

Community Infrastructure Audit of Skerries

In respect of the proposed development at

**Hacketstown,
Skerries, Co. Dublin**

Prepared by

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On behalf of

Land Development Agency

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Community Facilities Audit of the existing community facilities serving the Skerries area has been prepared to support the lodgement of a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) Planning Application to An Bord Pleanála. This report contains an audit of the existing social and community infrastructure in the area relating to:
- Community resources including community centres, retail and cultural facilities;
 - Education (primary, secondary and third level institutions);
 - Open space, sport and recreation;
 - Health and social services facilities;
 - Religious facilities
- 1.2 These facilities are assessed to support the proposed development of the subject site for residential use. In particular, this Assessment will demonstrate that there is sufficient community facilities provision within the catchment to cater for the future needs of the population, therefore the development of the subject lands will not result in a loss of community related activities
- 1.3 Following the tripartite meeting the Board recommended that the applicant should consult with the Fingal County Childcare Committee (FCCC) prior to the lodgement of the full application. Correspondence with the FCCC is enclosed as Appendix 3, who support the inclusion of a childcare facility of the proposed scale within this application.
- 1.4 The site currently provides no community facility or open space for public use. In addition to the residential uses, the proposed development will comprise of public open space, pedestrian and cyclist connections and play space. The proposal will also provide for a childcare (creche) facility which will benefit the local area, and the existing and future residents. Therefore the proposed development will result in a significant contribution to community facilities in the area.
- 1.5 This report has been prepared on behalf of Land Development Agency, who propose to develop lands in their ownership in Hacketstown, Skerries, for a residential development, including 345 no. residential units and a creche facility. The subject site is zoned 'RA' (Residential Area) under the current Fingal County Development Plan. Zoning Objective 'RA' states:
- "Provide for new residential communities subject to the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure".*
- 1.6 The purpose of the community audit is to determine if the Skerries area is well served by community related facilities to support the future residents of the proposed development. The study also forms an important information tool that can be used in the consideration of the redevelopment of other lands in the area.

Approach

- 1.7 The approach used to assess the need for social and community infrastructure is as follows: a desktop study was used to collect the baseline information, this was then supplemented with a site visit and land use survey of the area to confirm this was up to date using an approximate radius of 2km. Facilities outside of this 2km but conveniently accessible are also noted. The facilities in each category were recorded in an excel table then mapped.

2.0 SKERRIES AREA CONTEXT

- 2.1 Skerries is a coastal town in Fingal located 31km (19min) north of Dublin City Centre. Historically Skerries developed as a fishing village and later a centre of hand embroidery. These industries declined in the early 20th century and it became both a resort town and a commuter town for Dublin.
- 2.2 Skerries neighbours other northside districts such as Rush, Lusk, and Balbriggan.
- 2.3 Skerries is located c. 7km east of the M1, which links to the M50, Dublin Airport and Dublin Port Tunnel.
- 2.4 The town has an attractive coastal location and is served by a commuter rail line. The town has a variety of facilities including retail, restaurants and related services.



Figure 1: Skerries.

- 2.5 Figure 2 shows the subject site in the context of Skerries. Figure 3 below shows the locational context of Skerries in relation to the County.



Figure 2: Map showing context of the subject site in relation to Skerries.



Figure 3: Map showing context of Skerries in relation to the County.

3.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

3.1 In order to determine an appropriate catchment area for the Community Audit, it was decided to use the Settlement Area of Skerries town as per the CSO SAPMAP, as seen in Figure 4 below.

3.2 The demographic trends for the study area are derived from the 2011 and 2016 Census and relate to the Settlement area of Skerries. The following areas are discussed:

- Population;
- Age Profile;
- Social Class and Employment;
- Educational Attainment.



Figure 4: Study Area Boundary outlined in blue; Source: CSO.

Population

Year	Skerries		State	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2011	9,671		4,588,252	
2016	10,043	3.8	4,757,976	3.7

Table 1: Population Trends in Skerries, County and the State, 2011-2016.

3.3 As can be seen from Table 1 above, the population growth in the Skerries area is similar to the growth rate of the State.

Household Size

- 3.4 Table 2 below provides an overview of household size in the settlement of Skerries. The average household size is 2.8. Based on the average household size in Skerries the predicted population of the development is 995 No. persons.

Size of household	Households	Persons
1 person	672	672
2 persons	1,024	2,048
3 persons	616	1,848
4 persons	673	2,692
5 persons	385	1,925
6 persons	129	774
7 persons	20	140
8 or more persons	9	75
Total	3,528	10,174

Age Profile

Age Group	Skerries		State	
	2016 Pop.	% of Pop.	2016 Pop.	% of Pop.
0-19	2,987	29.7	1,309,368	27.4
20-39	2,285	22.2	1,322,467	27.7
40-59	2,923	29.1	1,253,607	26.3
60-79	1,588	15.8	727,831	15.2
80+	260	2.5	148,592	3.1
Total	10,043		4,761,865	

Table 2: Age Profile in Skerries and the State, 2016; Source: CSO.

- 3.5 The table above shows the age profile of the Skerries area in comparison to the State. The above figure shows that Skerries has a higher 0-19 population profile than the State average.

Social Class and Employment

Principal Economic Status	Skerries		State	
	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
At work	4,209	54.5	2,006,641	53.4
Looking for first regular job	48	0.6	31,434	0.8
Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	357	4.6	265,962	7.0
Student	913	11.8	427,128	11.3
Looking after home/family	677	8.7	305,556	8.1
Retired	1,268	16.4	545,407	14.5
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	223	2.8	158,348	4.2
Other	21	0.2	14,837	0.3
Total	7,716		3,755,313	

Table 3: Employment Statistics of Skerries and the State, 2016; Source: CSO.

- 3.6 The table above shows that the Skerries area has an above average amount of the population at work in similar to State, at 54.5.4% compared to the State average of 53.4%. The Skerries area has a high percentage of the population which are retired at 16.4%.

Social Class	Skerries		State	
	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
Professional workers	1,129	11.2	386,648	8.1
Managerial and technical	4,146	41.2	1,336,896	28
Non-manual	1,792	17.8	837,145	17.5
Skilled manual	1,013	10.0	671,890	14.1
Semi-skilled	614	6.1	501,103	10.5
Unskilled	189	1.8	170,391	3.5
All others gainfully occupied and unknown	1,160	11.5	857,792	18
Total	10,043		4,761,865	

Table 4: Social class of Skerries and the State, 2016; Source: CSO

- 3.7 The figures presented in Table 4 suggest that the Skerries area has a healthy employment trend when compared to the State average. In terms of social class, the above table demonstrates that the Skerries area has a high percentage of the population working as Managerial and Technical. For example, 41.2% of the Skerries population are employed as Managerial and technical, as compared to the State average of 28% and 11.2.5% of the Skerries population are Professional workers, compared to the State average of 8.1%.
- 3.8 The social class of an area is directly related to educational attainment. The high number of managerial and technical in the Skerries area suggests a strong educational attainment. This will be further discussed below.

Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Skerries		State	
	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
No Formal Education	59	0.9	52,214	1.6
Primary Education	413	6.3	334,284	10.7
Lower Secondary	665	10.2	449,766	14.5
Upper Secondary	1,331	20.5	573,643	18.5
Technical or Vocational qualification	471	7.2	271,532	8.7
Advanced Certificate/Completed Apprenticeship	364	5.6	182,318	5.8
Higher Certificate	374	5.7	153,351	4.9
Ordinary Bachelor Degree or National Diploma	671	10.3	237,117	7.6
Honours Bachelor Degree, Professional qualification or both	951	14.6	331,293	10.6
Postgraduate Diploma or Degree	826	12.7	284,107	9.1
Doctorate (Ph.D) or higher	93	1.4	28,759	0.9

Not stated	265	4.0	198,668	6.4
Total	6,483		3,097,052	

Table 5: Education Level in Skerries and the State, 2016; Source: CSO.

- 3.9 As can be seen from Table 5 above, the Skerries area has an above average level of educational attainment. For example, the percentage of the population with Honours Bachelor Degree or National Diploma in Skerries (14.6.5%) is above the State average (10.6%). Additionally, the percentage of the population in Skerries with a Postgraduate Diploma or Degree is above the State average, with figures of 12.7% and 9.1%, respectively.

4.0 Policy Context

4.1 The key provisions of national and local planning policy as it relates to the proposed development and this Community facilities Audit is set out in the following sections. The key policy and guidance documents of relevance to the proposed development include:

- *Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023*
- *Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;*
- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009);*
- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001);*

Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023

4.2 Chapter 3 of the Fingal County Development Plan sets out strategy for Placemaking in the County. The Development Plan states that “*Sustainable communities are those that are economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient*”.

4.3 Section 3.2 sets out the characteristics of successful and sustainable communities, including:

- *Include a range of facilities focused in a consolidated area with a critical mass of attractions and make best use of the already established investment in the built environment; these attractions include a mix of shops as well as a wide range of financial, professional and government services together with cultural, entertainment and leisure facilities.*
- *Include a thriving local residential population which adds to the vitality and vibrancy of the area as it ensures activity outside of standard retail and office opening hours.*
- *Are easily accessible by a range of transport modes including cycling and walking, have sufficient good quality short stay car parking close to the core area, have good transport linkages within the centre, and have efficient arrangements for delivery of goods.*
- *Present an attractive amenity in terms of the built environment and streetscape, streets and public spaces which are considered clean and safe, and have a sense of local identity and character, all of which greatly enhances the attraction of the centre.*
- *Have the vision and mechanisms in place to build on these existing assets, can overcome problems, adapt to both market and consumer needs and can secure appropriate and necessary improvements where required.*
- *Encourage and facilitate sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods.*

4.4 The proposed development has the potential to meet many of these characteristics in particular through the a high quality design approach to the proposed development including streets and open spaces. The development itself will be highly accessible as a result of bus and train infrastructure, but also through the provision of cycle paths and pedestrian infrastructure which will connect with Skerries.

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

4.5 The Guidelines state that one of the fundamental questions to be addressed during the planning process is “*the relationship and linkages between the area to be*

(re)developed and established neighbourhoods, including the availability of existing community facilities, and the provision of pedestrian and cycle networks.”

- 4.6 The Guidelines state that Planning Authorities should ensure efficient and integrated provision of schools, childcare, community centres, healthcare facilities and district/neighbourhood centres are made available for the wider community. We note the following requirements set out in the Guidelines that relate to social infrastructure:
- **Schools:** *“No substantial residential development should proceed without an assessment of existing schools’ capacity or the provision of new school facilities in tandem with the development.”* This is further clarified as requiring applications for 200+ units to be accompanied by a report detailing the school capacity of the area and the impact of the development.
 - **Childcare:** In accordance with the Childcare Guidelines 2001, the Guidelines recommend the provision of one childcare facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units. However, the Guidelines state *“the threshold for such provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas, in consultation with city / county childcare committees. The location of childcare facilities should be easily accessible by parents, and the facility may be combined with other appropriate uses, such as places of employment.”*
 - **Community Centres:** The Guidelines state that provision of community centres is to be assessed by the local authority but should be in a central area and near public transport facilities.
 - **Healthcare facilities:** The Guidelines state that the provision of healthcare facilities should be determined in conjunction with the Health Services Executive and the needs of the elderly and disabled should be taken into consideration in health care facilities, accessibility, caretaking facilities and residential development.
 - **District/Neighbourhood Centres:** The provision of new retail in new district or neighbourhood centres will be influenced by the Development Plan Retail Strategy.

The Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities

- 4.7 The Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities published in June 2001 provide a framework to guide both local authorities in preparing development plans and assessing applications for planning permission, and developers and childcare providers in formulating development proposals.
- 4.8 The Guidelines state that the local authority policies should focus on: *“The identification of appropriate locations for the provision of childcare facilities including city centres, district centres, neighbourhood centres, residential areas, places of employment, and educational institutions and convenience to public transport nodes as a key element in the development of sustainable communities.”*
- 4.9 Considering the number of 2 and 3 bed units in the proposed development it will need to provide for the childcare need generated by the future population.

5.0 Overview of Existing Community Facilities

5.1 A survey was carried out of the existing social infrastructure in the defined study area under the following headings:

- Community and Social Infrastructure
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Education Facilities
- Healthcare Facilities
- Religious Facilities
- Arts & Cultural Facilities
- Retail.

5.2 In addition we have mapped the key resources within approximately 2km of the subject site in the above categories. 2 km is considered a reasonable maximum distance to travel via range of transport including walking, cycling and public transport. The area is well provided for in many regards, as such the list is not exhaustive due to the number of such facilities nearby, instead the survey focuses on the most convenient and relevant. The site is regarded as being well connected to existing community facilities.

Community and Social Infrastructure

5.3 Quality neighbourhoods should be responsive to the needs of local communities, play an important role in quality of life factors and foster a wider sense of community and active citizenship.

5.4 Community Facilities are considered to include community centres, youth services, local authority offices, welfare services, libraries, Garda and fire stations, and other infrastructure.

5.5 Skerries has a strong network of community groups and clubs, many of which are voluntary groups. Our survey identified a large range of community facilities within the study area

5.6 Key providers in the area include the Skerries Community Centre and the Mounse Community Centres, *inter alia*. These facilities provide an essential role in responding to local community needs.

5.7 Skerries also has a library. Libraries provide useful facilities to local residents including free broadband and wireless internet service, self-service printing/scanning, photocopying, study space, children's learning zone, large print book collection, daily newspapers accessible to all. and a community noticeboard / information.

Arts & Cultural Facilities

5.8 It is widely recognised that arts and culture are key cornerstones in the sustainable development of new communities, helping to define and preserve identity, promote social activity, and offer valuable educational and economic returns. County Dublin has a strong network of artists, performers and musicians promoting cultural activities.

5.9 Fingal County Council Arts Office provides a service that supports the development of creative people and communities through the Arts. Provision and support of high quality arts experiences are central to the service. This is realised through research,

programmes, events, grants and awards and the development of on-line and off-line resources.

5.10 The following arts and cultural facilities have been identified in the study and provided a variety of uses to the community:

- Keys and String Music School
Keys & Strings School of Music provide comprehensive music education to children and adults, offering tuition in piano, violin, viola, cello, guitar, ukulele, drums, tin whistle, Irish traditional flute, saxophone, singing, pre-instrumental classes and music theory.
- Skerries Music Studio
Skerries Music Studio provides singing lessons, theory classes, music grinds to Primary, Secondary, Third Level Students and Adults.
- Yoganamara Yoga Studio
Yoganamara offers a variety of classes and workshops for all stages of life, including prenatal Yoga classes, postnatal baby friendly Yoga, Kids and Family.
- Skerries Library
Skerries library is located off Strand Street in Skerries town. It offers a range of facilities including internet access, study areas, computer classes, story telling and book club.
- Skerries Art School
Skerries Art School is a progressive Art School based in Skerries Mills. Classes cater for children from 4 up to 19 years and leaving Certificate and Portfolio courses are also provided as well as a full range of adult classes.
- Old Skerries Society
Old Skerries Society founded was in 1948 and is now known as the 'Skerries Historical Society' and promotes awareness of and conservation of local history, heritage and artefacts.

