

*February 2020*



# *Childcare Provision Assessment*

Proposed Strategic Housing Development

On lands adjacent to the existing residential development known as The Gallery, Turvey Walk, off Turvey Avenue and to the west of Donabate Train Station, Donabate, Co. Dublin

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## 1.0 Introduction

Downey Planning, Chartered Town Planners, No. 1 Westland Square, Pearse Street, Dublin 2, have prepared this Childcare Provision Assessment Report, on behalf of the applicant, Elchior Construction Ltd., to accompany a planning application for a proposed Strategic Housing Development on lands adjacent to the existing residential development known as 'The Gallery', Turvey Walk, off Turvey Avenue and to the west of Donabate Train Station, Donabate, Co. Dublin.

The proposed development consists of the construction of a residential scheme comprising 144 no. apartments (26 no. 1-beds, 100 no. 2-beds and 18 no. 3-beds) within 3 no. blocks ranging in height from 3-5 storeys with 1 no. retail unit proposed.

This report is being submitted in support of the justification for the aforementioned planning application and to provide a detailed assessment of the existing childcare facilities within the subject area, thus assessing if the existing available capacity is sufficient to cater for the proposed scheme and surrounding environs.

As such, the report will provide an overview and details on the current existing childcare provision in Donabate, as well as the future demand arising from the proposed development. An overview of the pertaining planning policy and guidance is also provided.

Furthermore, Downey Planning liaised with the Fingal County Childcare Committee as requested at the Stage 2 meeting who indicated that there are 20 no. spaces available. The proposed development generates a requirement for only 6 no. spaces.

This report demonstrates that based on the results provided by the aforementioned assessment, the proposed development would not require the provision of a childcare facility on site, and that there is sufficient available capacity to cater for the potential demand generated by the proposed scheme.

The following planning policy and guidance documents have been reviewed for the preparation of this report:

- *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Department of Environment (2001)
- *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (March 2018)
- Fingal County Council Development Plan 2017-2023
- Donabate Local Area Plan 2016-2022

In addition to the above, the assessment of current and future childcare facilities for the area includes the analysis of CSO data and childcare facilities located within the Donabate area, the current trends and details provided by the pertaining childcare facilities, as well as information provided by the Fingal County Childcare Committee.

## 2.0 Planning Policy

### 2.1 Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2001)

Government policy on childcare is to increase the number of childcare places and facilities available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community. These *Guidelines for Planning*

*Authorities on Childcare Facilities* provide a framework to guide both local authorities in preparing development plans and assessing applications for planning permission, and developers and childcare providers in formulating development proposals.

The following definition of Childcare is included in the Guidelines:

*“In these Guidelines, “childcare” is taken to mean 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, crèches, 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.”*

For housing schemes, the Guidelines provide a benchmark provision of 1 no. 20 space childcare facility per 75 dwellings. The threshold for provision should be established having regard to existing location of facilities and the emerging demography of the area where new housing is proposed. The recommendations provided within the Guidelines must be considered in the context of the *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (2018), which state that:

*“Notwithstanding the Department’s Planning Guidelines for Childcare Facilities, which are currently subject to review and recommend the provision of one childcare facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units, the threshold for provision in apartment scheme 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 for the area.”*

As recommended in the Guidelines, 1 no. childcare facility would be required as part of the proposal to cater for the influx of population arising from the proposed scheme. It is worth noting that as stated within the apartment guidelines, *“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”*. The calculations submitted as part of this report have taken cognisance of the above given the nature of the proposed development, i.e. apartments, and demonstrate that a childcare facility is not required in this instance.

## 2.2 Fingal County Council Development Plan 2017-2023

As stated within the Development Plan, the *“provision of good community facilities and services, such as education, training, libraries, **childcare facilities**, places of worship, health and community centres, in appropriate accessible locations is important as they contribute positively to an enhanced quality of life.”*

In relation to the provision of childcare facilities, the Development Plan acknowledges their importance as a factor for economic and social wellbeing. Furthermore, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy 2007-2016 indicates that *“the provision of childcare is essential to enable parents to participate in the workforce and to obtain an income that provides an acceptable standard of living for both them and their children.”*

Fingal County Council supports the sustainable development of good quality and accessible early childcare and education infrastructure in the County. The aforementioned Childcare Facilities Guidelines promote the “*provision of childcare facilities at suitable locations including residential areas, centres of employment, educational establishments, at town, village, district and neighbourhood centres, and in areas convenient to public transport*”, and further advocate a pro-active role by the planning authority in the promotion of increased childcare provision.

The Development Plan reinforces the views taken within the Guidelines in which the Council aims to:

**Objective PM74:** “*Encourage the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations, including residential areas, town and local centres, areas of employment and areas close to public transport nodes.*”

**Objective PM75:** “*Ensure that childcare facilities are accommodated in appropriate premises, suitably located and with sufficient open space in accordance with the Childcare (Pre-School) Services) (No. 2) Regulations 2006.*”

**Objective PM76:** “*Require as part of planning applications for new residential and commercial developments that provision be made for appropriate purpose built childcare facilities where such facilities are deemed necessary by the Planning Authority.*”

As such, the Development Plan encourages the provision of childcare facilities ***in appropriate locations where they are deemed necessary***. Given the nature, scale and proposed mix of units of the proposed scheme, as well as the potential demand arising from the proposed development and available capacity within the area, it is considered that the provision of a childcare facility within the proposed development would not be necessary.

### **2.3 Donabate Local Area Plan 2016-2022**

In regard to Childcare Facilities, the Donabate Local Area Plan 2016-2022 seeks to encourage the provision of full-day care/crèche facilities as part of any new residential development, and follows the recommendation provided by the Childcare Guidelines where 1 no. crèche facility will be required for every 75 no. residential units subject to existing supply provision. As such, any additional provision would be subject to the predicted demand for the area.

