



ARKLOW

**LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK
2026**

**SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE
AUDIT**



Foreword

This is the Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) for Variation No. 6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, including the Arklow Local Planning Framework 2026. This assessment was carried out in 2025 in order to prepare the objectives and land use zonings of the draft Local Planning Framework and therefore does not reflect the material alterations made to the final Variation/LPF.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Social infrastructure, community facilities and community development are fundamental elements in the creation of sustainable communities and supporting a good quality of life. 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 and care, leisure, recreation and culture.

Land use planning can contribute to enhancement of social - community facilities and development through the following means:

1. Facilitating the delivery of social - community infrastructure through:
 - Identifying, where possible, community - social infrastructure deficiencies and needs of towns and villages including, for example, local community centres, schools, healthcare facilities etc
 - The reservation of land for the development of new or enhanced social - community infrastructure in the County and local development plans where a need for new facilities is identified;
 - Managing the expansion of residential development commensurate with the social - community infrastructure available;
 - Requiring the delivery of new social - community infrastructure as part of development proposals; and
 - Cooperating with other service providers in the delivery of new social - community infrastructure.
2. Facilitating improved physical access to social - community infrastructure and services through:
 - Promoting a development pattern that maximises the accessibility of social - community facilities infrastructure by public transport, cycle and foot;
 - Requiring all new facilities to be accessible and useable by those with special needs, including mobility or other impairments; and
 - Facilitating enhancement of communications infrastructure.
3. Facilitating the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of communities, environmental upgrading and general actions to enhance the environmental, amenity and physical attributes of communities.

1.1 Methodology

The function of this Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) is to assist in the preparation of the new Arklow Local Planning Framework by examining and analysing the availability and capacity of existing social - community infrastructure facilities, to endeavour to predict likely future requirements, and make recommendations for the new Local Planning Framework based on anticipated settlement growth. The following SIA was prepared by Wicklow County Council (WCC) for the purposes of informing the Arklow Local Planning Framework (LPF).

The Audit will comprise of three stages, as follows:

- **Audit of Existing Infrastructure:** Data gathering and direct consultation with service providers will enable the construction of a baseline level of social – community infrastructure provision. This can be compared with current known population figures to establish whether social – community infrastructure within the settlement of Arklow adequately serves the current population.
- **Future Demand Analysis:** Applying the targeted population growth, as set out in the Core Strategy of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, to the end of the Local Planning Framework period will allow a determination as to whether the capacity of current social infrastructure can accommodate this growth. In order to future proof the LPF, the assessment will also consider a higher population future population for the town and its catchment than that set out in the current Core Strategy. Note that quantitative standards for the provision of social – community infrastructure may not exist in all cases. Furthermore, a range of figures for the target population may be required depending on the type of infrastructure, the expected catchment area of each facility and to take account of any changes in population growth targets that may arise during the lifetime of the LPF.
- **Social infrastructure Recommendations:** The identification of shortfalls (or lack thereof) in the provision of social – community infrastructure over the Local Planning Framework period will allow a recommendation to be made whether services should be expanded. This would allow the identification of suitable sites (zoned or otherwise) and development of appropriate objectives for the provision of new social – community infrastructure in the Draft Local Planning Framework



1.2 National Policy Context

National Planning Framework (NPF)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. It addresses social and community development within its outlined National Strategic Outcomes as detailed below.

Figure 1.1: NPF National Strategic Outcomes



NSO 7 'Enhanced Amenity and Heritage' states the following:

'This will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place'.

NSO 10 'Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services' states the following:

'Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful and competitive places. Compact, smart growth in urban areas and strong and stable rural communities will enable the enhanced and effective provision of a range of accessible services.'

Chapter 4 'Making Stronger Urban Places', aims to enhance people's experience of living and working in and visiting urban places in Ireland; to ensure our cities, towns and villages become more attractive and 'liveable', and offer a quality of life that more people are willing to choose in the years ahead.

In this context, **NPO 12** states the following:

'Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.'

Similarly, **NPO 15** states, in part, that it is an objective of the NPF to focus on '*Encouraging population growth in strong employment and service centres of all sizes, supported by employment growth*'. Arklow and Environs settlement being a key town should provide adequate social infrastructures and be large economically.

Chapter 6 'People, Homes and Communities' identifies, in broad terms, the elements supporting quality of life, several of which would generally fall into definitions of social – community infrastructure, e.g. health, education, and leisure and social interactions. This chapter also states that, among other elements, '*our ability to access services and amenities, such as education and healthcare, the leisure and social interactions available to us and the prospect of securing employment, all combine to make a real difference to people's lives*'.

Figure 1.2: Elements supporting Quality of Life



Figure 6.1 from the NPF sets out a broad indication of the level of service provision that applies to settlements of varying sizes, as envisioned by the NPF.

Figure 1.3: Level of service provision (Figure 6.1 of the National Planning Framework)



Though the settlement hierarchy under the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 does not sit exactly onto the levels shown in this figure, Arklow may fall into the 'Large Towns', based on its role and function.

NPO 36 also has relevance to the provision of social infrastructure and states the following:

'Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan, though integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.'

The NPF in multiple instances highlights that the provision of facilities and services must be tailored for use by a multitude of groups of differing interest and ability, as follows:

NPO 38 states:

'Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.'

While, in relation to the elderly in particular, **NPO 40** states:

'Local planning, housing, transport/ accessibility and leisure policies will be developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population along with the inclusion of specific projections, supported by clear proposals in respect of ageing communities as part of the core strategy of city and county development plans.'

In relation to children and young people, the NPF states that *'the number of people aged 15 or under will continue to increase until the early 2020's and decline only slowly thereafter. This means that the continued provision and enhancement of facilities and amenities for children and young people, such as childcare, schools, playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds, remains necessary and will need to be maintained at similar levels for the foreseeable future thereafter.'*

Under this section the NPF makes reference to the support for national policy including *'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures'*. Despite a predicted decline in the number of children in Ireland in the coming years, the NPF stresses that *'childcare provision in Ireland is reaching capacity and new planning approaches and sustained investment will be required, particularly in areas of disadvantage and population growth, to increase capacity and enable existing services to meet regulatory and quality requirements.'* It also infers that 'childcare' includes school-age childcare and early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

The above discussion on childcare is summarised within **NPO 41**, which states the following:

'Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in:

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

Section 6.6 of the NPF, in relation to housing, includes **NPO 43**, which states the following:

'Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.'

Within this section it is clarified that 'sustainable development' in relation to the location of housing can be characterised as places *'which support growth, innovation and the efficient provision of infrastructure, are accessible to a range of local services, can encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling, and help tackle climate change'.*

On this basis it is clear that the NPF envisions that social infrastructure and services that would reasonably be expected to be a town such as Arklow would be within walking or cycling distance.

National Guidelines

Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines 2024

These guidelines focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements. Good urban design and place making is an important element of compact settlements. The Guidelines seek that in Development Plans for larger settlements like Arklow, that the plan strategy should support the creation of strong and vibrant centres surrounded by an integrated network of well-designed mixed-use neighbourhoods. In smaller settlements, the strategy should be to create smaller neighbourhoods around a central core that caters for day-to-day needs and to strengthen connections to higher order settlements that provide a greater range of services and employment.

The Guidelines do not include specific references to 'social infrastructure', however guiding principles in Section 4.4 (ii), in terms of a mix and distribution of uses, promote a move away from segregated land use areas (residential, commercial and employment) that have reinforced unsustainable travel in favour of mixed use neighbourhoods. In less central areas, the mix of uses should cater for local services and amenities focused around a hierarchy of local centres that support residential communities and with opportunities for suitable non-residential development throughout.

The Guidelines also make reference to the '15 minute city' concept.

Section 4.4 (iv) of the Guidelines states that all statutory development plans should include a strategy for the provision of an integrated hierarchy of public open spaces and corridors across the plan area to meet the needs of the planned population. The level of provision should take account of the needs of the planned population, protected zones, landscape character and statutory obligations to protect certain habitats and biodiversity. Ideally, all residents within a settlement will have access to a multi-functional public open space within walking distance of their home.

Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities 2007

Section 4.3 'Building Sustainable Communities' sets out that, in general, *'the availability of a school, shop and bus stop will usually be the minimum level of available services/facilities'* in housing areas outside mixed use centres.

National Sports Policy 2018-2027

In recognition of the influence and importance of sport across Irish society, the National Sports Policy sets out the Vision for Irish Sport in 2027 and defines the actions the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport will undertake to achieve the goals of the National Sports Policy.

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System - Code of Practice for Planning Authorities 2008

The guidelines set out that the Department of Education will forecast the likely demand for schooling and will provide this information to the Local Authority as part of the consultation process on development plans. The guidelines further set out design standards in relation to new schools and their locations.

Technical Guidance document TGD-025 'Identification and Suitability Assessment of Sites for Primary Schools' (2nd Edition) sets out a range of suitable site areas for primary schools dependant on the number of classrooms required and whether the building is one or two storeys. For example, a two-storey, 8 to 16 classroom primary schools would require a site of c. 1.4 ha.

Technical Guidance document TGD-027 'Identification and Suitability Assessment of Sites for Post Primary Schools' (Revision 1) sets out a range of suitable areas for post primary schools dependant on the intended number of pupils. For example, a post primary school catering to 1,000 pupils would require a site of c. 4.57 ha.

The Guidelines set out the following quantitative standards:

'For new housing areas, an average of one childcare facility for each 75 dwellings would be appropriate. The threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas. Authorities could consider requiring the provision of larger units catering for up to 30/40 children in areas of major residential development on the basis that such a large facility might be able to offer a variety of services – sessional/drop in/after-school, etc.'

This figure can be altered based on assumption made in the number of proposed units which will need childcare, and on development plan/childcare committee identified gaps in provision.

1.3 Regional Policy Context

EMRA Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (RSES)

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy contains multiple objectives in relation to the provision of social – community infrastructure. Section 9.4 'Healthy Placemaking', includes objectives focusing on the multi-functionality, adaptability and inclusivity of social infrastructure for the purpose of social cohesion.

Figure 1.4: RSES Healthy Placemaking Objectives



Section 9.4 'Healthy Placemaking', includes objectives as follows:

RPO 9.12: *'In Planning policy formulation and implementation local authorities and other stakeholders shall be informed by the need to cater for all levels of disability, through the appropriate mitigation of the built environment, and in particular for the needs of an ageing population.'*

RPO 9.13: *'Local authorities and relevant agencies shall ensure that new social infrastructure developments are accessible and inclusive for a range of users by adopting a universal design approach and provide for an age friendly society in which people of all ages can live full, active, valued and healthy lives.'*

In relation to the provision of recreation and open space facilities, the RSES includes the following objectives, focusing on the adequate provision of a variety of facilities and support for national sport and physical activity policies. Included in this section are guiding principles in planning for recreation and open space, which recommend the co-location of services between sports providers, education, and other facilities to maximise use; the integration of play provision and child-friendly neighbourhoods; and the provision of dedicated youth spaces in key urban areas and the development of multi-function spaces in smaller communities/rural areas.

RPO 9.14: *'Local authorities shall seek to support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure that all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet the needs of the communities they serve.'*

RPO 9.15: *'Local authorities shall support the vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy, including working with local sports partnerships, clubs, communities and partnerships within and beyond sport, to increase sport and physical activity participation levels locally.'*

RPO 9.16: *'Local authorities shall support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan, through integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policies contained in development plans.'*

RPO 9.17: *'To support local authorities in the development of regional scale Open Space and Recreational facilities particularly those close to large or growing population centres in the Region.'*

RPO 9.19: *'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'*

Section 9.6 'Access to Childcare, Education and Health Services' states that there is currently a 'misalignment' in the Region across school provision, facilities and child friendly amenities and further states that it is through county development plan/local area plan policy that provision will be made on the location of new school facilities, in co-ordination with the Department of Education. Relevant objectives include the following;

RPO 9.21: *'In areas where significant new housing is proposed, an assessment of need regarding schools provision should be carried out in collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills and statutory plans shall designate new school sites at accessible, pedestrian, cycle and public transport friendly locations.'*

RPO 9.23: *'Facilitate the development of primary health care centres, hospitals, clinics, and facilities to cater for the specific needs of an ageing population in appropriate urban areas in accordance with RSES settlement strategy and core strategies of development plans.'*

Section 9.7 'Access to Arts, Culture, Language and Heritage' also includes a similar objective in relation to facilitating access to cultural services, as follows:

RPO 9.25: *'Seek to work with all relevant stakeholders to promote equality of access to and engagement with arts and cultural services and in the promotion of culture and heritage led urban and rural regeneration.'*

Though Chapter 8 is not directly related to social infrastructure policy, Section 8.3 'Framework for the Integration of Transport planning with Spatial Planning Policies' includes the following guiding principal of relevance:

'Support the '10 minute' settlement concept, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or accessible by high quality public transport to these services in larger settlements.'

1.4 County & Local Policy Context

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

Arklow is designated as a 'Self Sustaining Growth Town', which is targeted for growth rates of 25-30%. While this SIA is principally guided by demographic population growth targets set out in the adopted Core Strategy of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 which is growth from the 2016 Census population of 13,226 to a 2031 population of 16,441. However, in order to future proof both this SIA and the LPF, and to take account of Arklow's catchment, the assessment to following in this SIA will consider the needs of a larger population of 25,000.

Chapter 7 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 concerns social and community development. This chapter sets out the Community Facilities Hierarchy Model for the County, which lists the social and community facilities that are considered appropriate for settlements of varying sizes, as represented by four levels:

Table 1.1: Community Facilities Hierarchy Model

LEVEL 1 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 15,000 – 30,000	
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Regional and Local Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Youth Centre Athletics Track and Field Facilities Arts and Cultural Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting rooms	Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable) Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks Outdoor (full size) Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playground(s) Playing Pitches Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas Library
<i>Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 30 min</i>	
LEVEL 2 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 7,000 – 15,000	
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Sport & Recreation Centre Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Youth Resource Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting Rooms Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable) Neighbourhood and Local Parks	Outdoor Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playground(s) Playing Pitches Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas Library Arts and Cultural Centre
<i>Acceptable rural catchment time by car: 15 mins</i>	
Level 3 – settlements with population range 2,000 – 7,000	
Community/Parish Hall Multi-purpose Community Space/Meeting Rooms Local /Town Park (s) and Open Spaces/Nature Areas Outdoor Multi-Use Games Area – Synthetic/ Hardcourt	Playgrounds Playing Pitches Library
<i>Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 10-15 mins</i>	
Level 4 – settlements with population Range < 2,000	
Community/Parish Hall Open Spaces/Play Areas	Outdoor Multi-Use Games Area – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playing Pitches
<i>Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 5-10 mins</i>	

There are a number of objectives set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 in relation to social – community infrastructure. There are general objectives on community development, with **CPO 7.2** stating that *‘During the local plan-making process for towns and villages, to seek to facilitate community development and socially inclusive communities, through proper land-use zoning and transportation planning, phasing and the setting out of high standards of design in both streets and buildings.’*

In addition, **CPO 7.5** addresses the need for a Social Infrastructure Audit to be carried out for certain housing development applications;

*“Housing development shall be managed and phased to ensure that infrastructure is adequate or is being provided to match the needs of new residents’. New significant residential or mixed use development proposals (of which residential development forms a component)³, shall be required to be accompanied by a **Social Infrastructure Audit**, to determine if social and community facilities in the area are sufficient to provide for the needs of the future residents. Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity of existing or planned services’.*

*New significant residential or mixed use development proposals shall be required to be accompanied by a **‘Accessibility Report’** that demonstrates that new residents / occupants / employees (including children and those with special mobility needs) will be able to safely access through means **other than** the private car: (a) local services including shops, schools, healthcare and recreational and sports facilities, and (b) public transport services. Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity/quality of existing or planned linkages”.*

There are a number of specific objectives in relation to education and development in Chapter 7 that mainly focus on the zoning of suitable sites for schools.

This chapter also covers objectives on ‘Health and Care’, ‘Residential & Day Care’ developments, ‘Childcare & Preschool’, ‘Leisure & Recreation’, ‘Open Space’, Arts & Culture’ and ‘Social Enterprise’.

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 - Development & Design Standards

Appendix 1 of the County Development Plan sets out Development and Design Standards in relation to social and community developments. Section 7 sets out the criteria for the requirement of a ‘Social Infrastructure Audit’ as well as childcare, education, nursing homes, care facilities and retirements villages. Section 8 sets out the development and design standards for Open Space. This includes active open space, neighbourhood parks, equipped play spaces, allotments, residential public open space and private open space

Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan 2018-2024

Chapter 7 of the previous Arklow LAP includes a section on Social Infrastructure. This chapter contains a number of objectives with regard to schools, active open space and community buildings / facilities. The land use development objectives including the zoning provisions provide support, including adequate zoned undeveloped land, for the provision of new social and community facilities and infrastructure. The analysis and recommendations contained in the previous LAP can assist in developing new baseline and future recommendations for the new LPF.

Wicklow Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024

The Wicklow Local Economic & Community Plan 2024 is a six-year plan setting out measures necessary to promote and support community and economic development within the county. The LECP is not a land use plan. However, where any of the aims or objectives within the LECP have a spatial component, it may be necessary to integrate and facilitate such spatial components into Local Area Plans.

