

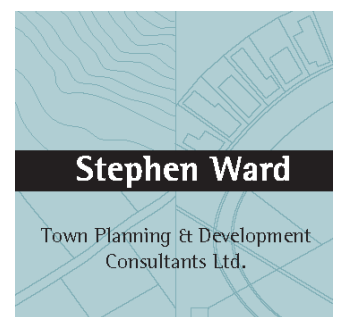
Community & Social Infrastructure Audit

Large-Scale Residential Development

Flemington & Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin



Prepared on behalf of
Lagan Homes Balbriggan Ltd
August 2026



CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Site Context	4
3.0 Site Location	4
4.0 Proposed Development	7
5.0 Fingal County Council Sports and Recreational Facilities Audit.....	10
6.0 Community & Social Audit	11
6.1 Key Themes.....	13
Education	14
6.1.2 Childcare	16
6.1.3 Sports and Recreation	17
6.1.4 Community Services	18
6.1.5 Healthcare	19
6.1.6 Retail	20
7.0 Planned Community Facilities and Infrastructure	21
8.0 New Community at Flemington Lane	22
8.1 Childcare Demand Assessment.....	22
8.2 School Place Demand	22
8.3 Public Open Space and Play Facilities	23
9.0 Conclusion	23

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Community and Social Infrastructure Audit has been prepared by Stephen Ward Town Planning and Development Consultants Limited in support of an application for planning permission for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) on a site north of Flemington Lane, Flemington and Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin. This report assesses the existing community and social infrastructure available to future residents of the proposed development in accordance with policy objective DMSO78 of the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied) (FCDP).

Objective DMSO78 – Community and Social Infrastructure Audit

Planning applications for large scale residential and mixed-use developments, of 50 or more residential units, shall include a Community and Social Infrastructure Audit. This audit shall assess the provision of community and social infrastructure within the vicinity of the site and shall identify existing shortcomings in terms of these facilities and assess whether there is a need to provide additional facilities to cater for the proposed development.

A Community and Social Infrastructure Audit shall include the following:

- *An assessment of existing community and social infrastructure facilities within 1 km of the subject site.*
- *An assessment of the need in terms of necessity, deficiency, and opportunities to enhance/share existing facilities based future population projections for the area*
- *A justification as to whether or not a new community facility will be provided as part of the proposed development, based on the findings of the audit.*

This Report will provide an overview of existing and planned facilities as well as key demographic data for the study area based on Census 2022 results and estimate the potential population generated from the proposed development.

According to the FCDP, “Community or social infrastructure includes facilities, services, places and spaces that provide a community with their social needs. The provision in appropriate accessible locations of good community infrastructure, such as **education, sports and recreational facilities, libraries, childcare facilities, places of worship, health and community centres**, is vital as it contributes positively to enhanced quality of life. The physical appearance of these facilities can also have a defining role in an area, strengthening the sense of identity and character.” (emphasis added)

The Audit undertaken of existing community and social infrastructure in the defined study area is addressed under the following headings:

- Education
- Childcare
- Sports and Recreational Facilities
- Community Facilities

- Healthcare
- Retail Centres

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

According to the 2022 Census, Ireland's population reached 5,149,139 in April 2022, representing growth of 8.1% from the previous Census in 2016. Fingal's population stood at 330,506 at the time, an increase from 2016 of 11.6%, or just over 34,000 people. Fingal's population is expected to continue to grow with the Fingal Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as varied) forecasting that the county's population will increase by approximately 53,883 by 2029, an increase of 16% compared to 2022.

Balbriggan's population stood at 24,322 in 2022. The Core Strategy for Fingal has been updated in accordance with the National Planning Framework - First Revision 2025 which sets national targets for population and housing growth. The Guidelines set a new annual housing growth requirement of 3,153 homes for Fingal to 2034. The Core Strategy incorporates the full allowance of 50% above the baseline requirement to produce a housing growth requirement for the Development Plan of 29,126 housing units between 2023 and 2029. 3,373 (12%) of the housing requirement has been allocated to Balbriggan.

Balbriggan has a high youth population with children (0-17 years) numbering 8,338 or 32.9% of the population, one of the highest proportions of young people among Ireland's large towns. Of the towns with a population of 10,000 or more surveyed in Census 2022, Balbriggan had the youngest population, with an average age of 33.6 years compared to the national average of 38.8.

Balbriggan is the second most densely populated of the towns with a population of 1,500 people or more with 5,481 people per km². The average number of persons in private households in Balbriggan is 3, above the national average of 2.74 but in line with Fingal.

There is marked difference the composition of the population living in Balbriggan in comparison to the State. Balbriggan has a culturally diverse population with 31% being born outside of Ireland compared to 13% Nationally and 9% identifying as Black or Black Irish, compared with 1% nationally. Integration of this diverse community is a key driver of Balbriggan's development strategy, through the "Our Balbriggan" programme, a multi-agency town regeneration initiative being delivered by Fingal County Council¹.

3.0 SITE LOCATION

The application site is located to the north of Balbriggan with frontage onto Flemington Lane. Lands to the west and north are rural while lands to the south and east are in residential use. The character of Flemington Lane is residential but varies in style and form with Bremore Cottages to the north, more recently developed bungalows as well as two storey suburban type housing developments set back from the road and townhouses with direct frontage. Flemington Lane runs in an east west direction from the R132 to Flemington Road. The R132 features bus stops and is served by regular bus services. There is full footpath connectivity along the south of Flemington Lane but not to the north where footpaths vary in width and have gaps between sections. There is a pedestrian

¹ Barron, C., Shier, H. (2024) Social Spaces and Youth Services for Young People in Balbriggan. Dublin. Dublin City University. ISBN: 978-1-911669-69-2

route from the application site to the closest retail and service centre at Castlemill shopping centre and Flemington Community Centre.