Additionally, the LAP envisages two appropriate locations for the provision of childcare facilities to be located at Corballis Local Centre and Ballymastone Educational and Recreational Campus (see Fig. 1 below). Furthermore, the LAP also states that, “*the Council shall provide for dedicated full-day care crèche facilities and future childcare needs within the LAP lands.*” As such, the subject site is not designated for childcare under the LAP.

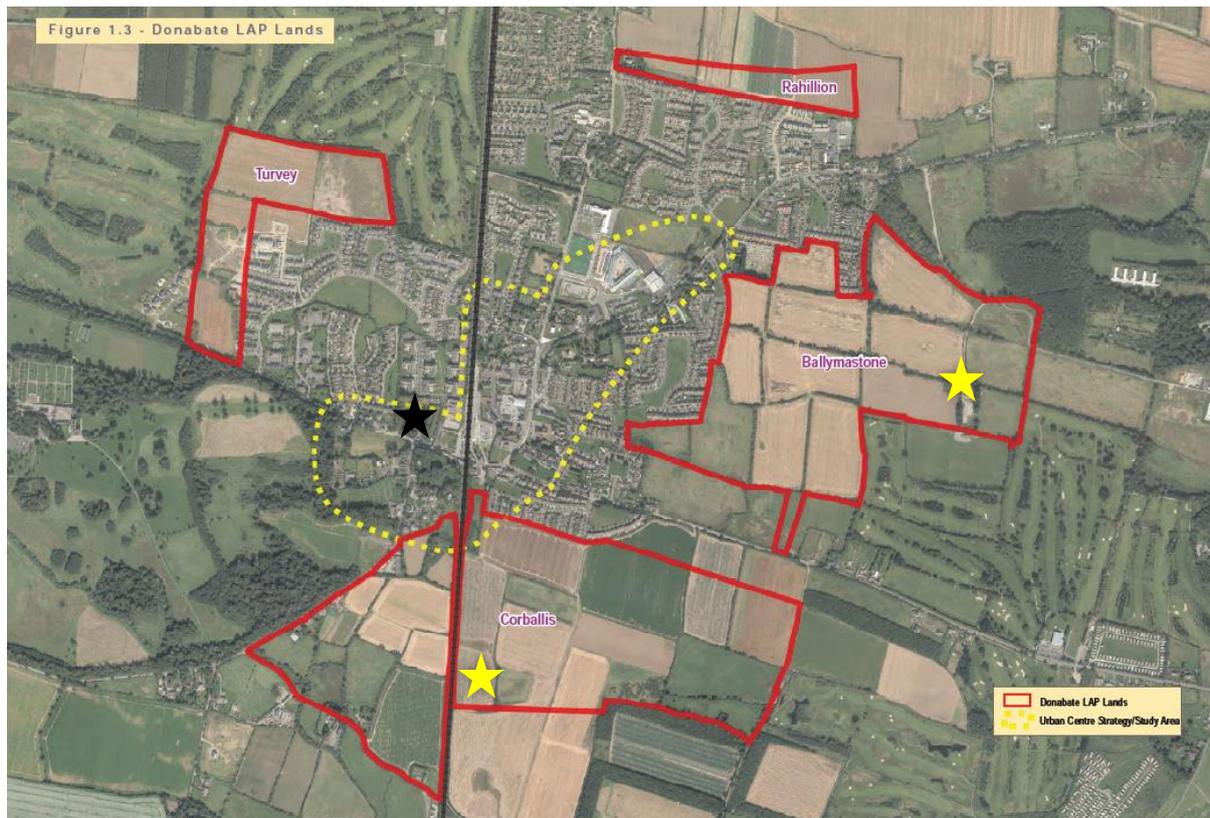


Fig. 1 – Donabate LAP Lands and proposed locations of childcare facilities as per the LAP (marked by yellow stars), site location indicated by black star.

### 3.0 Childcare Provision Assessment

#### 3.1 Distribution of Childcare Facilities

As part of the threshold for provision of childcare facilities, a survey and analysis of the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities has been carried out by Downey Planning, including the available capacity in the surrounding area that will help to serve the proposed scheme.

The Tusla map below (Fig. 2) shows a total 13 no. registered childcare providers within 2km of the subject site and surrounding area. Downey Planning have tried to contact them to determine their current capacity, as well as assessing the Early Years Inspectorate Inspection Reports provided by Tusla. The information obtained from our efforts indicates that there is some spare capacity—i.e. a total of 8 no. available spaces—within the existing operators in the area to cater for the proposed development.

Downey Planning have also engaged with the Fingal County Childcare Committee in relation to available capacity within the Donabate area. The Fingal County Childcare Committee indicated a spare capacity of 20 no. vacancies in the pre-school services for the area as per their own survey (December 2018). However, for the purpose of this report only the 8 no. available spaces (as per the survey carried out by Downey Planning) will be taken into consideration since this represents the worst-case scenario. It can be considered that there are more spaces available given that not all childcare facilities chose to participate in the survey carried out by Downey Planning and indeed the vacancy provided by the Fingal County Childcare Committee.

