





COAKLEY O'NEILL
town planning

Childcare Needs Assessment

Kinsale Road LRD

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BML Duffy Property Group Limited.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We, Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd, NSC Campus, Mahon, Co. Cork, have been instructed by BML Duffy Property Group Limited to prepare this Childcare Needs Assessment to accompany a planning application for the Kinsale Road LRD at the site of the former Vita Cortex Factory on Pearse Road/ Kinsale Road, Cork City.
- 1.2 This Childcare Needs Assessment examines the need to incorporate any on-site crèche facilities as part of the development proposal, with specific focus on the relevant planning policy, demographic statistics and an assessment of existing childcare facilities in the area.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The proposed development will consist of a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) of 170no. residential units (158no. apartments and 12no. townhouse apartments, to include 51no. 1-bed units, 84no. 2-bed units, 35no. 3-bed units) arranged in 4no. blocks varying in height from four to nine storeys over ground. The proposed development also includes: a crèche, café and management office on the ground floor level of Block 3 and 4no. retail units on the ground floor level of Block 4; 514no. bicycle spaces, including 162no. visitor spaces, located either in 4no. bike sheds at undercroft level and ground level, or on the public plaza at ground level; 9no. motorcycle spaces, and 82no. shared car parking spaces (including 13no. EV spaces and 6no. accessible spaces, 3no. of which are EV spaces) at undercroft level and ground level.
- 2.2 The proposed development will also include the provision of private, communal and public open space, including all balconies and terraces; rooftop solar panels and green roofs; internal roads and pathways; new vehicular and pedestrian access points from Kinsale Road and Pearse Road, including a terraced entrance, with cycle wheel ramp, from Pearse Road; 6no. bin stores at undercroft level and ground level; the relocation and upgrade of 1no. ESB substation; signage; and all associated site development works, drainage, including nature-based SuDS measures, and all hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments. The proposed development will also facilitate the future implementation of BusConnects along Kinsale Road.
- 2.3 The development of a childcare facility is also included in the development. The creche is to have an internal floor area of 250sq.m with an additional outdoor recreation area of 148sq.m. The creche has the capacity to accommodate 18 children, 3no. under 1 years, 7no. 1-3 year olds, and 8no. 3-5 year olds.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The requirement for the provision of a crèche for residential developments over 75no. dwellings is outlined in both national guidance under the “Childcare Facilities Guidelines” (2001) published by the Department of Environment and in local planning policy under the Cork City Development Plan (2022).

3.2 Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)

- 3.2.1 These guidelines provide a framework to guide both developers formulating development proposals, and local authorities in assessing these proposals.
- 3.2.2 The *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001* (the Guidelines) state that one childcare facility should be provided for new large-scale housing developments subject to a number of conditions.
- 3.2.3 The guidelines note that the development of childcare facilities in City Centre locations should be in areas which close to public transport nodes, and which can accommodate outdoor play facilities.
- 3.2.4 Appendix 2 of the Guidelines established an indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas. It is stated that one facility providing a minimum of 20no. childcare places is considered to be a reasonable starting point in this regard. The guidelines acknowledge that flexibility is required in relation to the number of spaces proposed in a facility, having regard to the type of development the facility accompanies.
- 3.2.5 Furthermore, Appendix 2 states that the threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profiles.

3.3 Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2018

- 3.3.1 The *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)* also advises that childcare facilities be provided in accordance with the demographic profile of the area and the existing capacity of childcare centres. The guidelines also state:

‘The threshold for provision of any such facilities in apartment schemes should be established having regard to the scale and unit mix of the proposed development and the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area’.

3.4 Cork City Development Plan 2022

- 3.4.1 Section 3.67 of the Cork City Development Plan outlines the locations and requirements for the development of childcare facilities in the city, which states:

‘The provision of childcare should be addressed where, or within walking distance to where the need arises. In accordance with the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001), new residential developments of more than 75 homes will be expected to provide purpose-built as part of the development unless it can be demonstrated there is sufficient capacity in existing facilities’.

3.4.2 With regard to this, objective 3.21 of the Plan seeks to:

To support the provision and expansion of high quality childcare facilities throughout the city.

