

**Strategic Housing Development at Lahardane and
Ballincolly (Townlands), Ballyvolane, Cork City**

Childcare Provision Assessment

For Longview Estates Ltd

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1 Introduction

Longview Estates Ltd are applying for planning permission for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 753 no. residential units, a local centre including a crèche, doctors surgery, community use unit and 2 no. retail units and all associated and ancillary infrastructure, services and site development works on a site in the townlands of Lahardane and Ballincolly, Ballyvolane, Cork City. This childcare assessment is submitted as part of the planning application to An Bord Pleanála. Specifically, this assessment examines the demand for crèche / childcare facilities in the area, having regard to:

- The relevant planning policy;
- The demographic profile of the area;
- An assessment of existing childcare service providers within c.2km of the development site; and
- The likely demand for childcare services that the proposed development will generate.

Figure 1 Site Location



2 Executive Summary

This assessment examines the need to provide an on-site crèche facility as part of the development proposal at Lahardane. On the basis of the policy and guidelines on the provision of childcare facilities, we have carried out an audit of existing known childcare facilities in the area. We have also examined the most recent Small Area Profile Statistics available for the area from the 2016 Census.

Our review has shown that there is some available capacity in childcare facilities in the area. It also shows that there is a high level of people in the area that principally look after the home / family. It is likely that many of these people also childmind.

Notwithstanding this, a crèche is being proposed as part of the development to meet the additional need arising from the proposed development. The crèche will be 692.88 sq.m and capable of accommodating approximately 103 no. children.

A crèche of 490 sq.m to cater for approximately 81 no. children had been proposed in the Section 5 pre-application to An Bord Pleanála (ref. PL. PL04 .304350). In the feedback prior to the meeting with An Bord Pleanála, Cork City and County Council's queried whether the crèche was sufficient in size.

Following the tripartite meeting, a meeting occurred with Janet Dennehy, the acting Coordinator of the Cork City Childcare Committee, on 8th August 2019 to discuss the provision of a crèche within the proposed development. At this meeting Ms Dennehy advised that the crèche should be increased in size to accommodate 100 no. children. In follow up correspondence Ms Dennehy also advised that crèche should be designed in accordance with the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings 2019.

The project Architects Horgan Carroll have since increased the size of the crèche to 692.88 sq.m and it will be capable of accommodating approximately 103 no. children. The crèche has been carefully designed in accordance with the Universal Design Guidelines. In a letter dated 17th September 2019, attached at Appendix A, the Childcare Committee have confirmed that this type of service will meet the projected childcare needs in this area and the surrounding area.

Figure 2 Proposed Site Layout



3 Planning Policy/ Guidelines Context

The 2001 Childcare Facility Guidelines for Planning Authorities define 'childcare' as:

'Full day-care and sessional facilities and services for pre-school children and school-going children out of school hours. It includes services involving care, education and socialisation opportunities for children. Thus services such as pre-schools, naíonraí (Irish language playgroups), day-care services, creches, playgroups, and after-school groups are encompassed by these Guidelines. Conversely childminding, schools (primary, secondary and special) and residential centres for children are not covered by these Guidelines'.

The Guidelines place an emphasis on the role planning has to play in delivering childcare facilities. In having regard to the Guidelines, the Council will take account of existing childcare provision when considering new childcare/ crèche facilities provision as part of residential developments in order to avoid over provision of these facilities.

Cork County Development Plan 2014 policy SC 3-1 covers childcare facilities. The objective is to:

'Support and facilitate the sustainable provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations and seeks their provision concurrent with development, having regard to population targets for the area and in accordance with the Guidelines on Childcare Facilities and the Childcare (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006'.

In relation to new housing developments, the Childcare Facility Guidelines state that a standard of one childcare facility providing for a minimum 20 childcare places per approximately 75 dwellings may be appropriate.

We note that this is a guideline standard and will depend on the particular circumstances of each individual site. As stated in the guidelines:

'The threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas.'