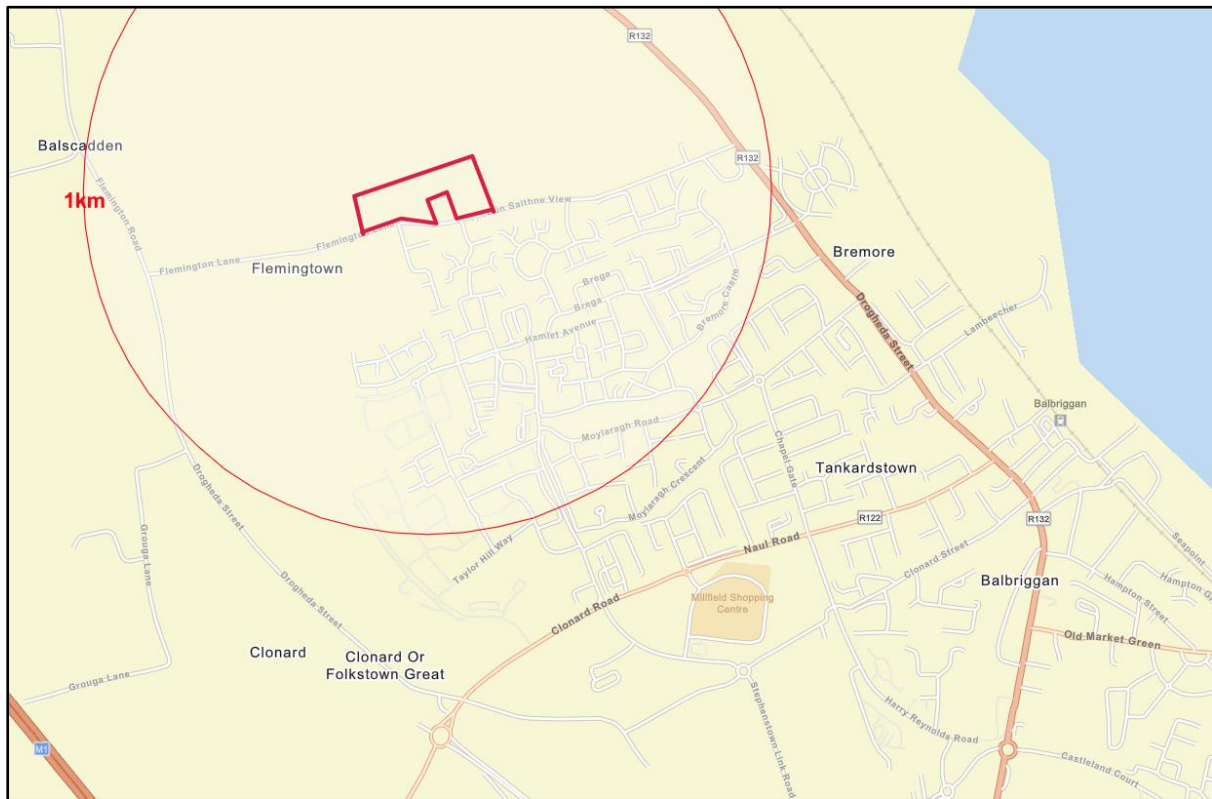


Figure 1 - Site Location

The application site falls within the Flemington Local Area Plan. According to Section 8.2 of the LAP, *“The Flemington area and its residents are well served by existing social and community infrastructure including sport and recreational facilities, public open space, and educational facilities.”* The Flemington Community Centre, a 10-minute walk from the LAP lands is the primary focus in addition to schools, childcare facilities and a number of sports clubs. The LAP lands also have the advantage of being proximate to the proposed Bremore Regional Park and Fingal Coastal Greenway.

Category	Infrastructure Asset
Open Space	Tankardstown Bay Beach, Bremore Bay Beach, Victory Garden, Dún Saithne Avenue Playground
Sport & Recreation	O'Dwyers GAA Club, Balbriggan FC, Fingal Rowing Club
Education	St. Molaga's National School, Balbriggan Educate Together National School
Childcare	Cocoon Childcare, Snowdrops Creche and Montessori, Bremore Castle Pre-School
Community	Flemington Community Centre, Balbriggan Garda Station, Bremore Castle
Healthcare	New Haven Physiotherapy Clinic, Hamlet Lane Medical Clinic, McCartan's Pharmacy, Castlemill Dental Clinic

Table 8.1: Summary of Social and Community Infrastructure Assets in the vicinity of the LAP Lands



Figure 2 - Bremore Regional Park Development Project 2021

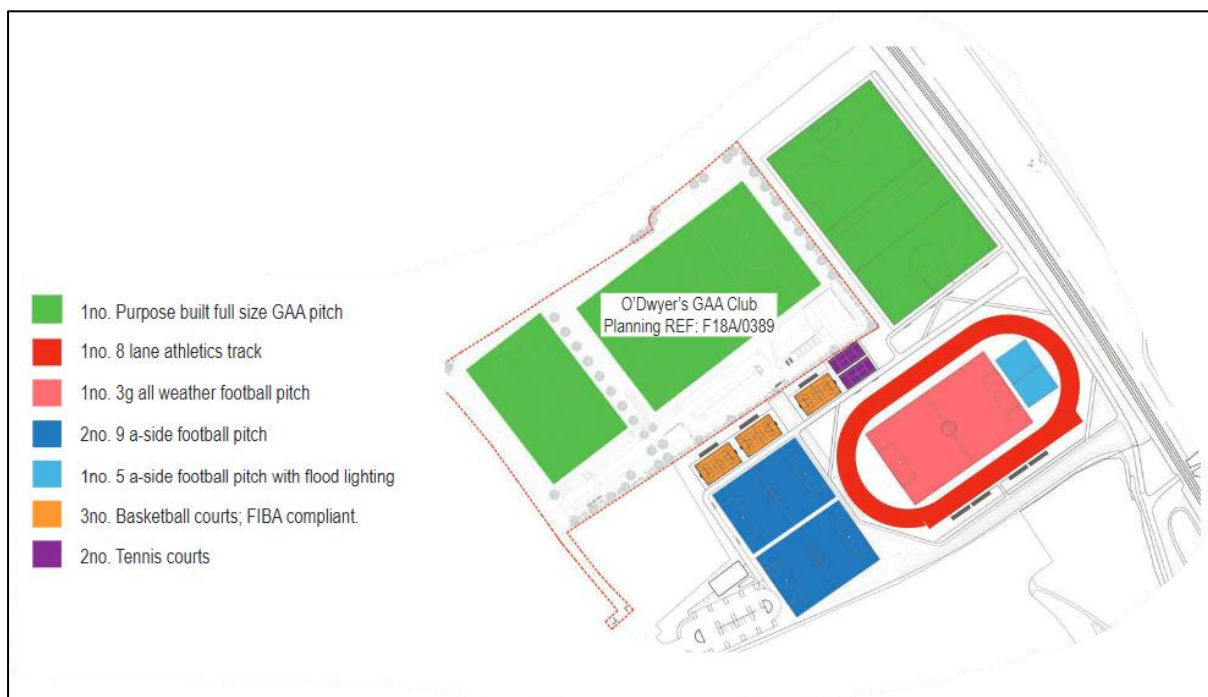


Figure 3 - North of Bremore Regional Park and new GAA Clubhouse & pitches currently under construction.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed Large-Scale Residential Development consists of 146no. dwellings (120no. houses and 24no. duplex) in a mix of 13no. 1-bed, 29no. 2-bed, 91no. 3-bed and 13no. 4-bed units. The new residents will be supported by a childcare facility that is designed to cater for 80no. childcare spaces. In line with the Flemington Local Area Plan, the development will also include a MUGA, an active travel hub and the first section of the active travel route that will form a central spine through the LAP lands ultimately terminating at the R132 to the east. Public open space extends to 5,325sqm representing 15% of the net site area. The LAP identified the need for a MUGA in Character Area 4 of the LAP. As noted above, this will be provided as part of the proposed development.