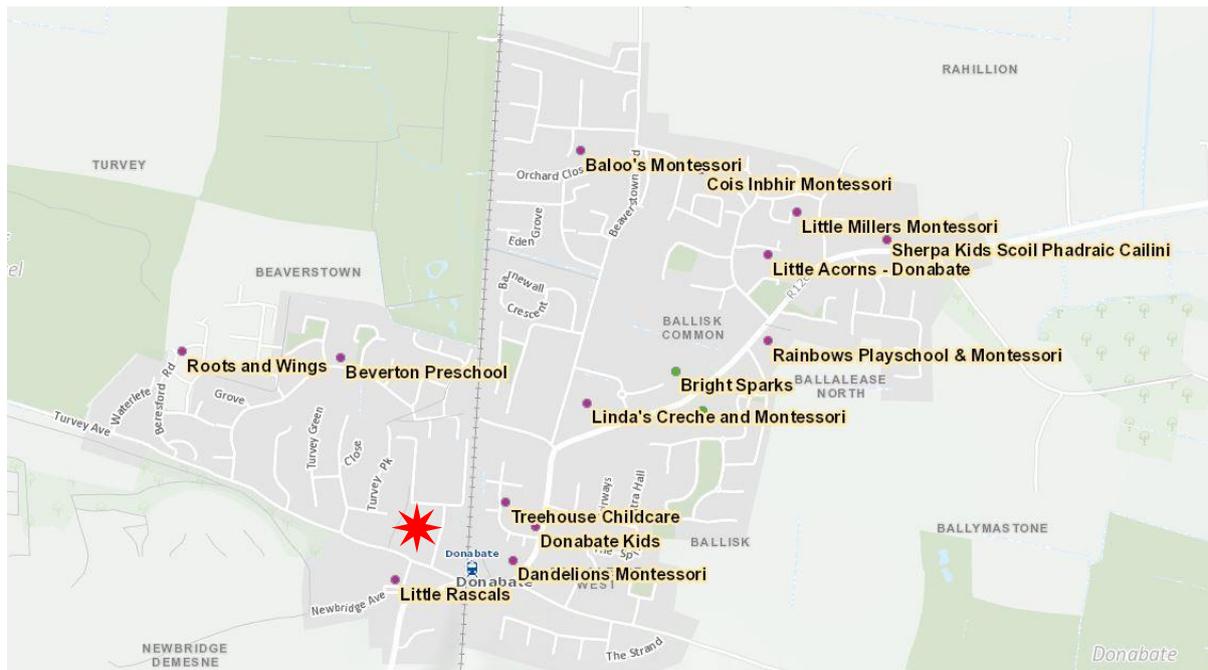


Fig. 2 – Location of childcare facilities within 2km of the subject site (site location marked by red star).

#### Childcare Facilities (Source: Tusla.ie)

Name	Address	Max Capacity	Type of Service
Baloo's Montessori School	8 Beaverbrook, Donabate, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (3–6 years)
Cois Inbhir Montessori	32 Cois Inbhir, Beaverstown Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin	11 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Little Millers Montessori	66 Carrs Mill, Donabate, Co. Dublin	15 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Bright Sparks Montessori	Donabate Portrane Community Centre, Portrane Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin	16 children	Part Time, Sessional (3–6 years)
Sophia Nurturing Centre Donabate	Hazel Grove Nurturing Centre, Portrane Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin	15 children	Part Time (2–6 years)
Linda's Creche and Montessori	St. Joseph's, Beaverstown Road, Donabate, Co. Dublin	45 children	Full Day (2–6 years)
Treehouse Childcare	Ballisk Court, Donabate, Co. Dublin	45 children	Full Day (0–6 years)
Donabate Kids	Unit 2, Main Street, Donabate, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Dandelions Montessori	St. Patrick's Parish Hall, Main Street, Donabate, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (3–6 years)
Little Rascals	C.O.I. Hall, The Square, Donabate, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Beverton Preschool	31 Beverton Drive, Donabate, Co. Dublin	26 children	Sessional (2–6 years)

<b>Roots and Wings Early Years Education and Care</b>	22 Beresford Road, Beresford, Donabate, Co. Dublin	60 children	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional (0–6 years)
<b>Natural Start</b>	Apple Blossom Cottage, Ballymadrough, Donabate, Co. Dublin	11 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
<b>Total Maximum Potential Capacity</b>		<b>332 children</b>	

Table 1 – Childcare facilities in the area.

Fingal County Council has raised some concerns in relation to the amount of childcare facilities that cater for the age group of 0–2 years. It is acknowledged that indeed there are only 2 no. childcare facilities that cater for the aforementioned age band (0–2 years), however the vacancy rates provided by the Pobal website show that there is a total of 24 no. available spaces for the 0–1 year age band and 38 no. available spaces for the 1–2 years age band, a total of 62 no. available spaces for the 0–2 years age group (Fig. 3 below), thus resulting in the second highest vacancy rate for all age bands within the County.

Furthermore, one of the childcare facilities indicated that their services will expand from *Sessional* to *Part Time* starting September 2020, thus increasing the hours of the service for the overall population.

It is also important to note that these childcare facilities are within proximity of the lands subject to this application and thus there will be available spaces to residents of this scheme for the 0–2 age group.

The Pobal website holds current local needs analysis data for the provision of Early Years Services. The information provided by the Sector Profile section includes County level data for the Early Years Sector and shows vacancy rates across each type of childcare services. As illustrated in the Pobal website, the vacant places by age for Early Years Services within Fingal County can be seen below (Fig. 3) and amount to a total of 450 available capacity for the County.

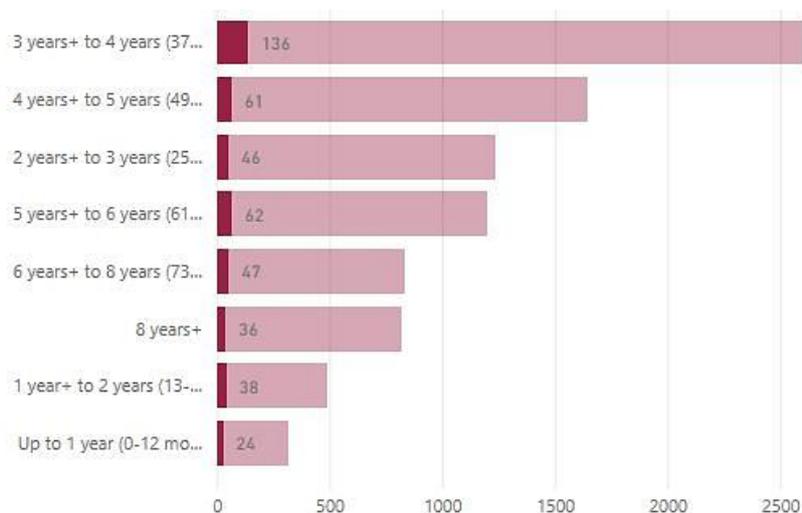


Fig. 3 – Vacant places by Age for Early Years Services (Fingal County).

