

Childcare Demand Report

For Development at The Former Ford Distribution Centre, fronting onto Centre Park Road, Ballintemple, Cork

on behalf of Marina Quarter Ltd.

November 2024



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Document Control Sheet

Client	Marina Quarter Ltd.	
Project Title	Ford LRD	
Document Title	Childcare Demand Report	
Document Comprises	Volumes	1
	Pages (Excluding Cover)	13
	Appendices	N/A
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Checked by	Cora Savage	
Office of Issue	Cork	
Document Information	Revision	A
	Status	Final
	Issue Date	November 2024

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Study Methodology.....	3
3. Planning Policy Context.....	4
3.1 National Planning Framework 2040	5
3.2 Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2001	5
3.3 Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.....	5
4. Assessment.....	7
4.1 The emerging demographic profile of the area	7
4.2 The existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area	7
4.3 Future Demand Generated by Proposed Development.....	10
5. Conclusion	12
6. References	13

1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants have been appointed by Marina Quarter Ltd. to prepare a Childcare Demand Report which considers the existing childcare facilities surrounding the proposed development at The Former Ford Distribution Centre, fronting onto Centre Park Road, Ballintemple, Cork. The report will inform the proposed development of 176 no. residential units at a site located c. 1km from the centre of Cork City.

This report provides details on the current capacity of existing childcare facilities, The capacity of existing facilities in the area will be considered against the demand factors for childcare spaces in the catchment and the number of childcare spaces to be generated by the proposed development.

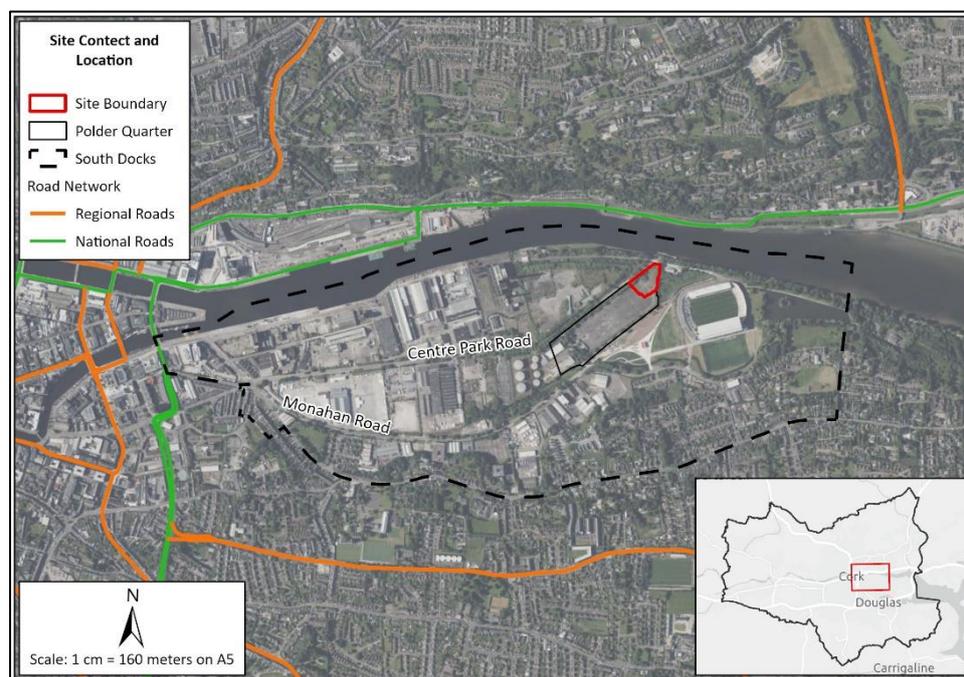


Figure 1: Location of site relative to the existing urban footprint of South Docks (Sources: Cork City Council, 2024)

2. Study Methodology

The study area for the proposed development has been determined using the data contained in Table DRC03 - Average Distance and Number of Remote Work Hubs and Childcare Services to Residential Dwellings (CSO, 2022). The national average distance between childcare services and residential dwellings in 2022 was 1.6km. Therefore, the catchment area for this childcare assessment was set at 2km from the site boundary. The area north of the River Lee was excluded from the catchment as the river poses an impermeable barrier to movement between the site and the area to the north of the River Lee. Using the catchment area as a guide, the small area boundaries intersecting the catchment area were selected and the Census 2022 figures for these small area boundaries were aggregated by theme and

table. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the catchment area and the small area boundaries selected for this report.