In June 2019, the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings were issued. These guidelines are an important step in making all Early Learning and Care services accessible to all children. This publication offers guidance on the refurbishment, renovation and building of centres for Early Learning and Care in Ireland. These guidelines set out the key Universal Design considerations and guidance for Early Learning and Care (ELC) settings in Ireland.

4 Future Demand Generated by Proposed Development

According to the 2016 Census the average household size in Cork City and Suburbs is 2.6 persons per household. The total number of units within the proposed development is 753. In accordance with the 2018 Apartment Guidelines, one bedroom and studio units are not considered in calculating the projected requirement for childcare as a result of the proposed development. Discounting the one bedroom and studio units, there are 706 no. units.

Applying the average household size it can be estimated that the proposed development could generate a population of 1836 no. people. If we assume that 8.3% (i.e. the current percentage of population for the 0-4 age group in Rathcooney Electoral District) of the proposed new population are within the 0-4 age group, we estimate that the number of children within the proposed development in the 0-4 age profile could potentially be 152.

5 Assessment

5.1 Census/ Demographic Review

The site itself is located within Rathcooney Electoral District. As we are reviewing known childcare facilities within approximately 2km of the site, we have also included Census 2016 Small Area Profile Statistics (SAPS) for electoral districts nearby which contain some of the facilities listed in table 3. The study area therefore includes the six electoral districts listed in table 1. Table 1 includes the population of childcare age children (aged 0-4) in each of the relevant electoral districts.

Table 1 Children aged 0-4

Electoral District	Total number of children 0-4 years old
Rathcooney ED	720 (8.3% of the total ED population and an increase of 7 persons from the 2011 total of 713)
St Marys ED	381 (6.9% of the total ED population and a decrease of 85 persons from the

	2011 total of 466)
The Glen A ED	134 (5.4% of the total ED population and a decrease of 9 persons from the 2011 total of 143)
The Glen B ED	212 (5.7% of the total ED population and an increase of 16 persons on the 2011 total of 196)
Mayfield ED	179 (6.1% of the total ED population and a decrease of 17 from the 2011 total of 196)
Montenotte A ED	86 (5.1% of the total ED population and an increase of 14 on the 2011 total of 72)
Montenotte B ED	86 (3.5% of the total ED population and a decrease of 9 from the 2011 total of 95)
Farranferris A ED	142 (6.9% of the total ED population and an increase of 28 from the 2011 total of 114)
Blackpool A ED	39 (5.7 % of the total ED population and no change from the 2011 total)
Total 0-4 age group in relevant Electoral Districts	1979

In general there has been a decrease in children within the 0-4 age profile in the study area in the period 2011- 2016. This correlates with the declining national birth rates as reflected in the 2016 Census. According to the Central Statistics Office there were 63,897 live births in Ireland in 2016. This figure has declined year on year from 74,033 in 2011.

Table 2 shows the amount of people within each of the relevant electoral districts whose principal status is looking after the home / family.

Table 2 Principal Status looking after home/ family

Electoral District	No. of People
Rathcooney ED	537
St Marys ED	404
The Glen A ED	199
The Glen B ED	294
Mayfield ED	233
Montenotte A ED	91
Montenotte B ED	171
Farranferris A ED	113
Blackpool A ED	43
Total in relevant Electoral Districts	2085

It is evident from the review of the SAPs that the number of people whose principal status is looking after the home / family is high in some of these areas. When these figures are compared with the 0 – 4 age profile of the respective electoral districts, we can assume that many of these pre-school age children are cared for in the home and do not attend a crèche.

It is also likely that many of the people whose principal status is looking after the home / family care for other children. It is difficult to extract exact numbers for childminders in the area as minding no more than 6 children, including the children, if any, of the person minding, in the house of that person, for profit or gain is exempted development in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). However, we did carry out a search of available childminders in the area using online sites such as Gumtree, Mindme.ie and rollercoaster.ie. It is evident that there are a number of childminders currently available in the area.

The demographic analysis of Rathcooney ED for Census 2016 also identified that 2200 (or 25.7%) persons within the Rathcooney Electoral District spend ¼ to ½ an hour commuting to work, school or college. It is likely that a considerable proportion of these commuters are travelling to areas of the city centre.

