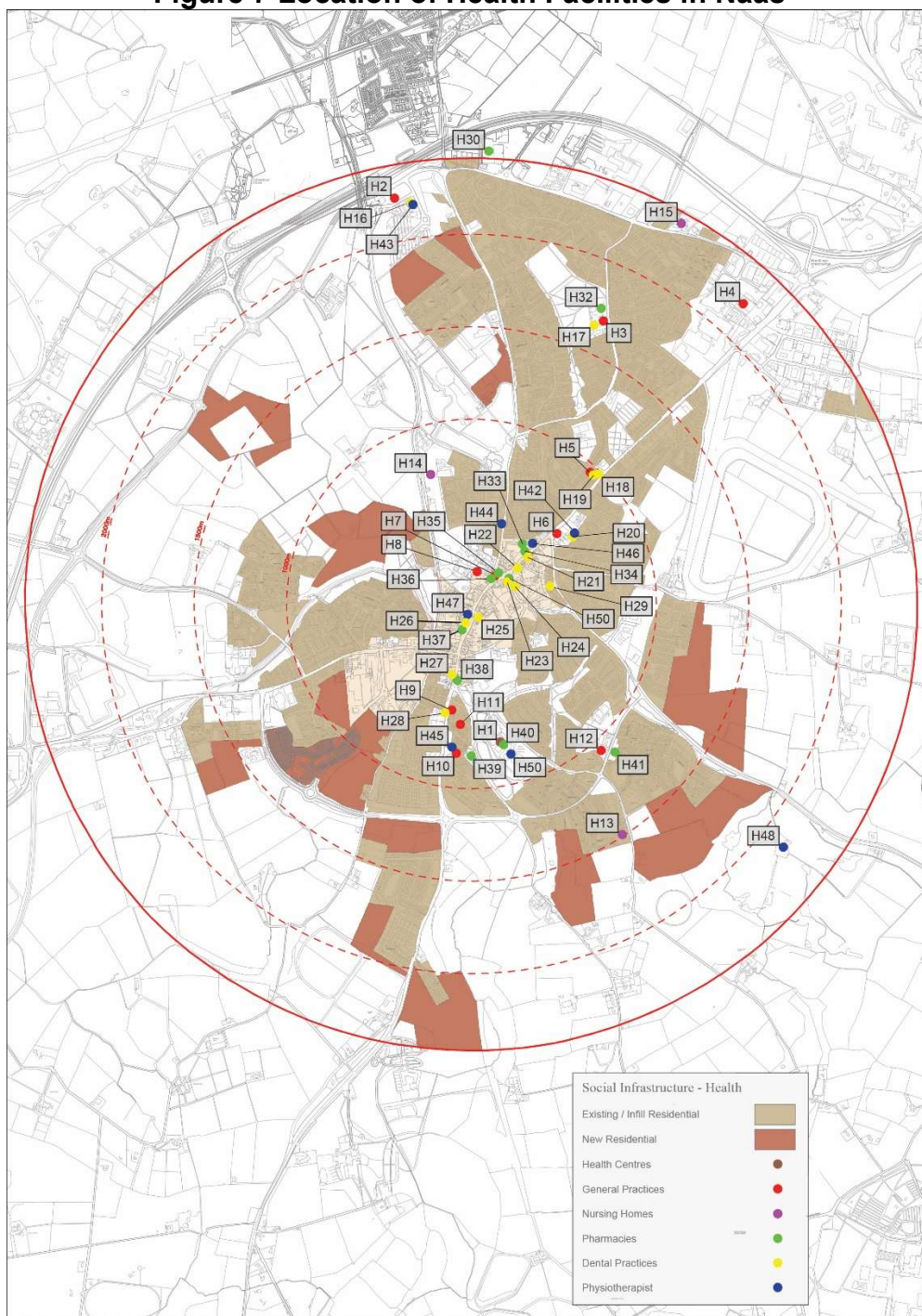
3.4 Health

The assessment of health facilities included GPs, health centres, dentists, pharmacy care and other related facilities.

A total of 49 health facilities were identified in the town comprising one hospital (16 years plus); eight GP practices; a care-doc facility, three nursing homes; 12 pharmacies; 14 dentist practices and 8 physiotherapists. From the health facilities identified, there are a total of 26 doctors (excluding doctors in Naas General Hospital) working from these locations.

The location of health facilities is dispersed throughout the town although there are obvious indications of clustering in the town centre, Lakelands / Fairgreen, and on the Dublin Road. The locations of these facilities are illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7 Location of Health Facilities in Naas



Source: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/maps/>

An audit of the health facilities including their location and services available is set out in Table 7 below.

Table 7 Health Facilities / Services in Naas

Map Label	Name / Location	Facilities / Services
H1	Naas General Hospital – Craddockstown Rd	Hospital (16 years +)
H2	Phoenix Medical Clinic – Millennium Park	GP x 3
H3	The Park Medical Centre – Monread Avenue	GP x 4
H4	HSE Beech House – Naas Business Park	HSE Area Offices
H5	Naas General Practice Centre – Dublin Rd	GP x 3
H6	Tara Clinic – Dublin Rd	GP x 1
H7	Dr Fays Surgery – Friary Rd	GP x 5
H8	Poplar Surgery – North Main St.	GP x 3
H9	Vista Primary Care – Ballymore Eustace Rd	K-Doc, out of hours service (20 GP's in Naas participate)
H10	Vista Family Practice – Ballymore Rd	GP x 2
H11	Affidea Expresscare – Ballymore Rd	Scanning Centre
H12	Ballycane Surgery – Hazelmerre Shopping Centre	GP x 5
H13	Craddockstown House – Craddockstown Demesne	Nursing Home (89 bed)
H14	Mill Lane – Sallins Rd	Nursing Home (70 bed)
H15	Larchfield Park – Monread Rd	Nursing Home (75 bed)
H16	Advanced Dental – Millenium Park	Dentist
H17	Advance Dentistry – Monread Avenue	Dentist
H18	Ashgrove Dental – Dublin Rd	Dentist
H19	Paul Dowling Orthodontics – Dublin Rd	Dentist
H20	William Purcell – Dublin Rd	Dentist
H21	Naas Dental – Dublin Rd	Dentist
H22	Philip G. O'Brien – Dublin Rd	Dentist
H23	Williams Denture Clinic – Friary Business Park	Dentist
H24	Dental Practice – Friary Rd	Dentist
H25	Michael G. Darcy – 54 South Main St	Dentist
H26	Martin Flynn & Associates – South Main St.	Dentist
H27	Naas Orthodontics – St. Michaels Tce.	Dentist
H28	Fiacla Dental Surgery – Kilcullen Rd	Dentist
H29	Donal Buckley – Tredagh, Blessington Rd	Dentist
H30	Boots – Unit 1, Monread Centre	Pharmacy
H31	Tesco Pharmacy – Monread Rd	Pharmacy
H32	Monread Pharmacy – Monread Avenue	Pharmacy
H33	Stay well David Muphy's Pharmacy - Dublin Rd	Pharmacy
H34	Boots - Dublin Rd	Pharmacy
H35	Poplar Pharmacy – North Main St	Pharmacy
H36	Burkes Pharmacy – Poplar Square	Pharmacy
H37	Daly's Pharmacy – South Main St	Pharmacy
H38	Fairgreen Pharmacy - Fairgreen	Pharmacy
H39	Vista Pharmacy – Ballymore Eustace Rd	Pharmacy
H40	Pharmacy Dept – Naas General Hospital	Pharmacy
H41	Lloyds Pharmacy – Hazelmerre Shopping Centre	Pharmacy
H50	O'Reillys Careplus – Poplar Square	Pharmacy
H42	DBC Naas Physio & Sports Injury – Dublin Rd	Physiotherapy
H43	Naas Physiotherapy – Millenium Park	Physiotherapy
H44	Physio Clinic Naas – Sallins Rd	Physiotherapy
H45	Kishan Mistri – Kilcullen Rd	Physiotherapy

H46	Naas Physio Clinic – Dublin Rd	Physiotherapy
H47	Naas Yoga & Physiotherapy – South Main St	Physiotherapy
H48	O'Donnell Physiotherapy - Craddockstown	Physiotherapy
H49	Physio Dept – Naas General Hospital	Physiotherapy

Source: HSE services and desktop survey

Census 2016 shows that almost 90% of the population consider themselves to be in good or very good health, while just over 8% consider themselves to be in fair, bad or very bad health. Almost 2% did not state the condition of their health.

There are no national standards for health provision in Ireland relating to the provision of primary care centres or the number of doctors in an area. However, the HSE has confirmed that a typical primary care centre can serve a population of between 10,000-20,000 people, subject to appropriate resourcing.