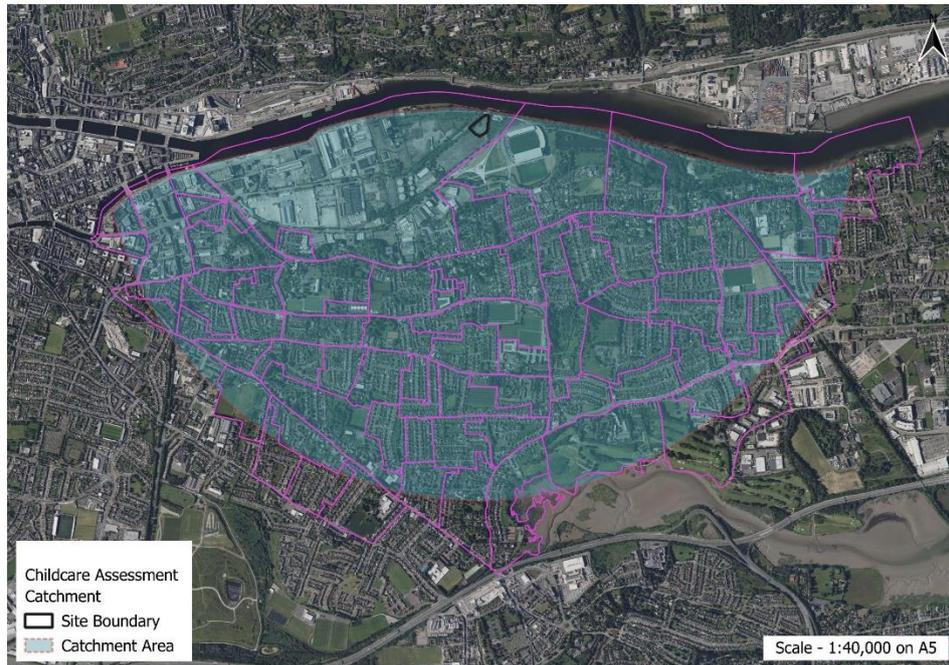


Figure 2: Childcare Catchment Area and 2022 Small Boundaries (Source: Tailte Eireann, 2024)

Several sources were consulted in the preparation of this report, including;

- Survey from Cork Childcare Committee;
- Tusla Reports;
- Census 2022 SAPMAP data;
- Census 2022 Profile 3 – Households, Families, and Childcare
- The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028; and
- The Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001.

3. Planning Policy Context

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

- National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040
- Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001;
- Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines to Planning Authorities 2022
- Cork City Council Development Plan 2022-2028

3.1 National Planning Framework 2040

The NPF 2040 lists 10 strategic outcomes of national importance, of which access to quality childcare, education and health services is one. Chapter 6 – People, Homes, and Communities of the NPF 2040 discusses the importance of making provision for childcare services in detail. Section 6.4 and 6.5 underlines the need for facilities and amenities serving children that are of a high quality and affordable. These sentiments are encapsulated within the first two bullets under National Policy Objective 31, which states:

- *A childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting of investment needs, including identification of regional priorities;*
- *The provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations;*

3.2 Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2001

Appendix 2 of the Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001 establishes an indicative standard of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas (Paragraphs 2.4 and 3.3.1 refer). One facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare spaces is a reasonable starting point in this regard. The Childcare Guidelines 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.

