**M76793**

PLEASE QUOTE REF NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE.  
  
Our Ref: DES-CU-04772-2022  
  
Dear Ms. Conroy  
  
I wish to refer to your correspondence to the Minister for Education, Ms. Norma Foley TD in relation to the establishment of a secondary school in Newcastle.  
  
In order to plan for school provision and analyse the relevant demographic data, the Department divides the country into 314 school planning areas and uses a Geographical Information System, using data from a range of sources, including Child Benefit and school enrolment data, to identify where the pressure for school places across the country will arise and where additional school accommodation is needed at primary and post-primary level.  
  
Where demographic data indicates that additional provision is required, the delivery of such additional provision is dependent on the particular circumstances of each case and may, be provided through:   
  
• Utilising existing unused capacity within a school or schools,  
• Extending the capacity of a school or schools,  
• Provision of a new school or schools.   
  
The most recent projections for the Newcastle\_Rathcoole School Planning Area indicate a slight increase in requirements at post primary level in the short term followed by a projected reduction in enrolments thereafter.  
  
The Department will continue to liaise with the Local Authority in Dublin in respect of its County Development Plan and any associated Local Area Plans with a view to identifying any potential long-term school accommodation requirements across school planning areas including in Newcastle\_Rathcoole.  
  
There are two capital projects planned in the Newcastle\_Rathcoole school planning area and when completed, will cater for the demand for school places in the area:  
  
Holy Family Community School (Roll Number 91301D) Brief: Replacement school to cater for 1,000 pupil + 2 SEN Base. Stage 3 (Stage 3 is the instruction for the project to proceed to tender)  
  
Colaiste Pobal Fola (Roll Number 76594L) Brief: New school to cater for 1,000 pupil + 4 SEN Base. Stage 2B (Stage 2B is the Developed Design & lodgement of Planning Permission)  
  
  
Yours sincerely  
  
Derek Newcombe  
  
Private Secretary