

Childcare Demand Assessment

Woodtown, Ballycullen, Dublin 16



Prepared on behalf of
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This assessment accompanies an LRD meeting request for a Large Residential Development (LRD) by Lagan Homes Ballycullen Ltd. A crèche is proposed as part of the LRD to serve the needs of future residents with full time capacity for 109no. childcare places with outdoor play area. The creche is centrally located within the site with full footpath connectivity for residents to walk/cycle/scoot to the facility from home. It has also been positioned adjacent to a future school site to enable future connectivity.

The purpose of this report is to assess if the childcare facility will provide adequate childcare spaces for the new neighbourhood.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed Large Scale Residential Development (LRD) consists of 502no. residential units (197no. houses and 305no. apartments) and a childcare facility. The mix of units is provided below-

| Table 1 | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Unit Type | 1-bed | 2-bed | 3-bed | 4-bed | Total |
| Houses | - | 19 | 116 | 62 | 197 |
| Apartments | 108 | 151 | 46 | - | 305 |
| Total | 108 | 170 | 162 | 62 | 502 |
| | 22% | 34% | 32% | 12% | 100% |

The proposed development will have two vehicular access points from Stocking Avenue 1) via an existing spur road to the east of Abbots Grove that terminates on the northern boundary of the application site and 2) via Stocking Wood Drive. The proposed creche is located close to the north western entrance and adjacent to a future school site while also remaining central to the proposed development.

2.1 PROPOSED CHILDCARE FACILITY

The creche is proposed as a stand-alone two storey building with potential capacity for 107no. full time childcare spaces within six group rooms.

| Table 2 | |
|---------|-----|
| Age 0-1 | 10 |
| Age 1-2 | 14 |
| Age 2-3 | 23 |
| Age 2-3 | 20 |
| Age 3-6 | 17 |
| Age 3-6 | 23 |
| | 107 |