In 2017 the Irish Medical Times confirmed that Ireland had on average 2.7 doctors per 1,000 population compared with 3.3 doctors for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average. Perhaps a more relevant figure for Naas (excluding hospital services which serve the wider region) is a standard specifically relating to family physicians. The Graduate Medical Education National Advisory Committee (GMENAC) an advisory group to the US Department of Health and Human Services suggests a standard of 25.2 physicians to 100,000 population (or 0.25 per 1,000 population).

The current doctor to population ratio in Naas (excluding hospital services) is 1.2 per 1,000 population with 26 doctors practicing from eight different facilities which is five times above the recommendations of GMENAC. However, having regard to the projected population growth during the life of the Naas LAP of 6,704 persons by 2027, the ratio of existing doctors per population will fall to 0.9 per 1,000 population which is still almost four times higher than the recommended standard. Assuming no increase or decrease in doctor numbers during that period this indicates that provision in Naas is well catered for.

However, the reality is quite different. All eight GP practices contacted indicated that there is significant demand for new doctors in the area. While the number of doctors is stated to be 26, it should be noted a large proportion are part time and working alternate days / shifts with other physicians.

All eight GP practices confirmed they are full, with half advising they are not taking on new patients at present while the other half are trying to facilitate those new to the area where possible. It was highlighted that three doctors retired from within the study area in recent years and were not replaced. This has caused a strain on existing resources and has been exacerbated by the increasing population.

Notwithstanding the above, it is likely that Naas provides healthcare to a larger catchment than the legal town boundary. The nearby settlements of Sallins (population 5,849), Johnstown (population 1,005) and Kill (population 3,348) have four GP practices (seven doctors) serving a combined population of 10,202 persons. Having regard to the GMENAC recommendation of 0.25 per 1,000 population, the existing provision is more than adequate. However, the four practices contacted advised they were full but were trying to facilitate those new to the area where possible.

In relation to care for the elderly it is noted there are 234 bed spaces in the three nursing homes. This would cater for 10.3% of the those aged 65 and over (2,271) as outlined in the Census 2016. It should be noted that these care homes which are privately run are likely to have a catchment which extends beyond the local area plan or legal town boundary in Naas.

3.5 Sport and Recreation

Sports and recreation infrastructure include parks and playgrounds, dedicated public open space and amenity areas, sports centres, and formal club facilities. Overall, some 214.33 hectares of land located within the study area provide for sports and recreational related activities.

3.5.1 Sports Facilities and Amenities

Figure 8 below indicates there are circa 23 locations in Naas (Legal Town boundary area) with sports facilities of various descriptions. Several clubs and facilities are clustered at the following locations (details of the clubs are contained in Table 7):

- Naas Sports Centre - West of the town centre, home to eight clubs, plus playground and skate park.
- Naas GAA - North of the town centre, home to four clubs.
- Monread Park – North of the town centre, home to one soccer club includes playground and park.
- Monread Community Centre – North of the town centre, home to three clubs.

Many of the facilities are shared among the 27 clubs identified in Naas. The facilities accommodate 12 outdoor playing pitches (nine soccer and three GAA); four astro-turf pitches (three soccer and one hockey), 12 tennis courts; four indoor halls / courts; one golf course (18 holes) and one 400m outdoor athletics track.

Other amenities include four playgrounds; one skate park; four swimming pools (includes commercial swimming pools at Osprey and Killashee Hotels). Additionally, there is Naas Racecourse and two significant parks; Monread Park (a local park) and Lakelands/Fairgreen (a neighbourhood park).

It should be noted there are other significant facilities which are outside the study area that also serve the population in the town but are not shown on the map below. These facilities include Naas Rugby Club, (east of town with three pitches, clubhouse, parking), Naas Golf Club, (18-hole course north of M7 at Kerdiffstown), Punchestown Racecourse (southeast) and Fun Factory Children's Play Facility at Newhall (commercial premises). Work is also ongoing to develop significant facilities at Kerdiffstown Park to the north of the study area, which is to include a public park, multi-use sports pitches and a children's playground.

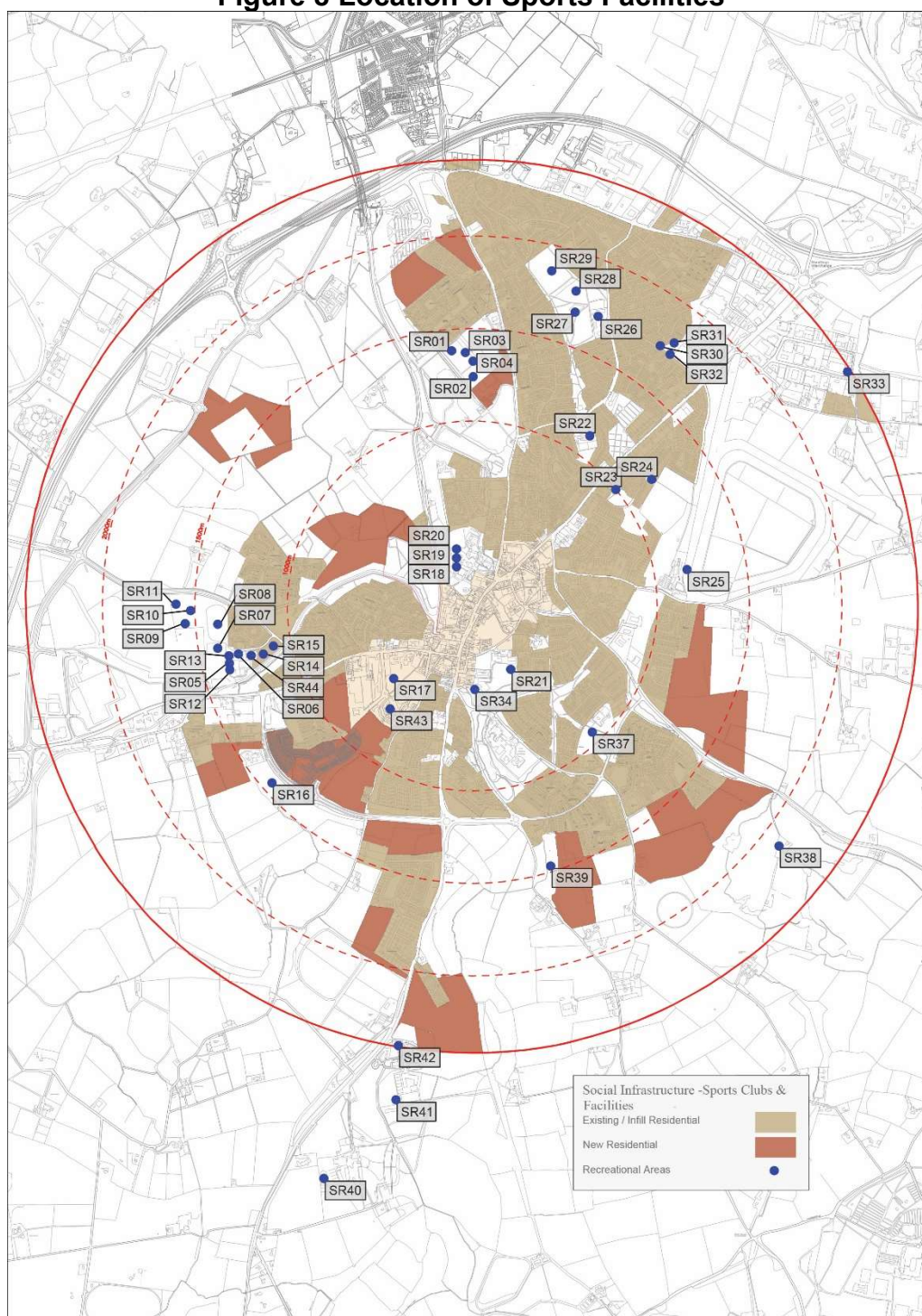
Overall, sports areas account for 95.52 hectares within the study area. However, almost 60% of this area (57.08 ha) comprises of the Craddockstown Golf Club. Figure 8 below outlines the location of each sports club and facility identified in the study area.

It is notable that most of the clubs/facilities identified are fee paying. Kildare Sports Partnership and many of the clubs consulted as part of the audit highlighted issues with capacity as clubs were finding it difficult to book facilities. This issue was also

raised in submissions received during the consultation period of the Draft Naas LAP (2019) that clubs were struggling to facilitate the demands for the existing population of Naas let alone an increase in population.

The study did not include sports facilities within schools. The table below shows some clubs are using school sports facilities such as St Mary’s College, Naas CBS and Piper’s Hill College to host training and games.

Figure 8 Location of Sports Facilities



Source: Site Survey

Table 8 below shows a description of clubs and their facilities with reference to their location in the above map (Figure 8).