As shown on Fig. 3, which provides a breakdown of available spaces by age group for Fingal, there is a higher proportion of available capacity within the ‘3–4 years’ group range with 136 no. available spaces, while the ‘0–1 years’ age band states a 24 no. available capacity.

The subject site is located in an area with 13 no. registered childcare facilities in proximity to the site which show available places (i.e. 8 no. available spaces overall) and a maximum potential capacity of 332 no. spaces. Additionally, there are two granted permissions for a childcare facility under Reg. Ref. F17A/0108 (previously granted under Reg. Ref. F12A/0086) and Reg. Ref. F17A/0373 (ABP Ref. PL06F.249206) which would be able to accommodate a maximum of 60 no. children each, resulting in the provision of an additional 120 no. childcare spaces for the subject area. Alongside the overall available capacity within the area there is a total available capacity of 128 no. childcare spaces. This is considered to be sufficient to cater for the proposed development.

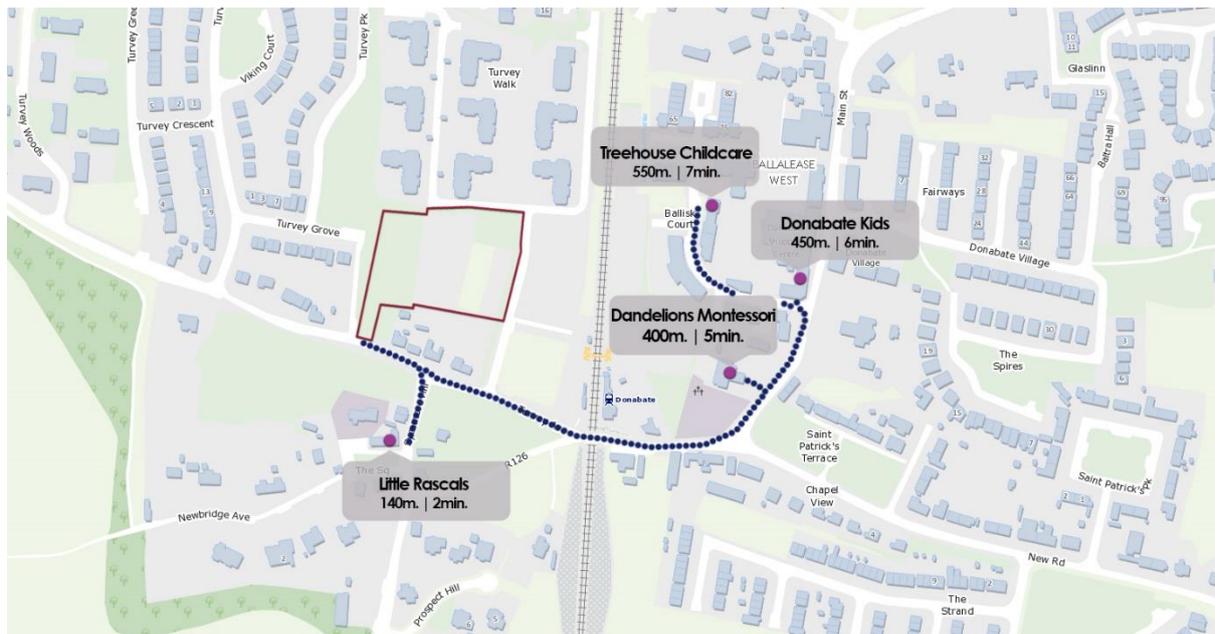


Fig. 4 – Location of childcare facilities closest to the subject lands.

As seen on Fig. 4 above, there are 4 no. childcare facilities out of the overall 13 no. facilities which are located between 2-min to 10-min's walking distance from the subject site. It is noted that Donabate Kids, Little Rascals and Dandelions Montessori offer Sessional services (2–6 years), however Dandelions Montessori has indicated that they will be providing Part Time services at the start of September 2020. In relation to Treehouse Childcare, it is the closest childcare facility to the subject site which provides Full Day service and caters for children aged 0–6 years. As such, it can be considered that the subject site benefits from existing registered facilities that can accommodate different types of services for children aged 0–6 years.

It is worth noting that the proposed development would also benefit from the quantum of available spaces that will become available upon 'graduating' population moving from childcare to primary school – which is still unaccounted for.

In light of this, it is submitted that there is sufficient available capacity in the area to cater for the childcare needs of the existing population and the proposed development, which would not generate a significant additional demand based on the scale of the development and the proposed mix of units.

### 3.2 Demographic Profile of the Area

Based on CSO Population Data, the population of the Donabate area increased from a total of 8,733 in 2011 to 9,399 in 2016 which represents a growth of 7.08%. It is worth noting that Fingal has also shown an increase in population from 273,991 in 2011 to 296,020 in 2016, thus experiencing a growth of 7.44% (+22,029 people).

As previously stated, Donabate has a population of 9,399 (Census 2016) of which 735 belong to the pre-school attending age group (i.e. 0-4 years), thus representing 7.8% of the total population for the pertaining ED. This figure, when compared to the 2011 Census result of 906 no. children (0-4 years) out of a total 8,733 population for Donabate (representing 10.3%), indicates a considerable decline in the pre-school attending age group.