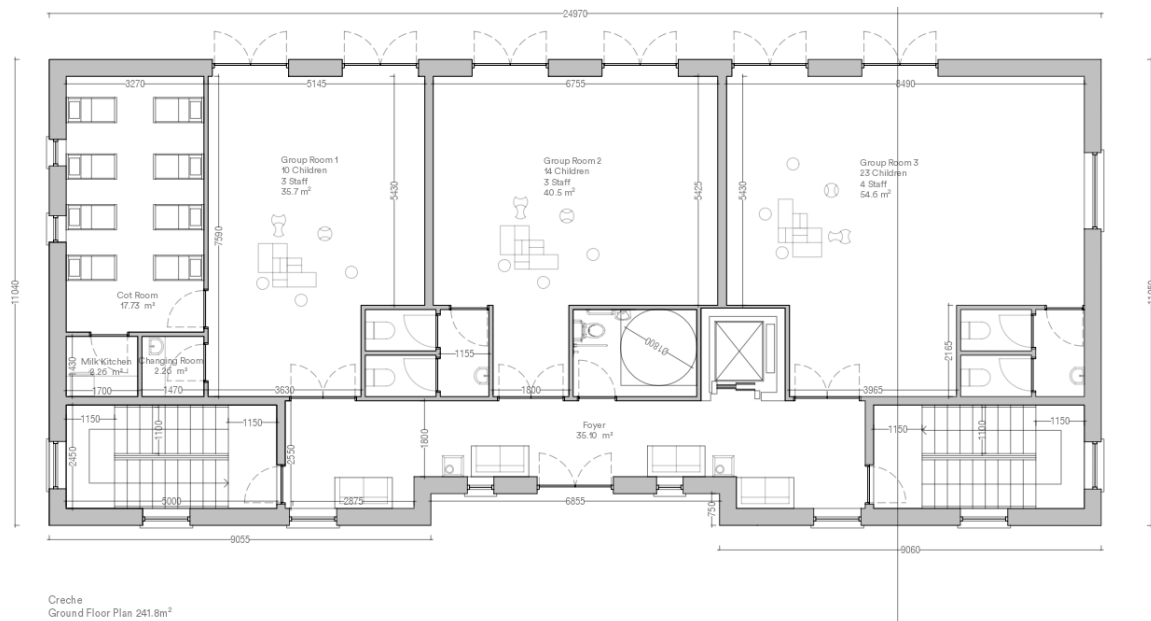


Figure 1 Extract from JFOC drawing - Ground Floor Creche Plan

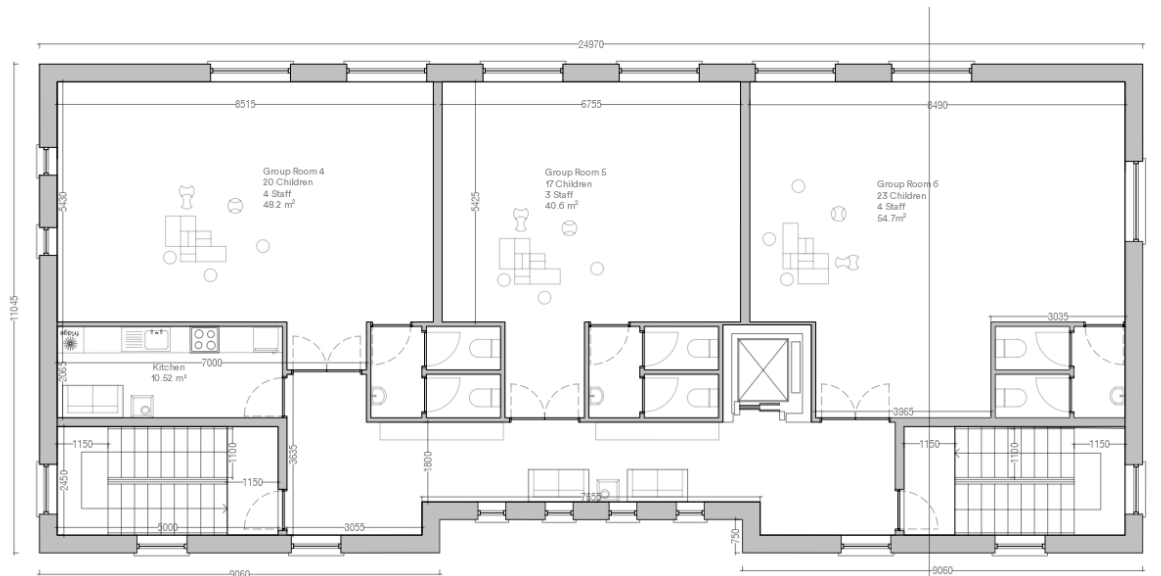


Figure 2 Extract from JFOC drawing - First Floor Creche Plan

The internal arrangement of rooms has taken full consideration of the adult to child ratios and requirements for clear space as outlined by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016

The proposed creche building is a two storey standalone building. There is a safe and enclosed space (125sq.m) for young children to play that will be well supervised. The creche is also in proximity to large areas of public open space. Storage for bins and secure bicycle parking will be provided to the east of the property. As detailed by the site layout plan submitted with the planning application, 15no. car parking spaces are allocated to the creche including two for mobility impaired drivers.

3.0 CHILDCARE FACILITIES – POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 SECTION 28 GUIDELINES

Section 2.4 of the *2001 Childcare Facilities- Guidelines for Planning Authorities* recommend that in new housing areas at least one childcare facility for each 75 dwellings would be appropriate. According to the Guidelines, appropriate locations for childcare facilities are as follows-

- (i) In new communities/larger new housing estates.
- (ii) The vicinity of concentrations of work places, such as industrial estates, business parks and any other locations where there are significant numbers working.
- (iii) In the vicinity of schools.
- (iv) Neighbourhood and town centres.
- (v) Adjacent to public transport corridors, park-and-ride facilities, pedestrian routes and dedicated cycle ways.

By reference to Circular Letter PL 3-2016 issued by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government dated 31st of March 2016, it is noted the Department is considering revising the 2001 Childcare Guidelines. The content of the Circular is reflected in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2023) which states at section 4.7;

“Notwithstanding the Planning Guidelines for Childcare Facilities (2001), in respect of which a review is to be progressed, and which recommend the provision of one child-care facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units, 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. 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.” (emphasis added)

The size of the childcare facility proposed as part of the development has been calculated on the basis that one-bedroom apartments will not contribute to a requirement for childcare provision. Using the benchmark of 20no. child places for every 75no. dwellings, this results in a requirement for 105no. child places. The design of the proposed childcare facility provides 107no, child places across all age ranges.

3.2 SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

The Development Plan recognises that “Pre-school childcare needs are difficult to assess on a long-term basis as the nature of demand evolves over time based on factors such as the population profile of an area, market conditions, government policy and the level of state intervention. Notwithstanding this, there is a recognised need for planned provision in new communities where no infrastructure exists.”(S.8.9)

The objective of the Guidelines outlined above has been carried through at county South Dublin County Plan 2022-2028 under objective COS7;

To require provision of appropriate childcare facilities as an essential part of new residential developments in accordance with the provisions of the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) or any superseding guidelines, or as required by the Planning Authority. The Guidelines recommend one childcare facility with a minimum of 20 places for each 75 units for new residential developments, with any variation to this standard being justified having regard to factors such as type of residential units, emerging demographic profile and availability of existing childcare services in the vicinity.”