A further 1341 (or 15.6%) of persons living within the electoral district spend between ½ an hour and 1 hour commuting to work, school or college and a further 201 persons spend between 1 hour and over 1.5 hours commuting. These demographic trends suggest a considerable amount of commuting and it is considered likely that a proportion of existing and the future population will avail of childcare facilities outside the area, perhaps closer to places of employment.

It must also be noted that the proposed development will be phased which will introduce a staggered effect in terms of the need for childcare i.e. children that require childcare in the few phases will not require childcare in the final stages.

5.2 Existing Childcare Facilities in the Study Area

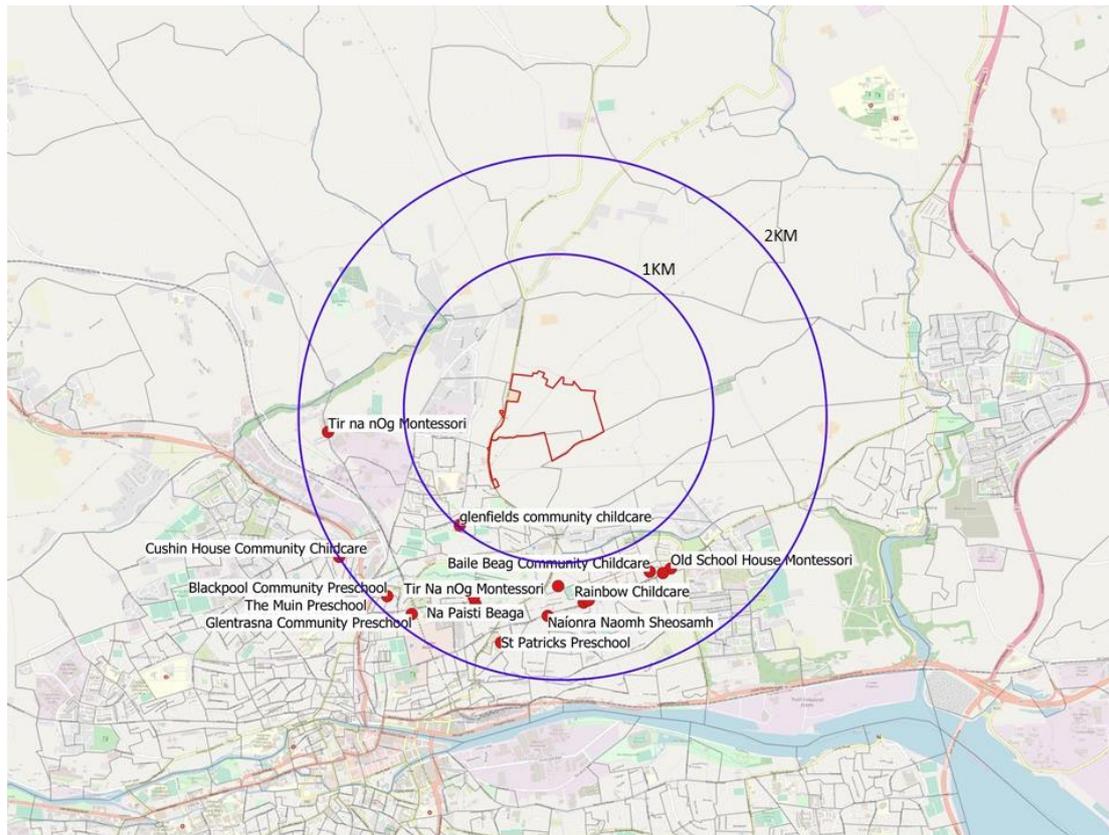
We carried out an audit of existing childcare facilities in operation in the area in 2019. This audit includes facilities within c. 2km of the site. Table 3 outlines the availability of spaces within each crèche where the information was provided/ available. We note that numbers could not be extracted for all facilities.