Those objectives within the LECP related to social infrastructure, and which have some degree of a spatial component that could be addressed in an LPF, are as follows:

- 1.4 *Support, protect and enhance biodiversity*
- 1.5 *Support the development of renewable energy opportunities*
- 2.2 *Promote sustainable tourism in the County having regard to environmental impact*
- 2.6 *Capitalise on natural resources such as the maritime economy ensuring nature-based solutions*
- 3.1 *Improve transport infrastructure in the County*
- 3.2 *Promote the development of sustainable transport infrastructure in the County*
- 3.3 *Support the roll out of quality broadband throughout the County*
- 3.4 *Increase facilities for remote working and co-working*
- 4.4 *Address gaps in service delivery in the county.*
- 5.1 *Drive the environmental, economic and social regeneration of County Wicklow's towns and villages and their hinterlands*
- 5.3 *Support the provision of community, sport and recreational infrastructure for communities.*

County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2020 – 2025 (currently under review)

This is an action plan that sets out Wicklow County Council's ambition for outdoor recreation in County Wicklow, and the steps to realise it. The Strategy is made up of 4 pillars:

1. **Plan and collaborate:** *a structured approach to the big issues of recreation hubs, marine development, trail management, transport links, infrastructure and collaborating with our neighbours.*
2. **Increased awareness:** *being alert and responsive to the various landowner, community, participant, enterprise and environment issues which make outdoor recreation possible and better, and which may help us to make our case for funding.*
3. **Resources:** *the specific projects, priorities, actions, training and staff requirements of outdoor recreation in County Wicklow.*
4. **Animating the outdoors:** *encouraging diverse outdoor recreation opportunities, for everyone and providing more depth to the outdoor recreation experience.*

To deliver these pillars individual Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Committee representatives take stewardship and monitor progress for each of the following themes:

- **Participation:** *Dispersion of participation in the County. Developing data capture and analysis. Growing inclusion.*
- **Infrastructure:** *Recreation infrastructure, public transport, parking facilities, retail and cafe.*
- **Our story:** *Managing the County Wicklow outdoor recreation brand, public relations and advertising.*
- **Marine:** *Joint representative group with agency, sports and business representation.*
- **Economics:** *Outdoor recreation innovation and diversification, business supports.*
- **Delivery themes** *and added value offerings.*

County Wicklow Sports and Recreation Policy 2004

The Sports and Recreation Policy recognises the importance that sport and recreation contributes to the quality of life of individuals, communities and the County as a whole. This is the overarching policy document that guides Wicklow County Council in the provision and expansion of sport and recreation opportunities throughout the County.

Social infrastructure standards, as included within this policy document, include the following:

- 1.1 *'The Council will ensure where possible that proper provision of sport and recreation facilities is provided as part of new developments. As a guideline, the Council will in future aim to make provision for an average of 200m² multi-use community space per 1000 population, or where an identified need exists, which includes provision for sports and recreation activity.'*

- 1.2** *'The Council will provide for open space including provision for sport and recreation according to the minimum provision of 2 ha per 1,000 population under Action 41 of Sustainable Communities in 'Outlook'.'*
- 1.3** *'The Council will ensure that within all Local Area Plans (LAPs) appropriate and sufficient land is clearly identified for amenity and sporting and recreation uses and provide protection for open space that is or has the potential to be of value to the community.'*
- 1.5** *'The Council will promote accessibility by locating local facilities within walking distance, cycling distance or on public transport routes and having regard to issues of security and personal safety'.*
- 1.6** *'The Council will seek to ensure that open spaces and recreation areas are located, designed and maintained so as to minimise the risk of crime and vandalism by:*
- *Clustering facilities*
 - *Locating facilities in places which are overlooked, providing indirect supervision*
 - *Providing teenage facilities such as shelters⁸, seating areas and MUGA facilities in accordance with County Wicklow Play Policy open space standards.'*

County Wicklow Play Policy 2004

Objective 3 of the County Wicklow Play Policy relates to the provision of playgrounds. Within these objectives, the following items involving either a quantitative standard or spatial component may be of relevance to the land use plan:

- *'Aim to provide adequate and appropriate hierarchies of open spaces for play as recommended in National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standards.'* (the 'Six Acre Standard', i.e. 2.4 ha per 1,000 persons)
- *'Ensure play areas will include enough space for equipment and general open spaces for games, tree planting and environmental enhancements'.*
- *'This Policy will be incorporated within the County Development Plan, Local Area Plans'.*

Objective 5 of the County Wicklow Play Policy highlights the provision of social inclusion and play. This objective aims to promote equality of access and participation for all children and shall:

- *'Ensure consideration will be given to rural issues regarding play provision in measures such as mobile play units'.*
- *'Ensure consideration will be given to the needs of children with disabilities, from a minority ethnic background, or from a disadvantaged background'.*
- *'Ensure all children will be respected and valued so that they can play free from exploitation, bullying, violence or discrimination'.*

The play policy states the quantitative standards in relation to equipped and informal play space; these standards are integrated into the County Development Plan Development and Design Standards.

Healthy Wicklow 2018

Wicklow County Council produced the 'Healthy Wicklow' strategy in line with the 'National Activity Plan' and the 'Healthy Ireland' framework. The document aims to assess the requirements and provides objectives with which to improve the overall health and wellbeing of the people of Wicklow and is guided with the four following key goals:

- Goal 1:** Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
- Goal 2:** Reduce health inequalities
- Goal 3:** Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing
- Goal 4:** Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland.

Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2023-27

The vision of County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy is to make County Wicklow a great place to grow old, where older people are respected and valued, living full lives, ageing in place within their communities. The document seeks to address existing issues and improve the conditions for the ageing population in Wicklow under 8 themes. Those actions related to social infrastructure that may have a spatial land use component are listed, where relevant, under the themes below:

Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

- Action 1.1: *Ensure Age Friendly principles and consideration of older people is embedded in all plans including, CDP, LA Plans, T & V, CLÁR, ORIS, etc., taking account of feedback from the public consultation process.*
- Action 1.5: *Provide Age Friendly seating/infrastructure in appropriate places in each Municipal District, including 'Chatting Benches'.*
- Action 1.12: *Facilitate development of green spaces and open spaces for recreational use – Tone Zones, Age Friendly Exercise Equipment and Dog Parks.*

Theme 2: Transportation

- Action 2.6: *Enhance access to recreation/heritage/outdoor facilities for older persons including transport*

Theme 3: Housing

Theme 4: Social Participation

Theme 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Theme 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Theme 7: Communication and Information

Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services

Theme 9: Safety and Security

Wicklow Children and Young People Plan 2020

Wicklow Children and Young People's Services Committee [CYPSC] was formally established in April 2011. The purpose of the Children and Young People's Services Committees is to secure better outcomes for children and young people through more effective co-operation and collaboration by existing services and through interventions at local level. Between 2011 and to date, two action plans have been developed and implemented to address local needs as consistent with the national outcomes framework. The Wicklow CYPSC 2020 Plan will continue to progress necessary work to meet ongoing and emerging needs.

CYPSCs work towards the five national outcomes for children and young people in Ireland. These are that children and young people:

1. Are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing
2. Are achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development
3. Are safe and protected from harm
4. Have economic security and opportunity
5. Are connected, respected and contributing to their world

The CYPP presents a coordinated interagency approach to the delivery of services to children and young people in Wicklow by all agencies in Wicklow. It reflects the priorities that have been identified from an analysis of the needs in the County and a commitment by members to address these needs over the three years of the plan. The voice of children and young people is represented and the CYPSC is committed to strengthening participation with children and young people further during the lifetime of this plan.

1.5.1 Land Use Zoning Objectives

The purpose of the Arklow Local Planning Framework land use zoning objectives is to indicate the Council's intentions for all lands in the town. The various land use zones and their objectives are identified on the maps of this LPF. Land use zoning objectives are listed in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Land Use Zoning Objectives

ZONING	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
RE: Existing Residential	To protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas	To provide for house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity. In existing residential areas, the areas of open space permitted, designated or dedicated solely to the use of the residents will normally be zoned 'RE' as they form an intrinsic part of the overall residential development; however new housing or other non-community related uses will not normally be permitted.
RN1: New residential Priority 1	To provide for new residential development and supporting facilities during the lifetime of the LPF.	To facilitate for the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with excellent layout and design, well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.
RN2 New residential Priority 2	To provide for new residential development and supporting facilities where it can be demonstrated that such development would accord with the Core Strategy housing target for that settlement in accordance with the objectives set out in the LPF.	To facilitate for the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with excellent layout and design, well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.
TC: Town Centre	To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including residential, retail, commercial, office and civic use.	To develop and consolidate the existing town centre to improve its vibrancy and vitality with the densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure and residential uses, while delivering a quality urban environment, with emphasise on regeneration, infill town and historic centre conservation; ensuring priority for public transport where applicable, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car based traffic and enhance and develop the existing centre's fabric.
LSS: Local Shops & Services	To provide for small scale local neighbourhood shops and services	To facilitate the limited development of small scale local neighbourhood shops and retail services and other local service uses that meet only the retail or service needs of residents in the immediate catchment and are not of such a scale or type that would detract or draw trade from lands designated town centre.
E: Employment	To provide for the development of enterprise and employment	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality employment and enterprise developments in a good quality physical environment.

ZONING	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
CE: Community & Education	To provide for civic, community and educational facilities	To facilitate the development of necessary community, health, religious, educational, social and civic infrastructure.
AOS: Active Open Space	To protect and enhance existing and provide for new active open space	Subject to the protection and enhancement of natural biodiversity, to facilitate the further development and improvement of existing active open spaces, formal exercise areas, sports grounds, playing pitches, courts and other games areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality active recreational areas.
OS1: Open Space	To protect and enhance existing public open space and provide for recreational open space.	Subject to the protection and enhancement of natural biodiversity, to facilitate the further development and improvement of existing parks and casual play areas, to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality amenity open areas and to restrict developments / activities (such as the use or development of such lands for formal sports grounds for organisations that are not available for a broad range of the public) that would reduce the opportunities for use by the wider public.
OS2: Natural Areas	To protect and enhance existing open, undeveloped lands.	To protect, enhance and manage existing open, undeveloped lands that comprise flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, steep banks, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity.
PU: Public Utility	To maintain lands providing services infrastructure	To allow for lands to be designated for public utilities such as waste water treatment plants, large ESB sub-stations, gasworks etc
T: Tourism	To provide for tourism related development	To provide for the sustainable development of tourism related structures, uses and infrastructure. To provide for the development of tourism facilities including accommodation of an excellent sustainable design and aesthetic quality. Tourism related office, civic and cultural and commercial development will be facilitated.
MU: Mixed Use	To provide for mixed use development	The nature of the mixed use development envisaged for any particular site is set out in the text of the LPF.
EX: Extractive Industry	To provide for extraction / quarrying and associated activities including processing of extracted materials and land restoration.	To facilitate the development of extraction/ quarrying, associated activities and land restoration
WZ: Waterfront	To provide for the development and improvement of the waterfront zone, to facilitate the continuation and development of existing employment / maritime / port, residential, public utilities, and community / recreational uses and to promote and provide for new commercial, maritime, residential, tourism and other mixed-use development.	To facilitate the continued and more intensive / efficient use of the existing employment, maritime and port uses; To maintain existing and support the development / improvement of high quality community, amenity, leisure and tourism uses; To facilitate commercial and retail uses at a scale that do not undermine the role of the existing Town Centre; To facilitate the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate high densities with excellent layout and design, well linked to the existing town centre, community facilities and water amenities.

2.0 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF ARKLOW

2.1 Location

Arklow and Environs is the main centre located in the south of County Wicklow. The town is located on the M/N11 national primary road link with ease of access to Dublin and the south-east and on the Dublin to Rosslare rail line. The centre has a large catchment and provides for the service needs of its residents and large geographical area extending to Avoca, Aghrim, Redcross, a significant rural population, and to some extent Tinahely / Shillelagh / Carnew.

2.2 Population and Administrative boundaries

Results from the CSO Census 2016 indicate the settlement of Arklow had a population of 13,163 while the CSO Census 2022 showed that the settlement had a population of 13,399, an increase of only 173 persons.

The population target for Arklow (in Co. Wicklow) as set out in the Wicklow Core Strategy is 15,419 by Q2 2028 and 16,441 by 2031. The housing unit growth target for the 2016-2031 period is 1,221 units.

This assessment will also consider the needs of a future town and associated catchment population of 25,000 persons¹ to ensure that the LPF not only meets current needs but also exceeds the expected demand over the lifetime of the framework.

Analysis within the below Social Infrastructure Audit will generally use the CSO Census 2022 Built Up Area (BUA) boundary in determining the baseline information (see Figure 2.1 to follow). It is recognised that the BUA does not include the entire extent of the Arklow LPF boundary. The population within the LPF boundary, but outside the BUA, is largely composed of dispersed rural housing. As such, the level of population not accounted for does not likely undermine the BUA as the most representative boundary for the Arklow LPF area.

Whichever baseline population figure is used, the 2031 population target of 16,441, as well as the 25,000 projected figure will be used in demand forecast analysis.

Table 2.1: Population Targets for the settlement of Arklow

CSO Settlement Population 2016	CSO Town Population 2022	County Development Plan Population Target Q2 2028	County Development Plan Population Target 2031
13,163	13,399	15,419	16,441

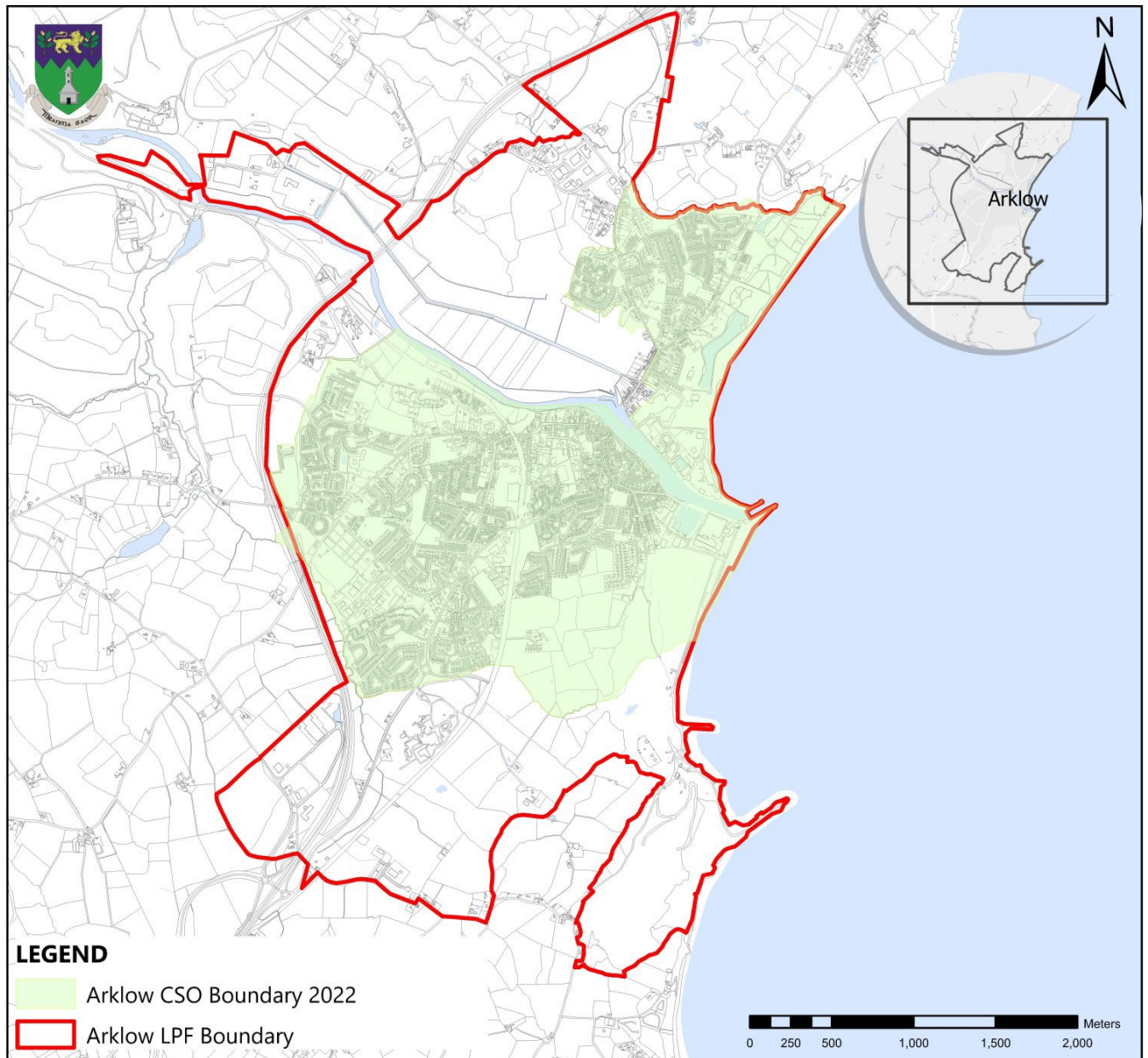
2.3 Household Size and Family Cycle

The average household size in County Wicklow in the 2022 Census was 2.74 persons per household, which increased from 2.66 per household in 2011. Arklow Urban had an average household size of 2.7 which is in line with the county household size outlined above and the national average of 2.7.

Within Arklow, 3,597 families are recorded. The largest family type comprises of two persons (40.22%), followed by families comprising of three persons (24%), four persons (23.46%), five persons (9%) and those with six or more persons (3.22%). In the 'Arklow Rural' area it is evident that 3 person households present the most common household size at 30% of total households.

¹ This projected population / catchment figure is a hypothetical estimate not derived from official census data or planning documents. It has been intentionally set at a level significantly higher than current projections to accommodate a wide margin of potential future scenarios.

Figure 2.1: Arklow LPF Boundary and CSO 2022 BUA



2.4 Age Profile

A review of the age profile of Arklow shows a demographic weighted generally towards an older population with an above average concentration of individuals over 65 years and a below average proportion under 19 years of age. The area's population profile is dominated by people in the 'working age' group (40-64 years). There has also been a significant decline in the number of children aged between 0-9 in the settlement which is indicative of the lack of formation of new family households in the settlement, likely driven by the lack of new residential development in the settlement since 2011. It is hoped that this decline in the numbers of young children in the settlement will start to reverse with the opening of the new waste water treatment plan which will allow for new residential development to proceed and in time attracting young families back to the area.

There has also been a visible increase in population aged 65+ from 1,290 persons (CSO, 2011) to 1,546 persons in 2016 (CSO, 2016) and to 1,857 persons in 2022 (CSO, 2022). A strong working age population requires more significant employment opportunities; similarly, a strong retirement age population are more likely to require care and health services.

Table 2.2: Approximate age structure in Arklow (Census 2022)

Age Range	Census Population 2011	% of Total 2011 Population	Census Population 2016	% of Total 2016 Population	Census Population 2022	% of Total 2022 Population
0-4	1,190	9%	1,005	8%	666	4.9%
5-9	954	7.5%	1,166	9%	952	7.1%
10-14	838	6.5%	962	7%	1,149	8.5%
15-19	761	6%	815	6%	951	7.0%
20-24	782	6%	684	5%	732	5.4%
25-39	3,279	26%	2,856	22%	2,316	17.2%
40-64	3,676	29%	4,129	31%	4,776	35%
65+	1,290	10%	1,546	12%	1,857	13.8%
Total	12,770		13,163		13,399	100%

2.5 Employment and Professional Qualification

In Arklow, the largest workforce group are employed in the Professional Occupations (13.1%) followed closely by skilled trades occupations (12.8%). Following this 11.3% are employed in associated professional and technical occupations while 10.3% are working in elementary occupations. A further 9.1% are in caring, leisure and other service occupations. The remaining occupation split is as follows: sales and customer services (8.8%), process, plant and machine operatives (8.5%), administrative and secretarial (8.1%), managers, directors and senior officials (7.3%) with 10.6% not stated.