Figure 4 - Site Layout Plan (JFOC Dwg. No. PD1001)

Character Area 4	
Gross Development Area	c.4.4 hectares
Net Development Area	c.3.27 hectares
DPH Range	c.37 dph- c.47 dph
Approximate Unit Nos	c.121 no. - c.154 dph
Infrastructure	c.0.47 hectares of public open space. c.0.36 hectares of active travel route. c.400 sqm - c.500 sqm of community floorspace. Section of new link street. MUGA. SuDS garden.

Figure 5 - Extract from Flemington LAP

Character Area 4	LAP	Proposed Development
Gross Development Area	4.4ha	4.4ha
Net Development Area	3.27ha	3.3ha
DPH Range (net area)	37dph-47dph	41dph
Housing Typologies	Townhouse, duplex and apartments. 1-4 beds	Townhouse, duplex, apartments. 1-4 bedroom sizes.
Approx. Unit Nos.	121no.-154no.	146
Quantity of Public Open Space	0.47ha	0.5ha
Community infrastructure	MUGA SuDS Garden	MUGA SuDS Garden
Community Floorspace	400-500sq.m	382sq.m Crèche with 153sq.m play space. 80sq.m Active Travel Hub (open structure)
Section of Active Travel Route	0.36ha (no length stated)	363 linear metres (0.123ha based on 4m width) The Active Travel Route has been extended from the starting point indicated by the LAP, providing an additional 68m from the active travel hub to the western site boundary.
Section of new Link Street	No quantity/length stated	380m of link street proposed
Roads and Access	Provision of vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist accesses onto Flemington Lane.	The proposed development will create three vehicular access points onto Flemington Lane as well as an off road cycle and pedestrian route. Two pedestrian crossings are proposed on Flemington Lane.

The Flemington LAP sets out the community infrastructure that should be provided in each character area. The phasing as set out is weighted in Phase 1 to ensure these facilities are sequenced to be delivered as the growing community grows. The proposed development provides the community infrastructure called for in the LAP within Character Area 4 in addition to a childcare facility.

Character Area 4 has the strong advantage of pedestrian connectivity to the Flemington Community Centre (12-minute walk) and Castle Mill Shopping Centre (9-minute walk) to the south as illustrated by figure 5.

The proposed development will be well served and supported by existing and proposed community infrastructure.



Figure 6 - Flemington Community Centre



Figure 7 - Dunnes Stores in Castle Mill Local Centre

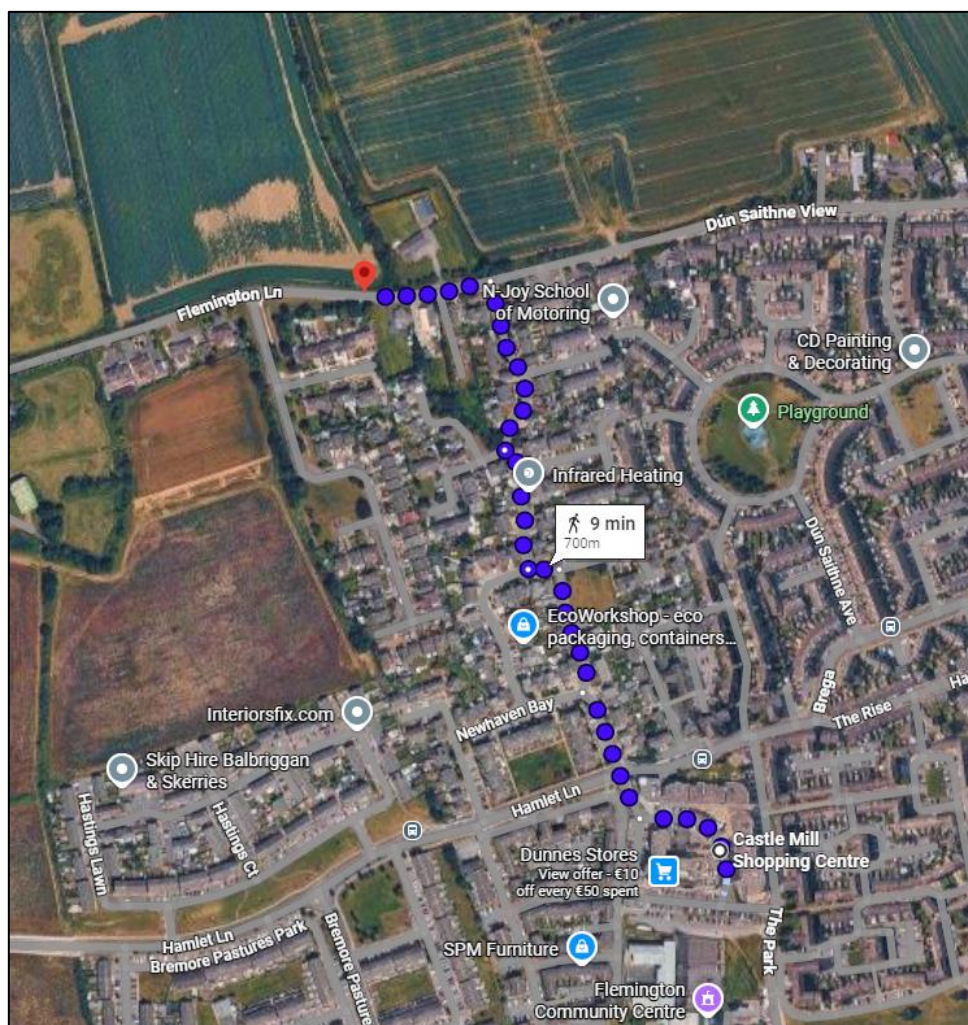


Figure 8 - Google Map extract showing walking distance to Castle Mill and Flemington Community Centre.

5.0 FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AUDIT

Fingal County Council published a Community, Sport and Recreational Facilities Audit in April 2025 which was prepared by KPMG Future Analytics to provide insights, gap analysis and recommendations around these facilities. The table below provides a summary of the recommendations made in relation to the settlement of Balbriggan and observations on progress addressing the gaps identified since this publication in blue text.

Summary of Recommendations for Balbriggan		
	Future FCC provision	Demand Assessment
Pitch Sports	Bremore Active Recreational Hub; pitch Taken Into Maintenance	2 additional pitches by 2029*
Observation on Audit: It is noted that the potential demand for pitches identified by the Audit assumes no cross over so is a conservative approach. The Audit does not appear to include the new GAA pitch provided at the western end of Hamlet Lane to the south of the application site or the permitted pitches to the east of		

the R132 illustrated by figure 3. A further pitch is proposed to be provided as part of the proposed LRD by Glenveagh Homes (P.A. Ref. LRD0069-S3e).