Retail

5.11 Skerries has a range of choice and type of retail uses in the immediate area. Key retail facilities are concentrated in the town centre. In addition there are a number of neighbourhood and local centres catering for more everyday needs.

5.12 A small retail complex anchored by C & T Superstore is located on Shenick Road, approximately 2km from the subject site. In addition to the supermarket, the complex also houses the pharmacy, butchers, hairdressers, and GP surgery.

5.13 Skerries Point Shopping Centre is anchored by Eurospar. Other tenants include Boylesports, Well Fit Health and Fitness, Vets First, and Kelly's Bay Montessori, alongside a pharmacy, takeaway and beauticians.

5.14 Skerries Point extends to 6,381 sqm and has parking at surface and basement level for 200 cars.

5.15 The following mix of retail uses were noted in the Skerries Town Centre, neighbourhood and local centres:

- Convenience and comparison retail
- Book shops
- Restaurants and cafes
- Hairdressers and barbers

- Pharmacies
- Electronics
- Post office
- Banks and credit unions
- Mechanics and Car repairs
- Medical, Social welfare and other civic services

5.16 It is considered that the subject proposal support the retail offering in the town, particularly with regard to convenience shopping adding to the town’s vitality and vibrancy.

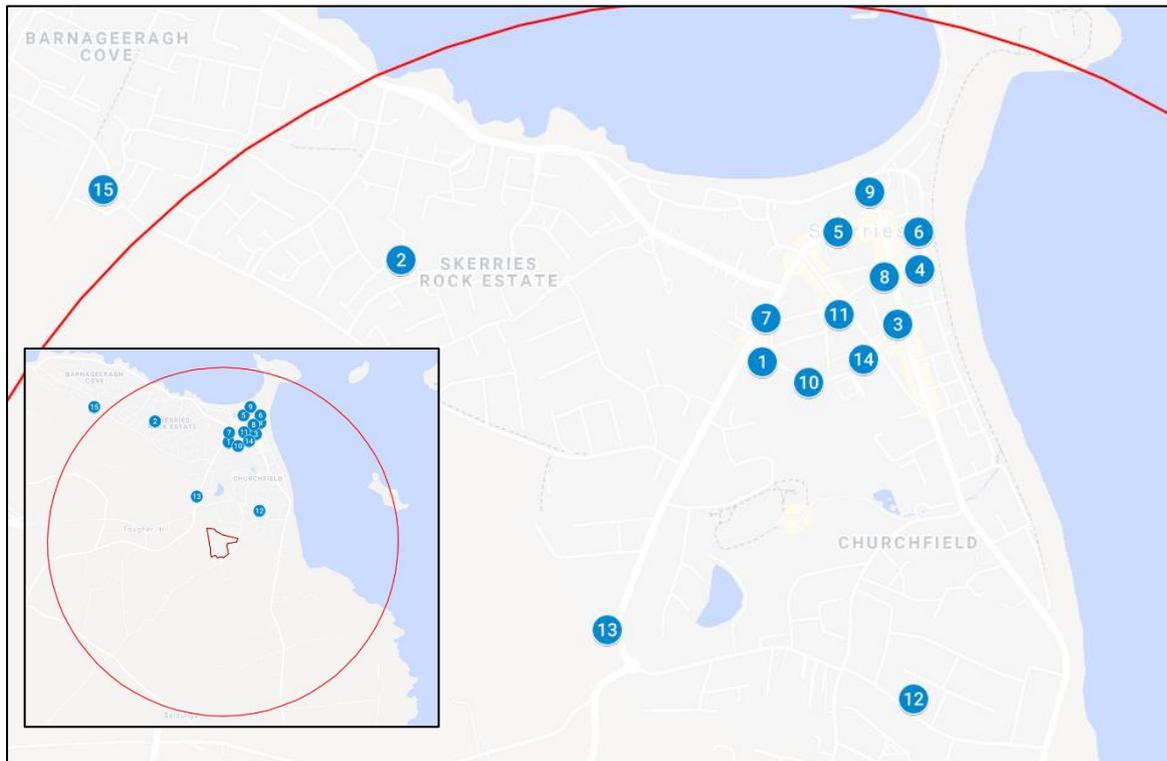


Figure 5: Overview of Community facilities within 2km of the subject site.

Type	Name	Address
1. Community Resource	Skerries Community Centre	Thomas Hand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
2. Community Resource	Mourne Community Centre	32 Mourne Park, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 RX40
3. Library	Skerries Library	Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
4. Post Office	An Post Skerries	30/31 Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
5. Credit Union	Progressive Credit Union Skerries Office	26 Thomas Hand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 PP73
6. Recycling	Recycling	19 S Strand, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
7. Cultural	The Little Theatre	R127, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
8. Garda Station	Skerries Garda Station	Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 F682

9. Community Resource	Prosper Fingal	Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
10. Youth	Skerries Scout Den	Scouts Den, Beau Piers, Lane, Skerries, Co. Dublin
11. Retail	Skerries Town Centre	Skerries, Co. Dublin
12. Retail	Holmpatrick Shopping Centre	8 Shenick Rd, Skerries, Co. Dublin
13. Fire Station	Skerries Fire Station - Dublin Fire Brigade	Dublin Rd, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 RK22
14. Local Service	Moriarty's Supervalu Skerries	Church St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 FX23
15. Local Service	Skerries Point Shopping Centre	Skerries Point Shopping Centre, Kelly's Bay Dr, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 KC92

Table 6: Overview of key community facilities within 2km of the subject site.

Open Space, Sport & Recreation

- 5.17 The purpose of this audit is to support the provision of residential development on the subject site in that the study area is well served by existing community facilities which will adequately serve the needs of the future residents.
- 5.18 Recreation and open space are an important part of every community's life. They require pro-active encouragement and enhancement to ensure participation by all within the local community. This section of the audit seeks to identify the type, functions, location and maintenance requirements of open spaces within the wider area and includes:
- An assessment of the quality and condition of facilities and fitness for purpose;
 - The levels of use, needs and differing aspirations for open space by the community; and
 - An evaluation of the existing provision against the identified needs, such as to identify areas of deficiency or surplus and other issues and opportunities.
- 5.19 The immediate area has a range of open space areas suitable for cycling, running and walking. Skerries is a small town but adjacent to the rural environment and the coast with a range of open space and recreation areas. For the purposes of this study open space and recreation facilities are considered to include parks, playgrounds, multi-use games areas, leisure facilities and sports pitches used by GAA, football and other clubs.
- 5.20 Quality recreation, leisure and amenity facilities have a fundamental impact on quality of life. It can improve social integration and cohesiveness. Sporting, recreation and leisure activities are of primary importance to the quality of life enjoyed by the local community.
- 5.21 We note several open spaces and sport facilities in the vicinity of the subject site such as Skerries Golf Club, Skerries Rugby, Football and GAA clubs, Skerries Beach which provides key recreational resources to the local population.