3.3 Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

The CCDP 2022 defines childcare as an all-encompassing term which includes crèches, full day-care, part-time care, and sessional facilities as well as pre-school, and school-age (after-school) services. Regarding the provision of childcare facilities, the CCDP 2022 cites the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001). New residential developments of more than 75 units must consider the need to include a childcare facility. Where it can be substantiated that there is sufficient existing capacity within the area, there may not be a requirement to provide a new childcare facility Objective 3.21 states the following:

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 Committee 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.*

Chapter 11 notes that there are five types of locations which are deemed as suitable for the placement of childcare facilities which includes new residential developments.

4. Assessment

The local crèche demand which is likely to be generated by the proposed development and the number of existing crèches 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;
- The existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area

4.1 The emerging demographic profile of the area

The demographic profile of the 85 small areas was examined from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census of Small Area Population Statistics 2022 which includes a comparative analysis with National and City proportions across several datasets.

The combined population of the 85 small areas grew by 9.5% between 2016 and 2022 census periods with a population of 18,378 in 2016 and 20,129 in 2022 (CSO, 2023 (1)). During the same period, equivalent values for the State and City saw an increase of 8.1% and 7.5% respectively. In 2022, 5.1% of the total population of the combined small areas were of pre-school going age (i.e. 0-4 years), which is the same as the figure recorded by the City- (5.1%) for persons in this age category in 2022.

Travel trends indicate that the catchment area contains a considerable number of persons aged 5 years and over travelling to work, college, or school (hereafter referred to as commuters). Nearby employment centres such as Cork City Centre, Mahon and the South Environs are accessed for work purposes daily. Almost half, 42%, of the commuters within the combined small areas travelled between 15 mins and 30 mins each day to work, school, or college (CSO, 2023 (1)). With a further 27.5% travelling no longer than 15 mins. Thus, close to 70% (69.7%) of commuters in the catchment area travel less than 30 mins to school, college and work each day. The proportion of commuters travelling less than 30 mins to work, college, or school in 2022 was higher in the catchment area than both the proportions recorded for the City (64.4%) and Ireland (57.5%).

4.2 The existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area

The catchment area contains 10 no. existing childcare providers. The location of these facilities and the number of children each can accommodate is outlined in [Figure 3](#). The list of facilities, along with the approximate distance to the site boundary is given in Table 1.

Geographic Distribution

The catchment area reflects a 10–25-minute travel time from the subject site, the equivalent of a 2km radius which is regarded as a reasonable travel time

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to access essential services. This study area yielded a total of 10 no. childcare facilities. The location of these facilities is shown in [Figure 3](#).

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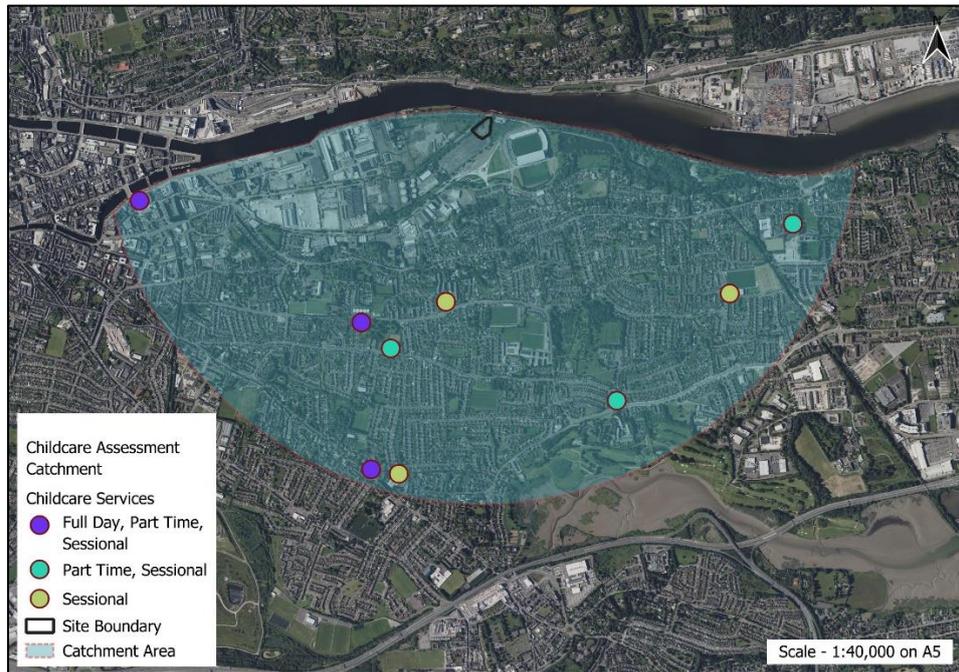