The Council will:

- a) Require purpose built childcare facilities as part of proposals for new residential developments of more than 75 dwelling units. However, where it can be clearly established that existing facilities are sufficient, alternative arrangements will be considered;*
- b) Consult with the Cork City Childcare Company and the HSE on planning applications where childcare facilities are proposed;*
- c) Require employers with more than 500 members of staff to provide childcare facilities as part of planning applications for significant new and extended development.*

4.0 FUTURE DEMAND CREATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 In calculating the likely future demand for childcare spaces as a result of the proposed development, significant regard must be had to the planning policies in place pertaining to the provision of childcare facilities as part of apartment developments.
- 4.2 The Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2018 note in relation to the provision of childcare facilities in new developments, '*One-bedroom or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any childcare provision and subject to location, this may also apply in part or whole, to units with two or more bedrooms*'.
- 4.2 In this instance it is noted that there 51no. 1-bedroom apartments proposed as part of the proposed development. Having regard to the planning policies outlined in Section 2 above, the 51no. 1 bedroom units, which consist of 30% of the total units being provided, will not be included in calculations regarding likely demand for childcare spaces.
- 4.3 Noting that the Apartment Guidelines 2018 advise that, subject to location, units with two or more bedrooms may also not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any childcare provision, our assessment takes a precautionary approach. Accordingly, this assessment is restricted to considering the likely demand arising from the proposed development in respect of 84no. 2-bedroom units and 35 no. 3-bedroom units, is 119 no. units total.
- 4.4 The 2022 Census outlines that the national average household size is 2.72 persons per household. Based on the average household size of 2.72 people per household for Cork, it is estimated that the proposed development of the 119no. units will result in a population of 324 people.
- 4.5 The 2022 Census also notes that on average children under the age of 9 represent 10.6% of the population of Cork City. Using this rationale, it is estimated that the proposed development will potentially result in approximately 35 no. children of the age where childcare facilities could be required.

- 4.6 In addition to this, it is of note that nationally, 19.5% of children aged 0-9 avail of Crèche/Montessori/Playgroup facilities. The Census indicates that in Cork City, 18% of children aged 0-9 avail of Crèche/Montessori/Playgroup facilities.
- 4.7 Using the national percentage of pre-school children who are cared for in a Crèche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility, then theoretically, only 7 no. childcare spaces would potentially need to be accommodated at the proposed development.

5.0 ASSESSMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 In order to establish the local need for a new crèche as part of the proposed development, a thorough examination was undertaken in line with current guidelines. Assessing the population trends identified in the 2022 Census, to ascertain the trends in relation to household sizes and types, and the impact of such on the demand for Childcare Facilities in the city.
- 5.1.2 In addition to this, contact was made with the Cork City Childcare Committee, who are funded by the Government to deliver early childhood care and education programmes which support children and families. The childcare committee was one of 30 no. committees set up in 2001 to encourage the development of childcare locally.
- 5.1.3 The applicant's agent has undertaken consultation with Ms. Deirdre Cotter, Development Officer, Cork City Childcare Committee, in order to gain a better understanding of the current state of childcare availability in the City.
- 5.1.4 The details of the current trends in childcare availability in Cork City is outlined in section 5.3 below, however the Childcare Committee note that there is an acute shortage of facilities, and the development of any new facilities are welcomed.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN CORK CITY

- 5.2.1 The demographic profile of Cork City was examined from the CSO Census of Population Statistics 2022 in the defined administrative boundary of Cork City. For comparative purposes, the population statistics for the administrative boundary of Cork City as per the CSO Census of Population Statistics 2016 were also examined.
- 5.2.2 The population of Cork City was recorded as 224,004 people in the 2022 Census. This was an increase of 103,253 people since the 2016 Census. It is of note that the 2016 Census data does not account for the change in the administrative boundaries of Cork City in 2018.
- 5.2.3 In 2022 children aged between 0-9 accounted for 10.6% of the population in Cork City, remaining the same as in 2016 despite the overall increase in population.

- 5.2.4 The 2022 Census also outlines that the average commuting times to work for those living in Cork City and its suburbs is 23.6 minutes. With 13% of workers living in the city commuting by foot, 8% by bus and 2.9% by bike. The average journey time for those aged under 4 to Creche/Montessori is 12.5 minutes, suggesting that parents are choosing childcare facilities closer to their homes., with 19.7 of under 4s travelling by foot or bike.
- 5.2.5 In 2022 there were a total of 83,391 households in Cork City, with the average household size of 2.72 people. Per household, the average number of children per family in Cork City is 1.23. In addition to this, the CSO indicates that 24.8% of all family units in the state are in rented accommodation.
- 5.2.6 It is of note that on a national level, the Census indicates that there are a total of 1,279,951 family units in the State, of this 50% of family units are in households which comprise of 2 or 3 bed households.
- 5.2.5 As outlined in Section 4 above, it is noted that 10.6% of the population of Cork City were made up of children under the age of nine, and that using the average family size statistics, it is estimated that the proposed development could potentially accommodate 35no. pre-school children. However as noted, the Census indicates that in this age group in Cork City on 18% of children attend a creche/Montessori. Given this trend, it can be concluded that there is the potential for this trend to carryover to any future occupants of the scheme, reducing the demand for childcare spaces generated by the development to 7no. of spaces.