The level of educational attainment in the form of those holding professional qualifications including ordinary and higher bachelor's degrees is 16.6%, which is just below the national figure of 18.29%. This trend is reflected also in those holding 'postgraduate' qualification (5.6%), which is below the national rate of 9.1%.

Overall Arklow has an active employment base with 52% of those aged 15 and over in employment and 5.7% unemployed, split between 3.6% in long term unemployment and 2.1% in short term unemployment which is below the national rate of 7%. Retirees account for 14.7% of the population.

2.6 Mobility

In Arklow, car ownership amongst households is lower than average with 18% of households recording no car. This is comparative with a national rate of 15% without a car. The most common rate of car ownership in Arklow is at 45% of households recorded having 1 car. The trend of car ownership per household then drops again with 30% owning 2 cars, 5.3% owning 3 cars and 1.3% owning 4 or more cars.

There is a high dependency in the area on travel to work and education by car. The 2022 Census data shows that of the total 8,996 work/education trips within Arklow, 63% were made by private vehicle. With respect to trips to work, after the private car, walking is the second most popular mode (12%) and trips by bus (2%), bike (1%) and train / DART / Luas only account for 4%, reflecting the currently poor level of cycling infrastructure and public transport provision. With respect to trips to education, private vehicles account for over half (59%) of trips, walking is the second most popular mode (31%) and trips by bus (6%), bike (25) and train / DART / Luas only account for 1%. The number of trips to education by 'active travel' modes fell between 2016 and 2022.

2.7 Health

In the 2022 Census, 82.7% of the residents of Arklow town evaluated their personal health to be either 'Very Good' or 'Good', which is just below the national average of 87% with 2.3% considering themselves to be of 'Bad' or 'Very Bad' health, slightly above the national rate of 1.6%.

It is also notable that 26% of the population of Arklow confirm that they have a disability, which is almost twice the national rate of 13.5%, whilst 2.4% of those aged 15 and over are unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability.

3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE – EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1 Existing Infrastructure

An audit of social infrastructure within Arklow was undertaken using a series of predefined themes including education, childcare, health, sports and recreation, social / community services, arts and culture, faith, and other elements.

The following analysis seeks to categorise these infrastructure elements 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.

Table 7.1 in the County Development Plan 2022-2028 contains a list of the social and community facilities that are considered necessary in settlements, according to their population range. Arklow is a self-sustaining growth town with moderate levels of jobs and facilities. It is the largest town in South County Wicklow and is designated to accommodate high levels of growth in population.

Arklow currently fulfils Level 2 of the Community Facilities Hierarchy Model being within the 7,000-15,000 population range, however the Core Strategy as contained within the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 has a population target of 16,441 in 2031. As detailed above, in order to future proof the LPF, a future population and catchment is up to 25,000 persons is also considered in this audit.

As such, in order to plan for Arklow's future development, the settlement is deemed to fall into Level 1 of the Community Facilities Hierarchy Model – 'Settlements with population range 15,000-30,000'. This is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Extract of Community Facilities Hierarchy Model

COMMUNITY FACILITIES HIERARCHY MODEL	
LEVEL 1 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 15,000 – 30,000	
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Regional and Local Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Youth Centre Athletics Track and Field Facilities Arts and Cultural Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting rooms	Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable) Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks Outdoor (full size) Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playground(s) Playing Pitches Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas Library
Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 30 min	

Source: Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

Arklow also caters for a catchment from the surrounding rural villages and rural areas. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 to follow illustrate the catchments that fall within a 15 minute and 30 minute drive time of Arklow.

Figure 3.1: Areas reachable by car in approximately 15 minutes from Arklow

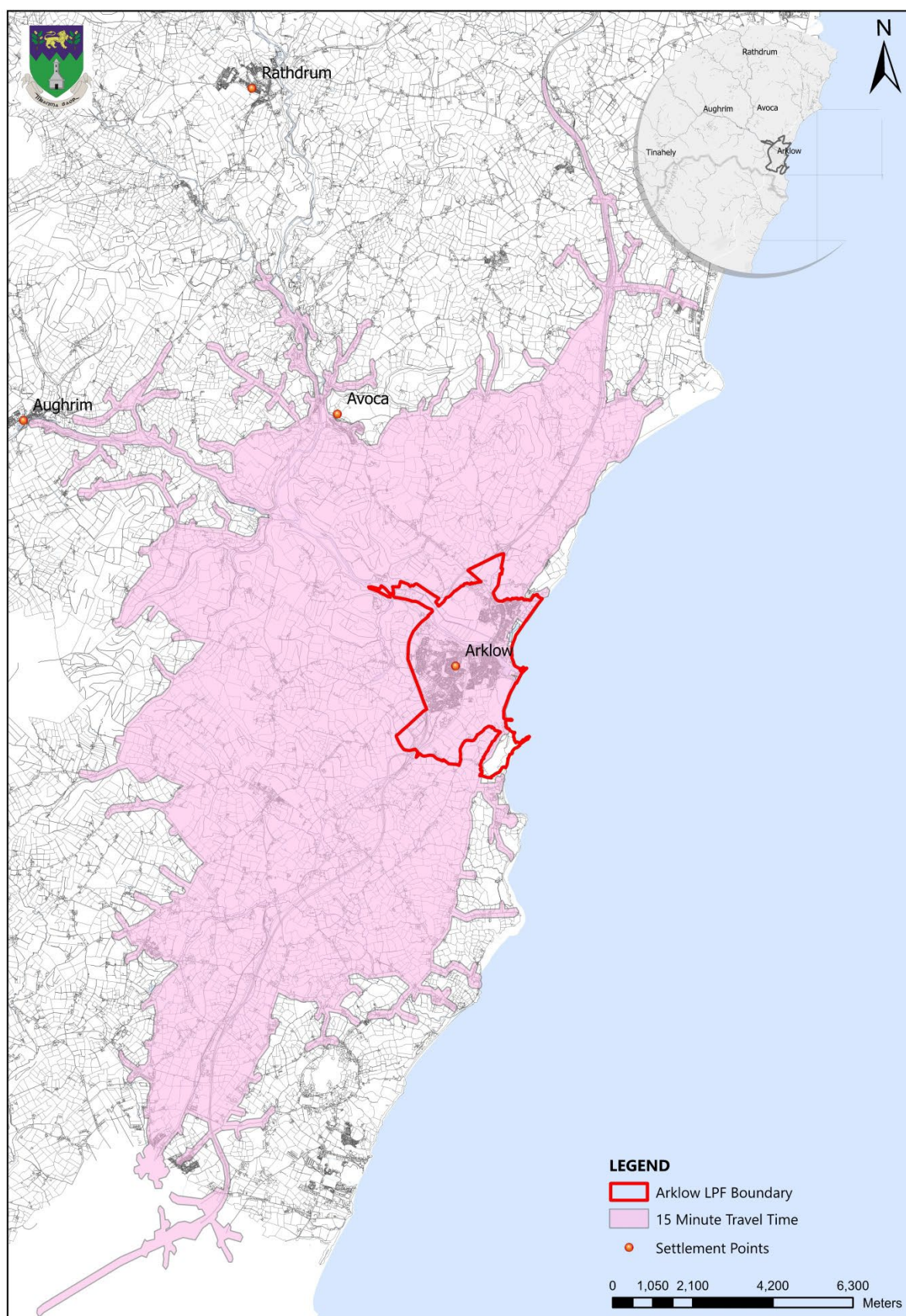


Figure 3.2: Areas reachable by car in approximately 30 minutes from Arklow

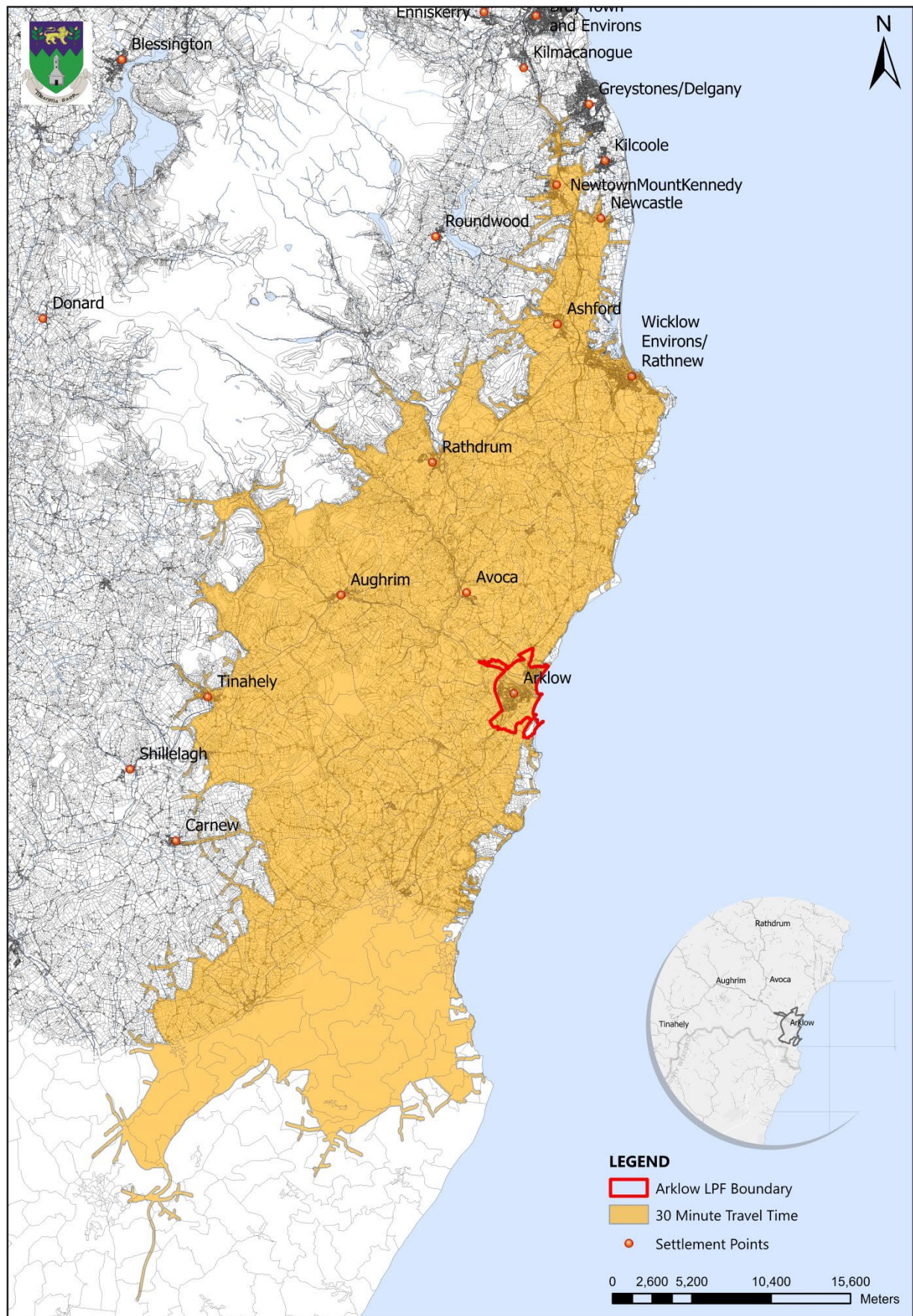


Table 3.2: Community Facilities currently available in Arklow

Community Facility Hierarchy Level 1	Community Facilities in Arklow
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/ Meeting rooms	Coral Leisure Centre The Colour Club Arklow Women's Shed Arklow Men's Shed Árus Lorcaín Abercorn Masonic Hall St. Saviour's Church Hall Marlborough Hall
Regional / Local Indoor Sports & Recreation Facilities	Coral Leisure Centre Arklow Boxing Club Cobra Gymnastics Club Arklow Gymnastics Club
Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre	Coral Leisure Centre The Arklow Bay Health & Leisure Club
Youth Centre	East Wicklow Youth Services
Athletics Track & Field Facilities	The Track at Kynoch Park
Arts & Cultural Centre	Arklow Arts Centre Asgard Theatre Maritime Museum
Outdoor Water Sports Facilities	Arklow Sailing Club Arklow Sea Scouts Arklow Rowing Club
Neighbourhood Parks & Local Parks	Arklow Skate Park Kynoch Park Xeriscape Garden Bloom Garden St. Mary's Park Navy/Churchview Park Old Abbey Park and Rose Garden Fernhill/Marian Villas
Outdoor (full size) Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic / Hardcourt	Coral Leisure Centre
Playground(s)	St. Peter's Place Playground Seaview Avenue Playground South Green Playground
Playing pitches / courts	Arklow Rock Parnell's GAA Arklow Geraldines Ballymoney GAA Arklow Town FC Arklow Celtic FC Arklow United RC St. Kevin's Sports grounds Glenart College grounds St. Mary's College grounds Arklow Golf Club Arklow Lawn Tennis Club
Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities	Arklow Dance Studios Leinster Taekwondo Arklow Eagle Martial Arts
Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas	Kynoch Park Arklow South Beach Arklow Cove Arklow North Beach Arklow Rock Walking Trail Glenart Wood Riverwalk Garden
Library	Arklow Library
DISCLAIMER NOTE – This list presents an example of the facilities within the settlement and is not an exhaustive list. The listing of existing infrastructure in the above table does not infer that further facilities of that type may not be warranted, merely that a facility of each type is represented in Arklow. See below for facility capacity analysis under various headings.	

3.2 Education & Training

Facilities and services analysed under this section include both primary and post-primary schools, alongside any other relevant training or evening courses available in the area. Within the study area there are five primary schools, four post-primary schools and one further education / training centre. The location of these facilities is illustrated in Figures 3.3, 3.4 and 3.9 to follow with further analysis of each type set out under the following sections.

The following analysis of current and projected education need is prepared in accordance with advice received from the Department of Education (DoE), which calculates the extent of primary and post primary need, based on the following assumptions:

- 10.25% of the population at any given time is of primary school going age;
- 7.5% of the population at any given time is of post primary school going age;
- i.e. 17.75% of population is of school going age.

3.2.1 School Places Demand in Arklow

Census 2022 indicates a total population of 13,399 in the settlement of Arklow. Based on the assumed % above, school demand for this area should be:

- **1,374 primary school places**
- **1,004 post primary school places**
- **Total of 2,378 school places**

A detailed demographic breakdown of the population of Arklow is available from the 2022 Census and shows that the actual number of children in the 5-19 (i.e. school going) cohorts in Arklow Town significantly deviates from the Department of Education assumptions indicating that **3,052** school places may be required; 28.3% higher than the Department of Education assumptions (see Table 3.3 below).

Detailed demographic breakdown from Census 2022 is not available to determine the actual number of children in the 5-12 (primary school age) and 13-18 (post primary school age) as the Census provides data in the 0-4, 5-9, 10-14 and 15-91 age ranges. However, applying the departments assumption that 10.25% of the population will be primary school age and 7.5% will be post primary school age, would translate to a 58:42 ratio split of the cohort total of 3,052. This would suggest a 2022 demand for **1,770 primary school places** and **1,282 post primary school places** in Arklow.

Table 3.3: Summary School Places Demand using 5-19 Cohort Breakdown Arklow Census 2022 and Department Assumptions

Cohorts	Cohort Population	Primary / Post Primary Demand using cohort population and 58:42 split of the 5-19 cohorts.	Department Assumption
Total population	13,399	1,770 Primary 1,282 Post Primary 3,052 school places	1,374 Primary 1,004 Post Primary 2,378 School Places
5-9	952		
10-14	1,149		
15-19	951		
Total school age	3,052		
% total population at school age	22.8%	22.8%	17.75%

3.2.2 Wider Schools Catchment

The schools in Arklow, mainly the post primary schools, serve a wider catchment than the town itself.

Census 2022 indicates a total population of 18,296 in the potential wider **primary school catchment** encompassing the Electoral Divisions of Arklow Urban 1 & 2, Arklow Rural, Kilbride, Ennereilly, Dunganstown South and Ballyarthur. There are a number of additional smaller primary schools located in this catchment area.

The **post primary school catchment** extends further to include the Electoral Divisions of Arklow Urban 1 & 2, Arklow Rural, Kilbride, Ennereilly, Dunganstown South, Ballyarthur, Avoca, Aughrim and Kilpipe, which had a 2022 population of 21,449.

While it is accepted that some pupils in these areas may be served by secondary schools in Rathdrum, Carnew and Wicklow Town, the most proximate secondary school to these catchments are in Arklow.