Skerries Beach

- 5.22 A popular local amenity in the area, Skerries Beach, is a sandy beach approximately 2.5km in length with low dunes behind the strandline in the centre of and to the south of the designated bathing area. The beach is accessible from the footpath / promenade that runs in parallel the length of the beach and provides facilities for dog owners, nature lovers, joggers and swimmers.



Figure 6: Skerries Beach.

Skerries Golf Club

- 5.23 Skerries Golf Club, founded in 1905, is a championship 18 hole parkland golf course which is located within proximity of the subject site.



Figure 7: Skerries Golf Club.

Skerries Harps GAA Club

- 5.24 Skerries Harps is a Gaelic Athletic Association club based in Skerries, County Dublin, Ireland, playing Gaelic football, hurling and camogie. The club is located on the Dublin Road in Skerries with a main pitch and club house at this location. The club has just under 40 teams competing at all levels in football, hurling, camogie and ladies' football.

The club plays at senior level in football and camogie, intermediate level in ladies' football and junior hurling.



Figure 8: Skerries Harps GAA pitches.

Skerries FC

- 5.25 Skerries Town FC is a north county Dublin football club. The main pitch and Clubhouse is located at Park Lane, off the Dublin Road opposite Skerries Community Centre. The other pitches in the Town Park have access via the car park of Skerries Community Centre or via the car park of the Skerries Mills.

Skerries Rugby Football Club

- 5.26 Skerries RFC is an All-Ireland League team, established in 1926, and open to all rugby players and supporters. The club grounds and clubhouse are located at Holmpatrick, Skerries.



Figure 9: Skerries RFC.

Mourne Park

- 5.27 Mourne Park is a public open space that is located between a number of residential developments built in c. 1950. The park has two pitches which are used by local GAA and football clubs.

Ballast Pit

- 5.28 Ballast Pit is located on the Newtown Park Road north-east of the Skerries train station. The pitch is used by Skerries Harps GAA club during the week for training and at the weekend for matches. At all other times it is accessible to be utilised by the local residents.



Figure 10: Ballast Pit.

Type	Name	Address
1. Open Space	Skerries Town Park	Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
2. Open Space	The Green	Holmpatrick, Ardgillan Castle, Co. Dublin
3. Open Space	Skerries South Beach	Unnamed Road, Skerries, Co. Dublin
4. Open Space	Skerries North Strand	8 Harbour Rd, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 C799
5. Sports Club	Skerries Rugby Club	Holmpatrick, Skerries, Co. Dublin
6. Sports Club	Skerries FC, Town Park Pitches	Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
7. Sports Club	Skerries GAA Club	Thomas Hand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
8. Sports Club	Skerries Town Football Club	Park Lane, Thomas Hand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
9. Sports Club	Skerries Hockey Club	Skerries Community Centre, Skerries, Co. Dublin
10. Sports Club	Skerries Sailing Club	Skerries Community Centre, Skerries, Co. Dublin
11. Sports Club	Skerries Rowing Club	Harbour Rd, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin

12. Sports Club	Skerries Golf Club	Hacketstown, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 R208
13. Sports Club	Skerries Bowling Club	1 Tennis Ct Ln, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
14. Open Space	Red Island Park	Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
15. Sports Club	Skerries Harps	Newtown Parks, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
16. Open Space	Mourne Park	Northcliffe Heights, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin

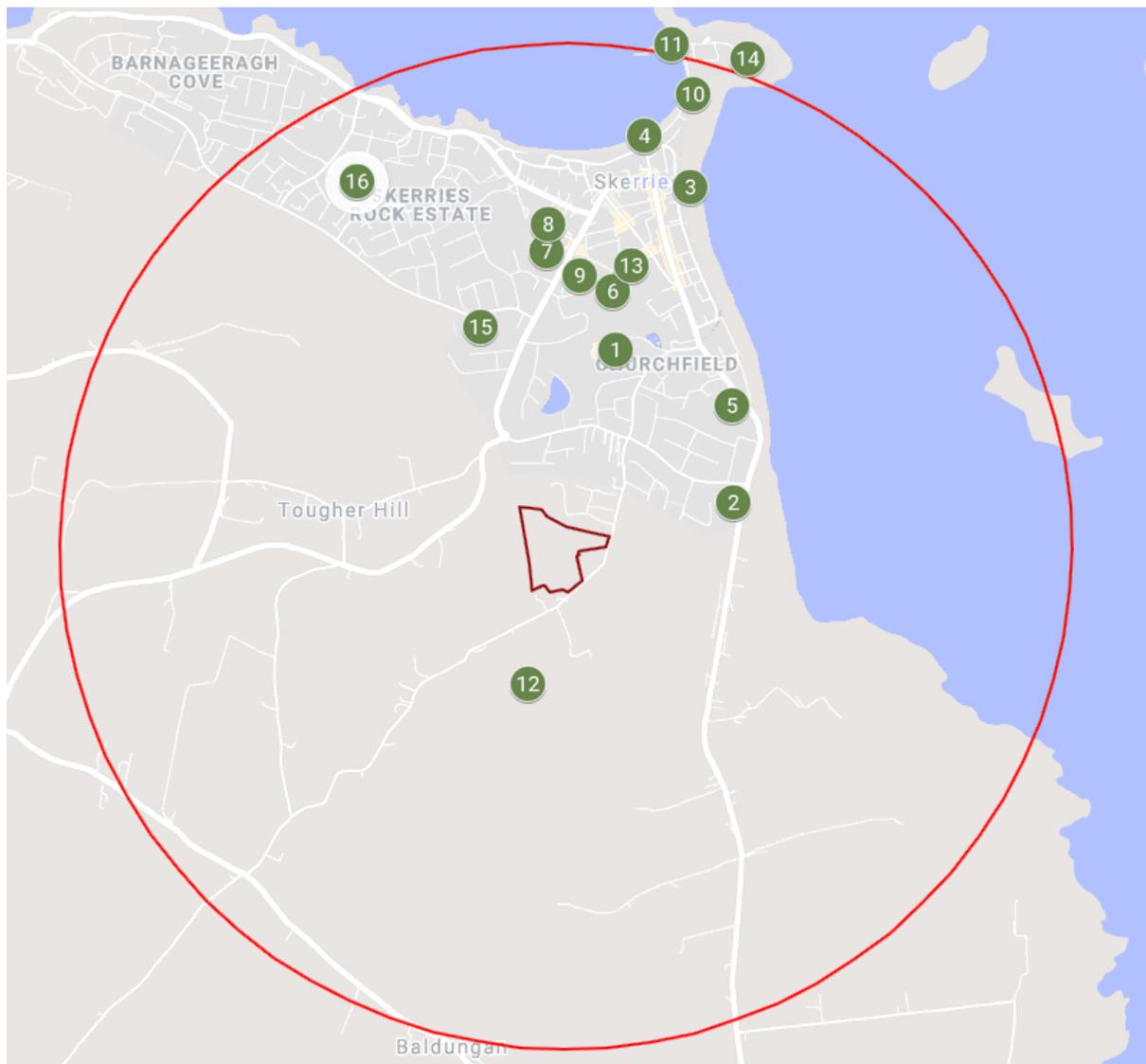


Figure 11: Overview of Open Space and Recreation Facilities within 2km.

Educational Facilities

- 5.29 The following range of education facilities including: pre / after school, primary, secondary, third level colleges and further education facilities were identified within close proximity of the subject site.
- 5.30 The map below illustrates the high concentration of schools within a 2km radius of the subject site. Appendix 1-2 lists details of individuals facilities.
- 5.31 The proposed development includes a childcare facility; the rationale and justification for this facility is set out below.
- 5.32 We also note St Michaels Special School directly to the east of the subject site.