Table 8 Audit of Existing Sports Clubs and Facilities in Naas

Map Label	Name / Location	Description / Facilities / Services	Comment
SR1	Naas GAA Club – Sallins Rd	3 adult size grass pitches (1 floodlight), juvenile grass training area / pitch, hurling wall, dressing rooms / clubhouse including hall and parking.	Fee Paying Club
SR2	Naas Ladies Football – Sallins Rd	Use same facilities as Naas GAA Club.	Fee Paying Club
SR3	Naas Camogie – Sallins Rd	Use same facilities as Naas GAA Club.	Fee Paying Club
SR4	Naas Badminton Club – Sallins Rd	Use hall / court in Naas GAA clubhouse	Fee Paying Club
SR5	Naas Sports Centre / K-Leisure-Caragh Rd	Swimming Pool, Indoor hall, Gym, Astro-turf hockey pitch, Athletics track, 4 adult size grass soccer pitches, 1 no. 9 a side and 2 no. five a side Astro-turf soccer pitches.	Fee Paying Facility
SR6	Naas Cobra's – Caragh Rd	Ladies volleyball club use hall at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR7	Naas Hockey Club – Caragh Rd	Use Astro-turf hockey pitch at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR8	Naas Athletic Club – Caragh Rd	Use Athletics track and facilities at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR9	Ballycane Celtic – Caragh Rd	Use of soccer pitch at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR10	Kingstown FC – Caragh Rd	Use of soccer pitch at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR11	Naas AFC – Caragh Rd	Use of soccer pitch at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR12	Naas Taekwondo Club – Caragh Rd	Use facilities at sports centre	Fee Paying Club
SR13	Kildare Water Safety	Use swimming pool at K-Leisure	Fee Paying Club
SR14	Naas Playground – Caragh Rd	Children's play facilities	Free Facility
SR15	Naas Skate Park – Caragh Rd	Play facility aimed at children & teens	Free Facility
SR16	Naas Utd – Jigginstown	1 adult size & 1 juvenile grass pitch	Fee Paying Club
SR17	Redwood FC – John Devoy Rd	1 adult size grass soccer pitch	Fee Paying Club
SR18	Naas Karate Club – St. Mary's College	Use of facilities for classes	Fee Paying Club
SR19	Naas Arch Club – St. Mary's College	Providing a social outlet for people with special needs.	Fee Paying Club
SR20	Naas Basketball Club – St. Mary's College	Location 1 of 2 - Use of court(s) at St. Marys College	Fee Paying Club
SR21	Naas Basketball Club – Naas CBS	Location 2 of 2 – Use of court(s) at Naas CBS	Fee Paying Club
SR22	Naas Lawn Tennis Club – Greenaun	11 courts, clubhouse and parking facilities	Fee Paying Club
SR23	Tennis Court – Kingsfurze Ave.	1 full size court	Free Facility
SR24	Playground – Kingsfurze Ave.	Play facilities for children	Free Facility

SR25	Naas Racecourse – Dublin Rd	Horse racing track, viewing stand and parking	Fee Paying Facility
SR26	Gym Plus Naas – Monread Ave	Swimming Pool, Gym and Squash Courts	Fee Paying Facility
SR27	Monread Park Playground – Monread Ave	Enclosed playground located in centre of Park	Free Facility
SR28	Monread Park – Monread Ave	Park, playground and 3 adult size grass soccer pitches	Free Facility
SR29	Monread FC – Monread Ave	Use of pitch(es) in Monread Park	Fee Paying Club
SR30	Naas Shotokan Karate -	Monread Community Centre – Sports hall 23m x 13m.	Fee Paying Club
SR31	Naas Pythons Special Olympics Club	Monread Community Centre - Sports hall 23m x 13m.	Free Club
SR32	Naas Indoor Bowling Club	Monread Community Centre - Sports hall 23m x 13m.	Fee Paying Club
SR33	Panthers Gymnastics	Unit 3, Naas Industrial Estate	Fee Paying Club
SR34	St. David's Boxing Club – Old Fire Station, Fairgreen	Use of building	Fee Paying Club
SR35	Fairgreen Park / Lakelands	Neighbourhood Park includes Railway Line Walk, Playground & Workhouse Cemetery	Free Facility
SR36	Brendan's Running Club – Ballymore Road	Meeting point only, no facilities, over 100 members.	Club
SR37	Playground – Ballycane Rd	Within Fairgreen / Lakelands Neighbourhood Park	Free Facility
SR38	Craddockstown Golf Club – Blessington Rd	18-hole golf course, clubhouse, and parking.	Fee Paying Club
SR39	Playground – Oak Park, Ballymore Rd	Play facilities for young children.	Free Facility
SR40	Killashee Leisure Centre – Kilcullen Rd	Swimming pool and gym.	Fee Paying Facility
SR41	Pipers Hill College – Kilcullen Rd	6 basketball courts, 1 astro-turf soccer pitch and 1 adult size grass pitch. Facilities are used by various clubs in the area along with the school	Fee Paying Facility
SR42	Naas Triathlon Club	Use facilities at Monread Park, Gael Scoil Nas Na Riogh, Killashee Leisure Centre and K-Leisure / Sports Centre	Fee Paying Club
SR43	Osprey Leisure Club – John Devoy Rd	Swimming pool and gym	Fee Paying Facility
SR44	Naas Cycling Club – Court House or K-Leisure	Meeting points only, no facilities	Fee Paying Club

Source: Desktop study and survey

There are no relevant standards for sports facilities in Ireland. Consideration is therefore given to comparative recommendations from UK guidance, specifically the, 'Fields in Trust (FIT)' recommendations which set out benchmark guidance for the provision of amenity and open space use in urban planning and design. The recommendations of 'FIT' go beyond the established 'six-acre standard' (six acres per 1,000 population) and provide quantitative guidance in relation to other open space typologies.

The 'FIT' benchmark guidance recommends that 1.6 hectares of outdoor sports area should be provided per 1,000 population and that outdoor sports should be located

within 1.2km of all dwellings in major residential areas. Other 'FIT' benchmark guidance recommendations for 'formal outdoor space' which are of interest in this study are set out in Table 9 below.

Table 9 Fields in Trust (FIT) Benchmark Guidance for Different Recreational Facilities

Type	Hectares per 1,000 population	Walking distance from dwelling
Playing Pitches	1.2	1,200m
All outdoor sports	1.6	1,200m
Equipped / Designated play areas:		
- Local Areas for Play – aimed at very young children	0.25	100m
- Local Equipped Areas of Play – aimed at children who can go out to play independently	0.25	400m
- Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play aimed at older children	0.25	1,000m
- Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) and skateboard parks etc	0.3	700m

Source *Fields in Trust (FIT)*

Within the study area there are 95.52 ha of outdoor sports facilities. Based on the Census 2016 population for the study area, the current outdoor sports area provision is 4.42 hectares per 1,000 population. Accordingly, there is more than adequate outdoor sports 'area' in the town to serve the existing population in the context of these guidance recommendations. Having regard to the population projection of 28,097 persons to 2027, the standard of outdoor sports decreases to 3.38 hectares per 1,000 population, which is still considerably higher than the recommendations contained in the UK guidance.

It is considered that the inclusion of the Craddocktown Golf Club skews the figures since there is an awareness of existing capacity issues in Naas. Craddocktown Golf Club accounts for 57.08 ha of the outdoor sports area. When this is excluded existing provision is reduced dramatically from 4.42 to 1.78 hectares per 1,000 population and future provision forecast to 2027 is 1.36 hectares per 1,000 population. Excluding the Golf club from the overall outdoor sports provision was deemed appropriate given its vast area and size which appeals to one type of user and reflects the reality of provision more accurately. It is therefore notable that without the golf club there will be a shortfall of outdoor sports provision by 2027. An additional 6.8 hectares of outdoor sports is required within the study area to cater for the projected growth.

The provision of four playgrounds (0.932 ha) within the study area falls short of the benchmark guidance in terms of quantity, and provision for all age groups. Based on the Census 2016 population current playground provision is 0.04 per 1,000 people considerably short of the 0.25 benchmark.

To reach the benchmark standard by 2027 a further 6.1 hectares of playground facilities should be provided within the study area.

3.5.2 Open Space

In carrying out the open space audit, open space has been categorised by typology of use, consistent with the amenity space definitions contained in the Kildare County Council Open Space Strategy 2011. These include neighbourhood parks, local parks, green corridors, natural / semi natural green spaces, and other open spaces such as amenity green space associated with housing estates. The definition of each typology is outlined in Table 10 below.

The spatial location and distribution of the open space by typology of use, is illustrated in Figure 9 Open Space Survey by Typology in Naas. The overall audit of open space is presented in Table 10, including the current provision along with the qualitative recommendations.