5.3 CAPACITY OF CHILDCARE FACILITIES IN CORK CITY

- 5.3.1 In addition to the above analysis, it was deemed appropriate to audit existing childcare provision within Cork City.
- 5.3.2 Cork City Childcare's submission to Cork City Council informing the LRD opinion provides data in relation to the childcare services currently located in the area surrounding the proposed development.
- 5.3.3 The existing childcare facilities in Cork City in addition to their capacity and availability are detailed in Table 1 below. This data has been collated based on the information provided by the Cork City Childcare Committee in November 2024 and the Tusla Register of Childcare providers.

	Name	Address	Service Type	Age Range	Capacity	Availability
1.	All Stares Preschool	Morning Star National School, Connolly Road, Ballyphehane, Co. Cork	Sessional	2-6 years	22	No
2.	An Cliabhán	Lower Friar's Walk, Ballyphehane, Co. Cork.	Part time & sessional	1-6 years	22	No
3.	Hope Childcare	Presentation Secondary School, Joe Murphy Road, Ballyphehane, Co. Cork	Full day	1-6years	60	Yes
4.	Maria Assumpta Preschool	Pearse Road, Ballyphehane, Co. Cork	Sessional	2-6 years	39	No

5.	Naionra an Teaghlaigh Naofa	Tory Top Road, Ballyphehane, Co. Cork	Sessional	2-6 years	26	No
6.	Blossom Grove	18A Maglin Grove, Deanrock Est, Togher, Co. Cork	Sessional	2-6 years	22	No
7.	Cur le Cheile	Togher Girls National School, Togher, Cork City, Co. Cork	Sessional	2-6 years	22	No
8.	Togher Family Centre	6 Maglin Grove, Cork, Cork T12 C8VW	Sessional	1-6 years	46	No
9.	Tus an Bothair	Togher Road, Cork, Cork T12 Y710	Sessional	2-6 years	22	No
10.	Greenmount Community Preschool	Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire na nGrás, Cork, Cork T12HE14	Sessional	2-6 years	36	No
11.	Turner's Cross Preschool	Bunscoil Chriost Rá, Cork, Cork T12 H6KA	Sessional	2-6 years	66	No
12.	Nurture Fairy Lawn	2 Fairy Lawn, Cork, Cork T12 KP94	Full Day Care	0-6 years	117	No
13.	The Chalet	Lough Villas, Cork, Cork T12E061	Sessional	2-6 years	11	No
14.	Classes Childcare	2 Maryville, Cork, Cork, T12TX9D	Full Day Care	0-6 years	25	No
15.	St Anne's Day Nursery,	St Anne's Day Nursery, Nursery Ltd., Cork, Cork T12WF77	Full Day Care	0-6 years	49	No
16.	Orchard Childcare	6 The Mews, Cork, Cork, T12 KF95	Full Day Care	1-6 years	21	No
17.	Orchard Montessori	46 South Douglas Road, Cork, Cork T12YC6T	Part time & Sessional	2-6 years	44	No
18.	HeaddStart Childcare	Park Avenue, Cork, Cork T12K3EH	Sessional & Full Day Care	0-6 years	68 sessional & 65 Full Day Care	No
19.	Tir na NÓg AMI	Kilbarry, Cork, Cork T23A594	Full Day Care	0-6 years	110	No
20.	Cuddles Creche	107, 108 Douglas Street, Cork, Cork T12K22T	Full Day Care	1-6 years	57	No
21.	Creche Cois Laoi	Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, Cork, Cork T12v821	Full Day Care	0-6 years	78	No
22.	Lios Na NÓg,	CSN College of Further Education, Cork, Cork T12AC91	Full Day Care	0-6 years	49	No
23.	Steppingstones	51A Capwell Road, Cork, Cork T12 V590	Sessional	2-6 years	11	No
24.	Bel Childcare Donnybrook	Donnybrook Commercial Centre, Cork, Cork T12FY89	Full Day Care	2-6 years	87	No
25.	Bel Childcare	Calderwood Road, Cork, Cork T12X361	Full Day Care	1-6years	43	No