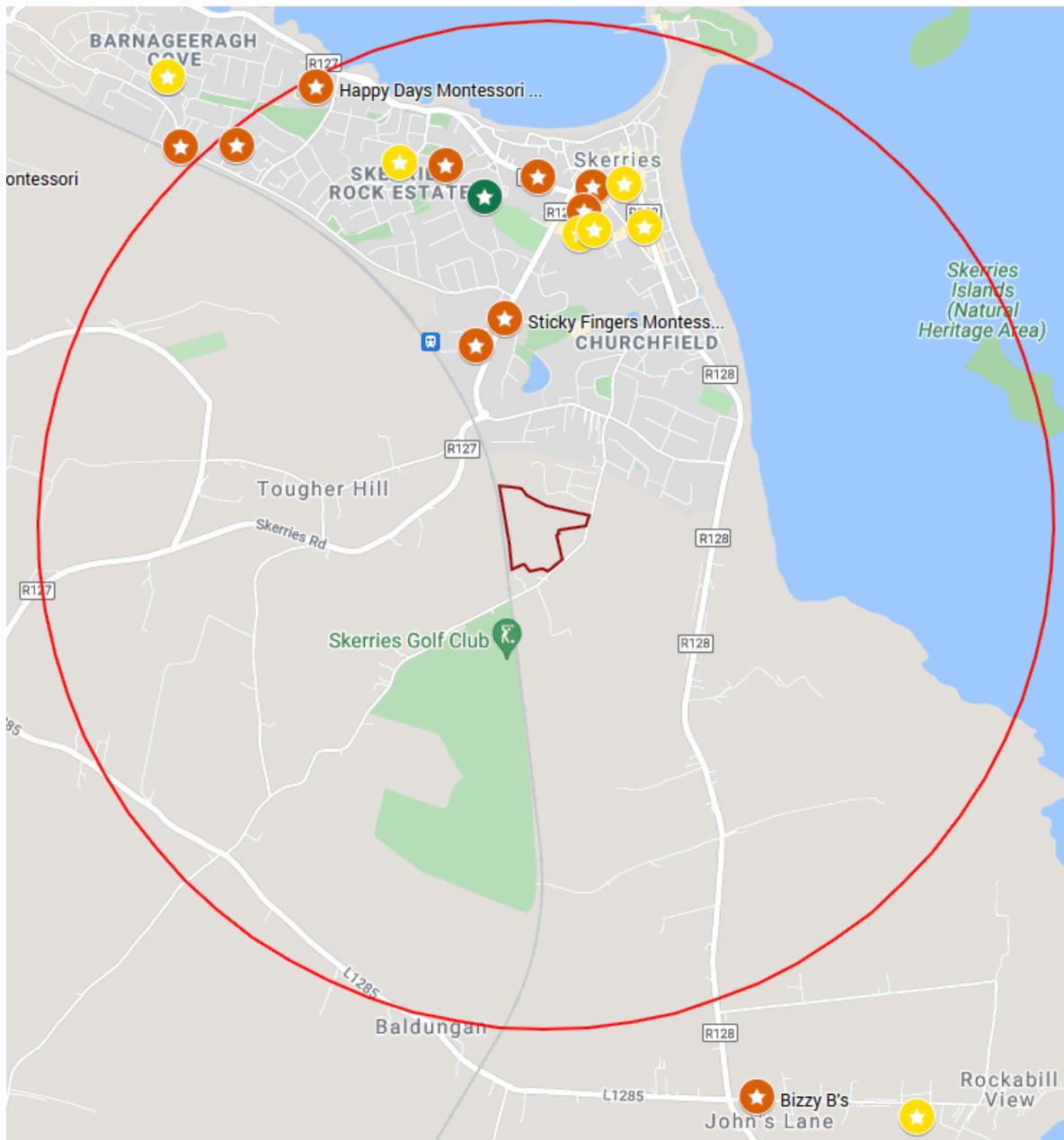


Figure 12: Overview of Education Facilities within 2km with approximate locations.

	Primary Schools
	Secondary Schools
	Childcare Facilities

- 5.33 *“The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008)”* published by the Department of Education and Science and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, sets out best practice approaches that should be followed by planning authorities in ensuring that the planning system plays its full part in facilitating the timely and cost-effective roll-out of school facilities by the Department of Education and Science and in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.
- 5.34 In respect of identifying requirements for primary schools in the future, the “Code of Practice” outlines that the Department of Education and Science will assume that an average of 12% of the population is of primary school-going age.
- 5.35 In respect of secondary schools’ provision, the “Code of Practice” identifies that the procedure for establishing demand for new second-level schools may in some cases be more complex as it involves not just an assessment of likely population growth but also an appraisal of the capacity of existing post-primary schools, coupled with an assessment of the enrolment patterns in existing and anticipated ‘feeder’ national schools.
- 5.36 Planning Authorities are required to anticipate the demand for new schools’ infrastructure using this methodology.
- 5.37 The “Identification and Suitability Assessment of Sites for Primary and Post Primary Schools” Guidance has been prepared to assist in the identification and the assessment for suitability of new sites for Primary Schools. The guidance is intended for use in conjunction with relevant design guidelines and technical guidance documents produced by the Department of Education and Skills and other appropriate stakeholders.
- 5.38 Whilst the technical guidance document provides helpful information on the physical suitability requirements of school sites, it does not provide assistance with determining when a school site may be required. This guidance is set out within the ‘Provision of Schools and the Planning System’ code of practice document produced by the Department of Education and Science.

Primary Schools

- 5.39 The primary education sector includes a range of school types, including: state-funded schools, special schools and private primary schools. The state-funded schools include religious schools, nondenominational schools, multi-denominational schools and Gaelscoileanna (Irish-medium schools).
- 5.40 The State pays the bulk of the building and running costs of state-funded primary schools. Although children are not obliged to attend school until the age of six, almost all children begin school in the September following their fourth birthday. Nearly 40% of four-year-olds and almost all five-year-olds are enrolled in infant classes in primary

schools (sometimes called national schools). Primary education consists of an eight year cycle: junior infants, senior infants, and first to sixth classes. Pupils normally transfer to post-primary education at the age of twelve.

- 5.41 We note 6 No. primary schools within 2 km of the subject site, with another 2 No. just outside this radius catering for 1,762 No. pupils. Please see Appendix 1 for full list of these primary schools (figures based on most recently available Department of Education figures dated 27 December 2021¹).
- 5.42 With an average primary school-going age cohort of 12% of the population (as per the Department of Education methodology for calculating school demand), the additional primary school-going population which would be required to be planned for within the Skerries area equates to c. 119 no children ($995 / 100 \times 12$).