Figure 9 Open Space Survey by Typology in Naas

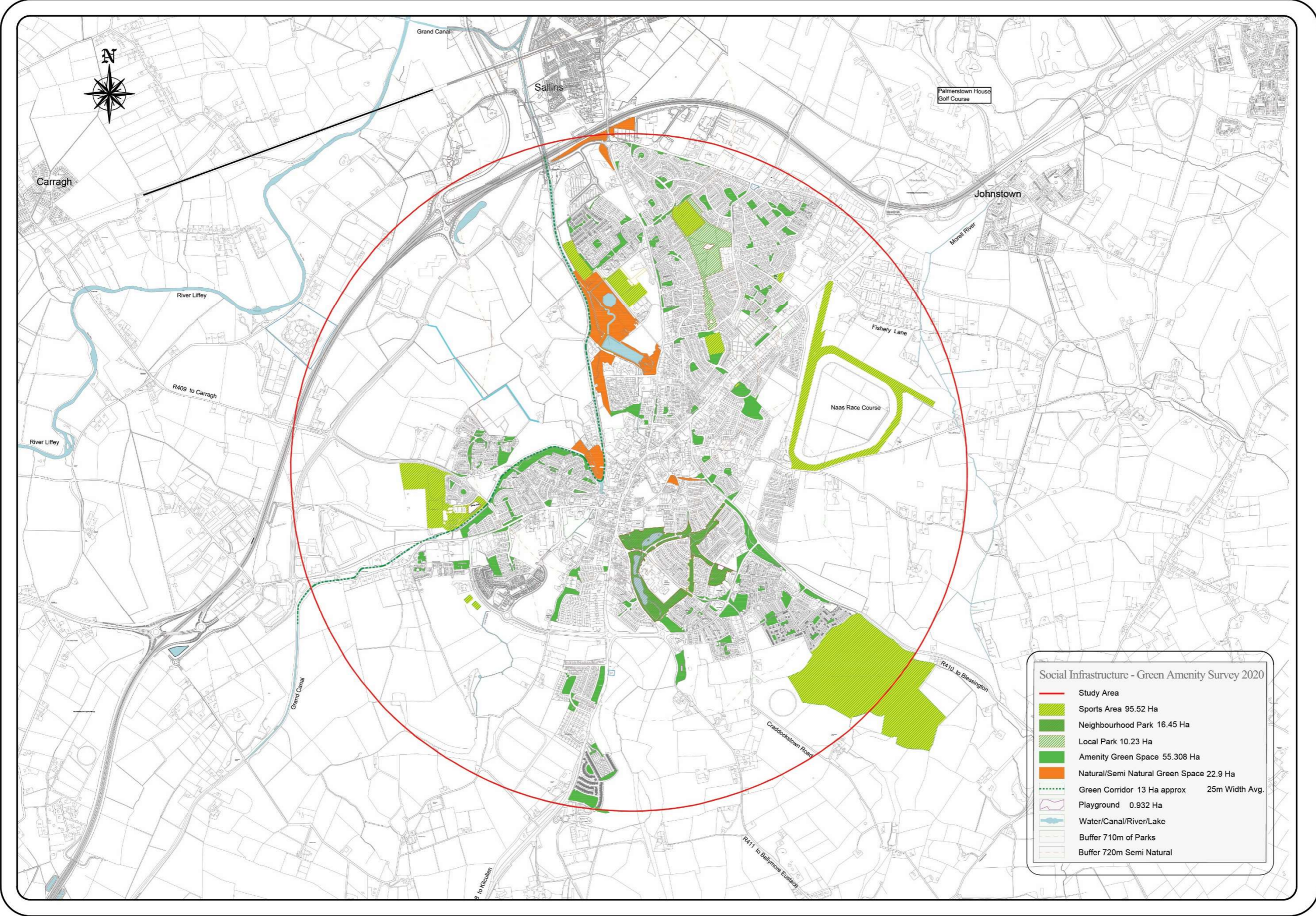


Table 10 Audit of Amenity Open Space by Typology

Name / Typology	Definition	Area (ha.)	Standards and Recommendations
Neighbourhood Park	Large area of parkland (>16 ha minimum) and managed as a public park to facilitate both passive and active recreation	16.45	Located within 0.8km of target population. Should be regular in shape & contain: - Football pitches up to 6 units - Tennis Courts up to 10 units - Netball/Basketball Court up to 2 units - Golf Putting Green up to 2 units - Children's Playlots up to 1 unit - Car Parking up to 1 unit Parks should contain extensive tree and shrub planting, with a path system and a general amenity open space with adequate seating furniture. The neighbourhood park's size can be adjusted in accordance with the size and needs of the population.
Local Park	Small area of parkland (>2 ha minimum)	10.22	Located within 0.4km of target population and designed for passive recreation only. Should be attractively landscaped with trees and shrubs. Paths, seats, and litter bins should be adequately provided.
Amenity Green Space	Relatively small areas of open space associated with individual housing estates	55.308	To be of a size and quality to enhance residential areas.
Play space for children and teenagers	Areas designed to facilitate children's play usually located within an existing public park and easily accessible from residential areas	0.932	Usually within settlements.
Green Corridors	Linear green spaces such as canal and river corridors	Ca. 13.0	
Natural / semi natural green spaces	Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with habitats such as woodland or wetland areas.	Ca. 22.90	
TOTAL		118.8	

Source: Kildare County Council Open Space Strategy (2011) and desktop analysis and field survey

The park located at the Lakelands/Fairgreen can be considered a neighbourhood park, only in terms of its overall size measuring approx. 16.45 ha. This was the approach taken in the Kildare County Council Open Space Strategy (2011), which classified the area as a neighbourhood park. However, the Lakeland/Fairgreen park facilitates predominantly passive recreation with the exception of the children's playground. It does not meet many of the standards associated with neighbourhood parks insofar as it is not regular in shape and it does not contain active uses such as football pitches or tennis/basketball courts.

Monread Park meets the criteria for a local park, providing for passive recreation and some active uses, usually associated with neighbourhood parks such as football pitches, a playground and parking facilities. It should be noted the football pitches which are part of Monread Park were not included in the measurement of 10.31 hectares outlined in Table 10 as outdoor sports were assessed separately under Section 3.5.1 and it is considered inappropriate to duplicate this space by applying it in the context of open space. It should be noted that, incorporating the area attributed to the football pitches would increase the overall area to 13.6 hectares which is still short of the minimum recommended for neighbourhood park status.

In addition to the two main parks at Lakelands/Fairgreen and Monread, the analysis of the study area revealed other amenity spaces such as eight outdoor sports areas, four playgrounds (including the two at Lakelands/Fairgreen and Monread) and a skate park. The study area also consists of amenity green spaces associated with housing estates, linear green spaces along the canal and areas of undeveloped natural/semi natural green spaces located in the Oldtown.

There are no relevant standards in Ireland for open space provision. Therefore, as detailed in Section 3.5.1 Sports Facilities and Amenities, consideration has been given to 'FIT' (Fields in Trust) recommended benchmark guidelines for 'informal outdoor space'. These recommendations are based on quantity and location as follows:

Table 11 Benchmark Guidance for Open Space from Fields in Trust (FIT)

Type	Hectares per 1,000 population	Walking distance from dwelling
Parks & Gardens	0.8	710m
Amenity Open Space	0.6	480m
Natural & Semi Natural Open Space	1.8	720m

Source: *Fields in Trust (FIT)*

Table 12 presents an evaluation of the existing open space provision in Naas against the benchmark guidelines detailed in Table 11.

Table 12 Evaluation of Open Space in Naas against Benchmark Standards

Typology (defined by the Kildare Open Space Strategy)	Existing Amount (Ha.)	Typology 'FIT' definition	FIT Standard (ha/1000 pop.)	Existing Provision (ha/1000 pop.)	Future Provision (ha/1000 pop.)
Neighbourhood Park	16.45	'Parks & Gardens'	0.8	1.23	0.94
Local Park	10.22				
Amenity Green Space	55.308	'Amenity Open Space'	0.6	2.56	1.95
Green Corridor	13.0	'Natural & Semi-Natural Open Space'	1.8	1.66	1.27
Natural / Semi-Natural Green Space	22.90				
Playground	0.932		0.25	0.04	0.03

Source: *Desktop analysis and field surveys*

Having regard to the projected population (28,097 persons) for the forthcoming Naas Plan to 2027, shortfalls will exist under two of the defined typologies, based on the existing open space provision, as follows:

- Natural and semi-natural open space - additional 15.04 ha required by 2027.
- Playground - additional 6.1 ha required by 2027.

In the context of natural / semi-natural green space 22.9 ha are located within the study area. These lands can function as an area for recreation but also as areas for biodiversity and nature conservation. There is no public access to approximately 10.8 ha of this open space typology, on lands known as the De Burgh lands located in the Oldtown Demense. However, it still provides an important environmental function for the town. The removal of these lands from the assessment would result in a need for an additional 25.84 hectares in accordance with the projected population to 2027.

The typology of Parks and Gardens comprises of both neighbourhood parks and local parks. As previously discussed, the park located at Lakelands/Fairgreen, is not consistent with standards and recommendations for a neighbourhood park as outlined in the Kildare County Council Open Space Strategy 2011. Therefore, while Naas appears to have adequate provision for the future population growth in terms of the area provided, the quality of the open space falls short as it is lacking in provision of the necessary requirements.