#### CSO Population and Families Data

The **average number of children per family** remained at **1.38** for the State in both 2011 and 2016 Census, meanwhile Fingal shows an average of 1.44 for the 2016 Census. This figure varies for the Electoral Division (ED) pertaining to the subject site (i.e. Donabate) with an average of 1.48 in 2011 and 1.55 in 2016, this illustrates a small increase in the number of children per family for Donabate.

#### Population in Pre-school Ages, Donabate

	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4 years	Total
Census 2016	140	132	142	152	169	735 children
Census 2011	169	177	174	205	181	906 children

Table 2 – Comparison of population change (data taken from the CSO Census Results).

#### Families by Size, Donabate

	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons
Census 2016	741	558	664	368
Census 2011	759	524	585	327

Table 3 – Comparison of number of families by size (data taken from the CSO Census Results).

#### Number of Children in families, by Size of Family, Donabate

	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons
Census 2016	209	660	1,367	1,117
Census 2011	200	626	1,194	993

Table 4 – Comparison of number of children in families by size of family (data taken from the CSO Census Results).

#### Family Units with Children (All children under 15), Donabate

	1 child	2 children	3 children
Census 2016	367	430	184
Census 2011	371	443	222

Table 5 – Comparison of family units with children under 15 (data taken from the CSO Census Results).

**Families by Age of Youngest Child, Donabate**

	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20+ years	Total
Census 2016	563	436	340	254	310	1,903
Census 2011	672	376	263	177	235	1,723

Table 6 – Comparison of families by age of youngest child (data taken from the CSO Census Results).

According to the data provided by the CSO census results and pertaining to the Donabate ED, the quantum of families with children in the 0-4 years category is 563 out of a total 1,903 no. families, which represents a **29.5%** for the area—a significant decline from the 39% recorded in the 2011 Census. The State percentage stands at 28.8% with 249,091 no. families with children in the 0-4 age band out of a total 862,721.

It is important to note that projection figures may differ from the actual outcome, however these figures assist in forecasting demand and have been taken into consideration for the purpose of this childcare provision assessment.

### 3.3 Fingal County Childcare Committee

The Fingal County Childcare Committee (FCCC) has provided us with data on Early Years and School Gae Childcare in Donabate from a survey carried out by FCCC in December 2018, the following items pertain to the outcome of the aforementioned survey:

- 14 no. services were invited to provide information to FCCC on numbers of attendance, vacancies and proposals to expand, etc. It is noted that 10 no. services responded to the survey.
- 4 no. full time services, 11 no. sessional services, 4 no. services offering SAC, 1 no. SAC Only service.
- 20+ vacancies in the pre-school services.
- 249 no. children on waiting lists across the 10 no. services that responded to the survey, with 193 no. children belonging to the 3-6 years age band.
- 13 no. services offer ECCE, 5 no. services offer CCSP and 4 no. services offer CETS.

As well as this, the FCCC noted that the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) commenced on 20th November permitting parents to apply for childcare supports for childcare aged 0–15years. All 14 services in Donabate have applied to participate in this programme. Furthermore, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs announced capital funding coming on stream in February 2020. The 2020 capital investment programme to increase the number of early learning and care and school age childcare places.

### 3.4 Proposed Development Demand

The proposed development comprises 144 no. apartments (26 no. 1-beds, 100 no. 2-beds and 18 no. 3-beds) within 3 no. blocks ranging in height from 3-5 storeys with 1 no. retail unit.

According to the apartment guidelines, “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”. The calculation shown below thus

excludes 1-bedroom apartments and discounts 50% of the 2-bedroom units on the basis that these will not be occupied by families, instead these are foreseen to be occupied by young professionals. As such, and acknowledging the recommendations within the guidelines, the proposed development comprises a total of 68 no. residential units which could be potentially family-occupied.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposed scheme at Turvey Avenue may accommodate a maximum of 68 no. families. Additionally, the average number of children per family for Donabate is 1.55 children/family, resulting in 105 no. children (0-18 years age band) generated by the proposed development. Section 3.2 of this report indicates that, as an average, 29.5% of families have children within the pre-school age category (0-4 years), based on this percentage the proposed development would generate a demand of approximately 30 no. childcare spaces. These calculations can be found below.

Number of children generated by the proposed scheme:

$$68 \text{ no. families} * 1.55 \text{ children/family} = 105 \text{ no. children (0-18 years)}$$

Number of children generated by the proposed scheme (0-4 years age band):

$$105 \text{ no. children (0-18 years)} * 29.5\% = 30 \text{ no. children (0-4 years)}$$

The CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS), Childcare, Quarter 3 2016 contains the most current available published data on childcare statistics. The statistics shown below (Fig. 5) relate to the types of childcare used by children by school-going status and region, it records 25 out of 115 no. children are cared for in a crèche/Montessori/playgroup/after school facility in Dublin. This indicates that **21.7%** of children are cared for in a childcare facility for the Dublin region.

Type of childcare	Pre-school children								
	Border	Midland	West	Dublin	Mid-East	Mid-West	South-East	South-West	State
Parent / Partner	65	56	59	62	65	51	67	65	62
Unpaid relative or family friend	16	13	18	16	16	16	20	22	17
Paid relative or family friend	2	5	2	3	5	1	4	2	3
Childminder / Au Pair / Nanny	13	18	21	8	13	13	13	12	13
Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility	15	14	15	25	14	28	17	16	19
Other	1	<1	<1	1	<1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total pre-school children using non-parental childcare</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>
<i>Unweighted sample</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>136</i>	<i>234</i>	<i>525</i>	<i>244</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>230</i>	<i>316</i>	<i>2,072</i>

Fig. 5 – Types of childcare used by children by school-going status and region, Quarter 3 2016 (Pre-school children).