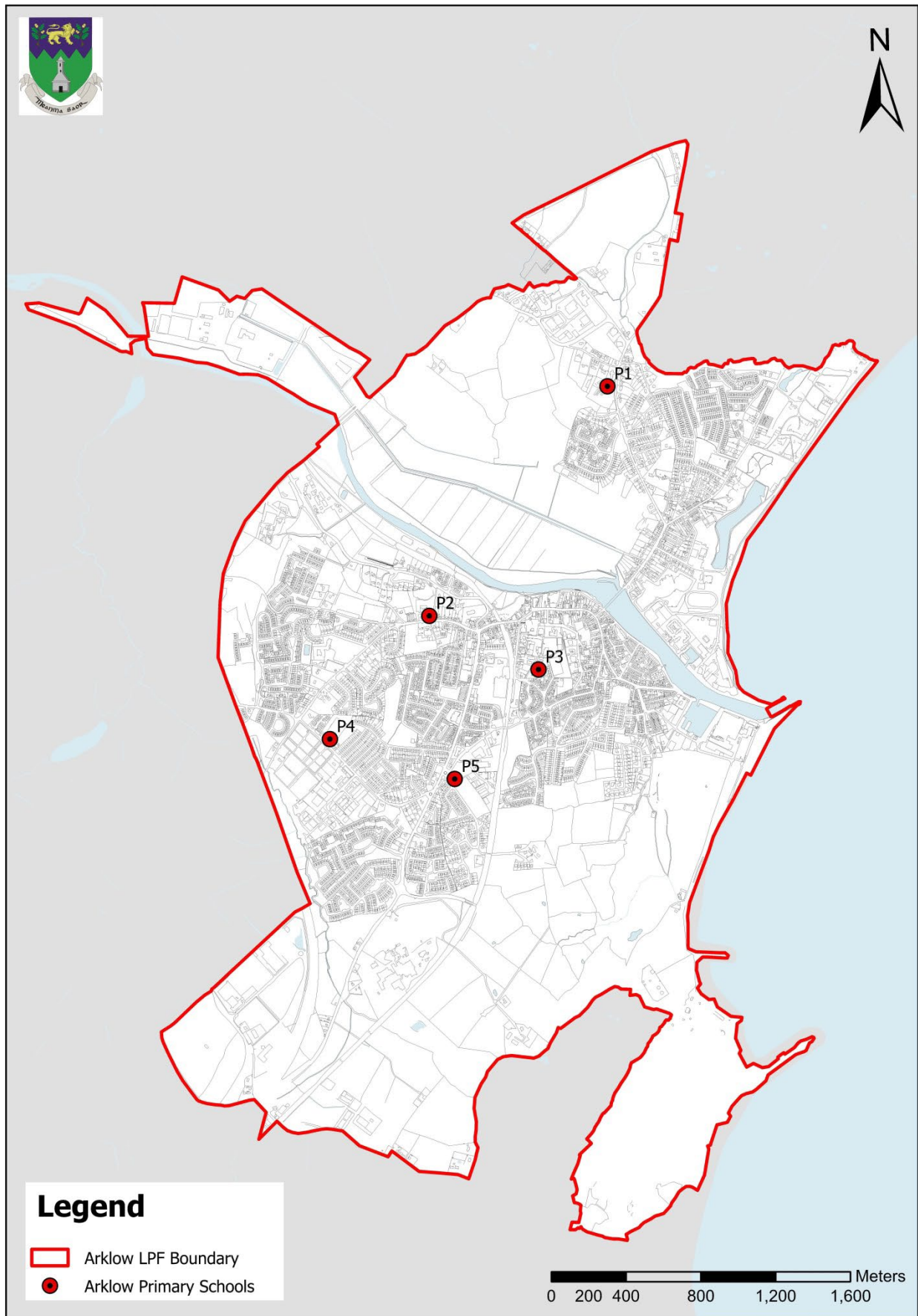
Based on the above catchment populations and DoE assumptions, the following is noted:

- The **assumed 10.25%** school place demand for the wider catchment area should be **1,875 primary school places**.
- The **assumed 7.5%** school place demand for this area should be **1,609 post primary school places**.
- This results in a total demand for **3,484 school places** based on these combined figures.

3.2.3 Primary Schools in Arklow

The analysis under section 3.2.1 above calculates that there may be a demand for **1,374-1,875 primary school places** in Arklow primary schools. The geographical location of existing primary schools is close to / within existing and new residential neighbourhoods (defined by the land-use zoning objectives) and the location of these facilities is illustrated in Figures 3.3, 3.5 and 3.6 below.

Figure 3.3: Primary Schools within the Arklow LPF Boundary



A capacity audit of the existing primary schools is presented in Table 3.7 below.

Table 3.7: Capacity of Existing Primary School Facilities Arklow Town

Map Label	Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating Level	Places Available	Planned Expansion
P1	St. Joseph's National School*	576	513	89%	63	No
P2	St. John's Senior National School* (3 rd to 6 th Class)	450	352	78%	98	No
P3	SS Michael and Peter Junior School* (J1 to 2 nd Class)	384	284	74%	100	No ²
P4	Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir - Current School	277 (based on average class size of 25 and 11 mainstream teachers)	277	100%	0	+203
P5	Carysfort National School*	220	200	91%	20	No
	Total	1,907	1,626		281	+203

Source: Data obtained from schools directly in April 2025 indicated by *. Where there was no response from a school, best available data taken from schooldays.ie and the schools own website.

With regard to Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir, it is noted that planning permission was granted under PRR22/213 on lands in Kilbride, Arklow North, for a new educational campus comprising of a new building for Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir comprising of a two storey, 16 classroom primary school with two special needs rooms serving 480 pupils and a new building for Gaelchólaiste na Mara comprising of a three storey post-primary school with two special needs rooms, PE Hall and ancillary spaces serving 400 pupils.

It is therefore noted that once this permitted school is constructed there will be increased capacity in Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir for 203 pupils.

The following is a summary of the conclusions of the analysis of primary school places in Arklow Town:

- There are **1,626 pupils enrolled** in the five primary schools for the 2024/2025 academic year.
- Direct consultation with the primary schools in Arklow Town confirmed that the current primary school infrastructure can theoretically accommodate **an additional 281 children**.
- The **enrolment number of 1,626** is 18% above the theoretical demand from the area using DoE assumptions which suggest demand of **1,374**, but is 8% below the **1,770** figure calculated as outlined on Table 3.7 above.

² Planning permission granted under PRR24/60751 for 4 no. special education teaching rooms for existing students. No additional capacity proposed.

3.2.4 Primary Schools (wider area)

Table 3.8 below includes the primary schools within Arklow Town as well as the surrounding areas of Arklow Rural, Kilbride, Ennereilly, Dunganstown South and Ballyarthur.

These include Bearna Chlé NS, St. Mary's Barndarrig NS, Scoil San Eoin Redcross and St. Kevin's Ballycoog NS.

Table 3.8: Capacity of Existing Primary Schools (wider area)

Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating Level	Places Available
St. Joseph's National School*	576	513	89%	63
St. John's Senior National School	450	352	78%	98
SS Michael and Peter Junior School*	384	284	74%	100
Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir	277	277	100%	0
Carysfort National School*	220	200	91%	20
St. Patricks Bearna Chlé *	100	81	81%	19
St. Kevin's, Ballycoog*	30	21	70%	9
Scoil San Eoin Redcross*	70	44	63%	26
St. Mary's Barndarrig*	30	31	101%	-1
Total	2,137	1,803		334

Source: Data obtained from schools directly in April 2025 indicated by *. Where there was no response from a school, best available data taken from schooldays.ie and the schools own website.

The following is a summary of the conclusions of the analysis of primary school places in Arklow town and its catchment:

- There are **2,137 pupils enrolled** in the nine primary schools for the 2024/2025 academic year.
- Direct consultation with the primary schools in Arklow Town and its catchment confirmed that the current primary school infrastructure in Arklow and this catchment can theoretically accommodate **an additional 334 children**. This does not take into account the additional capacity that will be available upon construction of the new school for Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir
- The enrolment number of **2,137** is 10% above the theoretical demand from the area using DoE assumptions which suggest demand of **1,875**.

3.2.5 Primary Schools Synopsis

The data appears to indicate that there are sufficient primary school places for the **current demand** in Arklow Town and the wider area.

However noting the current operating levels, in particular in the five primary schools in the settlement of Arklow, it is considered that demand in the town could quickly surpass supply during the lifetime of the LPF if residential development significantly increases. This is a particular consideration noting the pause in development in Arklow Town over the last 10 years due to the lack of a waste water treatment facility which has now been rectified.

It is unlikely that the population of the wider catchment would increase at such a rate during the lifetime of the LPF, that it would result in a shortage of school places in these more rural schools. However if a scenario were to emerge where the population in Arklow increased significantly during the lifetime of the LPF, resulting in a shortage of primary school places in the town itself, it is likely that parents would turn to these more rural schools to find school places for their children which would not be sustainable in terms of travel patterns.

3.2.6 Future Demand Analysis - Primary Schools

Table 3.9 below calculates the projected demand for primary school places in the settlement of Arklow based on the targeted population growth to 16,441 for 2031 as per the current County Development Plan, 10% population growth in the rural catchment over the same period 2022-2031.

In addition, a 'future proofing' exercise has been carried out based on a future town population of 18,907 - 21,373 (a 15%-30% increase from the 2031 target) and an additional 10% growth in the rural catchment.

Table 3.9: Primary School Capacity Forecast for Arklow Town

Year	Town Population	Catchment Population	Using DoE 10.25%	Primary Demand using cohort population and 58:42 split of the 5-19 cohorts = 13.2%	Primary school capacity	Additional primary school capacity needs
2022 population	13,399	18,296	1,373	1,770	1,907	
2031 population	16,441	21,827*	2,237	2,881	2,110**	771
Longer term ***	18,907 - 21,373	24,833 - 27,299	2,545 - 2,798	3,277 - 3,603	2,110	1,167 - 1,493

* Assuming catchment in the rural area outside of Arklow town grows by c. 10% between 2022 and 2031

** Assuming the new school building for Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir will be operational by 2031

*** Assuming a further 10% growth in the rural catchment and a 15-30% growth in Arklow town from 2031 target

Having regard to the figures in Table 3.9 above, it is considered that the DoE figure of 1,685 for primary school places demand in 2031 is conservative noting that in 2024/2025 there are currently 1,626 children enrolled in the five primary schools in Arklow.

Noting the current and planned capacity of these five schools, it is considered that there will not be a need for an **additional** primary school in Arklow **in the immediate term**. Any short term additional demands will likely be possible to accommodate by using the existing spare capacity in existing schools, and via the expansion of the capacity of Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir through the building of the new school campus at Kilbride.

However, as new housing is delivered during the course of the LPF, the primary schools in Arklow may start to reach saturation. This would indicate that there will be a need for existing primary schools to either expand or a **sixth primary school** to be planned for and built. Either way, such projects take time to plan for and construct. The LPF should there make zoning provision for (a) expansion of existing schools through appropriate zoning where feasible, (b) the delivery of the new Gaelscoil and (c) a further new primary school in the short-medium term.

This LPF should also make provision for potential longer term needs, particularly given the pressure for further housing growth beyond the existing 2031 target that might arise due to the unlocking of barriers with the construction of the new WWTP and with housing market pressures. The table above identifies a potential need for 38-50 additional classrooms, or 2 additional 24 classrooms schools.

It is noted that the lands zoned for 'Community & Education' use under the 2018 Arklow Plan in Kilbride area, which is identified as a longer term large scale residential growth area, are the lands already identified and permitted to accommodate the new Gaelscoil Campus for both primary and post primary level.

3.2.7 Capacity of Post Primary Schools

A capacity audit of the existing post primary schools is presented in Table 3.10 below:

Table 3.10: Capacity of Post Primary Schools Arklow

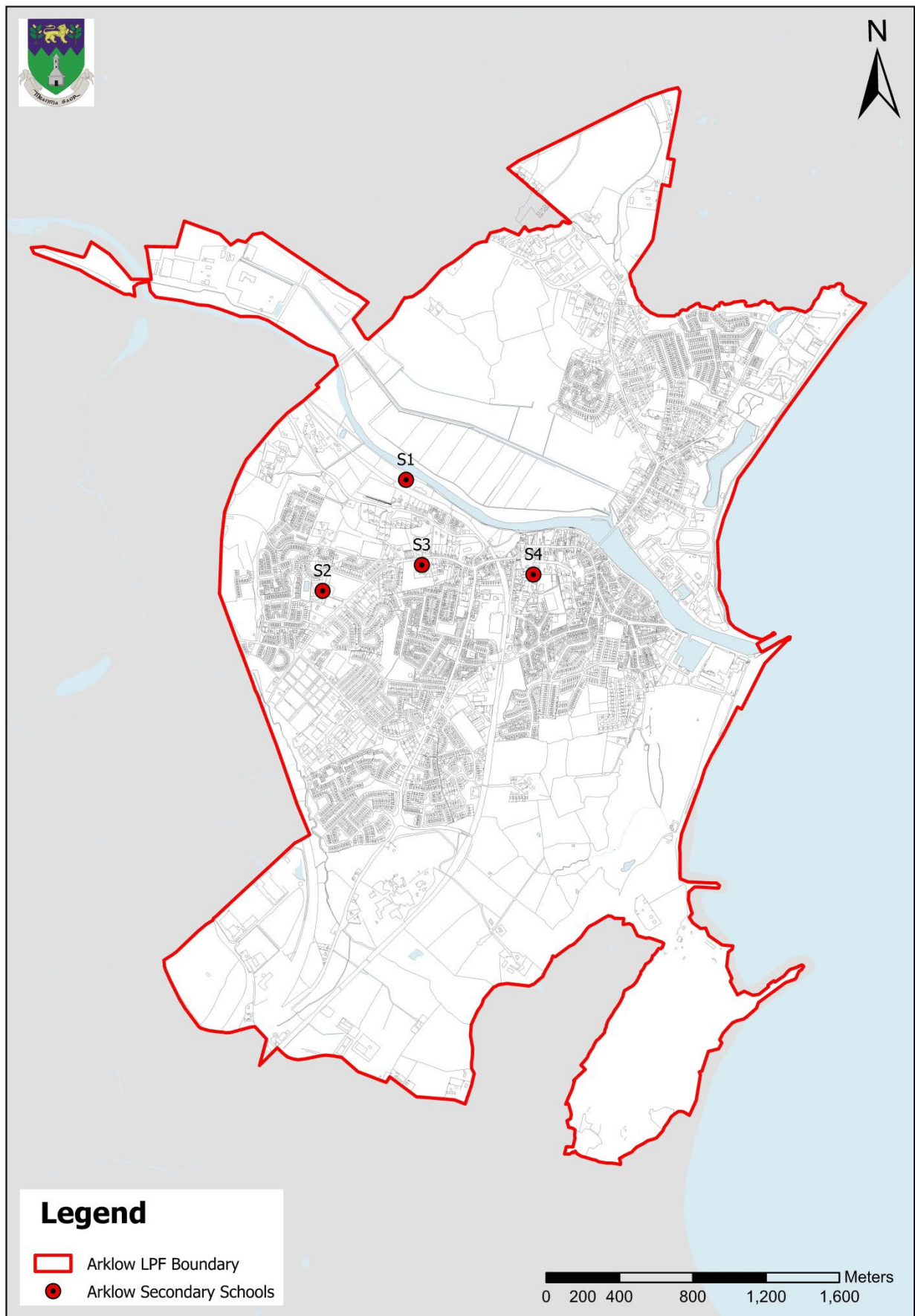
Map Label	Name	Current Capacity	Enrolled	Operating Level	Places Available	Planned Increased Capacity
S1	Gaelchólaiste na Mara ³	302	302	100%	0	+100
S2	Glenart College *	740	629	85%	111	No
S3	Arklow CBS	400	372	93%	28	+100
S4	St. Mary's College*	600	536	89%	64	No
	Total	2,042	1,839		203	+200

Source: Data obtained from schools directly in April 2025 indicated by *. Where there was no response from a school, best available data taken from schooldays.ie, the schools own website and data included in recent planning applications relating to the school in question.

There are currently 2,042 post primary school places available within the secondary schools in the Arklow with 203 school places available and a further planned capacity for an additional 200 students in the short to medium term. This indicates that there are currently sufficient post primary school places available in Arklow in the short to medium term. Figure 3.4 below shows the current spatial location of these four post primary schools in Arklow.

³ New build due to start Q3 2025 to cater to 400/450 and due to be complete in approximately 2 years.

Figure 3.4: Current Location of Secondary Schools within the Arklow LPF Boundary



3.2.8 Future Demand Analysis - Post Primary Schools

Table 3.9 below calculates the projected demand for post primary school places in the settlement of Arklow based on the targeted population growth to 16,441 for 2031 as per the current County Development Plan, 10% population growth in the rural catchment over the same period 2022-2031.

In addition, a 'future proofing' exercise has been carried out based on a future town population of 18,907 - 21,373 (a 15%-30% increase from the 2031 target) and an additional 10% growth in the rural catchment.

The Core Strategy has a target population of 16,441 for Arklow by 2031. However, having regard to the wider rural catchment of pupils for secondary schools in Arklow that are from outside the settlement, it is necessary to accommodate a higher post primary school place demand than that generated by the increase in population in the settlement of Arklow alone. As previously noted, the **post primary school catchment** extends further to include the Electoral Divisions of Arklow Urban 1 & 2, Arklow Rural, Kilbride, Ennereilly, Dunganstown South, Ballyarthur, Avoca, Aughrim and Kilpipe, which had a 2022 population of 21,449.

Table 3.11: Summary of Post Primary School Places Demand Arklow & wider Catchment Area

Year	Town Population	Catchment Population	Using DoE 7.5%	Post Primary Demand using cohort population and 58:42 split of the 5-19 cohorts = 9.5%	Post Primary school capacity	Additional Post Primary school capacity needs
2022 population	13,399	21,449	1,609	2,038	2,042	
2031 population	16,441	25,296*	1,897	2,403	2,242**	161
Longer term ***	18,907-21,373	28,648 – 31,114	2,149-2,334	2,722 – 2,956	2,242	408 - 714

* Assuming catchment in the rural area outside of Arklow town grows by c. 10% between 2022 and 2031

** Assuming the new school building for Gaelcholáiste na Mara and extension to Arklow CBS are operational by 2031.

*** Assuming a further 10% growth in the rural catchment and a 15-30% growth in Arklow town from 2031 target

Noting the current and planned capacity of these four schools, it is considered that there will not be a need for an additional post primary school in Arklow **in the immediate term**. Any short term additional demands will likely be possible to accommodate by using the existing spare capacity in existing schools, and via the expansion of the capacity of Arklow CBS via extension and Gaelcholáiste na Mara through the building of the new school campus at Kilbride.

However, as new housing is delivered during the course of the LPF, the post primary schools in Arklow may start to reach saturation. This would indicate that there will be a need to further expand existing schools or for a **fifth post primary school** to be planned for and built. Either way, such projects take time to plan for and construct. The LPF should therefore make zoning provision for (a) expansion of existing schools through appropriate zoning where feasible, (b) the delivery of the new Gaelcholáiste and (c) a further new post primary school.

This LPF should also make provision for potential longer term needs, particularly given the pressure for further housing growth beyond the existing 2031 target that might arise due to the unlocking of barriers with the construction of the new WWTP and with housing market pressures. The table above identifies a potential need for c. 400-700 additional places, which would be 1 No. additional post primary school.