Secondary Schools

- 5.43 The post-primary education sector comprises secondary, vocational, community and comprehensive schools. Secondary schools are privately owned and managed. Vocational schools are state-established and administered by Education and Training Boards (ETBs), while community and comprehensive schools are managed by Boards of Management.
- 5.44 Post-primary education consists of a three-year Junior Cycle (lower secondary), followed by a two or three year Senior Cycle (upper secondary), depending on whether the optional Transition Year (TY) is taken.
- 5.45 Students usually begin the Junior Cycle at age 12. The Junior Certificate examination is taken after three years. The main objective of the Junior Cycle is for students to complete a broad and balanced curriculum, and to develop the knowledge and skills that will enable them to proceed to Senior Cycle education. The Senior Cycle caters for students in the 15 to 18 year age group. It includes an optional Transition Year, which follows immediately after the Junior Cycle. We have surveyed the number of schools in the wider 2km area, as these schools are likely to serve the future residents of the proposed development.
- 5.46 Based on an average post-primary school-going age cohort of 8.5% of the population (as per the Department of Education methodology for calculating school demand), the additional post-primary school-going population which would be required to be planned for within the Skerries area equates to c. 84 no. children ($995 / 100 \times 8.5$).
- 5.47 We note 1 No. post-primary schools within 2km of the subject site, catering for 1,003 No. pupils. We also note an objective to provide a school to the east of the subject site (figures based on most recently available Department of Education figures dated 27 December 2021²).

<p> Skerries Community College Roll Number 76078Q, Address: Skerries, Co. Dublin, County, Dublin, K34HH29 Gender: Mixed Ethos: Inter Denominational Female Students: 439 Male: 564 </p>

¹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/primary-schools/>

² <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/post-primary-schools/>

Total (2021/22): 1,003

Summary of Schools Capacity

- 5.48 The total number of primary school pupils enrolled in the schools currently amounts to 1,762, with the total number of secondary school pupils amounting to 1,003. On this basis it is considered the increased demand from the population projects, as identified by the Skerries area, of 119 primary and 84 secondary can be accommodated within the existing and planned school provision in the area.
- 5.49 The proposed development provides for a total 345 no. units. The maximum occupancy for the development is calculated as 995 no. persons based on the average household size in Skerries.
- 5.50 Based on the primary school age cohort representing 12% of the total population (based upon the methodology employed by the Department of Education and Skills), the proposed development with its estimated capacity for 995 new residents will create additional demand for 119 no. primary school places. This figure represents a high-end estimate as it is based upon the assumption of maximum occupancy with the development, and it is likely not all units will be occupied families.
- 5.51 Based on the post primary school age cohort representing 8.5% of the total population (based upon the methodology employed by the Department of Education and Skills), the proposed development will create additional demand for c. 84 no. secondary school places. As above, this figure represents a high-end estimate as it is based upon the assumption of maximum occupancy with the development, and it is likely not all units will be occupied families.
- 5.52 Having regard to these estimated figures for additional primary and secondary school demand, the school provision (both existing and planned) in the surrounding area of the subject site, and the accessibility of the site to further schools, it is considered reasonable to estimate that the additional population can be accommodated within the existing and planned school infrastructure.
- 5.53 We note The Department of Education and Skills is currently progressing improvement works at Skerries Community College and St. Michael's Special School³. The Department assessing the demand for new schools on a continual basis will bring forward proposals for new schools in the area as the need arises based on their forecasting process. We note an existing objective to provide a school on lands to the east of the site on Golf Links Road, Thus, it is respectfully submitted that it is appropriate for the Board to grant permission for the proposed development in the context of existing and planned school provision in the area.

Childcare Facilities

- 5.54 We have carried out an audit of the existing childcare facilities in the Skerries area. The following pre / after schools were identified within the Skerries area. Figure 12 above illustrates the location of these facilities. Within just approximately 2 km we noted 6 No. childcare facilities, with a further 2 No. in close proximity, providing a range of services from full day to sessional for a range of age profile with a cumulative capacity for 260 No. children. Appendix 2 sets out full details of individual childcare facilities.

³ <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/c5b56b-major-projects/#current-status-of-large-scale-projects>

- 5.55 We also note the a Creche facility (455 sqm) planned on Noonan lands to the north of the subject site as part of phase 3, Hacketstown, Skerries (previously the subject of Pre-Application consultation SHD).
- 5.56 The total number of pre-school childcare places available in Skerries is 260 places. The 2016 Census found there were 725 No. children aged between 0 and 4 in the area. Statistics for the total number of children attending pre-school facilities within this area are not available but nationally a figure of 19% of pre-school aged children attend a creche or Montessori.
- 5.57 The proposed development provides for 345 units within the scheme. In calculating the need for childcare, we have discounted the number of 1 bedroom units from the equation as set out by the Design Standards for New Apartments. There are 81 no. 1 bedroom units being provided, as such only 264 no. units will accommodate families. Taking the above standard into account ($264/75 \times 20 = 70$) there is a requirement for 70 no. childcare spaces to be provided within the proposed development.
- 5.58 The proposed development provides for a creche facility of c. 300 sqm, with a further 95 sqm shared with a community room. It is considered that, at 4 sqm per child, this facility is suitably sized to meet the childcare demand as a result of the proposed development.
- 5.59 Considering the proposed development's characteristics, namely unit mix; the demographic profile of the area; and, the permitted provision of childcare facilities; and the scale of development existing, under planned for the area, that the proposed childcare facilities included in this application are designed to meet the demand of the future population created by the proposed development and will also help meet existing demand in Skerries.
- 5.60 The provision of a Creche/Childcare Facility of c.377 sqm (equating to c 75 no. child spaces based on a space requirement of 4 sqm per child), in combination with recently permitted and existing childcare facilities in the area, meets the requirements of delivering this proposed scheme of development.
- 5.61 Correspondence with the Fingal Childcare Committee is enclosed as Appendix 3, who support the inclusion of a childcare facility of the proposed scale within this application.

Third Level and Further Education

- 5.62 Third-level education in the Republic of Ireland includes all education after second-level, encompassing higher education in universities and colleges and further education on Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) and other courses.
- 5.63 There are no third level institutes in the surrounding area however we note a number which may be conveniently accessed by Skerries population in Balbriggan to north.
- 5.64 Adult Education Service Balbriggan offers a range of full time and part-time learning opportunities to the community of Fingal. Their range of courses supports adults returning to education to gain confidence as well as new skills, embark on new learning opportunities for employment, self-development or progression to third level.
- 5.65 We also note a number of large scale universities in Dublin City such as Trinity College Dublin, in Dublin City Centre or DCU, Glasnevin in the North Dublin area.
- 5.66 It is clear that Skerries is well served by all education facilities.

Healthcare Facilities

- 5.67 Healthcare within the study area is provided by a range of different organisations including public, voluntary and private agencies. The Health Services Executive is the primary agency responsible for delivering health and personal social services in Ireland. In recent years, primary care has been identified as the most effective and cost-efficient way to treat patients. This offsets dependence on the hospital system allowing most patient care to take place at local, community locations which feature multi-disciplinary teams of healthcare professionals working together.
- 5.68 For specialist services individuals may be willing to travel further, as the proposed development is located within the Great Dublin Area it has access to national public hospitals, private hospitals, high-tech hospitals, accident and emergency services, psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation centres, orthopaedic hospital and hospices.
- 5.69 Many of the healthcare facilities are clustered around the Skerries Town Centre. In addition there is another primary care centres in the area in the town centre.