The provision of a childcare facility within the proposed development is in keeping with the Development Plan objective.

4.0 CHILDCARE FACILITIES– EXISTING PROVISION

An audit of existing childcare facilities has been undertaken within the area illustrated by figure 4. Information was obtained from the Pobal website and Tusla Inspection Reports. There are seven existing childcare facilities within a 1km radius of the application site. These facilities have a combined capacity of c.405 child spaces based on information from Tulsa Regulatory Inspection Reports.

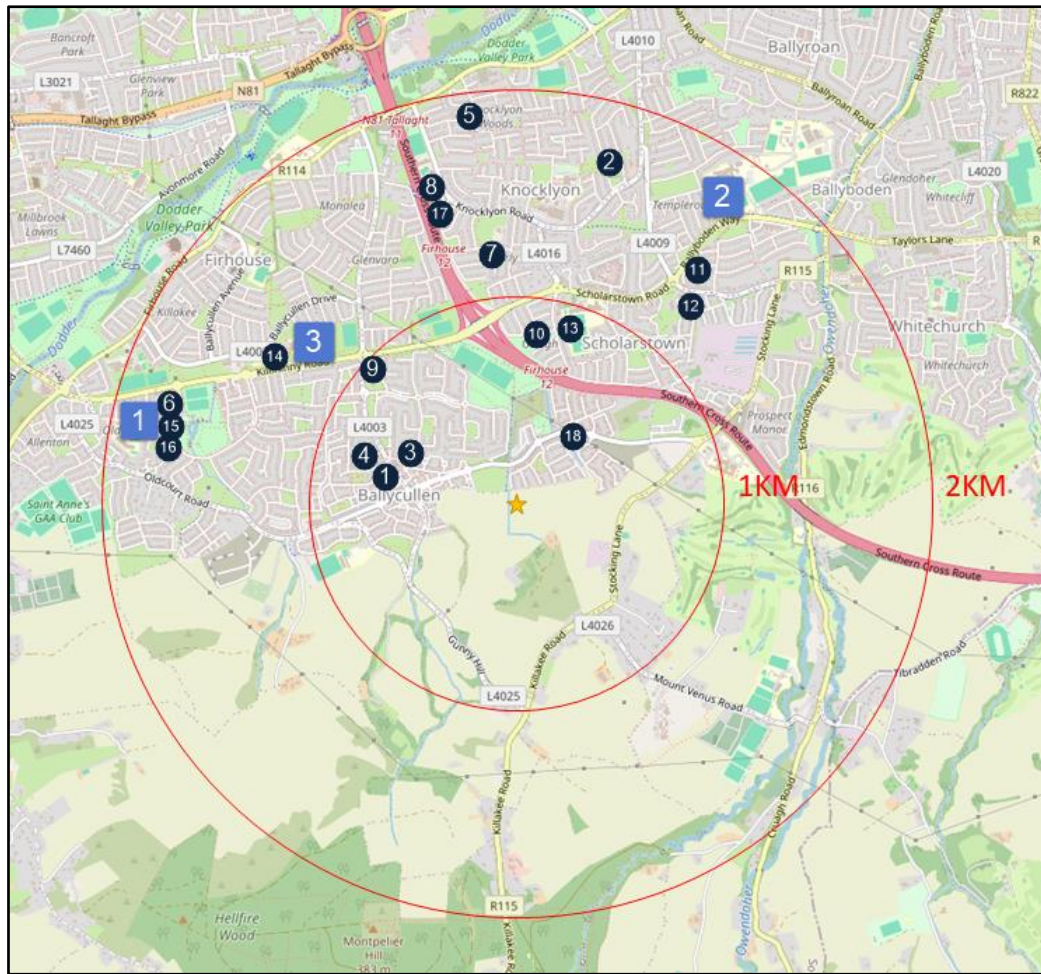


Figure 3: Childcare Facilities within 2km of site (yellow star)

| No. | Name | Tusla Number | Age Range | Service Type | Capacity |
|-----|--|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Ballycullen Montessori | TU2015DS039 | 0-6 Years | Sessional | 28 |
| 2 | Cool Kidz Crèche | TU2015DS158 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 14 |
| 3 | Chuckleberries Dalriada Montessori & Crèche | TU2015DS012 | 0-6 Years | Full Day Part Time | 75 |
| 4 | Chuckleberries Hunterswood Montessori & Crèche | TU2015DS007 | 2-6 Years | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | 75 |
| 5 | Delaforde Montessori | TU2015DS166 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 21 |
| 6 | Discoveries Crèche & Montessori | TU2015DS025 | 0-6 Years | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | 45 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|------------|--------------------------------|-----|
| 7 | Eager Beavers Montessori | TU2015DS100 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 12 |
| 8 | Knocklyon Lodge Crèche & Montessori | TU2015DS048 | 0-6 Years | Full Day | 102 |
| 9 | The Learning Curve Playschool & Montessori | TU2015DS108 | 2-6 Years | Part Time Sessional | 66 |
| 10 | Let's Play Pre-School | TU2016DS011 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 22 |
| 11 | The Lodge Montessori Preschool | TU2015DS023 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 16 |
| 12 | Little Harvard Crèche & Montessori | TU2022DR001 | 0-6 Years | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | 70 |
| 13 | Little Penguins | TU2015DS121 | 2-6 Years | Full Day | 44 |
| 14 | Little Penguins Firhouse T/A Firhouse Childcare* | TU2023DS004 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 61 |
| 15 | MGW Childcare Ltd. T/A Tickles Daycare | TU2015DS208 | 0-6 Years | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | 60 |
| 16 | Mini Marvels Montessori | TU2015DS122 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 11 |
| 17 | Naionra Chnoc Liamhna | TU2015DS070 | 2-6 Years | Sessional | 22 |
| 18 | Safari Childcare Rathfarnham | TU2022DR002 | 1-6 Years | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | 95 |
| School Age Services (Blue box) | | | | | |
| 1 | Lily's Before & After School Childcare (Firhouse Carmel) | TU2022DS008SA | 4-12 Years | Standalone | 60 |
| 2 | Lily's Before & After School Childcare (The Park) | TU2019DS006SA | 4-12 Years | Standalone | 60 |
| 3 | Primary Pals | TU2019DS0075A | 4-12 Years | Standalone | 100 |

*As of the writing of this report, Firhouse Childcare has applied to SDCC for an expansion of their premises to allow for an additional pre-school/Montessori classroom for up to 24no children (PA Ref. SD24A/0218W). No decision has yet been issued on the application.

The above table shows an overall combined capacity of 1,059no childcare places within 2-kilometres of the application site including capacity specifically for 220no children of school age.

5.0 PROJECTED CHILDCARE DEMAND

The application site is located within the Electoral Division of Firhouse-Ballycullen and east of Firhouse Village ED. The 2022 Census results for the two Eds have been reviewed to establish the existing demographics in the area of the site. According to the results, 5,929no. of the 7,258no. households are occupied by families (82%).

Based upon the existing demographic pattern above and discounting one-bedroom apartments (108no.) and presuming 82% of all other housing is occupied by families with children, this would equate to 323no. of the 502no. dwellings proposed being occupied by families with children. According to the same Census results, families with children in the two Eds of Firhouse-Ballycullen and Firhouse Village have on average 1.5 children per family household. Using this average figure, the 323no. dwellings would generate a population of **485no. children** within the LRD as proposed. Based on the demographic profile of the Eds from the 2022 Census results, the 485no. potential children living in the new development have been profiled as follows-

- 112no. aged 0-4
- 131no. aged 5-9
- 131no. aged 10-14
- 112no. aged 15-19

The application site is located within the Electoral Division of Firhouse-Ballycullen and east of Firhouse Village ED. The 2022 Census results for the two Eds have been reviewed to establish the use of childcare in the area. According to the results, 1,898 children under 15 years of age are in childcare. This represents 36% of all children aged from 0-14years. 884no. (47%) of the children using childcare are preschool ages 0-4 and 1,014no. (53%) are school aged children ages 5-14. This is higher than the Census 2022 result for South Dublin County Council which shows 29% of children under 15 are in childcare (46% preschool and 54% school age children).

The estimated population of children within the new neighbourhood is 374no. aged between 0-14. Based on the Census statistics outlined above, 135no. of those children (36%) would use some form of childcare. In the South Dublin County Council administrative area 45.9% of children in childcare use a formal childcare service like a creche/Montessori/playground or afterschool club. Applying this figure to the potential demand within the proposed development would equate to 62no. children using the creche facility.

6.0 CONCLUSION

It is considered appropriate to include a childcare facility within the proposed development based on its location relative to existing services and the projected pre-school population that the new neighbourhood would cater for. The childcare facility provides adequate capacity based on the benchmark recommended by the Childcare Guidelines and taking account of Census 2022 results for the immediate area.