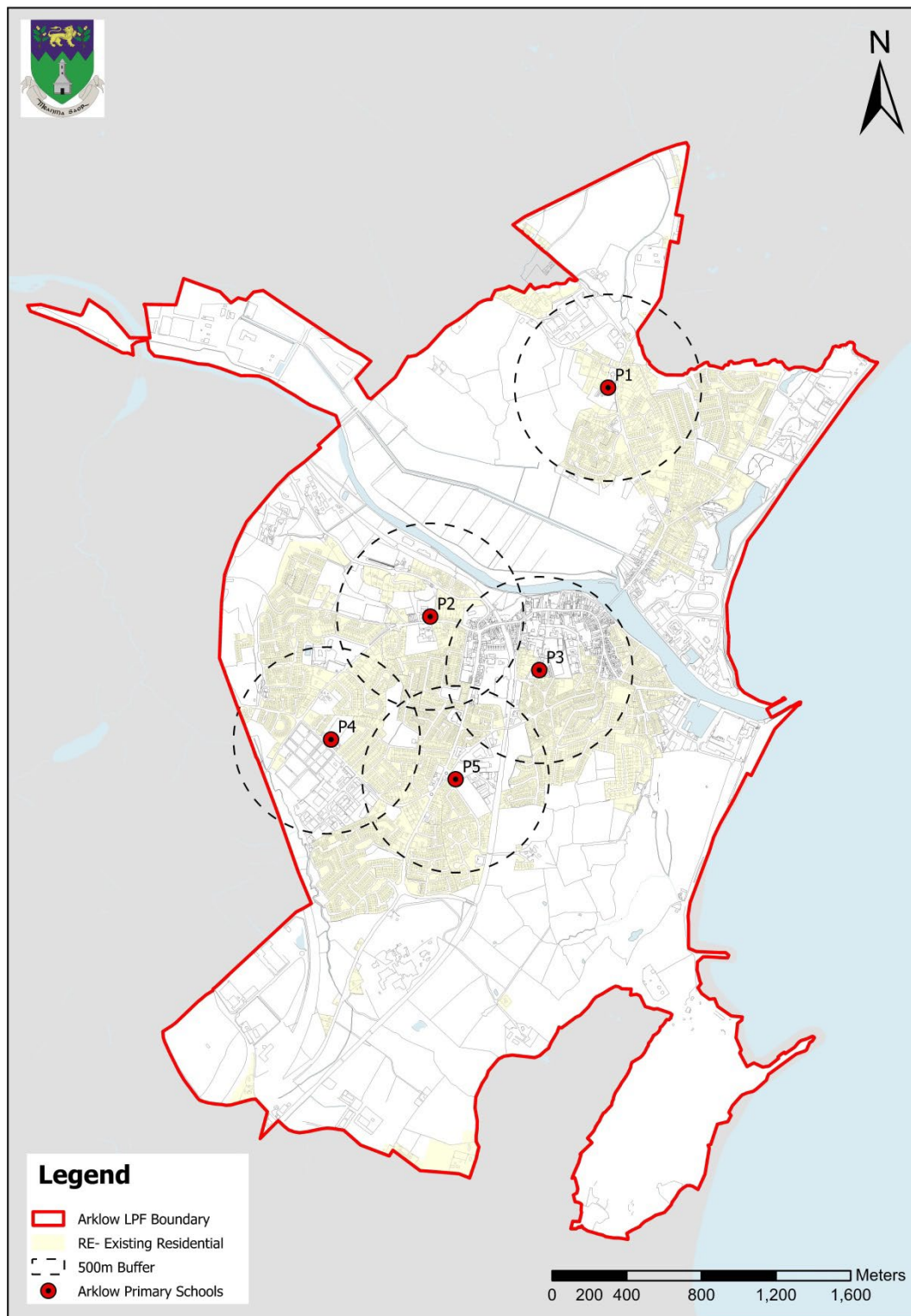
It is noted that the lands zoned for 'Community & Education' use under the 2018 Arklow Plan in Kilbride area, which is identified as a longer term large scale residential growth area, are the lands already identified and permitted to accommodate the new Gaelcholáiste – Gaelscoil Campus for both primary and post primary level.

3.2.9 School Site Selection

Primary School Site Selection

Figure 3.5 below shows the spatial distribution of existing primary schools in Arklow relative to the existing residential areas (in yellow) which fall within a 500m radius of these schools.

Figure 3.5: Existing Residential Areas in Arklow within 500m of a Primary School



It is noted that Gaelscoil an Inbir Mhóir (indicated as P4 in Figure 3.5) is due to relocate to the planned Gaelscoil Campus in Kilbride. Figure 3.6 below shows the future planned distribution of primary schools in Arklow and the existing residential catchment areas within a 500m of these school locations (Note that Gaelscoil an Inbir Mhóir is now indicated as P4(a) on this map).

Figure 3.6: Existing Residential Areas in Arklow within 500m of a Primary School in the event Gaelscoil an Inbir Mhóir relocates to Kilbride - Site P4(a)

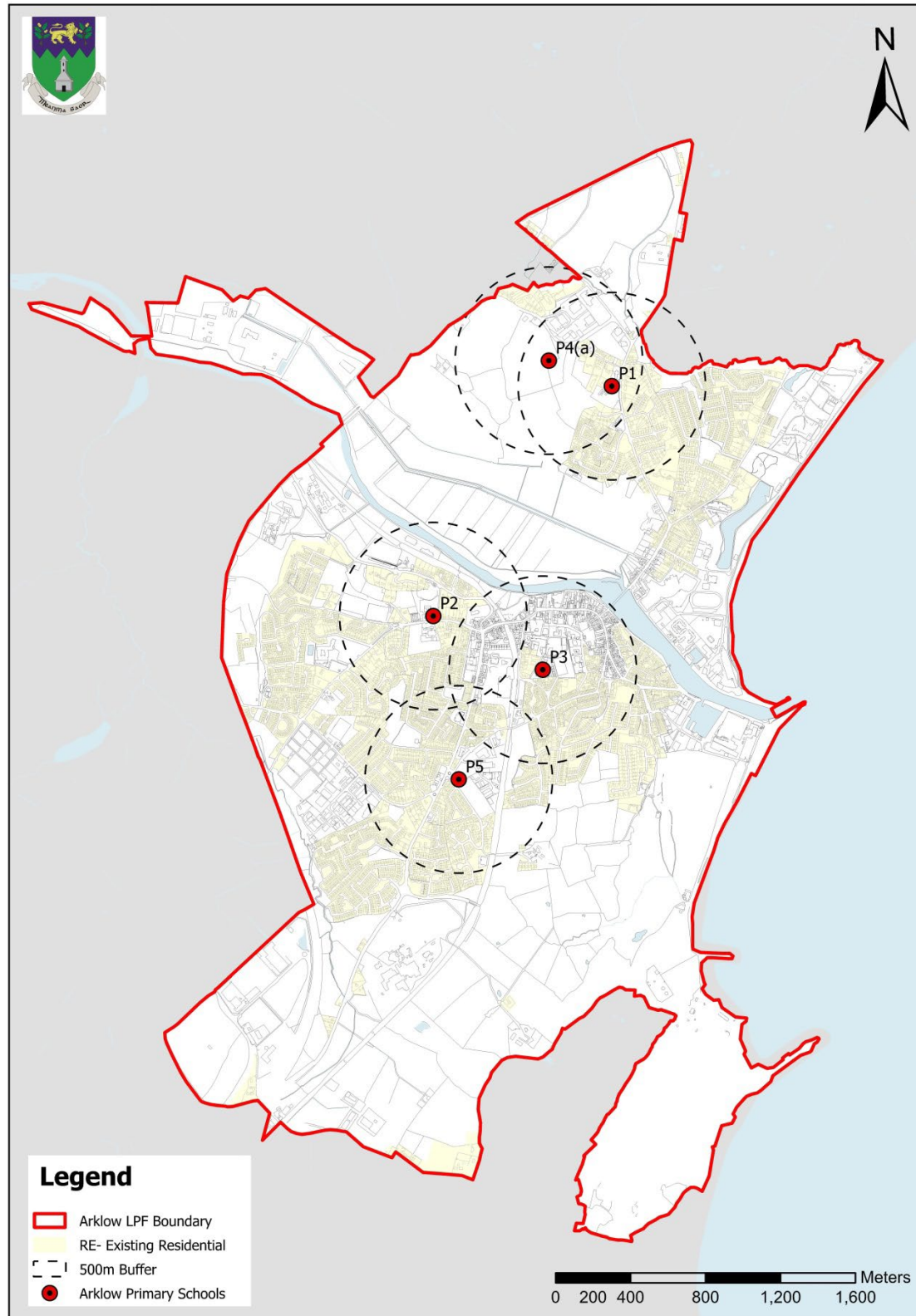


Figure 3.6 illustrates that there will be significant existing residential areas on the south western side of the town which will no longer fall within the 500m catchment of a primary school. Gaelscoil an Inbir Mhóir is currently utilising temporary buildings and facilities on the Arklow United Football Grounds. This is not considered to be an appropriate long term location for a school and alternative sites for a possible future primary school in the Emoclew/Coolgreaney Road area should be considered.

It is further noted that the Kilbride (north Arklow) and Tinahask (south east Arklow) areas are earmarked for significant future residential development under the 2018-2024 Arklow and Environs LAP. These areas are subject to agreed Action Area Plans, with some permission already granted and their development as future residential areas will be carried forward into the 2025 Arklow Local Planning Framework.

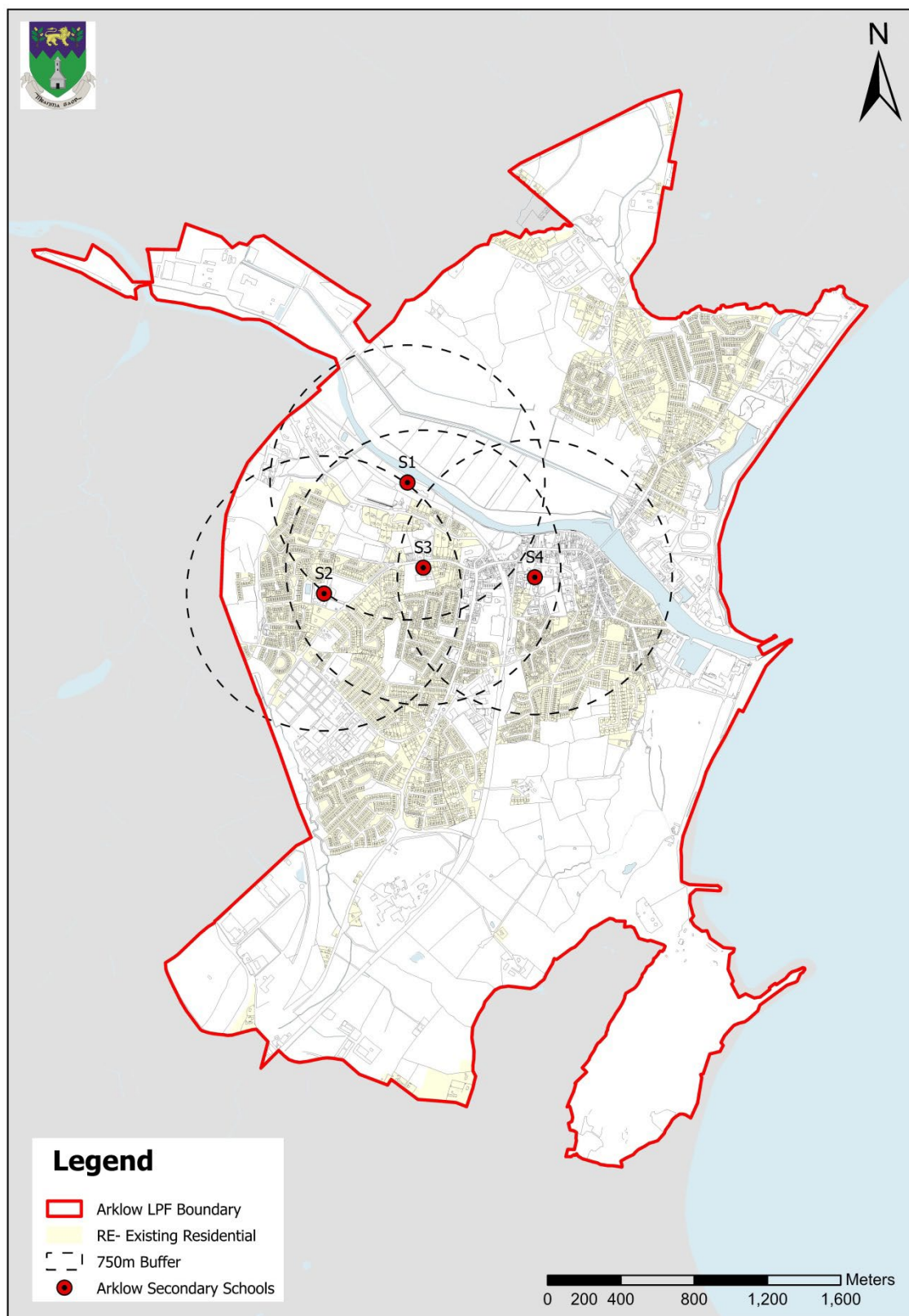
In order to ensure that families have the choice to send their children to the school nearest to their home, the LPF shall ensure that there is appropriate zoned land to accommodate at least 1 new primary school in the short to medium term in south Arklow. A site in SLO3 'Abbeylands and Tinahask Upper' (former AAP1 under the 2018 LAP) will be reserved/zoned 'CE- Community and Education' to facilitate the development of a new primary school at a location within an easy walking distance of the planned residential community in this area and a reasonable walking distance of the some of the existing residential areas in south Arklow.

In order address the possible future gap in provision in south-west Arklow and to future-proof the LPF and to ensure site choice, a site on the western side of the Wexford Road in south Arklow will also be zoned 'CE - Community and Education'. This site could accommodate the development of either a primary or post primary school as required; however in terms of location, the development of a primary school in the Emoclew – Coolgreaney Road area may be preferable given the existing residential catchment.

However as there is no obvious undeveloped site of suitable size currently available in this area, a new objective shall be provided which allows for the development of new primary schools on all land use zones in the LPF area (other than OS1 and OS2) subject to sufficient spatial separation from any existing primary school.

Figure 3.7 below shows the spatial distribution of existing post primary schools in Arklow relative to the existing residential areas (in yellow) which fall within a 750m radius of these schools. It is considered that a 750m radius is a reasonable distance for the walking catchment of a post primary school.

Figure 3.7: Existing Residential Areas in Arklow within 750m radius of an Existing Post Primary School



Similar to Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir, Gaelcholáiste na Mara is due to relocate to the planned campus in Kilbride. Figure 3.8 below shows the future planned distribution of post primary schools in Arklow and the existing residential catchment areas within a 750m of these school locations. Note that Gaelcholáiste na Mara is now indicated as S1(a) on this map.

Figure 3.8: Existing Residential Areas within 750m of a Post Primary School in the event Gaelcholáiste na Mara relocates to Kilbride - Site P4(a)

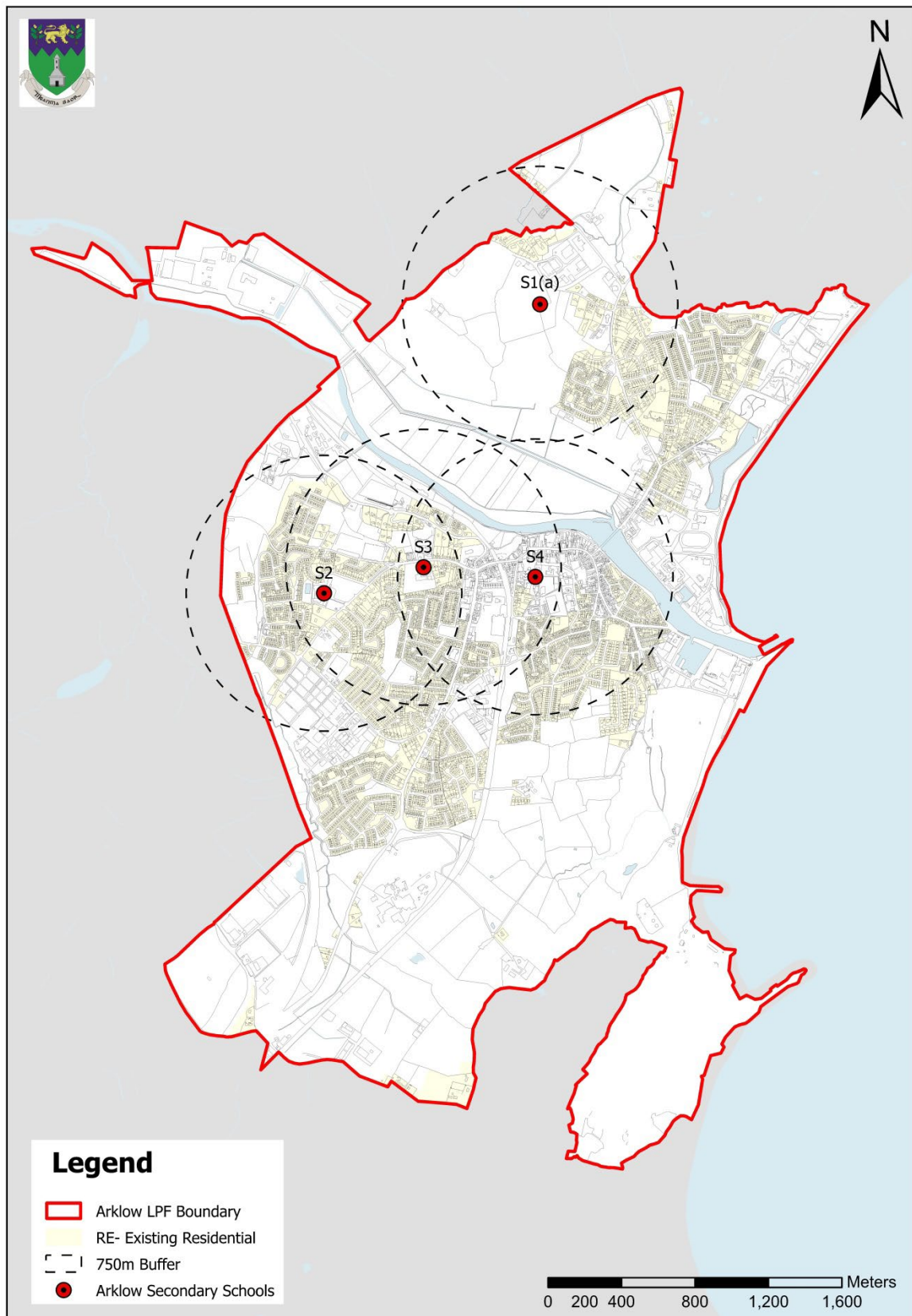


Figure 3.8 above illustrates that the spatial distribution of post primary schools will improve with the relocation of Gaelcholáiste na Mara to Kilbride, but also shows a significant gap in the provision of post primary school in the southern extent and to a lesser degree, the north eastern extent of the settlement.