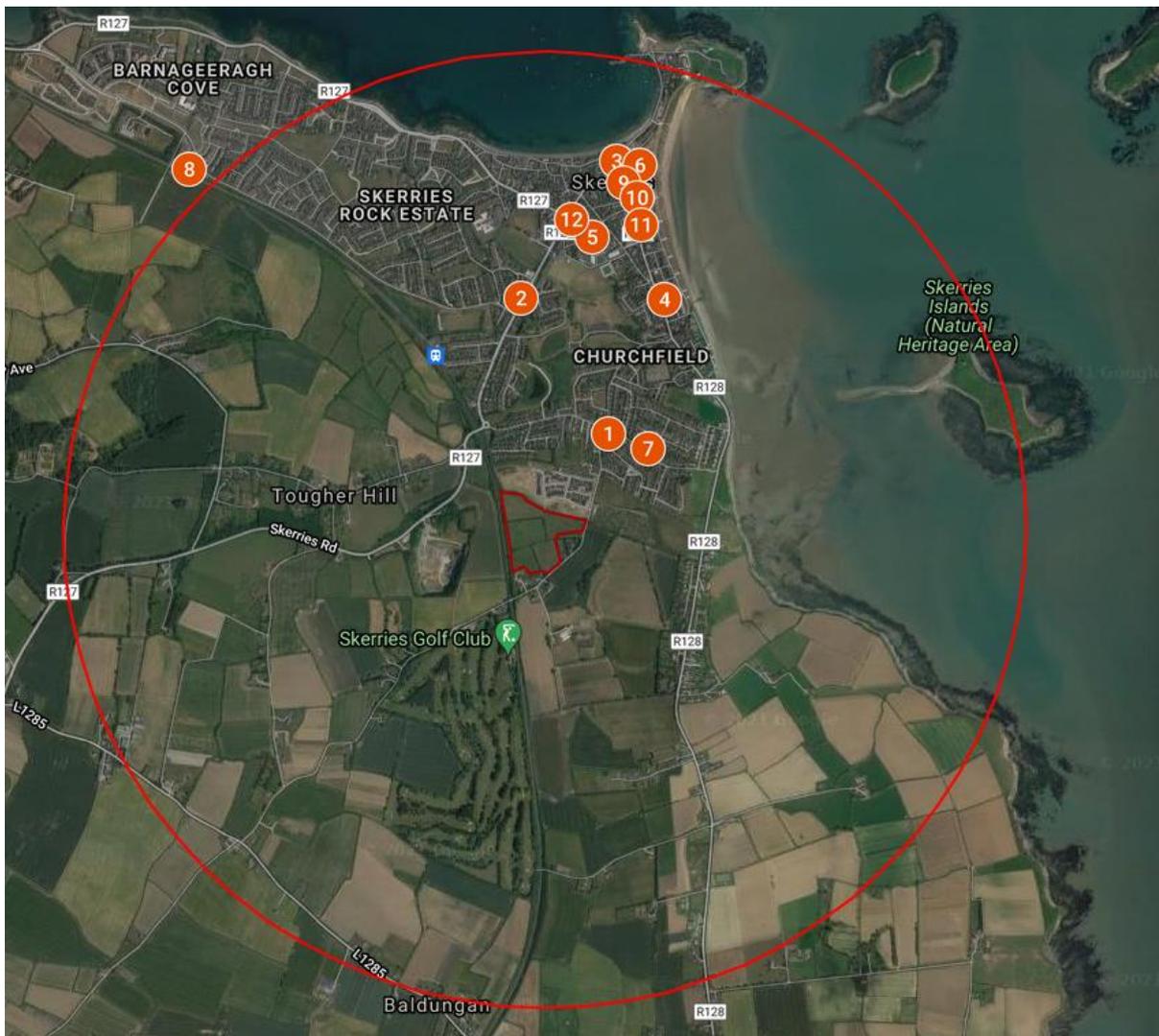


Figure 8: Overview of Healthcare Facilities within 2km.

Type	Name	Address
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Dentist	1. Coastal Dental Care - Skerries	2 Shenick Rd, Holmpatrick, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 AT82
Dentist	2. SKERRIES DENTAL LABORATORY	2 Dublin Rd, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 TW98
Dentist	3. Kbn Dental Ewa Adams Limited	College Court, Apt 3, Strand St, Skerries, Co. Dublin
Gp	4. Seaholm Surgery	10 Holmpatrick, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 R942
Gp	5. The Windmill Medical Centre	Windmill Drive New Street South, Dublin, K34 Y658
Gp	6. Dr. Seamus Mulholland	The Surgery, 7 Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
Pharmacy	7. Stack's Pharmacy	Shenick Rd, Holmpatrick, Skerries, Co. Dublin
Pharmacy	8. Brady's Pharmacy	Unit 3A Skerries Point Centre, Kelly's Bay, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 X781
Pharmacy	9. Care Pharmacy	Unit, 99 Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin
Pharmacy	10. McMeel's Pharmacy	27 Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 Y319
Pharmacy	11. Skerries Allcare Pharmacy	38 Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 RY73
Primary Care Centre	12. Skerries Health Centre	58 Thomas Hand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 WK35

Table 7: Overview of Healthcare Facilities within 2km.

Religious Facilities

- 5.70 Religious and community facilities are a very important part in the provision of neighbourhood facilities. Skerries town is a long established town in Fingal, County Dublin and has a range of religious facilities. In many cases, as described below community facilities are associated with these religious facilities.
- 5.71 The predominant religion in the Republic of Ireland is Christianity, with the largest church being the Catholic Church. The second largest Christian denomination, the Church of Ireland (Anglican) has more recently experienced an increase, as have other small Christian denominations.
- 5.72 In the 2016 census, 78.8% (3.7 million) of the population identified as Catholic which is 132,220 fewer than the 2011 census when the percentage stood at 84%.
- 5.73 The next largest group after Catholic was "no religion". 10% of the population (468,421 people) had no religion or did not indicate a religious belief according to the census. Other religious recorded in the Census included: Eastern Orthodox (1.3%), Islam (1.3%), Presbyterian (0.5%), Hindu (0.3%), Apostolic or Pentecostal (0.3%) and 'Not Stated' or 'Other' (4.8 %).
- 5.74 In the Skerries Settlement the population is more diverse:

Population by Religion		
Religion	Persons	Percentage
Catholic	7,501	74.7%
Other stated religion	770	7.7%
No religion	1,586	15.8%

Not stated	186	1.9%
Total	10,043	100%

Table 8: Overview of Population by Religion. (Source: CSO,2016).