Applying the above percentage for Dublin to the approximate demand generated by the proposed development (30 no. children) it is predicted that the development would need 6 no. childcare spaces for children in the pre-school age band (0-4 years).

Proposed development potential demand:

$$30 \text{ no. children (0-4 years)} * 21.7\% = 6 \text{ no. childcare spaces}$$

Within the Donabate area, there are 13 no. existing childcare facilities according to data provided by Tusla and Pobal. It is noted that the area shows a total available capacity of 8 no. childcare spaces, however there are also two granted permissions for a childcare facility to accommodate a maximum

of 60 no. children each, under Reg. Ref. F17A/0108 and Reg. Ref. F17A/0373 (ABP Ref. PL06F.249206). This would result in a total **128 no. childcare spaces** which will cater for the influx of population generated by the proposed scheme.

Furthermore, and according to the calculations shown above, the proposed development would generate an approximate demand of 6 no. childcare spaces. Given the recommendations provided in the Childcare Facilities Guidelines and the existing available capacity, it would seem unnecessary to provide a childcare facility at this location when the required provision to sustain its use is not available and there is available capacity within the vicinity of the subject site to cater for the proposed development.

It is worth mentioning that there would be a graduating population moving from childcare to primary school, thus increasing the available spare capacity for each upcoming year. As well as this, it is important to consider the accessibility to employment centres outside Donabate as preferred destinations for childcare, as some parents would drop-in and pick-up their children on the way to and from work nearby their workplace instead and reducing the demand within Donabate.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the omission of a childcare facility from this residential development is appropriate given the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area and the existing available capacity. The calculations provided within this report indicate that the proposed scheme does not generate a significant quantum for a childcare facility in an area which is considered to have enough capacity to cater for future residents. Therefore, the omission of a childcare facility from within the development is considered to be justified in this instance.

### 3.5 Additional Childcare Provision

It is worth noting that there are two granted permissions mentioned in Section 3.3 above, under Reg. Ref. F17A/0108 and Reg. Ref. F17A/0373 (ABP Ref. PL06F.249206) which would provide a total of 120 no. childcare spaces and the provision of the After-School Care offered by the adjacent school.

The aforementioned granted planning permissions relate to:

- **Reg. Ref. F17A/0108** – By Order dated 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017, Fingal County Council granted planning permission to Loughglynn Developments for minor amendments to the crèche facilities previously granted under reg. ref. F12A/0086. The proposals seek: a) Planning permission to increase the capacity of the Crèche from 42 no. children to 60 no. children and b) retention permission of minor external/internal alterations of the Crèche facility to meet Crèche operator requirements. The Crèche facility is located on site no. 22 Beresford Road, Beresford, Donabate, Co. Dublin.
- **Reg. Ref. F17A/0373 (ABP Ref. PL06F.249206)** – By Order dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Tilberry Limited for a residential development of 151 no. residential units and 1 no. crèche/childcare facility to include: 41 no. 2.5 storey, 3 bedroom terrace dwellings; 2 no. 2.5 storey, 3 bedroom semi-detached dwellings; 9 no. 2 storey, 2 bedroom detached dwellings; 9 no. 2 storey, 3 bedroom detached dwellings; 90 no. 2 bedroom duplex units arranged in a split level design over three storeys; and 1 no. 2 storey crèche/childcare facility all with associated car parking. Planning permission is also sought for

1 no. new link road with new pedestrian and vehicular entrance from existing New Road connecting to 'The Links' (existing residential estate to the north) along with 2 no. additional vehicular and pedestrian entrances to the proposed development from New Road and associated upgrade works. Permission is also sought for landscaping including private, public and communal open space, 1 no. playground and boundary treatments. Planning permission is also sought for a temporary foul pumping station to serve the development. This temporary pumping station will be decommissioned and removed following completion of the permanent pumping station on the new distributor Road/New Road (not part of this application) to which the proposed development will then be connected and all associated site and engineering works necessary to facilitate the development on lands at New Road, Ballisk, Donabate, Co. Dublin.

As previously stated, the proposed development would generate an approximate demand of 6 no. spaces. It is therefore considered that the additional 120 no. childcare spaces alongside the existing available capacity (i.e. 8 no. childcare spaces) within Donabate is sufficient to cater for the proposed development and the wider area.

It is worth mentioning the existence of an After-School care facility (i.e. Sherpa Kids Scoil Phádraic Cailíní), available to all children attending Scoil Phádraic Cailíní and St. Patricks Boys National School located adjacent the school, which offers a wide range of activities including Arts & Crafts, Music & Drama, Sports activities (indoor and outdoor), Technology & Science Projects, among others. As well as this, this facility offers holiday care consisting of camps open to any children aged 4-12 years and offering a variety of before and after school options, thus providing flexibility for the population availing of their services.

In addition to the above, there is a permitted childcare facility within the Rahillion residential development granted under Reg. Ref. F18A/0217 which would provide for an additional 41 no. childcare spaces to the area.

Given the amount of existing and future childcare facilities, and the approximate demand that would be generated by the proposed development, Downey Planning are of the professional opinion that the omission of a childcare facility within the proposed development is justified in this regard. As such, it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

#### 4.0 SHD Precedents

Downey Planning have undertaken a review of the Strategic Housing Developments which have been granted permission by the Board without the provision of a childcare facility on site. The following list comprises several schemes which are similar in nature to the proposed development.