Water Activity Facilities	Castlelands pool (25m, 6-lane)	Primary target for improving pool access/provision. Balbriggan is the priority location for a new swimming pool.
Observation on Audit: The proposed construction of a public swimming pool building was advertised in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in February 2026 with submissions accepted to the 6th of March 2026. This will address a key deficit.		
Indoor Activity Facilities	None listed	Prioritise increasing accessibility around settlement periphery in north, including outdoor gym facilities and outdoor basketball courts.
Observation on Audit: The Audit records that while Balbriggan settlement has above average provision of indoor activities, it is recommended that access to indoor facilities be increased in the residential areas surrounding Skerries Road and Hamlet Lane. The distribution was also identified for improvement particularly within a reasonable walking distance of the settlement periphery. The application site is a c.12-minute walk from the Flemington Community Centre which has a host of activities including fitness classes, dance classes, Pickle Ball, Ballet, Yoga and many more indoor activities for both children and adults.		
Outdoor Activity Facilities	New playground (play audit)	Prioritise increasing accessibility around settlement periphery in north, including outdoor gym facilities and outdoor basketball courts.
Observation on Audit: While the demand assessment includes the provision of outdoor basketball courts, the strong provision of indoor basketball facilities is acknowledged to decrease the pressure on this front. The Audit records Balbriggan settlement has a good number of outdoor activity facilities with no part of the settlement more than a 15 minute walk from a location. The Fingal Playgrounds Accessibility Audit (2023) shows a gap to the south of the town around the Skerries Road. The proposed development will provide a MUGA where an outdoor basketball court can be provided.		

6.0 COMMUNITY & SOCIAL AUDIT

This Audit was undertaken in March-April 2025 by Stephen Ward Town Planning and Development Consultants Limited on behalf of the applicant. It involved a site survey in addition to desk-based research of relevant sources and publications.

In accordance with Objective DMSO78, the Audit of existing community and social infrastructure facilities focuses on the area within 1km of the subject site. a 1.5km radius is also shown having regard to the 15-minute city concept. Post primary schools within 2km are also considered as it is generally acceptable to travel further for secondary education needs.

The ‘Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements—Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (2024) strongly promote the ‘15-minute city’ concept, where people can live, work and access most of their daily needs within 15 minutes of active transport i.e. by walking or cycling.

“Planning authorities at settlement level should plan for an integrated network of well-designed neighbourhoods that can meet day-to-day needs (such as food, healthcare, education, sports and professional services) within a short 10-15 (approx.) walk of all homes...” (S1.3.2:4).

The Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 supports the principles of the 15-minute city concept by promoting sustainable urban development, active travel, and compact settlements for healthy placemaking. The Plan encourages mixed-use development where essential services, such as shops, schools, and parks, are easily accessible by walking or cycling, minimising the need for car travel. This aligns with Fingal’s emphasis on enhancing public transport, active travel networks, and green spaces to reduce car dependency and create more self-sufficient, vibrant communities. This is reflected in the ‘Our Balbriggan’ Town Rejuvenation Plan transportation objectives and is central to the Balbriggan Active Travel Strategy 2024-2034.



Figure 9 - 1KM and 1.5KM radii

6.1 KEY THEMES

The audit collected information under six key themes as set out below with examples-

1. Education – primary, post primary, special needs education, further education and training.
2. Childcare – registered childcare facilities and services they offer.
3. Sports and Recreational Facilities – Public parks, green space, outdoor sports and playgrounds.
4. Community Facilities – libraries, fire stations, garda stations, community centres.
5. Healthcare – GPs, Primary Care Centres, Pharmacies, Older persons services, disabled care services.
6. Retail Centres – Local centres, neighbourhood centres and convenience retail.

EDUCATION

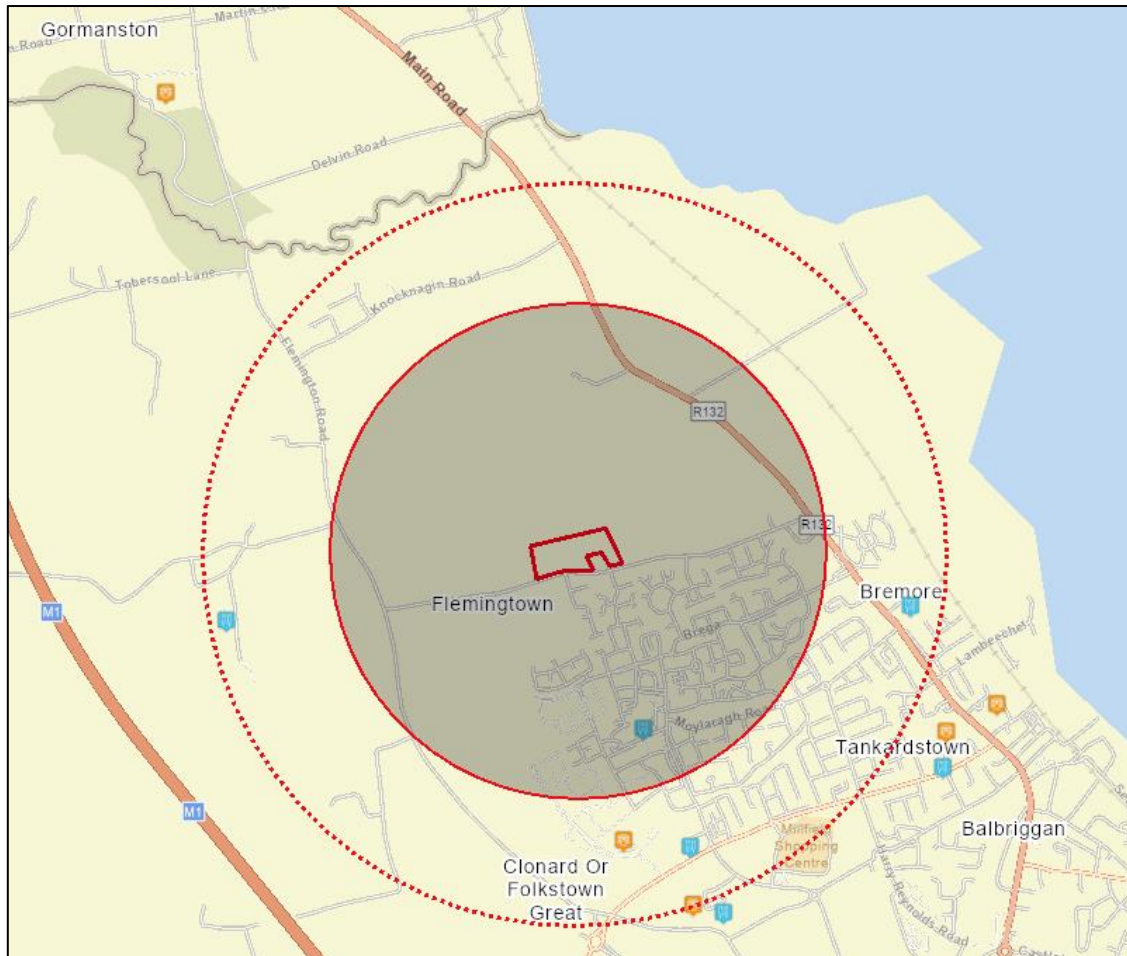


Figure 10 - Primary and post-Primary Schools

Primary Schools	Post-Primary Schools
1km radius	1.5km
Balbriggan Educate Together NS (20202A)	Colaiste Ghlor na Mara (68082L)
1.5km radius	Bremore Education Together Secondary School (68262N)
St. Molaga Senior NS (16970A)	2km
St. Georges NS (15315J)	Balbriggan Community College (70010V)
Balscadden NS (09492W)	Loreto Secondary School (60010P)

School	Roll No.	2025/206 Enrolment	2024/2025 Enrolment
Primary			
Balbriggan Educate Together NS	20202A	356	357
St. Molaga Senior NS	16970A	422	434
St. Georges NS	15315J	339	334
Balscadden NS	09492W	198	202
Post Primary			
Colaiste Ghlór na Mara	68082L	520	500
Bremore Education Together Secondary School	68262N	824	836
Balbriggan Community College	70010V	686	696
Loreto Secondary School	60010P	1,220	1,232

The Department of Education records of Current Status of Large-Scale projects and Additional School Accommodation projects being delivered under the school building programme (March 2026) were reviewed to assess if there will be additional capacity available in the study area.