The planned new residential area in Kilbride will be served by the planned Gaelscoil Campus in terms of Post Primary School provision; however, significant new residential development is also planned for south Arklow. In order to ensure that families have the choice to send their children to the school nearest to their home, the LPF shall ensure that there is appropriate zoned land to accommodate at least 1 new post primary school in the medium term in south Arklow. A site in SLO 4 'Tinahask Upper-Money Little & Money Big' (former AAP2 under the 2018 LAP) will be reserved/zoned 'CE- Community and Education' to facilitate the development of a new post primary school at a location within an easy walking distance of the planned residential community in this area and a reasonable walking distance of the some of the existing residential areas in south Arklow.

In order address the possible future gap in provision in south-west Arklow and to future-proof the LPF and to ensure site choice, a site on the western side of the Wexford Road in south Arklow will also be zoned 'CE - Community and Education' This site could accommodate the development of either a primary or post primary school as required. This site is also well connected for walking and cycling to these existing and planned for residential areas having regard to the completion of upgrades to the cycle and walking infrastructure along the Wexford Road northwards towards the Knockmore Roundabout and noting proposals to further improve cycle and walking infrastructure northwards along the Wexford Road as part of the draft Local Transport Plan for Arklow.

Existing and Proposed School Sites

It is proposed to zone the following sites CE which allows for the development of schools within the settlement in the future. These locations are all proximate to existing and future residential development and would allow for a geographical spread of schools throughout the town.

Table 3.13: Existing and Proposed Educational Lands

Existing Primary Schools		Site Area
St. Josephs National School		c.2ha
St. Michael and St. Peter Junior School		2.3ha + 1.4ha
St. Johns Senior National School		Total c. 3.7ha
Gaelscoil an Inbir Mhóir - Current School Site		Temporary site zoned AOS. School due to relocate when new campus constructed in Kilbride SLO5.
Carysfort National School*		c.1ha
Existing Post Primary Schools		
Glenart College		c.3.2ha
Arklow CBS		c.2.5ha
Gaelcholáiste na Mara		Temporary Site zoned OS2. School due to relocate when new campus constructed in Kilbride SLO5.
St. Mary's College		c.2ha
Proposed Education Zoning		
SLO3 Abbeylands - Tinahask Upper		Min. Site 2.5ha Primary School
SLO4 Tinahask Upper-Money Little & Money Big		Min Site 4.5ha Post Primary School Site
SLO5 Kilbride		5ha Site Primary and Post Primary School Campus.
Wexford Road		4.2ha Site Primary and/or Post primary School Site

3.2.10 Education & Training Services

There is one adult / further education facility in the area, the Arklow Further Education and Training Centre (AFETC), located at the Fernhill Plaza in south Arklow on the Wexford Road. . This centre offers various training opportunities for the population of Arklow. Full time courses are delivered in the form of Youthreach and Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme and there are a number of part time training options such as business administration, healthcare support and office skills. Table 3.14 below outlines the level and type of course available.

Table 3.14: Further Education and Training Facilities

Map Label	Name	Description of Courses	Level of Attainment
E1	Arklow Further Education & Training Centre (KWETB)	Full time and part time courses in Childcare, Healthcare and Business, Adult Basic Education, Youthreach and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).	QQI accredited courses levels 2-5

Arklow offers a range of free courses through the National Learning Network catering to students with physical and sensory difficulties, mild intellectual difficulties, and specific learning difficulties and for those that have experienced mental health difficulties or chronic illness. Services are offered from a property at Briggs lane, Ferrybank in north Arklow.

Another training facility available in Arklow is BEE (Blended Educational Experience) Smart training and consultancy - a training provider for management, staff, teams and individuals across all sectors, specialising in the area of social care.

Table 3.15: Other Educational Facilities

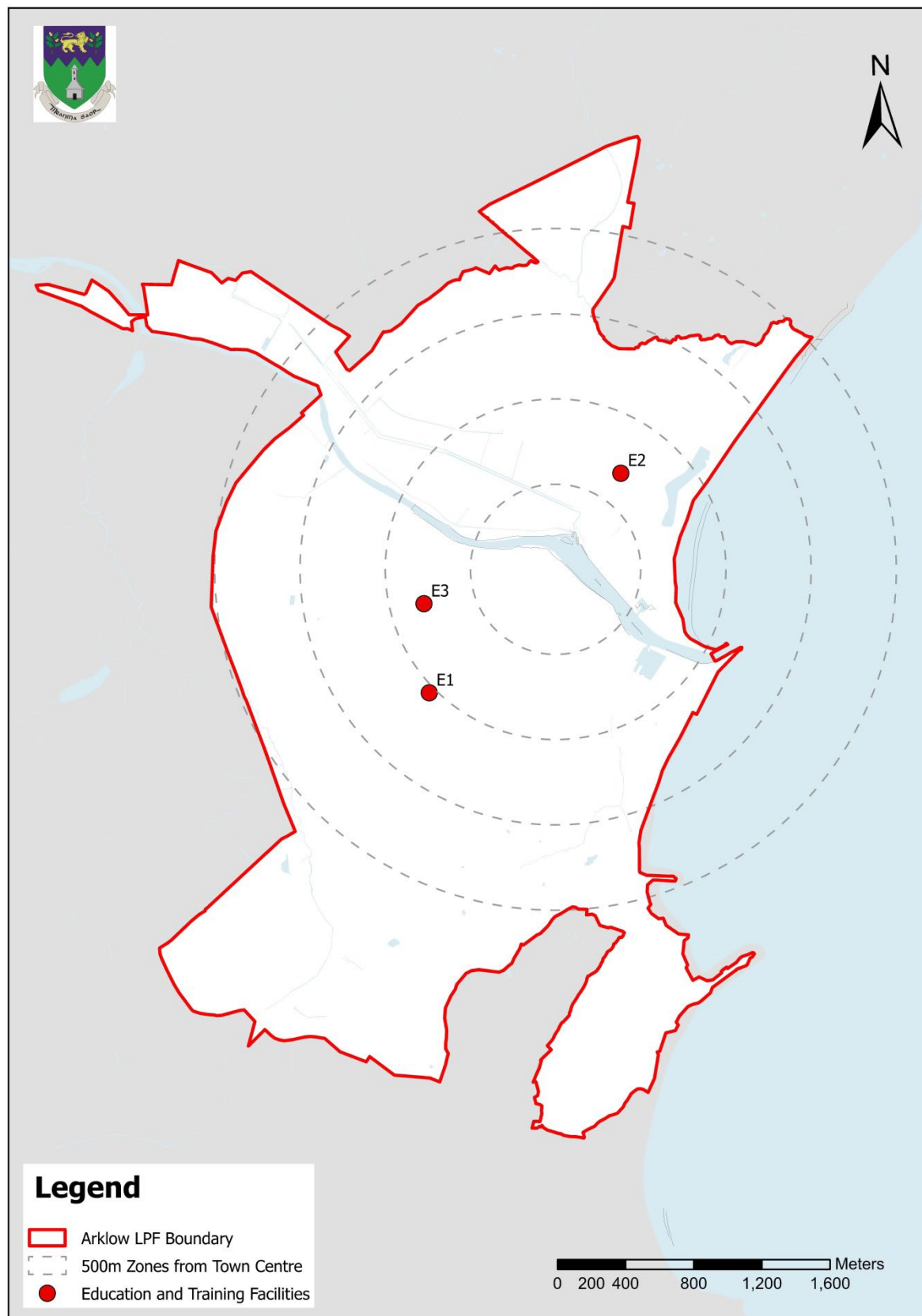
Map Label	Name	Description of Courses	Level of Attainment
E2	National Learning Network	Practical job-seeking skills for individuals with a broad range of extra support needs	N/A
E3	Bee Smart Training	Social Care, Safeguarding, First Aid	N/A

There is no guidance available on the provision for further education centres or post-secondary education on a per capita basis. However, the current site of the Arklow Further Education and Training Centre is not suitable for intensification of activity if the training centre is required to increase its capacity. There it will be important that the new LPF ensure that there are opportunities at a range of locations within the LPF for the development of new education / training facilities. In this regard, the development of education / training facilities of this type will be permissible in all zones (other than OS1 and OS2).

The town centre and other core areas, such as the waterfront areas are deemed highly suitable locations for the development of new third level / vocational training centres.

In addition, the development of education and training facilities on employment zones land would be particularly supported via County Policy Objective 7.13 '*Where lands are zoned for employment use, to facilitate the development of employment training facilities (privately and/or publicly funded)*'.

Figure 3.9: Education & Training Services in Arklow



3.2.13 Conclusion of Demand Forecast Analysis for Education Facilities

The provision of primary and secondary school facilities in Ireland is determined on an area specific basis by the Department of Education, having regard to available school capacity, demographic projections, an analysis of child benefit records, and local travel pattern modelling.

Having regard to the analysis carried out above and accordance with objectives CPO 7.10, CPO 7.11 and CPO 7.12 of the County Development Plan, the LPF should zone a number of sites of an appropriate site and at appropriate locations within the LPF area for 'Community and Education' that have the potential for the future provision of schools and other education facilities.

In addition as previously noted in this section, a new objective shall be provided which allows for the development of new primary and post primary schools on all land use zones in the LPF area (other than OS1 and OS2) subject to sufficient spatial separation from any existing school.

DISCLAIMER NOTE: Although great care and modern, widely-accepted methods have been used in the preparation of this assessment there is inevitably a range of inherent uncertainties and assumptions made during the estimation of current and future school place demand for the settlement and its catchment. These estimations have been based on the best most up to date data available at the time of the assessment. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that there are sufficient lands zoned at appropriate locations for the future provision of school. The delivery of, and timeline for the delivery of future schools is a matter for the Department of Education.

3.3 Childcare

A list of childcare facilities were obtained from TUSLA early years' service registration list to understand the enrolment figures and capacity available in childcare facilities located in Arklow. Childcare facilities are well represented spatially in Arklow with 16 facilities spread throughout the area, pre-dominantly located close to or within existing residential areas. There are also three facilities which are located outside the LPF boundary (Table 3.17). The capacity audit of each childcare provider is set out in Tables 3.16 and 3.17 below and the locations of the facilities are shown in Figure 3.10 below.

Table 3.16: Capacity of Childcare Facilities

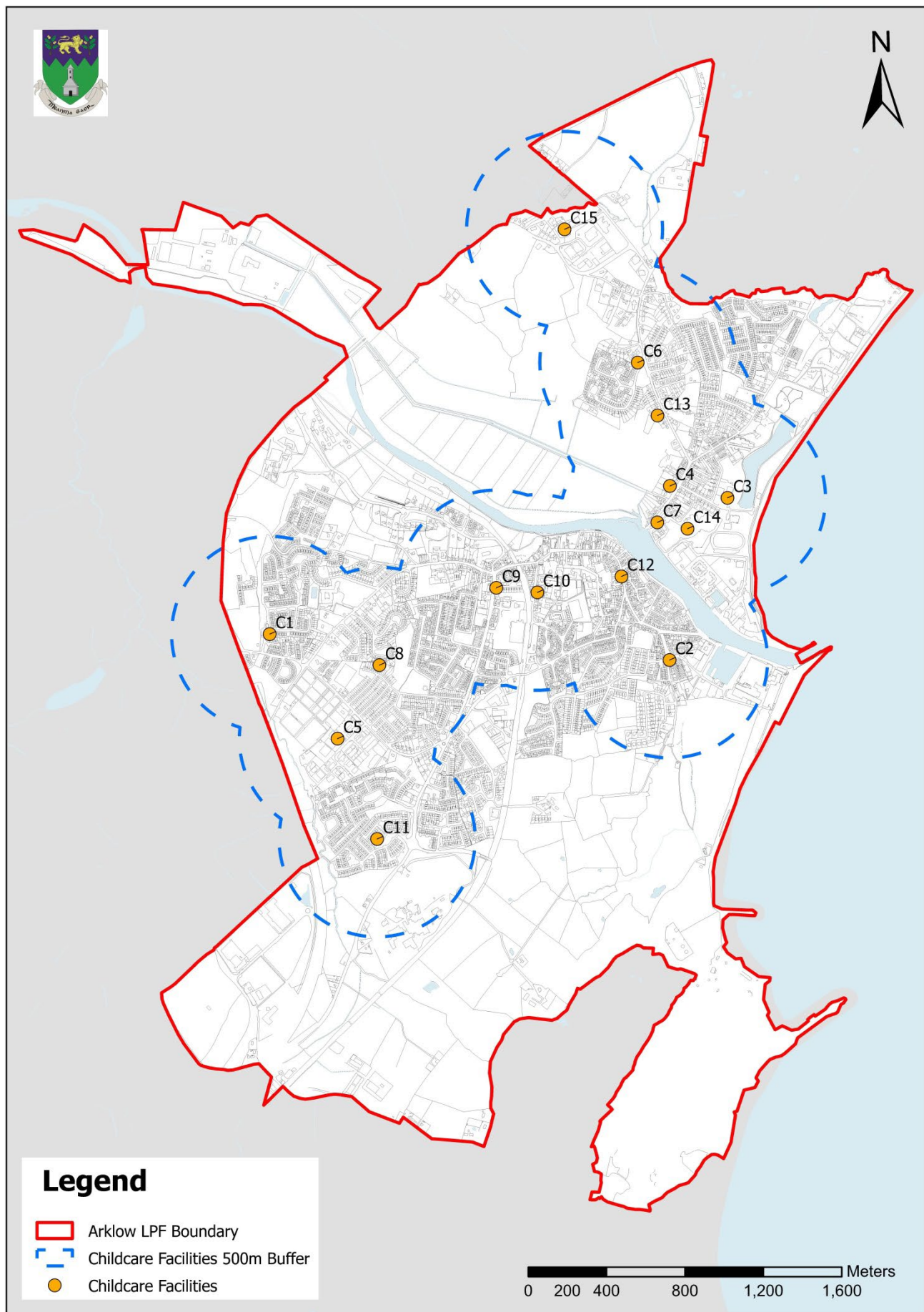
Map Label	Name	Capacity	Services
C1	Kangakare Childcare Ltd	107 / 33 (SAC)	Full daycare, Part-time, School Age Childcare, Sessional
C2	Ray of Sunshine Early Years Limited	41 (FDC) 46 (SAC)	Full Day Care, Part-time, Sessional
C3	Twinklers Montessori	22	Montessori, Sessional
C4	Head Start Pre-School & Montessori	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C5	Imagination Station	54 (S) 43 (PT)	Part-time, Pre-school, Sessional
C6	Kidz Inc Childcare	20 (S) 22 (SAC)	Pre-school, School age childcare, Sessional
C7	Ark Community Playgroup	22	Part-time, Pre-school
C8	Pixies Montessori Preschool	44	Montessori, Part-time, Pre-school, Sessional
C9	An Scoil Bheag	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C10	Blackberry Academy Montessori	42	Pre-school, Sessional
C11	Jellybeans Playschool	33	Pre-school, Sessional
C12	Little Treasure Playgroup	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C13	Building Blocks Montessori Preschool	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C14	Early Days Academy Preschool	44	Part-time, Pre-school, Sessional
C15	Frances' Little Flowers	11	Pre-school, Sessional
	Total	694	

Census **2022** shows that **666** children were in the age range for pre-school childcare (under school going age i.e. 0 – 4 years inclusive) in Arklow Town.

Figures obtained from Table 3.16 above show that there were a total of **694** children were enrolled for the **2024/2025** year, comprising a mix of full time pre-school care as well as part time, sessional and school age going care.

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. Due to a shortage of places or personal preferences, many families are reliant on this kind of arrangement as well as relying on family members, particularly for children under 1 year of age.

Figure 3.10: Existing Areas within 500m of a Childcare Facility



3.3.1 Demand Forecast Analysis for Childcare Facilities

Consultation with the Wicklow County Childcare Committee in March 2025 highlighted the lack of full day care places for young children and babies in the Arklow area. Currently there are only 2 full day-care crèches situated in Arklow (see Table 3.16 above). Many of the existing services in Arklow operate on a sessional basis only catering for the ECCE age, ranging from 2yrs 8 months to 5yrs. These services run 3 hours per day for 5 days per week for 38 weeks of the year only. On this basis, there appears to be a significant shortfall already in full time day care places in Arklow.

With respect to the future, using the same assumption with respect the town and rural catchment population growth as set out previously in this report for primary schools and assuming that the % of children in the 0-4 cohort stays stable at around 5%, there would possibly be c. 1,090 children in this age group by 2031 in Arklow and its catchment. In the longer term, this could increase to 1,200-1,350 children.

Even if only half of these children required full time day care, there would be a need to significantly enhance childcare provision in the LPF area.

The '*Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' (2001) state that new housing development proposals may require a childcare facility to also be provided as part of the proposed development. The facility should be purpose built and provide a minimum of 20 childcare places per 75 dwellings. The County Development Plan requires that where considered necessary by the Planning Authority, developers of new housing developments of 75 units or more shall make provision in the development for childcare facilities at a ratio of 20 places per 75 residential units, unless it can be demonstrated that having regard to the existing geographic distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area that this level of childcare facilities is not required.

The information above identifies that shortfalls in the provision of adequate childcare facilities is already arising across the LPF area, and therefore across this LPF area and for this LPF period, it is recommended that this objective be applied in all cases, without exception. The development of other childcare facilities, outside of the new housing developments, should also be supported and facilitated by this LPF.

3.4 Health (including elderly care)

3.4.1 Audit of Existing Health Facilities

The audit indicates that Arklow is well served by health services including a good range of GPs, health centres, dentists, pharmacy care and other related facilities. A total of 33 health facilities were identified in the town comprising five GP practices, a primary healthcare facility, a nursing home, eight pharmacies, three dentist practices, an orthodontist, four physiotherapists, three opticians, and other healthcare facilities including disability support services and home care/help services.

From the health facilities identified, there are a total of 19 GPs working from these locations.

Figure 3.11 to follow shows the spatial distribution of these health care facilities in the settlement of Arklow while Table 3.18 summarises an audit of the health facilities including their location and services available.