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 301044-18** – By Order dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Vimovo Doyles Limited for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 115 no. residential units, upgrade of the Brennanstown Road, pedestrian footbridge over the Cabinteely Stream and associated site works on lands at former Doyle's Nurseries and Garden Centre and Benoni, Brennanstown Road, Cabinteely, Dublin 18. (*Planning Authority: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council*)

The Inspector's Report states, *"The proposal does not include for the provision of a childcare facility. A Childcare Capacity assessment was included with the application which identifies that a demand of c.22-31 no. childcare places is likely to be generated by the proposed development. Following an assessment of existing facilities in the local area, the report concludes that there is no compelling case for an additional childcare facility on the site and the provision of such a facility may adversely affect existing childcare facilities in the area. This is considered acceptable in this instance."*

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 301334-18** – By Order dated 6<sup>th</sup> July 2018, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Crekav Trading GP Limited for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 102 no. residential units, existing vehicular access to be replaced with pedestrian and cycle accesses, provision of new vehicular and pedestrian access route to serve the proposed development via Watson Road and all associated site works on lands at site comprising of Kylemore, Woodlawn, Rockwinds, Smallacre, Church Road and No. 66 Watson Drive, Church Road, Killiney, Co. Dublin. (Planning Authority: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council)  
The Inspector's Report states, *"A childcare capacity assessment has been submitted with the application in response to the Board's Opinion which requested a report containing a 'childcare demand analysis and the likely demand for childcare places resulting from the proposed development'. [...] The applicant has indicated that 50% of the childcare facilities responded to the information required so as to establish whether there was adequate capacity to deal with the additional demand for childcare. Pursuant to an examination of the information submitted, I am satisfied that there is adequate capacity in the area to cater for any additional demand that would arise."*
- **ABP Reg. Ref. 303133-18** – By Order dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Cairn Homes Properties Ltd. for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 107 no. apartments, residential amenity and associated site works on lands at former Monastery Lands, Marianella, 75 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6 (a Protected Structure known as the Gate Lodge is located outside the application site to the west as the entrance to the site off Orwell Road). (Planning Authority: Dublin City Council)  
The Inspector's Report states, *"It is noted that a childcare facility is not proposed in this application. [...] A childcare facility has been permitted of circa 479m<sup>2</sup> within the wider Marianella development and I am of the opinion that the development will be satisfactorily served by the previously permitted childcare facility. [...] I consider that the lack of such a facility to be acceptable in this instance."*
- **ABP Reg. Ref. 303358-18** – By Order dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Cinamol Ltd. for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 112 no. Build-to-Rent apartments (13 no. 1-bed and 99 no. 2-bed), café/retail/restaurant and associated site works on lands at Swiss Cottage, Santry, Dublin 9. (Planning Authority: Dublin City Council)  
The Inspector's Report states, *"No childcare facility is proposed in this development. Reference is made to the families located within the vicinity of the site. Having regard to the availability of other services and the modest scale of the build-to-rent development, I consider that the proposal not to provide a childcare facility is acceptable in this instance."*
- **ABP Reg. Ref. 303429-19** – By Order dated 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Hines Cherrywood Development Fund ICAV for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 184 no. residential units (134 no. apartments, 14 no. duplex units and 36 no. houses), local neighbourhood road and associated site works on lands at the

townland of Laughanstown, Dublin 18 (lands generally bounded by Bishop Street to the south, the Luas green line to the east and Tully Park to the north). (*Planning Authority: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council*)

The Inspector's Report states, "No childcare facility is proposed and a justification for lack of same (section 5.5 of Statement of Consistency) has been submitted. It states that the proposed Cherrywood Town Centre development provides 2 no. childcare facilities of 969 square metres gross floor area and combined these facilities will provide c. 162 childcare spaces. These spaces will augment existing facilities in the area, as detailed. I am satisfied with regards to this matter and the planning authority has not raised concern in this regard."

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 303435-19** – By Order dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Durkan (Davitt Roads) Ltd. for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 265 no. Build-to-Rent apartments (127 no. 1-bed, 17 no. 2-bed 3-person and 121 no. 2-bed 4-person), retail/café unit and associated site works on lands at the former Dulux Factory Site, Davitt Road, Dublin 12. (*Planning Authority: Dublin City Council*)

The Inspector's Report states, "No childcare facility is proposed in this development. Having regard to the nature of the scheme, predominantly 1 and 2 beds in conjunction with the build-to-rent nature of the scheme and the proximity of the site to a number of childcare facilities within 500 metre radius of the site as set out in the community facilities audit, I consider that the proposal to have no childcare facility within the scheme is acceptable in this instance."

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 304590-19** – By Order dated 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Crekav Trading GP Limited for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 116 no. apartments (40 no. 1 bed apartments and 76 no. 2 bed apartments) and associated site works (the proposed development affects a protected structure) on lands at Walled Garden, Gort Mhuire, Dundrum, Dublin 14. (*Planning Authority: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council*)

The Inspector's Report states, "While applying the provisions of the 2001 Planning Guidelines would give rise to a requirement for 31 No. childcare places, I accept the applicant's contention that the unit mix within the proposed development would not be likely to generate this number of children. The applicant has sought to identify the likely demand for childcare places by omitting the one-bedroom units (in line with the 2018 Apartment Guidelines), and applying CSO figures for the percentage of the population in the area aged from 0-4, and the percentage of children in Dublin who attend creche or pre-school (25%). This results in a requirement for up to 3 No. places. The applicant has undertaken an audit of childcare facilities in the area, identifying 16 No. facilities, with 10 No. of these within 1km of the site. While the survey found that there is little or no capacity within these existing facilities, the applicant has also identified 3 No. recent permissions, which will provide a further c. 100 places in the area. Having reviewed the Crèche Assessment, and having regard to the nature of the proposed development, which comprises a significant proportion of one-bedroom units, with the remainder being two-bedroom, and noting the provisions of the 2018 Apartment Guidelines, I consider that the applicant has provided adequate justification for the omission of a childcare facility from the proposed development."