Table 4 Current Status of Large Scale projects in Balbriggan		
Roll Number	School Name	Current Status
129	70010V	Project Brief

The project brief is to provide a total of 1000 students and two new special education classes.

St. Molaga's Senior primary school is also due to be replaced with a larger two storey school with construction currently in progress (August 2026) (P.A. Ref. F21A/0668). According to the description of the development, the new two storey school will include 19no. classrooms, 10no. resource rooms, 2no. base classrooms for special needs as well as a GP hall and a multi-purposed room. According to the class size information recorded by the Department of Education and Youth (July 2024, St. Molaga's currently has 17no. classrooms.



Figure 11 - Extract from Planning Application Drawing by Van Dijk Architects No. 1952-PA-003

6.1.2 CHILDCARE

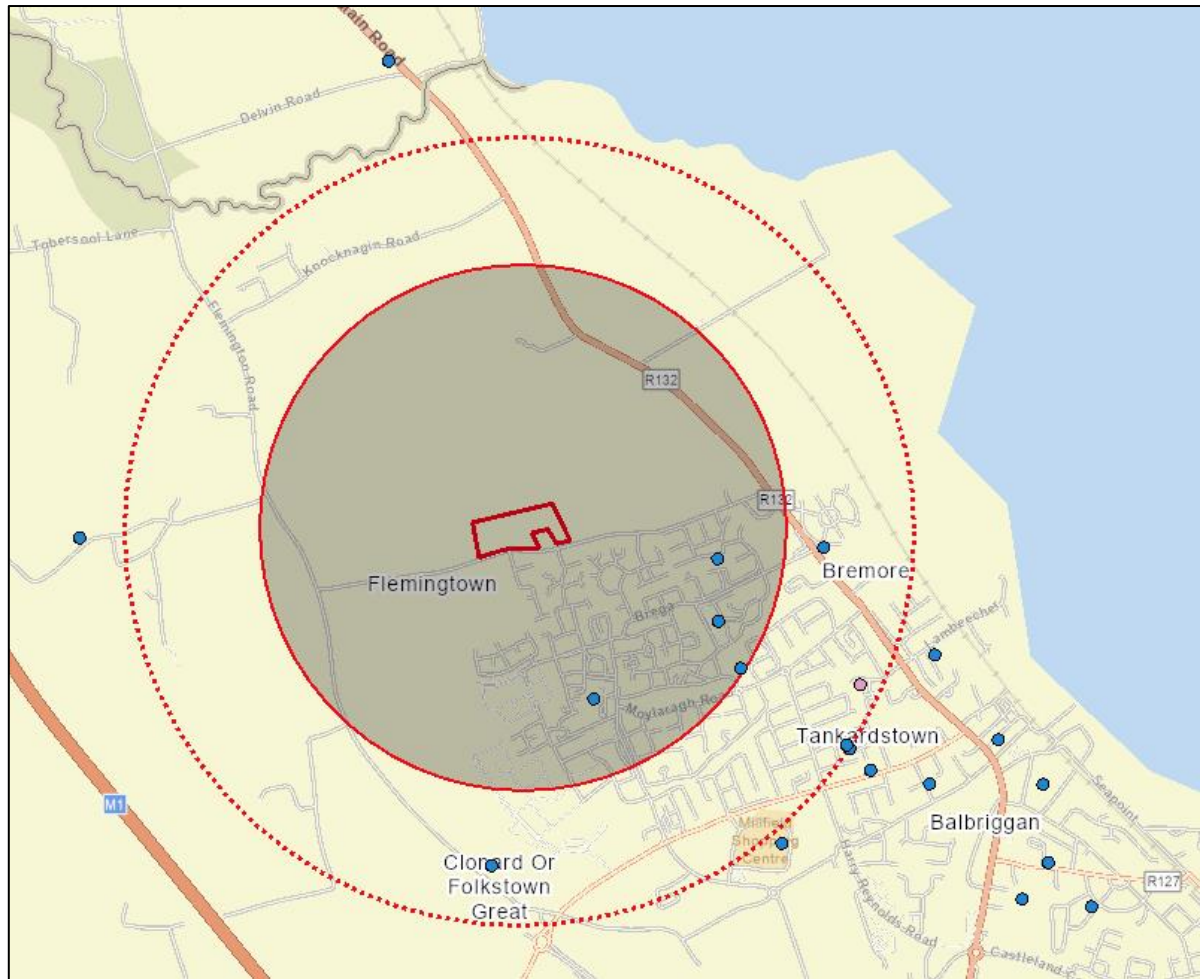


Figure 12 - Childcare Providers

1km	2km
Snowdrops Crèche	Cocoon Childcare
Bremore Castle Montessori	Balbriggan Community Childcare
The Children's Village	Circle of Friends Montessori
Really Cool Afterschool & Montessori School Ltd	

Helga's Pre-school and Lorraine's Montessori School are shown on the map of registered providers but do not appear to be operational at the time of writing².

Service Name	Age Profile	Service Type	Childcare Spaces
Snowdrops crèche	0-6 years	Full Day	35
Bremore Castle Montessori	2-6 years	Sessional	19
The Children's Village	1-6 years	Full Day	95
Really Cool Afterschool & Montessori School Ltd	2-6 years	Part Time	40
Cocoon Childcare	0-6 years	Full Day	15
Balbriggan Community Childcare	1-6 years	Full Day, Part-time, Sessional	54
Circle of Friends Montessori	2-6 years	Sessional	22
Total			280