Table 3 Childcare facilities in the study area

Childcare facility	Address	Availability (February 2019)
1. Glenfields Community Childcare Limited	1A Glenfields Park, Ballyvolane	Full at 92 spaces. Mornings only
2. Oak Park Pre School	30 Oak Park, Ballyhooly Road	Currently 2 spaces available in the mornings
3. Tír na Nóg Montessori	Glen Resource and Sports Centre, Glen Avenue, The Glen	Afternoon and morning sessions. Can take 44 children. There are currently 22 spaces available
4. Baile Beag Community Childcare	Ard Bhaile Community Centre, Old Youghal Road, Mayfield	Full
5. Newbury House Early Years Childcare	Newbury House, Old Youghal Road, Mayfield	Currently Full
6. Mayfield	The Bungalow, Roseville	Morning sessions

Community Preschool	House, Old Youghal Road	only. Can take 20 children. There are currently 3 spaces available.
7. Rainbow Childcare	Mayfield Community Resource Centre , 328 Old Youghal Road	Mornings only. Full
8. Na Páistí Beaga	Magnet Preschool Facility, Glen Resource and Sports Centre, The Glen	Could not make contact
9. Glentrasna Community Preschool	1A Glentrasna Drive, Glentrasna Avenue, The Glen	Currently 16 in the mornings – can take 22 and 13 in the afternoon – can take 22
10. Naíonra Naomh Sheosamh	The Library, Old Youghal Road	Currently full at 11 spaces
11. Blackpool Community Preschool	19 Mount Farran Place, Blackpool	Could not make contact
12. Tír na nÓg Montessori	Delaneys GAA Club Dublin Hill	Mornings and afternoons. The morning session is full, 1 or 2 spaces available in the afternoon session
13. St Patricks Pre School and After School	St Patricks Girls NS Gardiners Hill, St Lukes	Currently full morning and afternoon
14. The Muin Preschool	The Green Rooms Brocklesby Street Blackpool	Could not make contact
15. Cushing House Community Childcare	Pophams Road	Mornings only. There are currently 11 spaces available

Figure 3 Childcare Facilities within c. 2km of the Site



Regarding the childcare facilities that we could not make contact with, we have taken a conservative approach and assumed that these facilities are at full capacity for this assessment. Of those facilities we did speak with, 44 no. morning places were available in February 2019.

6 Conclusion

This assessment has provided a review of the known available childcare facilities within an approximate 2km radius of the proposed development. We note that it was not possible to get information from some of the childcare facilities and this assessment cannot give an overall picture of the array of childcare options that are available i.e. we cannot extract figures for informal childminding.

In any case, it is evident that overall there is some available capacity within those facilities that provided information. It would also appear likely that given the high level of commuting of persons in the Rathcooney Electoral District that a certain proportion of existing and future children may be cared for in childcare facilities outside the area. It is also evident from our demographic review that many children in the area of pre-school age are likely to be cared for in the home due to the number of people whose principal status is looking after the home / family.

On this basis and the proposed phasing of the development we consider that the provision of one large crèche of 692.88 sq.m will meet the needs of the proposed development. This has been confirmed as acceptable by Cork City Childcare Committee.

Appendix A Letter from Cork City Childcare Committee



17th of September 2019

A Chara,

My name is Janet Dennehy and I am the Acting Co-ordinator of Cork City Childcare. I am writing this letter in relation to the proposed development located in Lahardane, Ballyvolane, Co. Cork. From the scale of this development it is clear that it will generate a significant demand for childcare in the area. There is already limited childcare provision available in the surrounding area. The initial proposal of an 81-place childcare service was revised and will now accommodate over 100 children to meet the need for childcare in the area. This increase was suggested by Cork City Childcare due to the large waiting lists identified by the annual Pobal Sector Profile. This type of service will meet the projected childcare needs in this area and surrounding area.

Families have a number of options when considering how their childcare needs are addressed. These include centre based provision, childminders, nannies, au pairs or informal care arrangements with family members. A very popular option is centre based provision with 185,580 children nationally availing of childcare schemes in 2017/2018. The significant changes that are taking place within the Early Years sector have led to an increase in demand for centre based childcare provision as it allows parents to access subsidies to make childcare more affordable. It is vital that children can access high quality childcare provision locally. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Janet Dennehy

Acting Co-ordinator



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