Figure 3.11: Healthcare facilities within Arklow

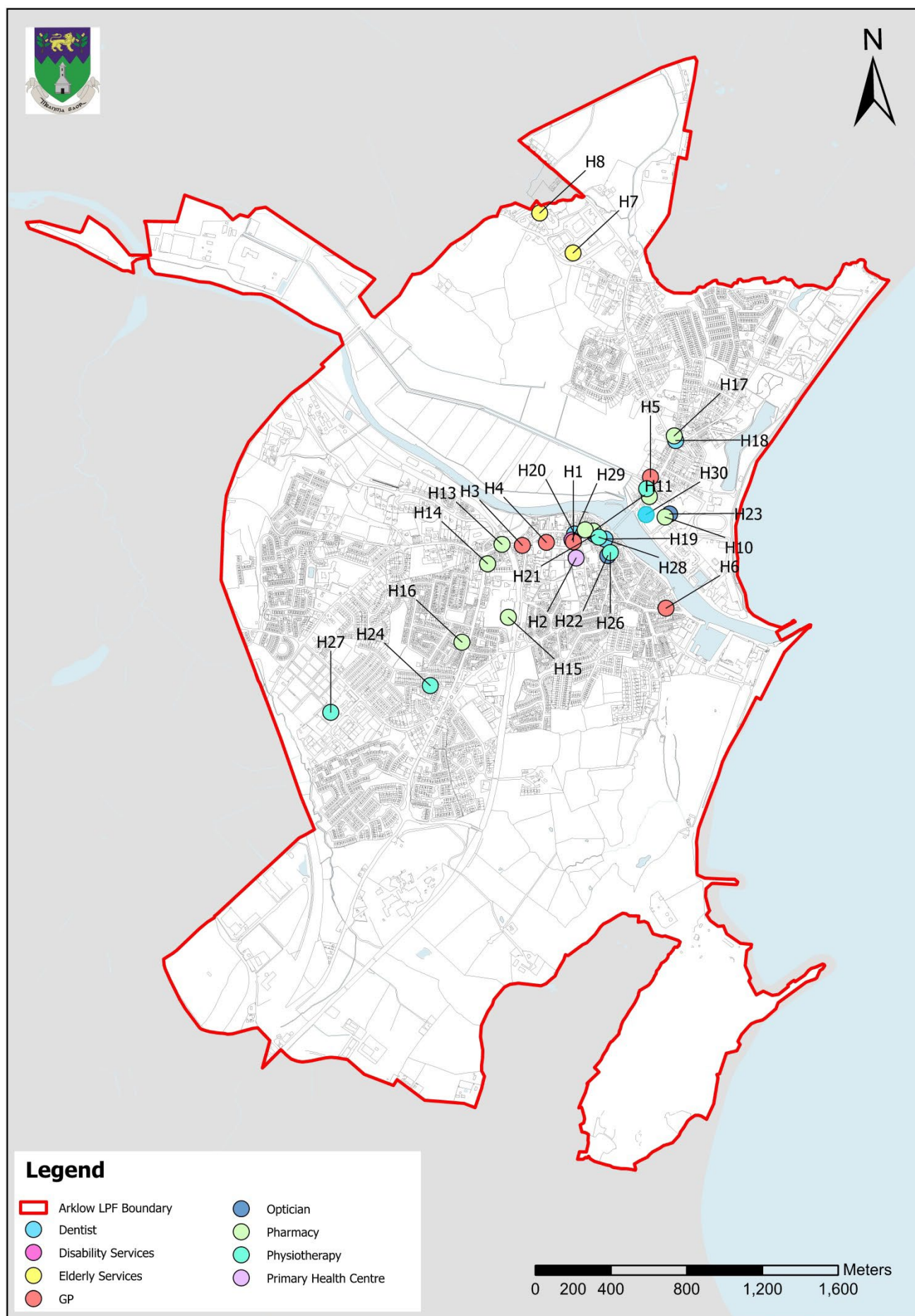


Table 3.18: Healthcare Facilities

Map label	Name	Location	Service Provided
H1	Maryville Surgery	Primary Care Health Centre, Castle Park, Arklow, Y14 AH57	GP x 4 Operating a waiting list.
H2	Arklow Primary Health Care Centre	Primary Care Health Centre, Castle Park Y14 AE10	Provides a wide range of healthcare services.
H3	Arklow Medical Practice	3 Upper Main St, Arklow, Y14 C9D8	GP x 3 Operating a waiting list.
H4	Bradshaw's Lane Surgery	Bradshaw's Ln, Arklow, Y14 E190	GP x 3 Operating a waiting list.
H5	Sheltonville surgery	45-52 R772, Ferrybank, Arklow, Y14 K300	GP x 2
H6	Harbour surgery	Evans Terrace, 1C Harbour Rd, Tinahask Lower, Arklow	GP x 2 Currently operating a waiting list, however just recently taken on a second GP.
H7	Arklow South Wicklow Home Care Service	Kilbride Industrial Estate, Kilbride	Home and Healthcare Service
H8	Asgard Lodge Nursing Home	Monument Ln, Kilbride, Arklow	Nursing Home
H9	Ferrybank CarePlus Pharmacy	Ferrybank, Arklow	Pharmacy
H10	Boots	Unit 12/13 Bridgewater Centre, North Quay, Ferrybank, Arklow, Y14 KW63	Pharmacy
H11	Adrian Dunne Pharmacy	41 Lower Main St, Arklow, Y14 AP99	Pharmacy
H12	Allcare Pharmacy	46 Main Street, Arklow, Y14 FY26	Pharmacy
H13	O'Mearas CarePlus Pharmacy	30 Upper Main St, Arklow, Y14 N6X4	Pharmacy
H14	Armstrong Life Pharmacy	40A Wexford Rd, Arklow, Y14 YW29	Pharmacy
H15	First Choice Pharmacy	Tesco Shopping Centre, Arklow Square, Wexford Rd, Arklow	Pharmacy
H16	Grants Pharmacy	Wexford Rd, Knockanrahan Lower, Arklow	Pharmacy
H17	Briggs Lane Dental Practice	Brigg's Ln, Tiknock, Arklow	Dental Clinic
H18	Louis Devereux Dental Surgeon	Beechgrove, Dublin Rd, Tiknock, Arklow	Orthodontist
H19	Kavanagh Dental	Hibernian House, Lower Main St, Arklow	Dental Clinic
H20	Arklow Dental Surgery	19 Main St, Arklow, Y14 R867	Dentist
H21	Rods + Cones Opticians	28 Main St, Arklow, Y14 X8D2	Optician
H22	Mary O'Loughlin Opticians	13 Lower Main St, Arklow,	Optician
H23	Specsavers Opticians & Audiologists	Unit 7, Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Ferrybank, Arklow, Y14 DX02	Optician
H24	Sinead Wixted Physio	46 Fernhill, Knockanrahan Lower, Arklow, Y14 H365	Physical Therapy Clinic
H25	Arklow Physiotherapy Clinic	12 Ferrybank, Arklow	Physical Therapy Clinic
H26	Injury & Rehabilitation Clinic	Boujee Beauty, 79 Lower Main St, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, Y14 KN72	Physical Therapist
H27	South East Spine and Sports Injuries Clinic	Croghan Industrial Estate, Knockanrahan Upper, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, Y14 WF99	Physical Therapy Clinic
H28	Philip Gleeson Sports Injury Clinic	Butler House, 30 Main St, Abbey Ln, Arklow, Co. Wicklow	Physical Therapy Clinic
H29	Enable Ireland Children's Disability Network Team	Arklow Primary Care Centre, Castle Park, Arklow, Y14 AH57	Disability Services and Support Organisation
H30	Enable Ireland Adult Day Services	Avoca River House, The Bridgewater Centre, North Quay, Arklow, Y14 V277	Disability Services and Support Organisation

3.4.2 Demand Forecast Analysis for Health Facilities

In the 2022 Census, 82.7% of the residents of Arklow town evaluated their personal health to be either 'Very Good' or 'Good', which is just below the national average of 87%, with 2.3% considering themselves to be of 'Bad' or 'Very Bad' health, slightly above the national rate of 1.6%. It is also notable that 26% of the population of Arklow confirm that they have a disability, which is almost twice the national rate of 13.5%, whilst 2.4% of those aged 15 and over are unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability.

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. On this basis, the primary care centre in Arklow may be sufficient to serve the targeted town population growth up to 2031. However, to ensure future proofing, this report also considered a larger town and catchment population of 25,000-30,000.

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 Arklow (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 standard of **25.2 physicians to 100,000 population** (or 0.25 per 1,000 population). Applying these ratios to the baseline and projected population of Arklow (Level 1 Catchment) gives the following:

Table 3.19: GP Requirements

Arklow	Population	Estimated Visits	Required GPs
Baseline	13,399	47,834	3
CDP 2031 Target	16,441	58,694	4
Long Term	25,000-30,000	89,000-106,800	6 – 7.5

Publicly available information indicates that there are approximately 14 GPs practising within 5 facilities the Arklow, giving a current doctor to population ratio of 1 GP per 1,000 population, almost 4 times above the recommendations of GMENAC. This indicates that Arklow is apparently well served by GP services, and that there is no need to expand current GP services in the town. However the reality is quite different noting that 4 of the 5 GP practices contacted indicated that there is a need for additional GP services as they are currently operating waiting lists for new patients. In this regard it is noted that GP services in Arklow would serve a wide rural catchment. Having regard to this information and the data from the 2022 Census, this would indicate that Arklow will need additional GP and health services as the town grows.

While the zoning of land specifically for health / GP usage would not be appropriate given the nature and scale of this use, it is recommended that the LPF supports the development of healthcare uses in all zones (other than Open Space OS1 and Natural Areas OS2) and ensure adequate land is zoned for 'Community and Education' - CE use which would allow for larger scale stand-alone medical developments.

With regard to the provision of nursing homes into the future it is noted that the development of such facilities is permissible on lands zoned residential (RN/RE), town centre (TC) and Community and Education (CE) should the need for a second facility arise in the settlement.

3.5 Sport, Recreation & Open Space

Sports and recreation infrastructure include parks and playgrounds, dedicated public open space and amenity areas, sports centres, and formal club facilities.

In accordance with WCC's Active Open Space Policy, active open space should be provided at a rate of 2.4ha per 1,000 population divided into:

- a) 1.6ha outdoor play space (pitches, courts, sports grounds) – open space Type A
- b) 0.6ha casual play spaces (parks) – open space Type B
- c) 0.2ha equipped play space (playgrounds and MUGAs) – open space Type C

Generally Type A is provided in the form of laid out and operated sports grounds, club etc. Type C comprises equipped playgrounds, mixed use games areas, outdoor gyms etc.

With respect to Type B, this includes both formal public parks and the casual public open spaces in housing developments. This type of space is therefore harder to quantify as it will appear as numerous pockets throughout any settlement as well as being more difficult to 'plan' for as much of this space will be delivered as part of new housing development on lands zoned for 'residential' use rather than 'open space' use.

3.5.1 Quantum of Existing Open Space

Based on the above rates, considering the Census 2022 population for Arklow was 13,399 and the 2031 population target of c.16,500, the following amount of open space would be required to serve the current and projected population. In order to 'future proof' this assortment, a larger population and catchment of 25,000 has also been considered.

Table 3.20: Open Space required based on current and future population

Open Space Type	Required (ha) based on 2022 CSO Population	Required (ha) based on CDP 2031 Target Population	Required (ha) based on Population of 25,000
Outdoor Play Space	21.43ha	26.4ha	40ha
Casual Play Space	8.04ha	9.9ha	15ha
Equipped Play Space	2.7ha	3.3ha	5ha
Total	32.17ha	39.6ha	60ha

The following table provides an audit of the existing actively used open spaces within the settlement boundary of Arklow. With respect to 'casual play space' only the more significant or structured casual play spaces are listed – there are many more smaller spaces not listed in this table. Overall, approximately 41 hectares of land located within the study area provide for sports and recreational related activities and open space and again this does not enumerate the significant additional smaller casual play spaces through housing areas. It is noted that many sports activities take place on school grounds and these grounds have not been taken into account in this figure.

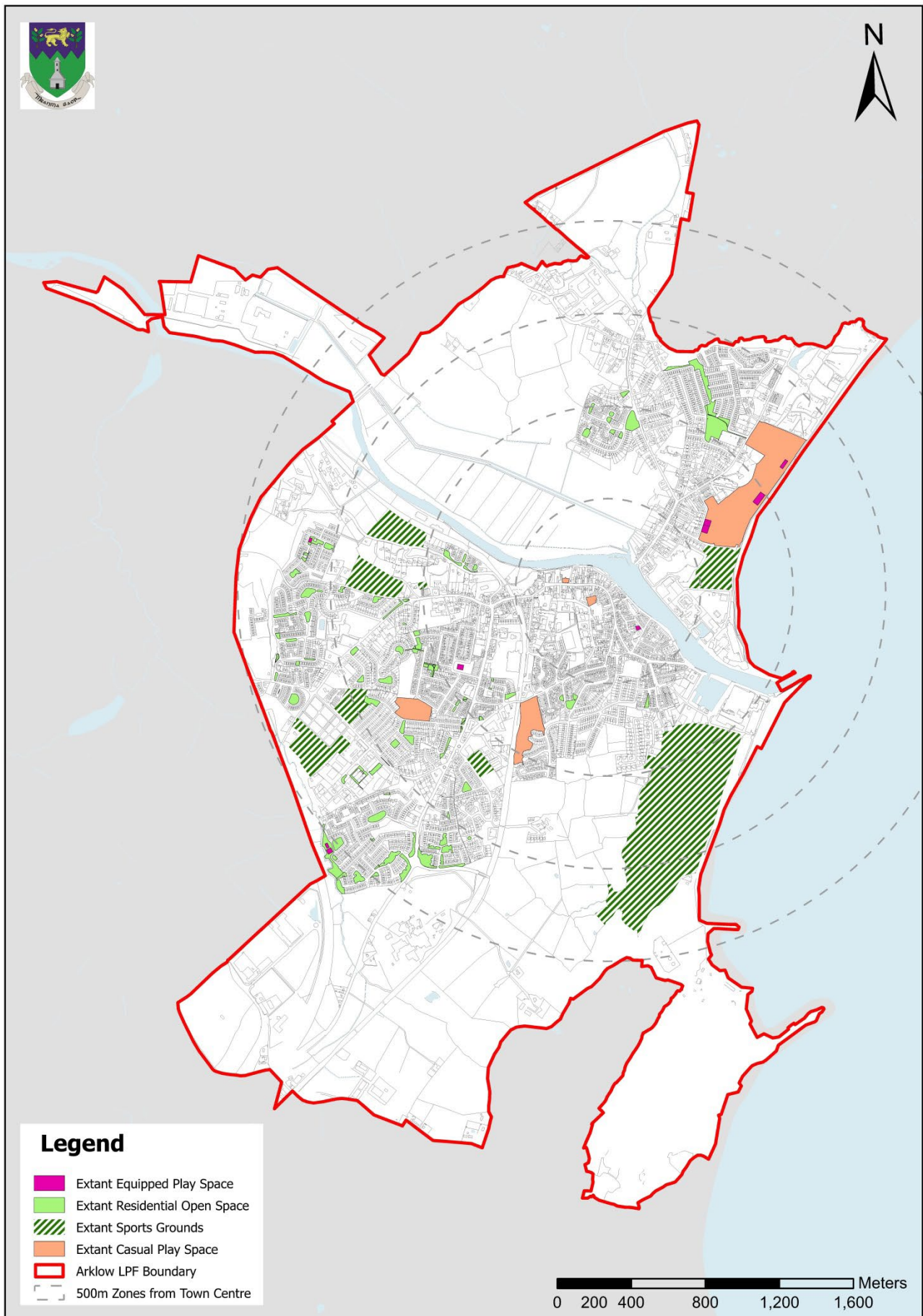
While Arklow Golf Club is listed in this table, it also has not been included in this figure noting this facility is only accessible to members of the golf club.

Table 3.21: Audit of Existing Open Spaces in Arklow

Name	Open Space Type	Approximate Area (ha)
Arklow Golf Club	Outdoor Play Space	41.14 ha
Arklow Geraldines Ballymoney GAA Club ⁴	Outdoor Play Space	3 ha
Arklow United Football Club	Outdoor Play Space	2.19 ha
Arklow Celtic	Outdoor Play Space	1.91 ha
Arklow Town Football Club	Outdoor Play Space	3.88 ha
Arklow Rock Parnell's GAA Club	Outdoor Play Space	2.48 ha
Arklow Lawn Tennis Club	Outdoor Play Space	0.17 ha
Lands to south east of Carysfort NS	Outdoor Play Space	1 ha
The Track Arklow	Outdoor Play Space	1.45 ha
Arklow Skate Park	Outdoor Play Space	0.05 ha
Ferrybank Basketball Court	Outdoor Play Space	0.1 ha
The Colour Court	Outdoor Play Space	0.09 ha
	TOTAL	16.32 ha (ex. golf club)
Abbey Rose Garden	Casual Play Space	0.2 ha
Kynock Park	Casual Play Space	18.6 ha
St. Mary's Park	Casual Play Space	0.08 ha
Bloom Garden	Casual Play Space	0.01 ha
Dispensary Garden	Casual Play Space	0.01 ha
Xeriscape Garden	Casual Play Space	0.04 ha
Navy Park	Casual Play Space	3 ha
Fernhill/Marian Villas	Casual Play Space	1.9 ha
Arklow Rock Cliff Walk	Casual Play Space	-
Glenart Woods Walk (start of trail within settlement)	Casual Play Space	-
Riverwalk Trail	Casual Play Space	-
Arklow North Beach walk, South Beach/Tinahask Lwr Bay Beach	Casual Play Space	-
	TOTAL	23.84 ha
Peter's Place Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.08 ha
Arklow Children's Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.13 ha
Meadowvale Resident's Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.04 ha
Heatherside Residents Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.03 ha
South Green Resident's Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.04 ha
Seaview Ave Mini Golf	Equipped Play Space	0.11 ha
Arklow Dog Park	Equipped Play Space	0.21 ha
	TOTAL	0.48 ha
OVERALL TOTAL		40.64 excluding Arklow Golf Club

⁴ Note – This club has additional grounds outside the LPF boundary

Figure 3.12: Location of existing unutilised Open Space and Recreation Grounds within the Arklow LPP settlement boundary



3.5.2 Qualitative Assessment of Open Space

While Table 3.21 above provides a quantitative summary of the existing utilised open spaces in the Arklow Town, it is considered that the qualitative aspects of these open spaces areas are just as important.