² https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Dublin_Feb26.pdf

6.1.3 SPORTS AND RECREATION

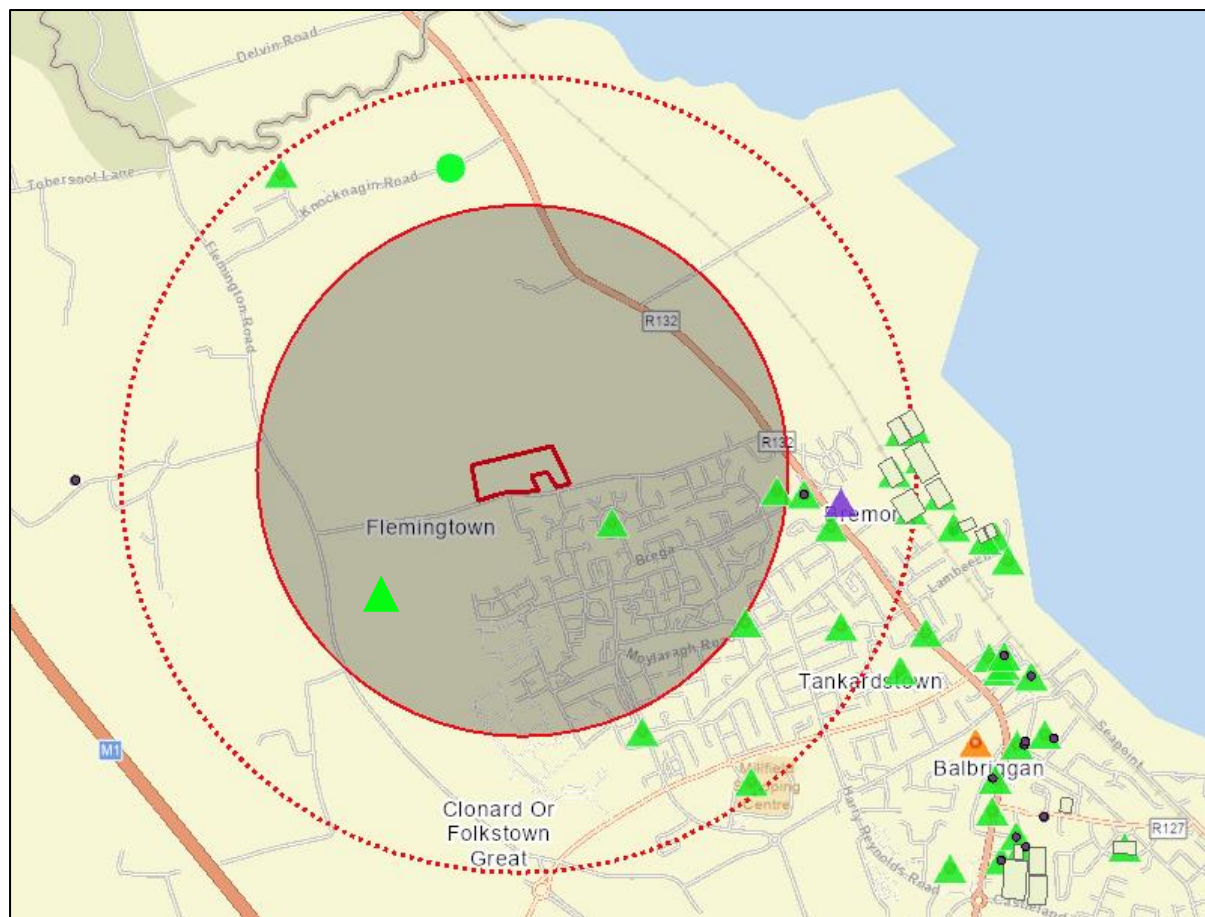


Figure 13 Sports and Recreation

1km	1.5km
Saithne Play Area	O'Dwyer's GAA – east of Bremore Park
O'Dwyer's GAA Pitch – west of R132 – Football, hurling, handball. O'Dwyer's GAA, LGFA & Camogie Club – Gaelic football, hurling, Camogie	Bremore Regional Park with exercise equipment • St. Mologa's Park Soccer Pitches • St. Mologa's Park All weather pitches East of the railway line • St. Mologa's Park Rugby Pitches • St. Mologa's Park GAA Pitches
O'Dwyer's GAA – Flemingtown Pitch	Flemington Community Centre Flemington Basketball Club
	D.P. Gymnastics
	Moyleigh Road Play Area
	Energie Fitness Gyn Millfield
	Allotments (Kocknagin Road/R132)
	Knocknagin Equestrian centre



Figure 14 - Balbriggan has the advantage of its coastal location, cultural heritage and sports facilities