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 304686-19** – By Order dated 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Jackie Greene Construction Limited for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 153 no. residential units and associated site works on lands

immediately east of the Assumption National School, Long Mile Road, Walkinstown, Dublin 12. (Planning Authority: Dublin City Council)

The Inspector's Report states, *"The application is accompanied by a Childcare Capacity Assessment. It is proposed to omit childcare provision. The assessment states that there is sufficient capacity in the area to cater for demand arising from the proposed development. The Dublin City Childcare Committee confirms that there are 13 no. facilities in the area with a combined vacancy rate of 72 no. childcare places (part-time, full-time and sessional places). On the basis of a demographic analysis the assessment states that the proposed development would have a childcare demand of 16 no. childcare spaces for 2 and 3 bed units (ex. one bed and studio units) and a demand for 1 no. childcare space for 3 bed units. The standards in the Childcare Guidelines would require a provision of 24 no. childcare spaces for the 2 and 3 bed units. When wider factors with regard to the distribution of existing facilities in the area and the demographic profile of the area are considered, I am satisfied on the basis of the submitted information, that there is adequate capacity within the area to cater for the demands arising from the proposed scheme. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal to omit childcare provision from the proposed development is consistent with the guidance set out in the Apartment Guidelines and that a refusal of permission is not warranted on this basis."*

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 305261-19** – By Order dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Dundrum Retail GP DAC for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 107 no. apartments, café and associated site works on lands at Building 5, Dundrum Town Centre, Sandymount Road, Dundrum, Dublin 16. (Planning Authority: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council)

The Inspector's Report states, *"No Childcare Facility is proposed as part of this development. I note the concerns of the Planning Authority in relation to same. A Childcare Demand Analysis has been submitted with the application. This concludes that the proposed development of 107 units, which comprises 56 no. two bedroom units and no three + bedroom units does not generate sufficient demand for additional childcare units in the area, and any demand for childcare services can be adequately catered for within the local catchment area. Having regard to the information in the childcare demand analysis submitted with the application and to the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is not considered that the provision of a childcare facility would be warranted under the advice given at sections 2.4 and 3.3.1 and Appendix 2 of the Guidelines on Childcare Facilities issued by the minister in 2001."*

- **ABP Reg. Ref. 305416-19** – By Order dated 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission to Resource Five Limited for a Strategic Housing Development comprising 147 no. residential units (103 no. houses, 44 no. apartments) and associated site works on lands at the townland of Newtown, Kill, Co. Kildare. (Planning Authority: Kildare County Council)

The Inspector's Report states, *"An assessment of childcare provision in Kill, in addition to the adjoining settlements of Johnstown and Naas, has been prepared and included in Section B2.4.1 of the Social Infrastructure Assessment (Appendix B of the Planning Report and Statement of Consistency) which outlines a justification for lack of same. This states that proposal will generate a demand of 35 no. childcare spaces. The assessment identifies 11 spare places within existing facilities in Kill and Johnstown. Johnstown is approximately 3km from the town of Kill and as such I am satisfied that it would be within an acceptable distance of the proposed development. [...] As such, having regard to the information with the application and*

*to the nature and scale of the proposed development, and having regard to the considerations above, it is not considered that the provision of a childcare facility would be warranted under the advice given at sections 2.4 and 3.3.1 and Appendix 2 of the Guidelines on Childcare Facilities issued by the minister in 2001.”*

In light of the above, and with regard to the provision of a childcare facility on site, it is considered that the nature of the development will predominantly consist of young professionals; therefore, the development would not generate the same requirement for a childcare facility. Downey Planning are of the professional opinion that, given the demand arising from the influx of population generated by the proposed development, the existing childcare facilities within the area and the pertaining available capacity, the proposed development would not require a provision of a childcare facility on site.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

Downey Planning have prepared this Childcare Provision Assessment Report on behalf of Elchior Construction Ltd., to accompany a planning application for a proposed Strategic Housing Development on lands adjacent to the existing residential development known as ‘The Gallery’, Turvey Walk, off Turvey Avenue and to the west of Donabate Train Station, Donabate, Co. Dublin.

This report identifies the current capacity of the existing childcare facilities within the vicinity of the subject site and the demand for childcare spaces likely to be generated by the proposed development, which consists of a residential development comprising 144 no. apartments within 3 no. blocks ranging in height from 3-5 storeys with 1 no. retail unit.

An assessment of the local area shows that there are 13 no. childcare facilities located in close proximity of the subject site with an overall available capacity of 8 no. childcare spaces, and that there are two granted permissions under Reg. Ref. F17A/0108 and Reg. Ref. F17A/0373 (ABP Ref. PL06F.249206) pertaining to additional childcare facilities within the Donabate area. Furthermore, the Fingal County Childcare Committee indicates a quantum of available capacity of 20 no. childcare spaces as per their own survey results. It is acknowledged that there is available capacity within the existing childcare facilities, and it is important to note that an additional 120 no. childcare spaces will be provided as part of the granted permissions mentioned above, therefore increasing the available capacity within Donabate to a total of 128 no. childcare spaces. Therefore, it is submitted that there is sufficient available capacity to cater for the proposed development.

The apartment guidelines state that, *“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”*. This is acknowledged for the calculations submitted as part of this report. Downey Planning are of the professional opinion that, given the potential demand generated by the proposed development and the available capacity within the area, the proposed development would not require a provision of a childcare facility on site and thus the omission of a crèche facility from within the proposed residential scheme is considered to be justified in this instance.

It is considered that given the demographics of the area within which the subject site is located, as well as the current characteristics and trends as per data from the CSO results and the childcare facilities survey, the proposed residential development would not warrant the construction of a

childcare facility on site. Furthermore, another factor to consider is the accessibility of future occupants to employment centres outside of Donabate, which would allow them to choose a childcare facility located closer to their place of employment instead—as indeed some of them do, and would result in less demand for Donabate.

In light of the above, Downey Planning are of the considered opinion that the proposed development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and that there is sufficient capacity to cater for the future demand generated by the proposed development and surrounding environs.