The Kildare County Council Open Space Strategy 2011 notes the qualitative standards referenced in the document titled 'Policy for the Provision and Maintenance of Parks, Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation Areas by Local Authorities', (DoE, 1987) of 2ha per 1,000 population. The Strategy states that based on this, population units of 10,000 ought to be allocated one neighbourhood park (≥ 16 ha) and two local parks (each ≥ 2 ha).

Considering the open space provision in Naas against this benchmark an additional 28.83 ha⁴ is required for neighbourhood parks by 2027. Such provision should include active uses such as football pitches, tennis courts, basketball courts and playground facilities. Having regard to the recommendation for local parks an additional 1.1ha⁵ is required. However, given the significant size of Monread Park, the open space provision under the local park typology is all located in one area rather than dispersed throughout the town at ≥ 2 ha respectively. Other local park requirements could be catered for at locations such as Ballycane, Kingsfurze and Corbally with better linkages to other spaces or extensions to existing area as these parks/spaces are slightly under the ≥ 2 ha requirement for a local park.

3.6 Social and Community

Social and community facilities are a broad category and can include general civic services and services targeted to specific sections of the community. There are twelve social / community services identified within the study which include the fire station and the garda station.

Most facilities are located within the town centre area except for Monread Community Centre (northeast) and Ballycane Parish Office (southeast), Naas Garda Station (south) and Enable Ireland (southwest) of the town centre.

⁴ 16 ha x 2.83 = 45.28 ha minus existing provision (16.45 ha) = 28.83 ha

⁵ 4 ha x 2.83 = 11.32 ha minus existing provision (10.22 ha) = 1.1 ha

Figure 10 Location of Social and Community Facilities

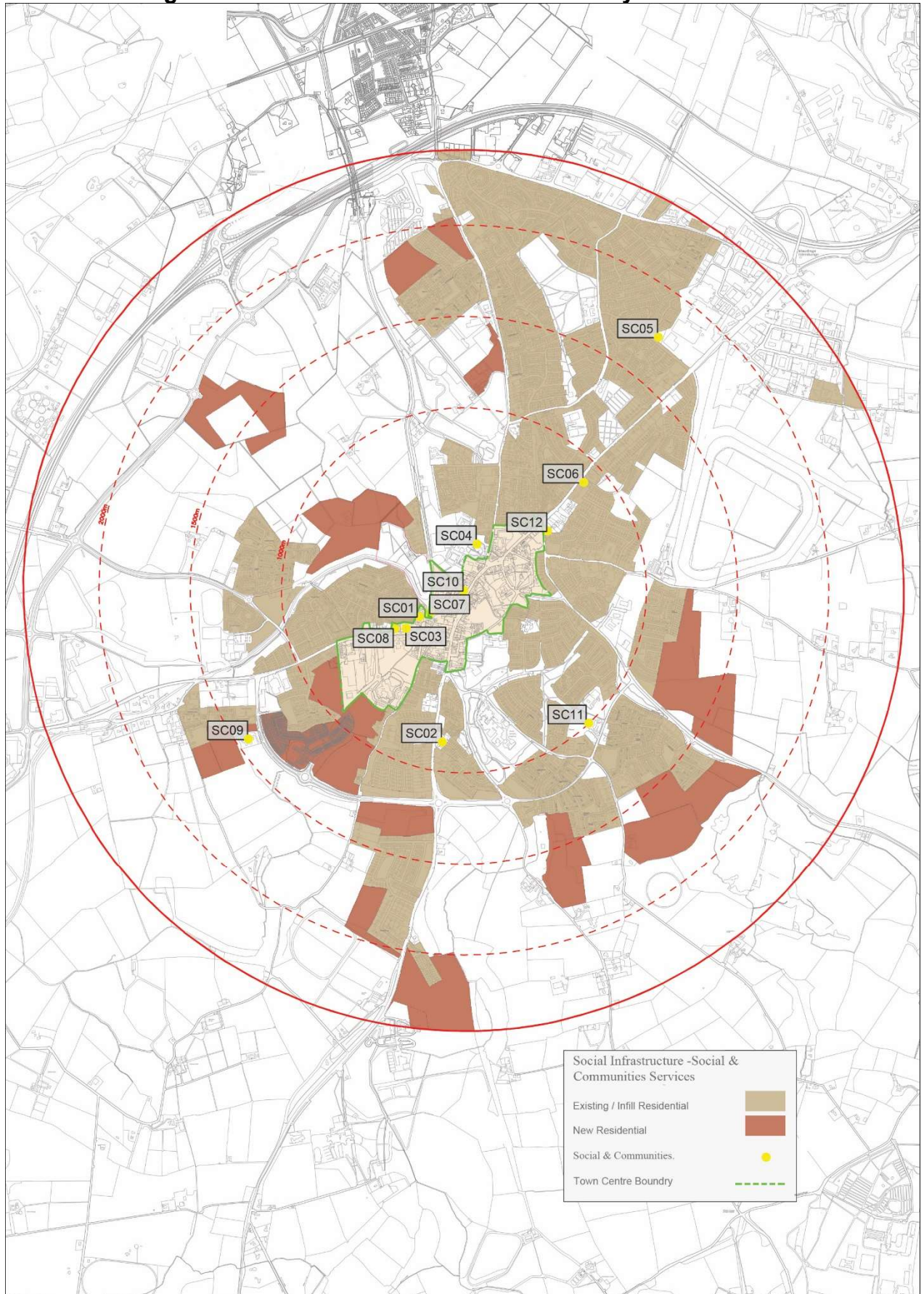


Table 13 Audit of Social and Community Services

Map Label	Name (Location)	Facilities / Services
SC1	Library (Harbour View)	Dedicated adult, children and teenage areas. Outdoor garden. Provision of online spaces.
SC2	Garda Station (Kilcullen Rd)	District Headquarters
SC3	Fire Station (Limerick Rd)	1 of 6 in Kildare. 24-hour fire & emergency response service and a HQ service provide support to other stations as well as fire safety & emergency planning services.
SC4	McAuley Place Community Centre (Sallins Rd)	Parish Office. Meeting rooms available for booking. Also, a facility providing sheltered housing for older persons and provision of on-site intergenerational facilities
SC5	Monread Community Centre (Maudlins Ave)	Sports Hall, meeting rooms available for booking and home to several local clubs / groups
SC6	Naas Men's Shed (Dublin Rd)	Range of activities differ, generally include woodwork, gardening, music, restoration and community work.
SC7	Kildare Youth Services (Basin St / Town Centre)	Voluntary organisation providing a range of development and learning opportunities for young people.
SC8	Naas Care of the Aged Centre (Limerick Rd)	Cares for the elderly organises outings, parties and trips. Also run card games, bingo and indoor bowling.
SC9	Enable Ireland (Jigginstown)	Free service to adults and children with disabilities. Playground located at facility.
SC10	Naas Town Hall (Main St)	Partly in use for exercise / fitness clubs.
SC11	Ballycane Parish Office (Ballycane Rd)	Parish office, meeting rooms available for booking.
SC12	Scouts Ireland	

Table 13 (above) does not include other notable community services as they operate from some of the facilities outlined in the table and they include:

- The Halo Project which is part of Kildare Youth Service, it offers help and support to families affected by adolescent substance misuse.
- Amen located at the Parish Office on Sallins Road provides support for men affected by domestic abuse.
- Aware also located at the Parish Office on Sallins Road provides support for those affected by depression.
- Naas Tidy Towns Group – Works collaboratively to make areas in the town attractive and welcoming.
- Naas Lions Club – Organises fundraising events for humanitarian needs locally and beyond.
-

These services / groups cannot be measured physically or numerically against any benchmark or guidance, but their existence is important in the community. There are no Irish standards for the provision of social and community facilities. However, a simplistic standardisation which has been employed elsewhere (*Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Strategic Framework for Community Centre Provision, 2016*) in neighbourhood planning is: 0.30 community facilities per 1,000 population. However, this approach is based somewhat crudely, on the number of buildings / facilities provided, and does not recognise the size or quality of individual facilities which are also important. Consequently, the use of this standard

is applied with caution, and on the basis that it is intended to present a benchmark at this time, which might be useful for future comparative analysis.

In employing that benchmark recommendation (0.30 per 1,000 pop.) a standard of 0.46 community facilities per 1,000 population is achieved in Naas (based on 10 facilities, which exclude the Fire and Garda Service). This suggests that based on Census 2016, the population in Naas is currently well served with community services and facilities. However, the provision decreases to the rate of 0.35 per 1,000 population for the projected population to 2027. However, this would not result in a need for an additional community facility in the town.