6.1.4 COMMUNITY SERVICES

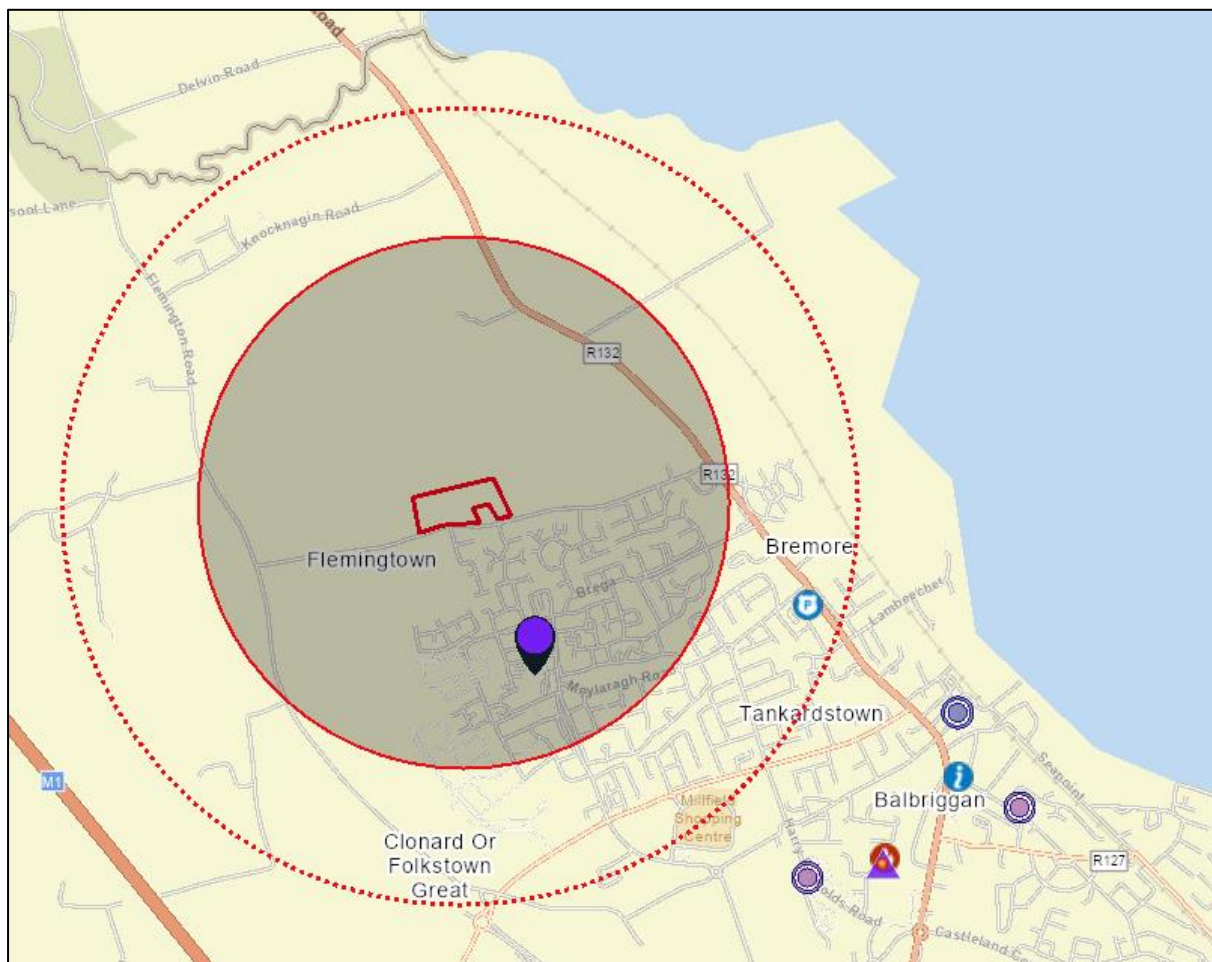


Figure 15 - Community Services

1km	1.5km
Flemington Community Centre	Garda Station
2km	
Balbriggan Fire Station	Balbriggan Enterprise and Training Centre (B.E.A.T)
Balbriggan Library & Citizens Information Centre	BEAT Enterprise Centre/Remote work hub
Intero	HSE Primary Care
Balbriggan Children's Disability Network	Aster Family Resource Centre

6.1.5 HEALTHCARE

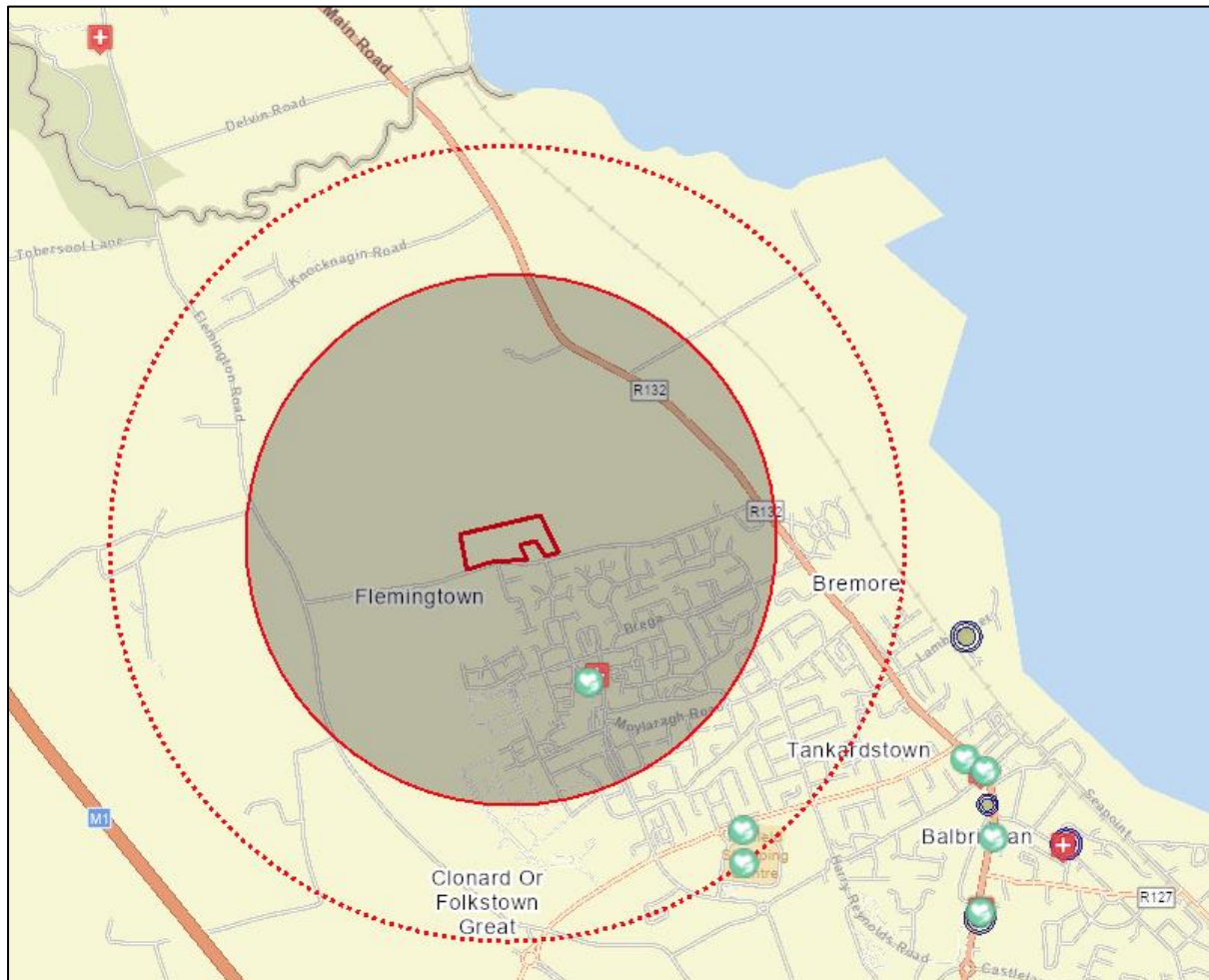


Figure 16 – Healthcare

1km	
Castlemill Family Medical Centre	McCartan's Pharmacy
Castlemill - Dental	Hamlet Lane Medical Centre (ID 3346)
1.5km	
Boots Millfield	Tesco Pharmacy Millfield