Figure 3: TUSLA Early Years Service Provider by Number of Children the Service can Accommodate (Source: TUSLA, 2024)

[Table 2](#) outlines the name of the childcare facility, the distance of each facility from the site and the relevant recorded travel times. The modes of travel considered to be feasible are walking, cycling and driving. As outlined previously, public transport is not considered given the short distances involved and the configuration of bus routes in the area. All travel times, provided in minutes, were determined using an application programming interface (API) provided by Openroute Service and are deemed to be approximate in nature.

Table 1: Childcare Facilities and Travel Times from Subject Site (all travel times in minutes)

Facility Name	Distance in Km	Drive (min)	Cycle (min)	Walk (min)
Stepping Stones Pre-School	1.9	4	6	22
Scoil Ursula Creche	2.0	5	7	24
Scoil Ursula Pre-School	2.0	5	7	24
Oakview Village Cork City	2.2	6	9	26
Step One Preschool	2.2	4	8	27
Classes Childcare	2.3	4	8	27
The Shalom Montessori Pre-School	2.3	5	8	28

Facility Name	Distance in Km	Drive (min)	Cycle (min)	Walk (min)
The Village Montessori School	2.4	5	8	28
Lilliput Montessori School	2.9	8	10	35
Nurture Childcare Douglas	3.3	7	11	40

The subject site is located close to Cork City Centre and close to major employment centres of Mahon and the South Environs. It is considered reasonable that a proportion of those commuting to these employment centres may also avail of childcare facilities in these areas. This has been illustrated in the above demographic research and therefore, for the purpose of this preliminary assessment, such facilities have been omitted from the research undertaken. As such, the identified capacity in the area should be viewed as a minimum.

The capacity figures for this report are sourced from a survey which was conducted by the Cork Childcare Committee. This survey found that none of the 10 early years providers has any availability in the catchment area ([Table 2](#)).

Table 2: TUSLA register childcare providers within catchment area and approx. distance to site (Source: TUSLA, 2024)

No.	Service Name	Address	Service Type	Age Range	Availability
1	Classes Childcare	Hillside, Boreenmanna Road cork	Full Day, Part time, Sessional	0 - 6 Years	0
2	Lilliput Montessori School	Ardfallen, Douglas, Cork	Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
3	Nurture Childcare Douglas	Unit 4, Ardfallen Mall, Douglas Road, Cork	Full Day, Part time, Sessional	0 - 6 Years	0
4	Oakwew Village Cork City	Cork City Hali, City Hall, Eglinton St, Cork (only available to council workers)	Full Day, Part time, Sessional	0 - 6 Years	0

No.	Service Name	Address	Service Type	Age Range	Availability
5	Scoil Ursula pre-School	Scoil Ursula N.S. Blackrock, Cork, Co. Cork	Part Time, Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
6	Scoil Ursula Creche	Scoil Ursula Primary School Blackrock Road. Cork,	Part Time, Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
7	Step One preschool	Blackrock National Hurling Club, Church Road, Blackrock, Cork	Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
8	Stepping Stones Pre-School	éiderwood, Boreenmanna Road, Cork	Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
9	The Shalom Montessori Pre-School	Ballinlough Community Centre, Ballinlough Road, Cork	Part Time, Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
3 10	The Village Montessori School	Skehard Road, Blackrock, Co. Cork	Part Time, Sessional	2 - 6 Years	0
Total					0

The research undertaken highlighted that of the 10-no. identified childcare facilities, all of which are operating at full capacity. Existing and potential capacity within existing creche facilities would indicate that there is insufficient capacity at existing creches to cater for the proposed development.

4.3 Future Demand Generated by Proposed Development

The proposed scheme consists of 176 no. apartment units. The 2018 Apartment Guidelines indicate that studio and 1-bedroom units need not be considered in determining the appropriate level of childcare required. Based on this guidance, 114 of the proposed units are being considered to determine the future childcare requirements for the proposed development and consist of the following unit types:

- 4 no. 2- bedroom, 3 person units
- 78 no. 2- bedroom, 4 person units

- 32 no. 3-bedroom, 4 person units

Based on the State average household size of 2.74, the 114 no. units which require childcare provision are likely to generate a population of 313 persons. Based on the assumption that 5.1% of the population of the combined small areas are of pre-school age (i.e. 0-4 years), the number of pre-school children likely to be generated by the completed development is approximately 16. As outlined previously, it is improbable that all children will require childcare so the figure of 16 is effectively a worst-case scenario in relation to the demand for childcare spaces generated from the proposed development.

The CSO published Table 5 - Number of usually resident children aged 0 - 14 years as part of Theme 11 - Commuting of the Small Area Population Statistics. Table 5 contains figures related to the number of children aged 0-4-years in childcare in 2022 and shows that 50.2% of children aged 0-4-years are in some type of childcare service across Ireland (CSO, 2023 (1)). Therefore, it can be expected that 9 of the 16 children aged 0-4-years generated by the proposed development will require childcare services.

The CSO published Table F3011- - Children Under 15 Years of Age as part of Profile 3 - Households, Families and Childcare as part of the Census 2022 results. Table F3011 breaks down the types of childcare services which parents avail of across Ireland. More than half (56%) of children aged 0-4 is enrolled in a Creche/Montessori/playgroup/after school facility (CSO, 2023 (2)). Therefore, it can be expected that 6 of the 9 children requiring childcare services generated by the proposed development will need to be placed in a Creche/Montessori/playgroup/after school facility.

The proposed development will be constructed in one phase and one childcare facility with a capacity of 35 childcare spaces will be provided as part of the proposed development. It is also important to note that the granted strategic housing development (SHD) neighbouring the proposed development will, provide 2 no. childcare with a combined capacity of 120 no. new childcare spaces.

5. Conclusion

This crèche demand report has been carried out to determine the existing childcare facilities within 2km (10–25-minute travel time) of the proposed development site. The modes of travel were identified as feasible within the study area are walking, cycling and driving. Public transport is not considered given the short distances from the subject site to the various crèche locations and the configuration of bus routes in the area.

Based on the current Census data outlining the demographics of the catchment area and evidence of national trends regarding the uptake of childcare facilities the proposed development may generate demand for up to 16 no. additional childcare places, although it has been outlined previously that in accordance with national research it is not probable that all 16 children will require childcare.

As outlined in this report, the proposed development includes 1 no. childcare facility which has a capacity of 35 no. childcare spaces. This exceeds the projected childcare needs of the proposed development.

6. References

- Central Statistics Office, 2022. Table DRC03 - Average Distance and Number of Remote Work Hubs and Childcare Services to Residential Dwellings, CSO Ireland.
- Central Statistics Office, 2023 (1). Small Area Population Statistics, 2023, CSO Ireland.
- Central Statistics Office, 2023 (2). Census 2022 – Profile 3 – Households, Family, and Childcare: Table F3011, CSO Ireland.
- Tailte Eireann, 2024. Small Area Boundaries 2022. Available online at: <https://arcg.is/CCX99>
- TUSLA, 2024. TUSLA Register of Early Years Service Providers June 2024.