Therefore, whilst there might appear to be a sufficient number and type of community facilities / services, the provision of future services needs to take account of locational circumstances, quality of provision and proximity to target user groups. It is also worth noting that many of these facilities draw on users from outside the study area, including those with significant populations such as Sallins, Johnstown and Kill.

3.7 Arts and Culture

Within the study area, there are 16 arts and culture facilities most of which are related to music, dance, and drama. Facilities are dispersed in various locations across the town with a concentration of facilities in the town centre and in the north east of the town. *Figure 10* illustrates the location of each facility and table 14 below presents further details.

Figure 11 Location of Arts and Culture Facilities

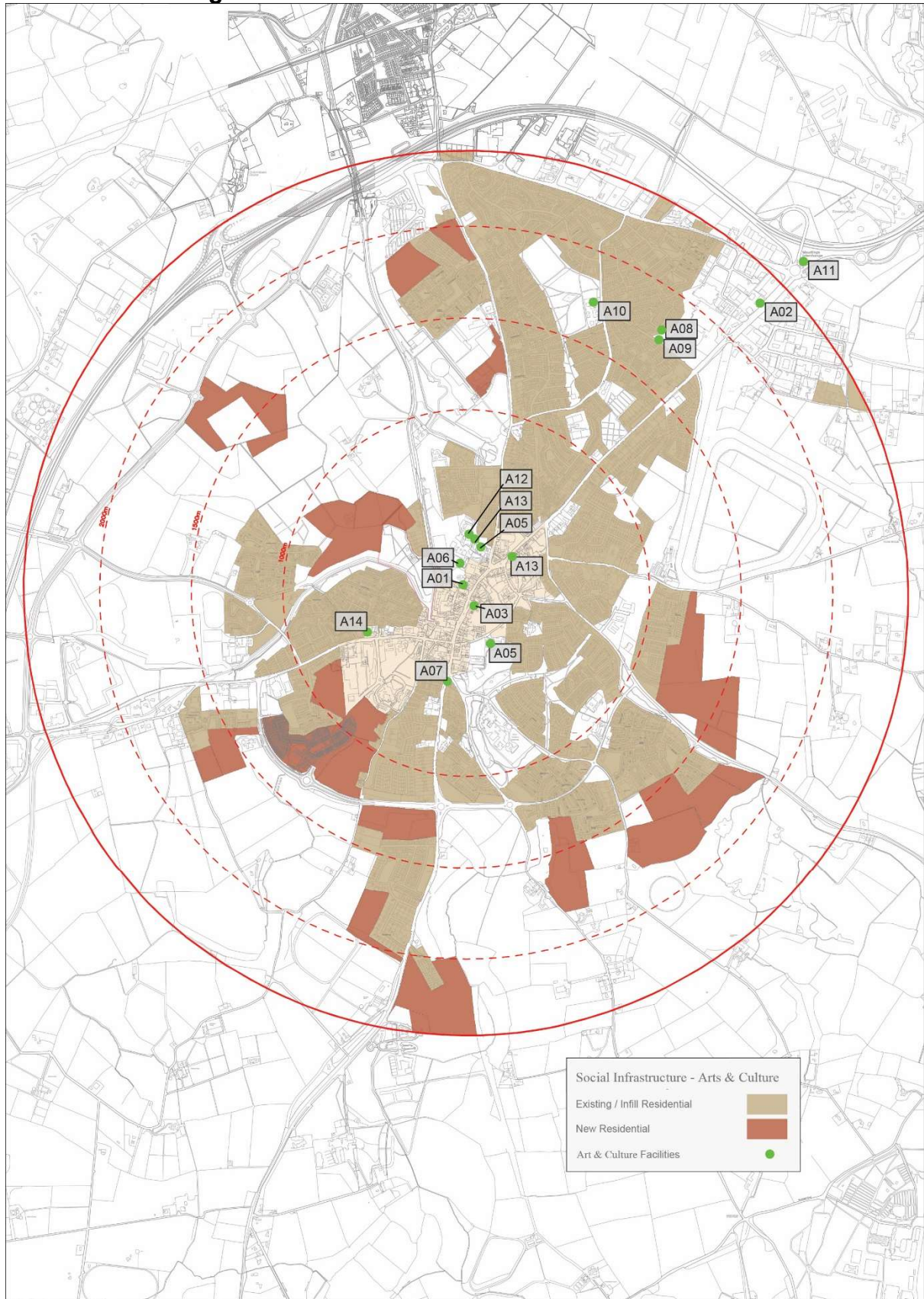


Table 14 Arts and Culture Facilities

Map Label	Name	Location	Facilities / Services
A1	The Moat Theatre	Abbey St	200-seater auditorium, rehearsal rooms, dressing rooms, foyer, coffee shop and bar
A2	Odeon Cinema	Dublin Rd	5 screens and seating for up to 850 people
A3	Jam Music Company	56 Main St	Provides music lessons and sale of musical instruments
A4	Kindermusik	McCauley Place, Community Centre	Music and movement class for babies and toddlers
A5	Leah Moran Stage School	Gaelscoil & CBS	Drama school teaching dance, drama and singing.
A6	Cusp Performing Arts School	McAuley Place & St Marys College	Dramatic Arts Company focusing on the social and personal development of students
A7	Naas Music School	Fairgreen St	Instrumental tuition of a range of instruments including guitar, piano, violin, trumpet, flute and clarinet etc.
A8	Sult Na Sollan	Monread Community Centre	Promoting the Irish language and developing / celebrating Irish traditional music and culture
A9	Stewarts School of Irish Dance	Monread Community Centre	Irish Dance Classes
A10	Anne Maher School of Ballet	Studio 3, Monread Leisure Centre	Ballet Classes
A11	Perpetual Motion Sculpture	Junction 9 on M7	Sculpture marks entrance to the town
A12	McAuley Place Arts & Culture Centre	Sallins Road	Formerly the Nuns Chapel recently restored seats up to 90 guests
A13	Tuckmill Gallery	Dublin Road	Art & Craft Gallery supporting Irish Paintings, Sculptures, Pottery & Crafts
A14	Naas Musical Society	Town House Hotel / Moat Theatre	Community based organisation produces a concert and a musical show annually
A15	Past Times Community Choir	McAuley Place	For people experiencing dementia, their families, carers and communities
A16	Naas Presbyterian Church	Main St	Monthly free open mic night for teens and young people with opportunities to listen to live music and perform

In addition to the facilities and groups listed above, festivals include the Midsummer Arts Festival, with many live music events taking place in the environs of Naas. Whilst additional opportunities for performance and music education will be provided with the roll out of Music Generation, commencing in 2020, led by KWETB and supported by Kildare County Council. Naas General Hospital also have an arts committee, with a programme of events and workshops which includes trained musicians visiting patients in the hospital and nursing homes.

Typical benchmarking standards for art and culture relate to the spend per capita in each area, as opposed to the provision of physical infrastructure. There is no record of such spending patterns in Naas.

3.8 Faith

A total of 12 faith facilities were identified in Naas comprising eight places of worship / churches and four cemeteries. Most facilities are in the town centre area with a

cluster south of the town centre at Lakelands / Ballycane and two cemeteries located on Dublin Road north east of the town centre. These are illustrated in Figure 12 and the details presented in Table 15 below.

Table 15 Audit of existing ‘faith’ facilities

Map Label	Name / Location	Description / Facilities / Services
F1	The Church of the Irish Martyrs (Ballycane Rd)	Catholic Church with Parish Office
F2	Church of Our Lady & St. David (Sallins Rd)	Catholic Church with Parish Office and Shop
F3	Naas Community Church (Millbrook)	Christian
F4	St. David’s Church (Main St)	Church of Ireland
F5	Naas Presbyterian Church (Main St.)	Presbyterian
F6	Christian Congregation in Ireland (Community Centre, Sallins Rd)	Christian.
F7	Kildare Islamic Cultural Centre (South Main St)	Islam
F8	St. Corban’s Cemetery Dublin Rd	Graveyard. 646 plots remain
F9	Maudlin’s Cemetery Dublin Rd	Graveyard.
F10	Abbey Road Cemetery	Graveyard.
F11	Naas Workhouse Cemetery Craddockstown Rd	Famine Graveyard
F12	Hospital Chapel (Craddockstown Road)	Contained within Naas Hospital

Figure 12 Location of Faith Facilities



Within the study area 79% of the population identified as catholic in Census 2016. There are two catholic churches serving 17,061 people. There are no known benchmarking standards for this category of infrastructure provision. St Corban's Cemetery is the only public cemetery in Naas with an average of two internments per week, or 120 per annum. Based on current figures it is estimated that there are approximately 646 plots remaining, sufficient capacity to cater for the projected population to 2027.

A Columbarium Wall was installed in St Corban's Cemetery in 2019 to ease the burden on space with capacity for 100. There has been slow uptake and 96 places remaining. Therefore, it is anticipated that additional space will not be required during the lifetime of the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027.

3.9 Other Facilities including Neighbourhood Centres

Neighbourhood centres generally comprise a small group of shops, typically a newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised neighbourhood catchment population.

In Naas there are five definable neighbourhood centres in the town. Four of which are clustered north of the town centre in the Monread area. Figure 13 illustrates the location of each centre and Table 16 below presents an audit of the facilities in terms of retail types and unit numbers. Figure 13 maps the centres and also includes two neighbourhood centres which have been granted planning permission near Jigginstown and Tipper West. Their locations will provide a spatial balance to serve existing and proposed residential areas.

Figure 13 Location of Neighbourhood Centres (Existing and Proposed)

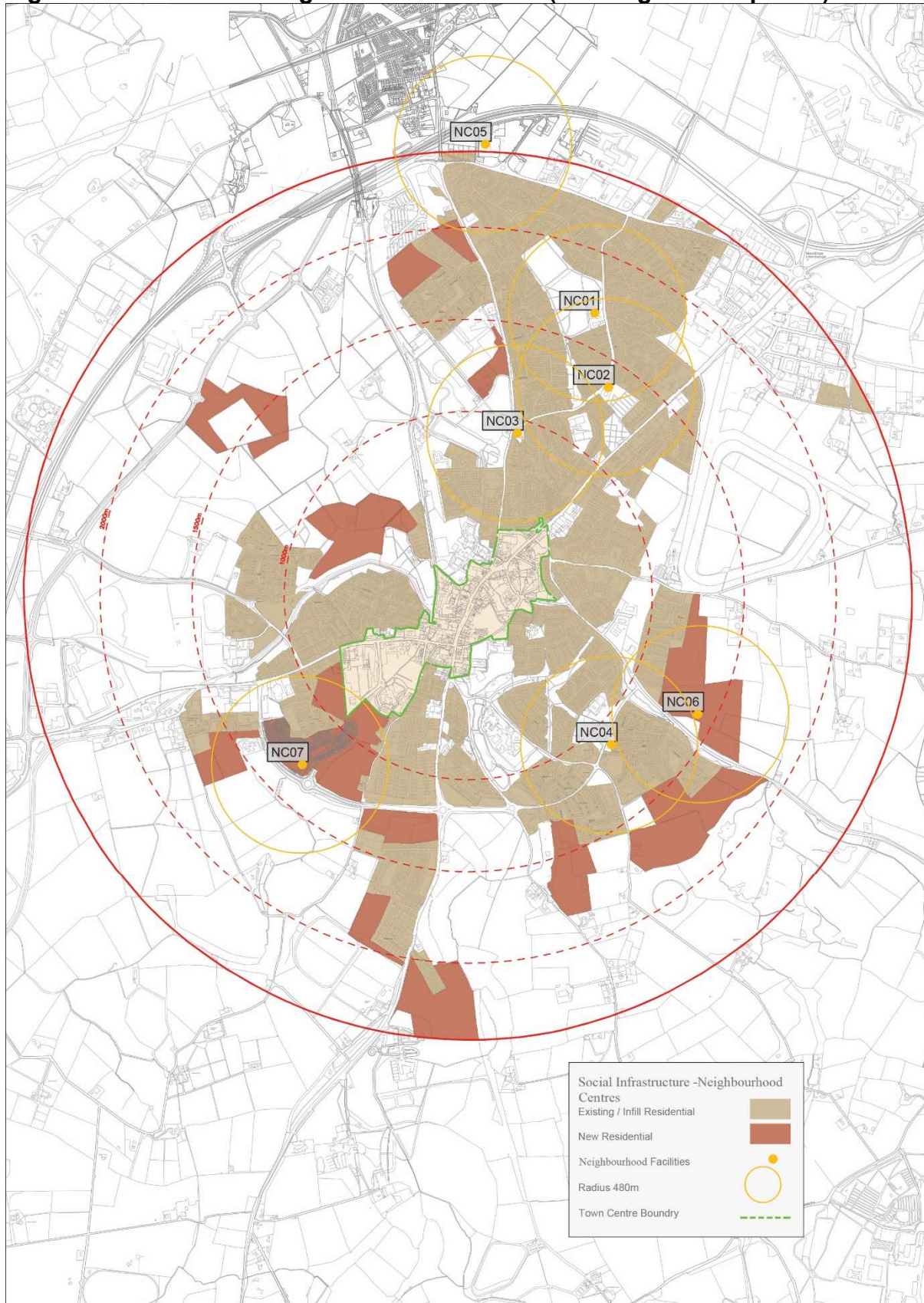


Table 16 Audit of existing Neighbourhood Centres

Map Label	Name / Location	Description / Facilities / Services	Comment
NC1	Monread Leisure and Commercial Centre – Monread Avenue	Medical centre, pharmacy, crèche, gym, beauty salon, café.	6 units
NC2	The Monread – Monread Avenue	Costcutters, butcher, dry cleaner, bookmaker, fast-food takeaway, public house / restaurant.	6 units
NC3	Applegreen – Monread Avenue/Sallins Rd	Garage / service station	1 unit
NC4	Hazelmere – Ballycane Rd	Centra, butcher, medical centre, pharmacy	4 units
NC5	Monread Shopping Centre- Monread Rd	Larger centre with Tesco as anchor also includes Argos, Boots, Costa.	23 stores
NC6	Proposed Centre – Blessington Rd	Extant planning permission.	
NC7	Proposed Centre – Devoy Link Rd	Extant planning permission.	

The five neighbourhood centres combined provide 40 stores / retail units for consumers to choose from. These include a range of services as outlined in the table above such as convenience, comparison, retail services and others i.e. bookmakers, cafes, and restaurants.

A spatial catchment as defined by a 10-minute walk-time (480-metre radius) from each neighbourhood centre is illustrated in Figure 13. A 480-metre radius reflects the general and accepted threshold of distance that people are prepared to walk to access such local services and facilities.

Spatially, the neighbourhood centres are primarily located north of the town centre and clustered in the Monread area, however, should the proposed neighbourhood centres be developed south of the town centre at Devoy Link Road and the Blessington Road this will somewhat address the current imbalance with the Hazelmere Centre only located on the southern part of the town. Town centre facilities serve those living in western and southern parts of the town along with those living in the immediate vicinity of the town centre area.

Other notable commercial facilities such as financial services, serving the study area are illustrated in Figure 14 and presented in the Table 17. These facilities are generally concentrated within the existing town centre area with one north of the town centre in Monread Shopping Centre.

Figure 14 Other Commercial Services and Facilities



Table 18 Audit of other commercial services and facilities

Map Label	Name / Location	Description / Services	Comment
O1	Post Office – South Main St	Post Office	Town Centre
O2	Credit Union – 20 North Main St	Credit Union	Town Centre
O3	Allied Irish Bank – South Main St	Banking Facility	Town Centre
O4	Bank of Ireland – South Main St	Banking Facility	Town Centre
O5	Ulster Bank – South Main St	Banking Facility	Town Centre
O6	KBC Bank – 33 North Main Street	Banking Facility	Town Centre
O7	Permanent TSB – Poplar Square	Banking Facility	Town Centre
O8	Life Credit Union – Monread Shopping Centre	Banking Facility	Out-of-Town

There is no standard per population for neighbourhood centres or other commercial premises, including financial institutions. Infrastructure requirements are dependent on market conditions and consumer demand, factors which are beyond the scope of this study. However, with the projected population growth and housing likely to extend and consolidate the urban envelope south and west of the town, additional centres may be required. Any additional neighbourhood centre should ensure the vitality and viability of the core retail area is protected.

4.0 Recommendations

This Social Infrastructure Audit has identified certain specific requirements for future provision of community infrastructure facilities for the town of Naas. These requirements are based on current and projected population growth, as provided for in the Core Strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied). Whilst projected growth to 2027 is accounted for to be consistent with Naas LAP period of 2021-2027, recommendations are based on population growing to 28,097 by 2027. This assessment can inform the future spatial development objectives for the town for this plan period and beyond.

4.1 Education and Training

Primary schools in Naas are already over capacity. Based on projected growth the number of primary school places required by 2027 will be 3,453 assuming this age group (5-12 years) continues at 12.2% of the population. Primary school capacity is currently 3,186 thus a requirement for an additional 267 places. Using a teacher pupil ratio of 1:26 a further 11 new classrooms are needed to accommodate growth.

However, based on enrolment figures for 2019/20, schools in Naas currently cater for 14.9% of the population (within the study area the percentage of children of primary school going age is 12.2%). This indicates primary school catchments are reaching beyond the study area. Applying the current figure of 14.9% to projected population growth an additional 1,030 student places are required as opposed to 267. This equates to an additional 40 classrooms as opposed to 11 outlined above. These could be provided within existing schools if there is capacity to expand or through the provision of new school(s) located near existing residential areas or proposed new residential development(s).