6.1.6 RETAIL

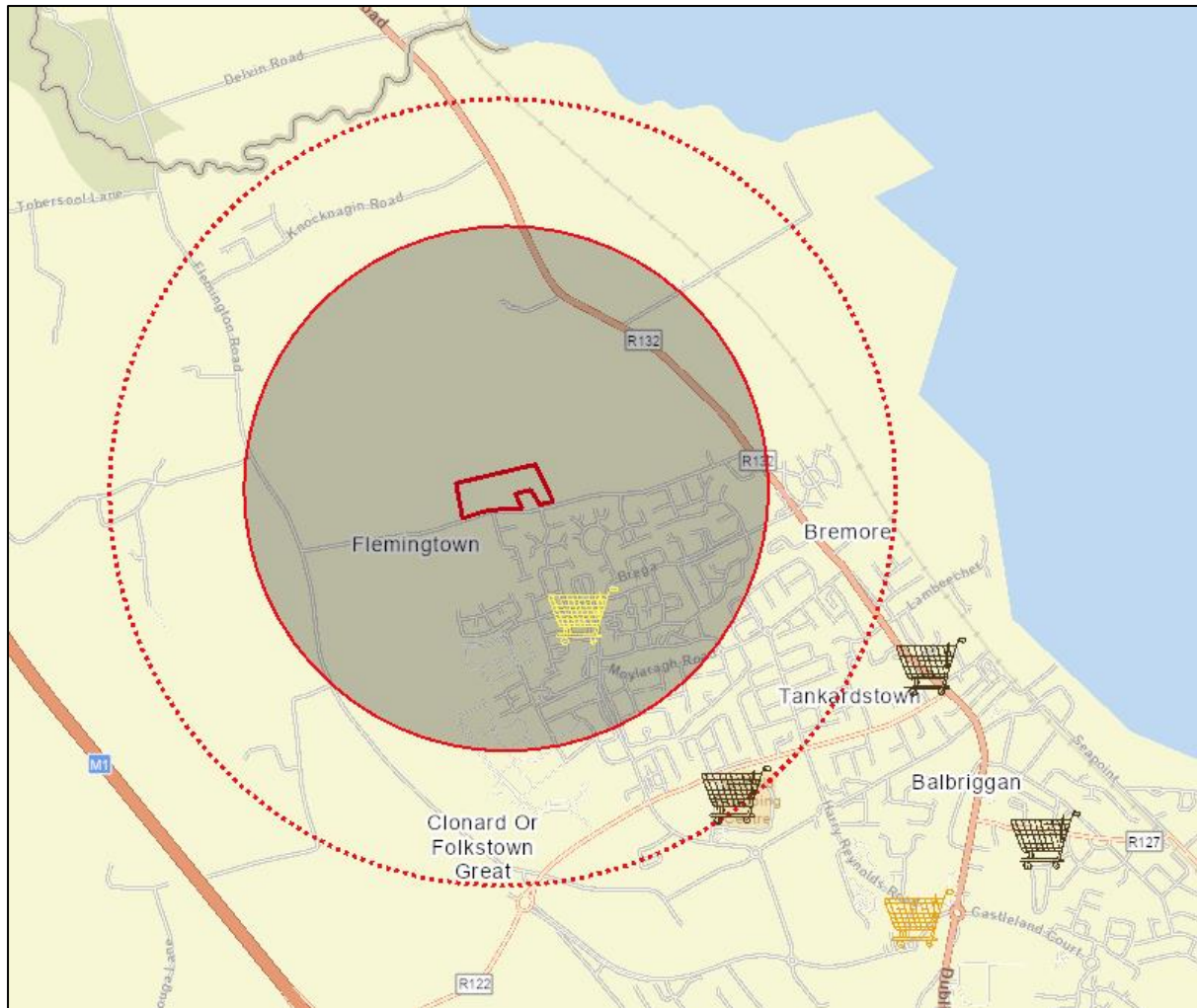


Figure 17 - Retail

1km	
Dunnes Stores	Castlemill Local Centre
1.5km	
Tesco	Millfield Shopping Centre

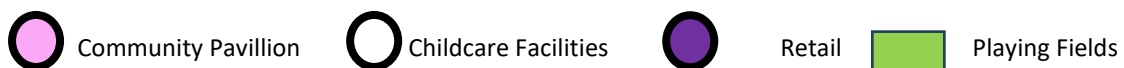
Supervalu and the town core of Balbriggan is c.1.7km from the application site travelling east along Flemington Kane and south via the R132.

A new Aldi store has recently been permitted to the south of Balbriggan (indicated by the orange symbol above).

7.0 PLANNED COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Figure 18 - Approximate Boundary of LRD Application Site by Glenveagh Homes



Planning permission has recently been granted by Fingal County Council for a Large-Scale Residential Development to the south west of the application site under P.A. Ref. LRD0069/S3E. The new community has been planned with community uses and retail floorspace as well as two childcare facilities. The location of this infrastructure together with the proposed development will provide an even distribution across this developing area of Balbriggan to facilitate access to all residents both new and existing facilities.

8.0 NEW COMMUNITY AT FLEMINGTON LANE

The Fingal County Development Plan provides an agreed occupancy of 3.5 persons in the case of dwellings with three or more bedrooms and 1.5 persons in the case of dwellings with two or fewer bedrooms for the purposes of calculating public open space.

Dwelling Size	No. Proposed	Occupancy	Potential Population Generated
1-bed	13	1.5 persons	63
2-bed	29		
3-bed	91	3.5 persons	364
4-bed	13		
Total			427

The demographic profile for the proposed development has been based on the profile recorded for Balbriggan in Census 2022.

Age Group	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Balbriggan (%)	26%	14%	29%	23%	8%
Proposal (no. persons)	111	60	124	98	34

8.1 CHILDCARE DEMAND ASSESSMENT

A Childcare Demand Assessment has been prepared under separate cover. This Assessment considers the potential demand for Childcare under the benchmark of 20no. childcare places for every 75no. dwellings provided by the Childcare Guidelines as well as analysis based on Census 2022 data.

The proposed crèche is intentionally oversized to allow additional capacity to cater for future development in the LAP area and increase commercial viability. This approach is accepted by the LAP (para.8.3). The prospective applicant is the landowner of the Flemington LAP lands enabling a coordinated approach to childcare provision within the new community.

8.2 SCHOOL PLACE DEMAND

A report on existing school enrolment is provided under separate cover. The proposed development is predicted to include 118no. children of school age. This population would be spread through the eight years of primary school and five years of post-primary school.

	Age 5-9	Age 10-14	Age 15-19
Balbriggan Census 2022	2,154	2,422	2,084
Percentage of Total Population	9%	10%	9%
Potential New Population	38	42	38

It is submitted that this population can be adequately catered for within the existing network of schools in Balbriggan. The application site was zoned for residential development under the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied) which has identified only one school site to the south of Balbriggan in Balrothery.

It is acknowledged that Balbriggan has a young population and is identified for growth under the revised population projections (Variation No.1). Any future school provision or additional capacity needs will be assessed and provided for by the Department of Education and Youth in collaboration with Fingal County Council.

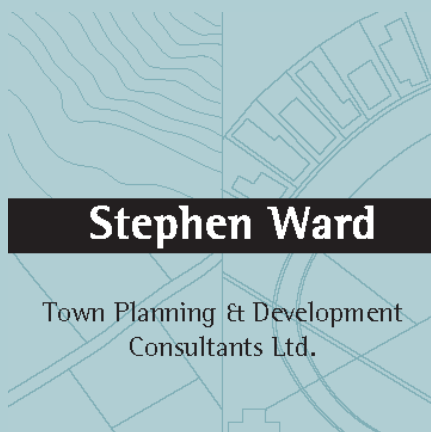
8.3 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND PLAY FACILITIES

The Fingal County Development Plan requires the provision of public open space in all new residential development. This is underpinned by the Flemington Local Area Plan. As detailed by the Statement of Consistency submitted under separate cover, the proposed development provides public open space in addition to the first section of an active travel route and active travel hub. The Fingal Playgrounds Accessibility Audit (2023) shows a gap to the south of the town around the Skerries Road but no gap was identified to the north in the Flemington area. Play facilities for the proposed development are provided in line with Objective DMSO68.

The proposed development will support existing clubs and investment made in the facilities in Balbriggan. While the site will provide public open space for the enjoyment and social cohesion in the new community, the site is in close proximity to the proposed Regional Park and a short distance from beaches and scenic routes.

9.0 CONCLUSION

The Audit undertaken together with the publications by Fingal County Council indicate that Balbriggan is well served with community infrastructure. The Flemington LAP ensure that this area will also be well provided for into the future. No gaps were identified during the course of this Audit.



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