In February 2023, Wicklow County Council published a commissioned report into the community and recreational needs of the Arklow Municipal District. This report received a substantial number of responses from Arklow residents which provide some insight into occurring issues.

Of the issues identified by respondents in public consultation:

- Lack of recreational facilities (52.5%);
- A deficit of facilities for young people and children (especially teenagers);
- Poorly maintained and outdated existing facilities;
- Supply constraints of recreational and sporting facilities to match the increase in demand from the rapidly growing population.

Suggested improvements and recommendations include:

- Provision of new recreational and sporting facilities relative to the population increase;
- Updates and maintenance of existing facilities;
- Increase networking and synergy between existing facilities.

The responses in the survey above have all been carefully noted. While some improvements have been made to date, further upgrades need to be carried out to the existing public open spaces in Arklow. While the LPF can ensure that there are adequate areas of land zoned for AOS: Active Open Space (Sports) and OS1: Open Space Type 1 (Public Parks and Playgrounds), the construction and upgrading of existing facilities is out site the remit of the LPF and would be matter for the Municipal District and the allocation of funding through the annual budgetary process. The LPF can include policies and objectives to support the development and upgrading of such facilities. The inclusion of appropriate zoning and policies will also support funding applications for the upgrading of such facilities.

3.5.3 Demand Forecast Analysis for Sport, Recreation & Open Space Facilities

Based on the information above, the following compares in quantitative terms the areas of active open space required at a minimum to serve the targeted 2031 population for Arklow (16,441) against the current level of provision in the settlement and identifies where shortfalls occur.

In order to 'future proof' the LPF, the active open space needs of a larger town population (and catchment) of 25,000 has also been considered below.

Table 3.22: Existing and Projected Open Space needs in accordance with policy

Open Space Type	Current Area (ha)	Current requirement (ha)	Required (ha) based on 2031 population target	Shortfall (ha) based on 2031 population target
Outdoor Play Space (AOS)	16.3	21.4	26.4	10.08
Casual Play Space (OS1)	23.8	8	9.9	None – surplus of c. 14ha
Equipped Play Space	0.5	2.7	3.3	2.8
Totals	40.6	32.1	39.6	

Open Space Type	Current Area (ha)	Current requirement (ha)	Required (ha) based on 25,000 population	Shortfall (ha) based on 25,000 population
Outdoor Play Space (AOS)	16.3	21.4	40	23.7
Casual Play Space (OS1)	23.8	8	15	None – surplus of c. 9ha
Equipped Play Space	0.5	2.7	5	4.5
Totals	40.64	32.1	60	

Based on the data presented in Table 3.22 above the following is noted:

- a) It is evident that **the settlement would have sufficient Casual Play Space (OS1 zoning type) to cater for the current and future projected residential population in quantitative terms**, but that these facilities are in need of **upgrades** in qualitative terms.
- b) There is a **shortfall in Active Outdoor play spaces** (AOS zoning lands) in the settlement to cater for the existing and targeted population. AOS provision therefore needs to be increased.
- c) There is also a **shortfall in equipped play spaces** such as playgrounds and MUGAs in the settlement and increased provision needs to be made for such facilities on OS1 or AOS lands and as part of planned new residential neighbourhoods in particular in SLOs 3, 4 and 5.

3.5.4 Future Provision

In order to ensure that there is sufficient open space in the right locations to cater for the current and future targeted population of Arklow during the lifetime of this plan, the LPF should address the following:

- Where there are suitable undeveloped lands adjoining existing sports clubs or schools, these lands should be zoned AOS;
- Where there are existing sports facilities that have the potential to expand and/or upgrade but have not been zoned AOS under the 2018 LAP, these lands should be zoned AOS to encourage and facilitate upgrades as funding allows;
- The greenspace at Churchview (Abbeylands/Navvy Park) is currently zoned AOS under the 2018 LAP. It is considered that this site should be rezoned from AOS to OS1 to reflect its current use and to allow this area to develop (as funding allows) as a parkland with safe and direct walking/cycle routes linking adjoining residential areas to schools, public transport and the town centre; along with equipped and casual play spaces (noting there is a shortfall in equipped play spaces in the study area and in this existing residential area). Due to its size, this area would still be able to accommodate the existing casual kick-about space on this site under an OS1 zoning;
- The existing greenspace at Fernhill/Marian Villas is currently zoned OS1. This area is centrally located in south Arklow and well overlooked by existing residential development. Part of this area should be rezoned AOS to support its future development (as funding allows) for more active sports uses, coupled with the development of a park (OS1) with safe direct walking and cycle routes linking adjoining residential areas to schools, public transport and the town centre along with equipped and casual play spaces;
- Where land is identified for significant new residential development, this shall be contingent on the delivery with the development of new areas of public open space, including sports grounds and equipped play spaces including MUGAs for larger scale developments and at a scale commensurate with the development;
- Lands along the northern side of Arklow Marsh have the potential to facilitate the development of a linear park acting as a buffer between this proposed NHA and the proposed new residential development to the north. This area is located in proposed SLO5 Kilbride which is earmarked for significant future residential development. This new amenity parkland could serve to link proposed and existing residential development in this area to the proposed AOS lands to the west whilst also facilitating possible walking and cycle connections towards Ferrybank and the town centre.

In order to meet shortfalls and taking into account the needs identified through Arklow LPF pre-draft public consultation, the February 2023 report on the Community and Recreational needs of the Arklow Municipal District and the findings of this SIA, the draft Arklow LPF shall zone the following lands to facilitate additional and enhanced open space development.

Table 3.23: New AOS zones

Location	Approximate Area (ha)	Change proposed
Lands at Kynock Park	7.3 ha	Reduction in 7ha OS1. Rezoning to AOS allows for the expansion and improvement of AOS facilities on these lands.
Lands at Fernhill/St. Marian Villas	1.3 ha	Reduction in OS1 at this location allowing for AOS facilities to be developed alongside c. 0.6ha of OS1.
Lands to south east of Carysfort NS	0.8 ha	Located beside an existing pitch of circa 1ha. Not currently in active sports use. Zoned AOS in previous LAP.
Lands west of Arklow Geraldines Ballymoney GAA Club	2 ha	Currently not utilised as AOS but well located adjacent to existing active AOS lands. Zoned AOS in previous LAP.
SLO3	3.2 ha min	
SLO4	4.6 ha min	
SLO5	6.2 ha min	
Total	25.4 ha	

The upgrading of existing, and development of new sports facilities will be facilitated by the proposed AOS zonings on the first two sites above as funding allows. These sites are within the control of Wicklow County Council. The development of the AOS lands on SLOs 3, 4 and 5 will be phased so that they are delivered in tandem with residential development in these new neighbourhoods.

While the above will result in the loss of circa 8.3ha of casual play space, it is noted that there was a surplus of casual play spaces in Arklow of circa 9ha. Circa 3.6ha of new OS1 lands have been zoned on SLOs 3 and 5 to cater for access and movement by walking or cycling and/or to act as buffers between very active land use zonings and sensitive sites.

With regard to the provision of equipped play spaces there will be requirement that a minimum of 1.6ha of equipped play spaces in the form of playgrounds for all age groups and MUGAs are provided across SLOs 3, 4 and 5 in accordance with the level of residential development envisaged in these areas. There is also potential to develop additional and/or improved/expanded equipped play spaces on the existing OS1 zoned lands at Kynock Park, Navy Park and Fernhill/Marians Villas as funding allows.

In order to future proof this LPF, The following table outlines the proposed quanta of each classification of open space proposed under the draft Arklow LPF in comparison to the minimum required to serve the projected 2031 population and the current provision in the plan area.

Table 3.24: Existing, Minimum Required and Proposed Open Space Provision

Open Space Type	Currently Area (ha)	Required (ha) based on 2031 population target	Required (ha) based on 25,000 population	Proposed in LPF (ha)
Active Open Space (AOS)	16.3	26.4	40	42
Casual Play Space (OS1/RE)	23.8	9.9	15	15.5 (min)
Equipped Play Space	0.5	3.3	5	2.1
Totals	40.6	39.6	60	60

With respect to equipped play spaces (playgrounds, MUGAs etc) while every opportunity will be taken to ensure new facilities are provided as part of the new significant developments (such as SLO3, 4 and 5) there will still be a shortfall in this form of play space. In this regard, the development of additional equipped play spaces shall be facilitated and supported by the LPF at existing parks, particularly on Council managed lands such as Navy Park and Fernhill/Marina Villas as funding allows and as part of the open space provision in residential areas outside the SLOs.

3.6 Social, Community & Cultural Facilities

3.6.1 Audit of Existing Social and Community Facilities

Social and community facilities are a broad category and can include general civic services and services targeted to specific sections of the community. The following Social, Community & Cultural facilities or organisations have been identified within Arklow:

Table 3.25: Social and Community Facilities within the Arklow LAP boundary

Map Label	Name	Facility Type
SC1	Árus Lorcáin	Community Hall
SC2	The Colour Club	Community Hall
SC3	Coral Leisure Arklow	Community Hall
SC4	Abercorn Masonic Hall	Community Hall
SC5	St. Saviour's Church Hall	Community Hall
SC6	Marlborough Hall	Community Hall
SC7	Arklow Library	Public Services
SC8	Arklow Fire Station	Public Services
SC9	Arklow Garda Station	Public Services
SC10	Arklow Post Office	Public Services
SC11	Arklow Municipal District Office	Public Services
SC12	Arklow Sea Scouts Centre	Social/Community Facility
SC13	Arklow Women's Shed	Social/Community Facility
SC14	Arklow Men's Shed	Social/Community Facility
SC15	East Wicklow Youth Services	Social/Community Facility
N/A	Arklow Tidy Towns	Community Group

DISCLAIMER NOTE – This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Those facilities without map labels in the table above (and therefore not shown on the accompanying map) represent groups or periodic events without permanent physical premises.

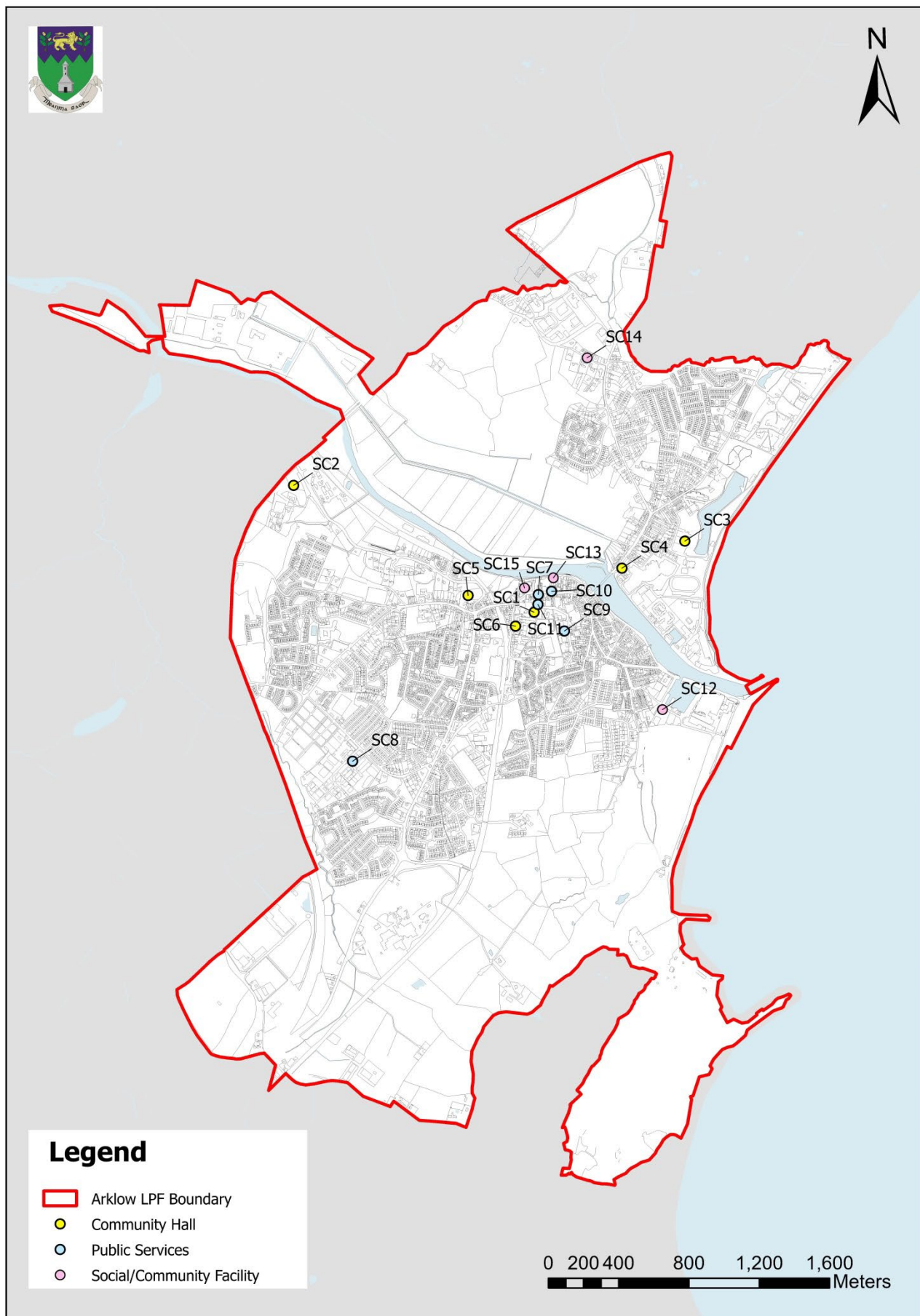
While there is no specific metric with respect to the amount of indoor community space required per head of population, taking into account the audit above and the public submission made at the pre-draft stage, it appears that these facilities do not fully meet the needs of Arklow's existing population. Particular shortfalls identified through public consultation included inadequate community halls / centres, lack of youth spaces and need for more indoor sports space that could be used by multiple users such as gymnastics, indoor racket sports etc.

Having regard to capacity constraints at existing facilities, and the unsuitability of some of these facilities for a wide range of users / users, there will be a need to plan for new community spaces as the population of the town increases.

Due to the variety of uses represented by the various facilities, a more even distribution of facilities within residential areas of the town would not necessarily represent better access to each type of facility. In this regard, the provision of multi-use community centres of sufficient size and format to cater for local community groups, classes and local small scale social events would be hugely beneficial to the settlement. Ideally such facilities should be centrally located in the existing built up area where they are most accessible to the existing and future residential population.

In order to support and facilitate the development of new community centres / facilities, such developments shall be acceptable in principle in all land use zones in this LPF other than OS1 and OS2, subject to normal planning considerations being fulfilled.

Figure 3.13: Location of existing Social and Community Facilities



3.7 Arts and Culture

Within the study area, 10 arts and culture facilities have been identified; the majority 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. Table 3.26 below provides details on the name, location and type of facility / service provided.

Table 3.26: Name and location of Arts and Culture facilities in Arklow

Name	Location	Facilities/Services
Arklow Maritime Museum	Bridgewater Shopping Centre, North Quay	Museum
Arklow Arts Centre and the 402 Art Collective	Lower Main Street	Artist's Studio, Gallery and Workshop Space.
Asgard Theatre	34/35 Lower Main Street	Performance Theatre
MAD (Murphy Academy of Drama and Performing Arts).	Knockenrahan Industrial Estate	Dance and Drama School.
Truly Musical	58 Lower Main Street	Music School -Piano
Arklow Dance Studios	Knockenrahan Industrial Estate.	Dance and Musical Theatre.
Studio 55 Dance Academy	Floor 2, Bridgewater Shopping Centre	Dance and Drama School.
Arklow Pipe Band	Arklow Pipe Band Hall	Music Group.
Avonmore Musical Society	Various venues	Performance Group.

DISCLAIMER NOTE – This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Again, while there is no specific metric with respect to the amount of Arts / Cultural space required per head of population, taking into account the audit above and the public submission made at the pre-draft stage, it appears that these facilities do not fully meet the needs of Arklow's existing population. Particular shortfalls identified through public consultation included inadequate theatre / performance space and art related spaces.

In order to support and facilitate the development of new Arts / Cultural space, such uses / developments shall be acceptable in principle in all land use zones in this LPF other than OS1 and OS2, subject to normal planning considerations being fulfilled. In addition, where new indoor community space is required to be delivered as part of large scale development, such spaces shall be required to be designed to meet the widest range of uses / users as possible.

3.8 Faith

Six religious facilities have been identified within the Arklow LPF area as follows:

Table 3.27: Religious facilities located in Arklow

Name	Location	Description
Saints Mary & Peter's Church	St. Mary's Road	Catholic Church
St, Joseph's Church	Templeraíneay	Catholic Church
St. Saviour's Church of Ireland	Vale Road	Anglican Church
Arklow Presbyterian Church	Ferrybank	Presbyterian Church
Arklow Christian Community Church International	St. Mary's Road	Christian Church
Banner of Love Church	Abbey Lane	Christian Church

In addition to the above, there is one active graveyard within the settlement of Arklow - St. Gabriel's Cemetery on the Emoclew Road. The SIA does not include inactive historic graveyards such as Howard Mausoleum Pyramid at Old Kilbride Cemetery and The Abbey Graveyard.

As per Council records, there have been c. 380 burials in St. Gabriel's Cemetery from 1st January 2018 to date. There are no quantitative standards for the provision of churches and other faith-based facilities, or graveyards. Currently there is enough capacity in the existing graveyard for the next 3 years.

Therefore the expansion of the existing graveyard or the formation of a new graveyard in the Arklow area will need to be considered in the short term. Should lands within the LPF area become available for such use, such development will be considered in accordance with the land-use zoning objectives of the LPF and normal planning and sustainable development considerations.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Provision of Social Infrastructure in general

In addition to the above specific social – community infrastructure requirements, this study recommends the following practices in the provision of social – community infrastructure to ensure consistency 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 and offer a focus to support community engagement;

Connectivity and linkages: Opportunities to enhance the existing cycle and pedestrian infrastructure network and routes should be incorporated into any development proposal. To facilitate access to and through amenities, for the purpose of improving connectivity/permeability and the quality of this amenity.

Partnership: Encourage delivery of infrastructure services and facilities through partnerships between different bodies for maximum efficiency and coordination; and

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 on community infrastructure and facilities for the benefit of the community and service providers.

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 Arklow.

The role of social – community infrastructure in integrating new and existing communities in the LPF 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 and community 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 all together.



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES