

Childcare Demand Report

For Development at Knockgriffin (townland),
Midleton, Co. Cork

on behalf of Havenfalls Limited

November 2022



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CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Study Methodology.....	3
3. Policy Context	4
3.1 Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028	5
3.2 Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001	4
3.3 Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartment Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018.....	5
4. Assessment.....	6
4.1 Demographic Profile of the Area	6
4.2 Distribution of Childcare Facilities in the Midleton Area	7
4.3 Future demand as a result of the proposed development.....	10

1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants have been appointed by Havenfalls Limited to prepare a Childcare Demand Report which considers the existing childcare facilities in the settlement of Midleton, Co. Cork. The report will inform the proposed development of a Large Residential Development consisting of the construction of 330 no. residential units. The subject site is located approximately 1.4km from Midleton town centre.

This report provides details on the current and future capacity of existing and proposed childcare facilities in the area, along with the demand for places likely to be generated by the proposed development.



Figure 2 Site location (in red) and distance to Midleton Town Centre

2. Study Methodology

The study area is made up of a combination of Electoral Divisions in the Midleton area as defined by the 2016 Census. The subject site itself is located in the Midleton Rural Electoral Division. Midleton is the largest town in East Cork with a substantial population, allowing sufficient scope for the childcare assessment.

The study area for the proposed development has been determined by applying a 3km radius or equivalent 5–30-minute travel time to ensure that childcare facilities can be accessed via a number of travel alternatives including walking, cycling and driving.

A number of resources were consulted in the preparation of this report.

- Tusla Reports;
- Census 2016 SAPMAP data;
- The Cork County Development Plan;
- The 2001 Childcare Guidelines; and

- The 2020 Apartment Guidelines



Figure 2. The Study Area in context of Site Location

3. Policy Context

This policy review looks at the following material to guide our assessment approach.

- Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001
- Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartment Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020
- Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

3.1 Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001

Appendix 2 of the 'Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities' establishes an indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas (Paragraphs 2.4 and 3.3.1 also refer to this standard). One facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare places is considered to be a reasonable starting point in this regard. The Guidance acknowledges that other case-specific assumptions may lead to an increase or decrease in this requirement.

The results of any childcare needs analysis carried out as part of a county childcare strategy should also be considered.

Appendix 2 also states that the threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas.

3.2 Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartment Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020

In relation to the provision of childcare facilities as they relate to apartments developments, Section 4.7 of the 2020 Apartment Guidelines provides the following guidance in relation to studio and one-bedroom units:

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

3.3 Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

County Development Plan Objective SC 6-4: Childcare Facilities of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 relates to the provision of childcare facilities. It states that the Council will:

“Support and facilitate the sustainable provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations and seek their provision concurrent with development, having regard to population targets for the area and in accordance with the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Local Authorities 2001 and regard to the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Centres 2019.”

Furthermore, it is also stated in the County Development that having regard to the Guidelines on Childcare Facilities for Planning Authorities, the Council will take account of existing childcare provision when considering new childcare/crèche facilities provision as part of residential development in order to avoid over provision of these facilities.

Finally, the Development Plan states that childcare facilities are acceptable in principle subject to normal planning considerations in all land use categories but must be developed in a sustainable manner and at an appropriate scale in the areas where they are needed.

4. Assessment

The local childcare demand likely to be generated by the proposal and the number of existing facilities in the vicinity to cater for such demand was examined in accordance with current guidelines. In accordance with the Childcare Guidelines, the following was established:

- The emerging demographic profile of the area; and
- The existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area.

In assessing the current and likely childcare demand for the catchment area, an analysis of childcare facilities located within a 5–30-minute travel time (3km) of the site was undertaken. Given the 3km radius from the subject site, we also provide an analysis of the CSO data for the Electoral Divisions within this parameter. As such this report analyses data from the Electoral Divisions of Midleton Rural, Midleton Urban, Carrigtohill, Lisgoold, Templenacarriga and Ballyspillane.

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Area

The demographic profile of the Midleton Rural Electoral Divisions (ED) and all associated Electoral Divisions as mentioned above were examined from the CSO Census of Population Statistics 2016 and includes a comparative analysis with national average across a number of datasets.



Figure 3 Relevant Electoral Districts within 3km of Subject Site

The population of the Midleton Rural ED was 8,922 according to the 2016 Census. This was an increase of 606 from the 2011 Census and represents an increase of 7%. In 2016, of the total population of the ED, 9% were of pre-school age (0-4 years). In 2011 this total figure was 12%, which represents a 3% decrease from the 2016 statistics.

The demographic profile of all the Electoral Divisions mentioned above, including Midleton Rural, had a total population of 21,085 in the 2016 Census.

This is an increase of 1,483 persons from the 2011 Census and represents a rise of 7.5%. In 2016, of the total population for all EDs, 10% were of pre-school age. In 2011, this total figure was 11%, which represents a 1% increase from the 2016 statistics.

By way of comparison, in 2016 for the Midleton Rural ED, the number of one person households and married couples without children was 1,313, or 14.7% of the total population. This figure for all the EDs combined was 3,446 or 16% of the total combined population. Across the local authority, this figure was 77,924, or 18.7% of the total population, meaning that on average there are fewer one person households and married persons with no children in our study area compared to the overall population of the local authority.

In terms of demographic travel trends, of the total population for the Midleton Rural ED aged over 5 years, 3,070 persons travel to work, school and college between 15 minutes and 45 minutes each day. This represents 38% of the commuting population.

4.2 Distribution of Childcare Facilities in the Midleton Area

The study area reflects a 5–30-minute travel time from the subject site, the equivalent of a 3km radius, which is regarded as a reasonable travel time to access essential services, such as childcare facilities, via walking, cycling and driving. The study area yielded a total of 12 no. childcare facilities were located in the study area. The location of these facilities is outlined in Figure 4 and the list of facilities along with their approximate travel times are given in Table 1. Additionally, the capacity of these facilities, along with their available places for the current year are given in Table 2.

No.	Name	Distance	Walk	Cycle	Drive
1	First Steps	1.7km	21	6	4
2	Little Angels	2.2km	27	7	5
3	Jack and Jill Childcare Centre	700m	9	3	2
4	Orchard Court Creche	3.9km	40	14	5
5	Singing in the Rain	2.1km	23	7	5
6	Tinga Tinga Childcare	2.4km	29	8	7
7	Tiny Tots	2km	25	6	6

No.	Name	Distance	Walk	Cycle	Drive
8	Willowbank Preschool	1.4km	17	5	17
9	Midleton Community Forum Oakwood Lodge	2.4km	30	8	7
10	Midleton Community Forum Sandy Walk	1.8km	22	7	4
11	Midleton Montessori and Play School	2.6km	29	8	6
12	Carraig Liath Respond Community Building	2.9km	37	11	6
13	Darling Buds	1km	13	4	3

Table 1 Commuting Distance to Local Creches from Subject Site



Figure 4 Distribution of Childcare Facilities with Site Location in Red

Waterrock is located close to employment areas in Midleton as well as being a short drive away to major employment hubs in Little Island and Cork City. It is considered reasonable that a sizeable proportion of those commuting to these places of employment may also avail of childcare facilities closely located to these areas. This has been illustrated in the above demographic research with regards to commuting time and therefore, for the purpose of this assessment, such facilities have been omitted from the research undertaken. As such, the identified capacity in the area should be viewed as a minimum.

Pre-school inspection reports from TUSLA are available for the majority of all the 13 facilities identified within our study area. Those that are not recorded in reports are due to that fact that they are recently established, and no inspection has been carried out. Moreover, few of these reports are up to date for the current year and therefore not all relevant data necessary to carry out the assessment was available with these reports. In the absence of this data, information in relation to the facilities was gathered by directly engaging with the proprietors or staff, who advised on the total capacity of the relevant facility and the corresponding number of available places.

Childcare Facility	Capacity of Facility in Places	Available Places 2021/2022
First Steps	74	15
Little Angels	74	0
Jack and Jill Childcare Centre	22	0
Orchard Court Creche	80	0
Singing in the Rain	22	2
Tinga Tinga	97	0
Tiny Tots	10	0
Willowbank Pre-School	11	2
Midleton Community Forum Oakwood Lodge	50	10
Midleton Community Forum Sandy Walk	22	6
Midleton Montessori and Play School	66	0

Childcare Facility	Capacity of Facility in Places	Available Places 2021/2022
Carraig Liath Respond Community Building	34	5
Darling Buds	60	16
Total Places	622	56

Table 2 Creche Capacity and Available Places

Of the 13 no. childcare facilities, it was not possible to contact one either by phone or email. In this instance where no response was received, a conservative approach has been taken and a zero capacity has been assumed.

4.3 Future demand as a result of the proposed development

The proposed scheme consists of the development of 330 no. units comprised of a mix of 2-bed apartments and 3 and 4-bed dwelling houses.

Based on the state average household size of 2.75 persons, the 330 no. units which require childcare provision are likely to generate a population of 910 persons. Based on the assumption that 9% of the population within the Electoral District of Middleton Rural are of pre-school age (0-4), we estimate that the number of pre-school children likely to be generated from the proposed development is approximately 82.

As previously indicated, it is not probable that all pre-school children would require childcare in the immediate vicinity of the site due to childcare being provided at home and commuting patterns, and thus the figure 82 is an over-estimation in relation to the predicted demand for childcare likely to be generated from the proposed development.

According to data from the Quarterly National Household Survey, Childcare, Q3 2016 states that, on average the percentage of children who require the use of childcare services at pre-school age is 38%.

Based on these statistics, we would predict that based on national averages, approximately 31 pre-school children generated from the proposed development would require access to a childcare facility.

5. Conclusion

This Childcare Demand Report has been carried out to determine the existing childcare facilities within a 5–30-minute travel time of the proposed development site and has been carried out in accordance with the Cork County Council Development Plan and national Childcare Guidelines.

Appendix 2 of the 'Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities' establishes an indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas (Paragraphs 2.4 and 3.3.1). One facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare places is considered to be a reasonable starting point in this regard. The Guidelines acknowledge that other case-specific assumptions may lead to an increase or decrease in this requirement.

Based on the highest-case scenario, the subject site could generate an additional 82 no. childcare places. Meanwhile, based on national trends we expect that a minimum of 31 places would be required. The research undertaken identifies that there is capacity in childcare places within the relevant travel time used as part of our study area and would provide suitable childcare options for residents of the proposed development.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the provision of a creche on site to cater for 90 no. children will meet the needs of the future residents of the development and the current market demands for a viable operator.

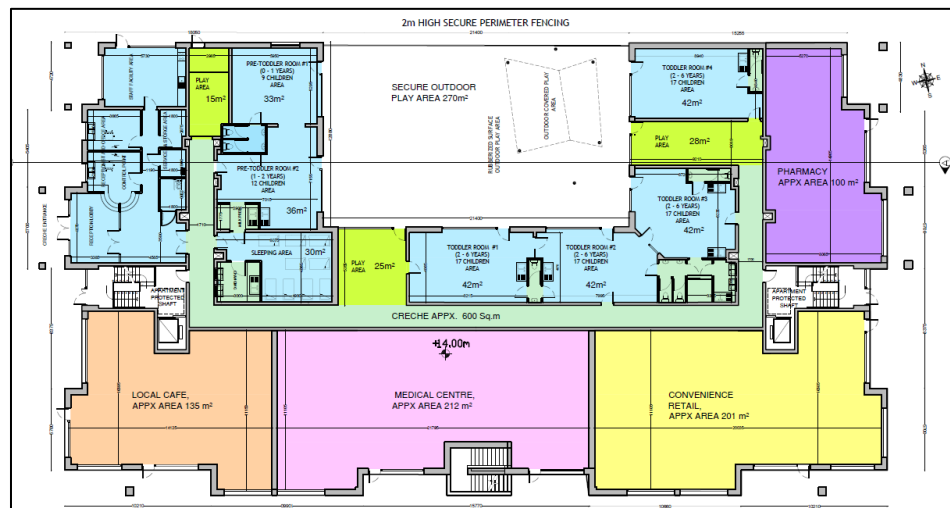


Figure 6 – Proposed Neighbourhood Centre Creche and Commercial Ground Floor Plan