26.	Nurture Childcare Douglas	Unit 4 Ardfallen Mall, Cork, Cork T12AK12	Full Day Care	0-6 years	107	No
27.	Liliput Montessori	47 Ardfallen Estate, Cork, Cork T12 YX84	Sessional	2-6 years	66	No
28.	Douglas Community Playgroup	Church Road, Cork, Cork T12C840	Sessional	2-6 years	37	Yes
29.	Naíonra Na Dubhglaise sa Chlos	Gaelscoil na Duglaise, Willow Park, Douglas, Corcaigh, Co. Cork	Full Day Care/ School Aged Childcare Service	2-6 years/ 4-15 years	55	No
30.	St. Columbas Montessori	Saint Columba's Boys National School, Cork, T12FW11	Part time	2-6 years	88	No
31.	Maryborough Montessori	Maryborough Estate, Douglas	Sessional	2-6 years	40	No
32.	Kangakare Childcare Ltd	The Square, Cork, Cork T12V20C	Sessional	0-6 years	44	No
33.	Tigers Childcare	Fort Hill, Moneygourney	Full Day Care	0-6 years	130	No
34.	Springbrook Montessori	Donnybrook, Douglas	Sessional	2-6 years	40	No
35.	Kids Inc. Togher	Togher Boys National School, Cork, Cork T12Y710	Afterschool	4-10 years	48	No
36.	Sherpa Kids Scoil Croí Íosa Blarney	St. Anns Road Blarney, Cork, Cork T23VE40	Afterschool	4-12 years	24	No
37.	Sherpa Kids Glasheen NS	Glasheen National School, Ballinagree East, Cork T12 N9W6	Afterschool	4-12 years	24	No
38.	Sherpa Gaelscoil na Duglaise	Wilow Park Road, Cork, Cork T12D702	Afterschool	4-12 years	48	No
39.	Sunny Days Montessori	Frankfield, Cork, Cork T12V440	Preschool	2-6 years	44	No
40.	Mighty Oaks	Frankfield, Doughill, Cork T12 HD86	Afterschool	4-12 years	108	Yes
41.	Paisti preschool, Kinsale Road Accommodation Centre	Cork Kinsale Road Accommodation Cen, Ireland	Preschool	1-6 years	15	No
42.	The Farmyard Kindergarten (Cabin)	Summerhill South, Cork, Cork T12XW8R	Preschool	2-6 years	38	No
43.	Sherpa Kids Greenmount NS	Greenmount School, Knockpogue, Cork T12HE14	Afterschool	4-10 years	24	No
Total:					2198	

Table 1 Existing TUSLA Registered Early Years Childcare Facilities as of July 2024. (Source: Childcare Need Assessment - Cork City Childcare, 2024 and TUSLA, 2024).

- 5.3.4 As identified in Table 1, there is a total of 43no. Childcare Operators identified. These operators have a capacity ranging from 11no. children to 130no, children. A total of 2,198no. children are catered for across these facilities.
- 5.3.5 The data indicates that only 7% of the identified operators, 3no facilities have any capacity to accommodate more children. In addition to the limited capacity currently available, the Cork City Childcare Committee note that some childcare providers have a waiting list which is at capacity to 2026.
- 5.3.6 As indicated by the data provided by the Cork City Childcare Committee, there is little to no capacity to in the current stock of childcare facilities to meet any demand which may be generated as a result of the proposed development.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The above assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001), the New Apartment Guidelines 2018 and the Cork City Development Plan 2022.
- 6.2 Noting that the Apartment Guidelines 2018 advise that one-bedroom or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any childcare provision, and that subject to location, units with two or more bedrooms may also not generally be considered, this report has taken a precautionary approach, assessing the potential childcare needs of those who will occupy the 2 and 3 bed units to be developed.
- 6.3 The 2022 Census data indicates that there an increasing number of families living in rented two and three bed dwellings. With regard to this, the assessment has shown the proposed units have the potential to house 203no. people. The 2022 Census indicates that percentage total of the population under the age of 9 in Cork City is 10.6%, equating to a potential population of 35no. children below the age of nine residing in the development.
- 6.4 Given the trends indicated in the Census which show that only 18% children aged under 9 in Cork City on average attend creche/Montessori facilities, this would equate to a potential demand of 7no. childcare spaces as a result of the development. The proposed childcare facility sufficiently caters for generated demand arising from the development.
- 6.5 Should the demand as a result of the development be in keeping with the trends of the percentage total of children attending creche in Cork City, resulting in a reduced childcare need as a result of the development, the location of the development, as outlined in the Social and Community Audit accompanying this application, is located in an area of significant residential and employment uses, which would be able to utilise any capacity in the facility.
- 6.6 The additional spaces available in the proposed childcare facility will, in the context of the comments made by the Cork City Childcare Committee, provide much needed spaces for the existing demand in Cork City helping to alleviate the acute shortage of childcare spaces available.
- 6.7 Therefore, in considering the existing demographic trends in the Cork City area, the nature of the proposed development and likely demand for childcare spaces to be generated as a result, and the availability of existing facilities in the area, it is considered that the proposed childcare facility will have the capacity to accommodate any childcare needs generated, and the potential to provide facilities for those in the local community.