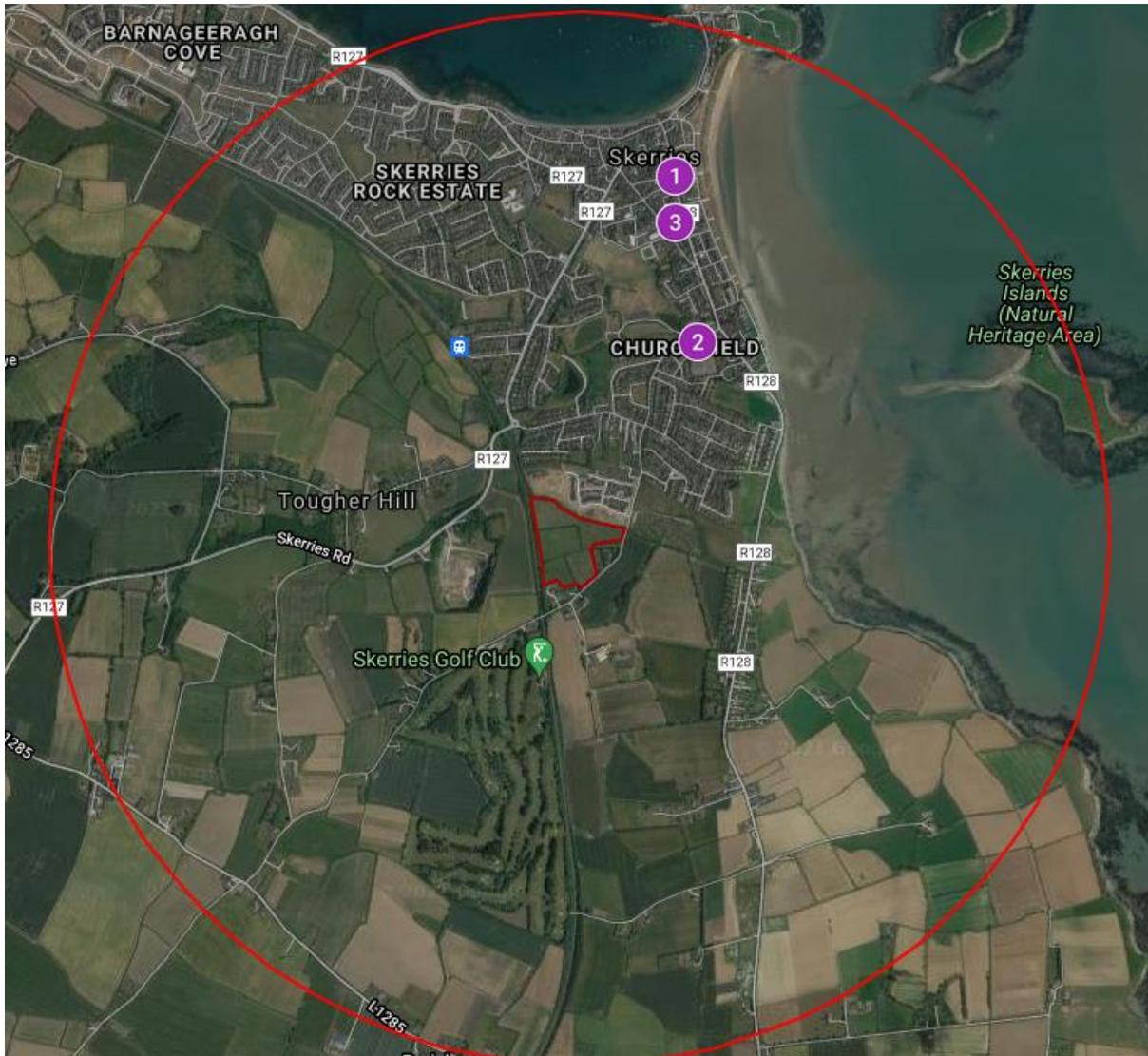


Figure 9: Overview of Religious Facilities within 2km.

Type	Name	Address
Methodist	1. Skerries Methodist Church	27-30 Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 Y319
Protestant	2. Skerries Protestant Church	5 Marywell, Churchfield, Skerries, Co. Dublin, K34 F259
Catholic	3. St. Patrick's Church	Strand St, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin

Table 9: Overview of Religious Facilities within 2km.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The purpose of the community audit is to determine if the Skerries area is well served by community related facilities to support the future residents of the proposed development.
- 6.2 Having regard to these estimated figures for additional primary and secondary school demand, the school provision (both existing and planned) in the surrounding area of the subject site, and the accessibility of the site to further schools, it is considered reasonable to estimate that the additional population can be accommodated within the existing and planned school infrastructure.
- 6.3 In summary, it is considered that Skerries is accessible to a range leisure facilities including; football/ rugby / GAA clubs, a number of public parks; a number of education facilities and a quantum of community facilities located throughout the town centre. As such the facilities that Skerries currently offers is very good and will be able to support the future residents of Skerries.
- 6.4 The proposed development will include high quality public open space including playing pitches, walkways, and play areas.

Appendix 1: List of Primary Schools (2021/22)

Figures published 27 December 2021

Roll Number	Official Name	Address (Line 1)	Address (Line 2)	Ethos Description	Female	Male	Enrolment per Return
1. 14180H	HOLMPATRICK N S	Convent Lane	Skerries	Church Of Ireland	37	33	70
2. 15569R	SCOIL MOIBHI	Milverton	Skerries	Catholic	32	57	89
3. 16332O	ST PATRICKS SNR MIXED	Beau Piers Lane	Skerries	Catholic	183	158	341
4. 16333Q	ST PATRICKS JNR MIXED	Tennis Court Lane	Skerries	Catholic	160	172	332
5. 16844S	SCOIL N. BREANDAN	Loughshinny	Skerries	Catholic	98	106	204
6. 19625V	Scoil Réalt na Mara	Balbriggan Road	Skerries	Catholic	187	172	359
7. 20307O	Skerries Educate Together National School	Kellys Bay	Skerries	Multi Denominational	156	211	367
						Total	1762

Appendix 2 List of Childcare Facilities

Tusla Number	Service Name	Address	Town	Age Profile	Service Type	No. Of Children Service Can Accommodate
1. TU2015FL024	Barnies Preschool	1 The Drive, Kelly's Bay	Skerries	2 - 6 Years	Sessional	11
2. TU2015FL108	Happy Days Montessori Preschool	Thorndale, Northcliffe Heights	Skerries	2 - 6 Years	Sessional	22
3. TU2015FL134	Kids Cottage	78 Church Street,	Skerries	2 - 6 Years	Sessional	40
4. TU2015FL186	Little Rugrats	53 Station Road,	Skerries	1 - 6 Years	Full Day Part Time Sessional	45
5. TU2015FL250	Popcorn Childcare	20 New Street,	Skerries	0 - 6 Years	Full Day	45
6. TU2015FL284	Sticky Fingers Montessori	Skerries Community Centre, Dublin Road	Skerries	2 - 6 Years	Part Time	52
7. TU2015FL304	The Green Gate Montessori	1 The Grove, Skerries Rock	Skerries	2 - 6 Years	Sessional	15
8. TU2015FL268	Skerries Creche	28 Balbriggan Street ,	Skerries	0 - 6 Years	Full Day Part Time Sessional	30
total						260

Appendix 3: Correspondence with Fingal Childcare Committee

FW: Proposed Residential Development at Hackettstown, Skerries

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Mon 28/06/2021 15:44

Good Afternoon Stephen

Your email below requesting comment on childcare provision refers.

There are presently 7 sessional services, 2 part – time services and 3 full day childcare services operating in Skerries.

Sessional services can only have the children on the premises for up to 3.5 hours – These services predominantly cater for ECCE children aged 2.10 months – 6 years. Some of these services offer 2 x 3.5hr sessions per day i.e. am and pm session. Some of the sessional services offer ECCE in the morning and School Age childcare in the afternoon.

Part-time services can have the children on the premises for no more than 5 hours per day. These services offer the ECCE programme and generally school age childcare. These services

Full day service normally operate for more than 5 hours per and would cater for children aged 0 – 12 years and would offer the ECCE programme and school age childcare.

The ECCE programme is only operational for 38 weeks of the year i.e. September to June when they close for the summer months.

Part-time and Full day services can operate for 52 weeks per year.

Two of the services mentioned in your list of services are now closed i.e. Rockabill and Playhouse. No new services have opened in Skerries for the past 7 years to replace the places lost by the closure of Rockabill and Playhouse.

COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on the Early Years and School Age sector nationally including the Fingal area. It will not be apparent until after 29th March (subject to public health direction) when this sector is expected to reopen what the impact of COVID-19 will be i.e. how many services will re-open and of those that do re-open what will be the take up of places.

FCCC greatly welcomes the establishment of a new full day 70 place wrap-around childcare facility in Skerries that will meet the demand for places from the residents of Skerries and surrounding areas.

If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me at 087 7722228 (Monday to Wednesday).

Regards – Jacinta

Jacinta Cooke
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