Secondary schools in Naas are also over capacity with 3,854 currently enrolled in the five schools which have capacity for 3,248 pupils. While, the new 1,000 pupil school under construction in Millennium Park will relieve some of the existing pressure once completed, further capacity is required into the future.

Should growth continue as projected in line with the CDP and using the current proportion of 17.8% attending secondary school it is anticipated a further 1,800 additional secondary school places could be generated within Naas (Legal Town boundary) by 2027. This is based on 46.8% of pupils being from outside the study area.

The locational decisions for new school infrastructure, and future land use zoning objectives, should seek to complement existing school provision by addressing the identified deficiency of existing primary school 'coverage' particularly within the west and north-eastern side of the town. The preferred location should have regard to the 10-minute walk time from existing residential areas identified for future and urban/neighbourhood expansion.

4.2 Childcare

Childcare facilities in Naas are already at capacity with many operating waiting lists. Based on figures obtained from facilities and Census 2016 circa 49.2% of the 1,577 children under 5 years old in Naas are enrolled in childcare facilities. Based on

projected growth and using 7.3% of the population as a measure for this age cohort (same as Census 2016) the figure is likely to rise by 489 to 2,066 in 2027.

The projected housing unit delivery target to cover the plan period to 2027 is 2,394⁶ units. To comply with the Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) the study area requires the provision of 640 additional childcare spaces must be provided to accommodate the projected housing growth. Permissions already exist for five creches with capacity for 445 children, should they be developed this will reduce the additional requirement to 195 spaces.

It is notable that there is a lack of provision for those in the 0-2 age cohort. This was also concluded in a study carried out in 2018 by the Kildare County Childcare Committee on childcare needs. The report titled, 'Needs Analysis of Early Years Childcare in County Kildare' found that services for children under the age of two were inadequate in Naas with parents relying on relatives and childminders. According to Census 2016 there were 921 children in this category. However, it should be noted the Local Authority cannot control the type of childcare spaces (baby, toddler, pre-school) to be provided in each facility this is determined in terms of viability of a business for the end user.

Having regard to the projected growth, the capacity and number of childcare facilities needs to be increased significantly to meet demand. The location of these facilities should follow in new residential areas or near schools with gaps noted in the south west and north east of the town.

4.3 Health

Based on the projected growth and the number of doctors practicing in Naas (excluding hospital services) the provision of healthcare appears to be adequately catered for according to the benchmark of 0.25 physicians per 1,000 population outlined by Graduate Medical Education National Advisory Committee (GMENAC). Naas is currently 1.2 per 1,000 reducing to 0.92 per 1,000 by 2027. However, the reality is quite different having contacted all facilities it was evident that many of the doctors working in the practices were part time or sharing hours. This is not reflected in the ratios. Furthermore, all practices confirmed they were at capacity and were finding it difficult to facilitate new patients. The recent closure of three practices due to retirements and the growth in new families coming to live in Naas has caused a further strain on resources.

4.4 Sport and Recreation

The existing provision of 95.52 hectare of outdoors sports facilities indicate that the current provision is almost three times (4.42 ha / 1,000) the benchmark guidance (1.6 ha / 1,000) outlined in FIT. However, most of this space is contained within Craddockstown Golf Club (57.08 ha). Excluding this area current provision is 1.78 ha / 1,000 which lowers to 1.36 / 1,000 by 2027 thereby requiring an additional 6.8 hectares preferably in the southern part of the town.

According to FIT guidance 'Parks and Gardens' are already catered for in terms of size. However, it was deemed more appropriate to examine this typology against

⁶ The projected housing target will have regard to the constructed and extant units within Naas and will be revised accordingly.

standards in the '*Kildare Open Space Strategy 2011*'. In this regard it is recommended that a range of active uses are incorporated into the neighbourhood park while an additional 28.83 hectares of this typology of space is required to cater for the existing and anticipated population by 2027.

Local Park provision is catered for in terms of size with 10.22 hectares located within one park at Monread. A further 1.1 ha is required by 2027. Provision could be increased significantly above that recommended in the Open Space Strategy should linkages be improved, or extensions added to amenity spaces at Ballycane, Kingsfurze and Corbally which are presently below the minimum ≥ 2 ha threshold for a local park.

Future spatial development objectives for 'neighbourhood parks'/ 'local parks' should seek to be provided no greater than 710m from residential areas.

Provide additional and enhanced equipped play areas suitable for all age groups including; for very young children (within 100m from dwellings); children who can go out to play independently (within 400m from dwellings), and Neighbourhood areas aimed at older children (within 1,000m from dwellings). An additional 6 hectares are required to reach FIT benchmark guidance based on projected population growth. The requirement to deliver same should be included as part of masterplan / framework plans in respect of future neighbourhood developments seeking to provide circa 370 units or more. The requirement to redress existing deficiencies should seek to utilise in the first instance, identified areas for 'amenity' where they are located within 1.2km from large neighbourhood concentrations.

To provide a minimum of 50.94 hectares designated for Natural and Semi Natural Open Space (including Green Corridors), preferably in locations within 720m from residential neighbourhoods. An additional 15.04 hectares are required to meet FIT benchmark guidance (assuming access is available to De Burgh lands). Amenity green space provision in Naas is over three times above FIT benchmark guidance. However, all new residential development should aim to provide amenity green space no greater than 480 metres, from dwellings.

4.5 Community Services

The location of future community services should be provided relative to the location of target user groups and their level of accessibility insofar as practical. Based on benchmarks used in Northern Ireland (*Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Strategic Framework for Community Centre Provision, 2016*) there is no requirement for additional facilities in Naas as the existing number will exceed the benchmark of 0.30 per 1,000 people in 2027 at 0.35 per 1,000 (based on 10 facilities excluding the Garda Station and Fire Station).

4.6 Neighbourhood Centres

The demand and need for additional neighbourhood centres / local retail services will be determined in the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027. The walkability analysis undertaken as part of this study and detailed in Figure 13 will influence the spatial arrangement and locational requirement for such facilities.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Best Practice Measures in the Provision of Social Infrastructure

In addition to the specific social infrastructure and community requirements detailed in Section 4, this study recommends the following practices in the provision of social infrastructure consistent with best practice and the sustainable and effective use of resources:

- Co-location
Co-location and clustering of complementary community services thus facilitating coordination, convenience and access for service users.
- Multi-purpose and multi-function
Facilities and spaces should offer flexible and diverse space and uses over a range of times to maximise efficiency, utilisation and adaptability of physical assets.
- Place making and community identity
Promotion and encouragement of community facilities that create a sense of place and identity, that have a civic quality, and level of amenity that can foster community ownership, offer a focus to support community engagement and the strong ‘informal community network’ that exists in Leixlip.
- Partnership
Encourage delivery of infrastructure services and facilities through partnerships between different bodies for maximum efficiency and co-ordination.
- Community Asset Management
For the local authority to maintain and enhance their strategic role in co-ordination and engagement between different service providers to ascertain up to date information of community infrastructure and facilities for the benefit of the community and service providers.

5.2 Connectivity and Linkages to Social Infrastructure

Opportunities to enhance the existing cycle infrastructure network and pedestrian routes should be investigated in the preparation of the Naas LAP. Design feasibility concepts should be considered that seek to encourage sufficient pathway infrastructure to facilitate access to and through neighbourhood and local parks for the purpose of improving connectivity/permeability and the quality of this amenity environment. Any peripheral development on suitably zoned land should seek to take a similar approach and provide a responsive infrastructure design approach.

New and/or enhanced pathway linkages through the town which seek to connect with built and amenity heritage features including the canal and adjacent walkways, including Oldtown Demesne, Monread Park, and the Neighbourhood Park at Fairgreen / Lakelands / Ballycane should be encouraged.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

Social and community infrastructure is essential to achieving a balanced approach to sustainable local communities and it is of critical importance to the economic and social development of Naas. This study examined the current context with respect to

social infrastructure facilities in Naas, determining future requirements based on the projected population growth to 2027 for the life of the Naas LAP. The findings highlight the presence of some excellent social infrastructure facilities in the area, and a shortfall or absence of some others, that will influence the delivery of future improvements.

The role of social infrastructure in integrating new and existing communities in the LAP area is critical. A mix of uses will provide opportunities for community activity and places for people to meet and connect. Local facilities within easy walking distance are supported to facilitate community cohesion as well as to reduce transport requirements. Continuity of public realm and interconnected neighbourhoods ensure people can easily access facilities and services they need by walking or cycling. With high density living in urban areas there is much greater demand for highly flexible, multi-use facilities within communities. A flexible approach to developed floorspace, as well as the capacity to retrofit existing community facilities is also important to address changing demographics and evolving community needs.

The provision of social infrastructure in an area is fundamentally about making the most of and developing the local network of assets, be they facilities, services or the programmes that bring this together. The production of this audit will function as an important evidence base for the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027, in highlighting the provision of accessible social and community infrastructure, which is critical for the quality of life for all the town's population.