

March 2021



Childcare Provision Assessment Report

**Proposed Strategic Housing Development
On lands at Auburn House (Protected Structure), Little Auburn and
Streamstown off the R107 Malahide Road/Dublin Road and Carey's
Lane, Malahide, Co. Dublin**

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1.0 Introduction

Downey Planning, Chartered Town Planners, 1 Westland Square, Pearse Street, Dublin 2, have prepared this Childcare Provision Assessment Report, on behalf of the applicant, Kinwest LTD., to accompany a planning application for a proposed Strategic Housing Development on lands at Auburn House (Protected Structure), Little Auburn and Streamstown off the R107 Malahide Road/Dublin Road and Carey's Lane, Malahide, Co. Dublin.

The proposed development will consist of the preservation and protection of the existing Protected Structure of Auburn House as 1 no. residential dwelling; the conversion of the existing stables of Auburn House to accommodate 4 no. dwellings and the construction of 406 no. residential dwellings, apartments and duplexes providing for an overall total of 411 no. residential units (102 no. dwellings, 266 no. apartments & 43 no. duplexes) along with 1 no. childcare facility.

This report is being submitted in support of the justification for the aforementioned proposed development and to provide a detailed assessment of the existing childcare facilities within the subject area, thus assessing the current capacity of the surrounding environs as well as whether the proposed childcare facility would be sufficient to cater for the proposed development.

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

At this juncture, it is important to note that the proposed development generates a requirement of 27 no. childcare spaces. The proposed childcare facility would provide c.34 no. childcare spaces to cater for the proposed residential scheme.

This report demonstrates that based on the results provided by the aforementioned assessment, the additional childcare facility proposed as part of the development is considered sufficient to cater for the potential demand generated by the proposed development, thus not availing of the existing available capacity in the Auburn/Malahide area.

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

- *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Department of Environment (2001)
- *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (December 2020)
- Fingal County Council Development 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 Auburn/Malahide area and the current trends and details provided by the Tusla and Pobal websites, 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."

It is important to note that the apartment guidelines also 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". As such, the calculations submitted as part of this report have taken cognisance of the above and demonstrate that as part of the proposal 1 no. childcare facility would be required to cater for the influx of population arising from the proposed scheme.

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.”*

It is submitted that given the nature, scale and proposed mix of units of the proposed development, as well as the potential demand arising from the proposed scheme and available capacity within the area, it is considered that the provision of 1 no. childcare facility within the subject lands is sufficient to cater for the proposed development.

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 within the area.

The Tusla map below (Fig. 1) shows a total of 18 no. registered childcare providers within 2km of the subject site and surrounding area. Downey Planning have assessed the Early Years Inspectorate Inspection Reports provided by Tusla in relation to details pertaining to the existing operators in the vicinity of the subject site.



Fig. 1 – 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
TLC Creche Waterside LTD	1 Watermill, Waterside, Swords Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin	100 children	Full Day, Sessional (0–6 years)
The Kids Den	Unit 3, Feltrim Industrial Park, Drynam Road, Swords, Co. Dublin	Unknown	Full Day (0–6 years)
Naionra Cholmcille	Scoil an Duinnínigh, Bóthar Faoldroma, Draighneán, Sord, Co. Átha Cliath	Unknown	N/A on Tusla
Bo-Peep Montessori	Church of The Visitation (Hall), Aspen Drive, Kinsealy, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Bo-Peep Creche & Montessori	22 The Rise, Melrose Park, Kinsealy, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (3–6 years)
Sticky Fingers Preschool	36 Mount Drinan Ave, Kinsealy Downs, Swords, Co. Dublin	17 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Kinsealy Childcare Limited (The Nest Kinsealy)	13 Drynam Square, Drynam Hall, Co. Dublin	60 children	Full Day (0–6 years)
Children's House Montessori School	3 Seabury Grove, Malahide, Co. Dublin	11 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Grow Montessori	4 Talbot Road, Swords Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin	18 children	Part Time, Sessional (2–6 years)
Links Creche & Montessori Ltd Abington Malahide	Abington Woods, Malahide, Co. Dublin	80 children	Full Day, Sessional, Part Time, (0–6 years)
The Cottage Montessori	Kinsealy Lane, Malahide, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (2–6 years)

The Village Montessori	Malahide Yacht Club, St. James's Terrace, Malahide, Co. Dublin	15 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
St. Sylvesters Montessori	Malahide Parish Pastoral Centre, Malahide, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Charlie's Childcare	Presbyterian Church Hall, Dublin Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin	57 children	Full Day (1–6 years)
Little Crickets Preschool	Malahide Cricket Club, Dublin Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin	22 children	Sessional (3–6 years)
Little Acorns Montessori	St. Andrew's Parish Centre, Church Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin	Unknown	Sessional (2–6 years)
Absolute Angels	12 Grove Ave, Malahide, Co. Dublin	17 children	Part Time (2–6 years)
Purple Turtle Montessori	13 Mountfield Lawns, Malahide, Co. Dublin	10 children	Sessional (2–6 years)
Total Maximum Potential Capacity		495 children	

Table 1 – Childcare facilities in the area.

It is worth noting that the data for the childcare facilities listed above (which fall under the Fingal County Childcare Committee's remit) has been provided by the Tusla and Pobal websites.

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. 2) and amount to a total of 450 available capacity for the County.

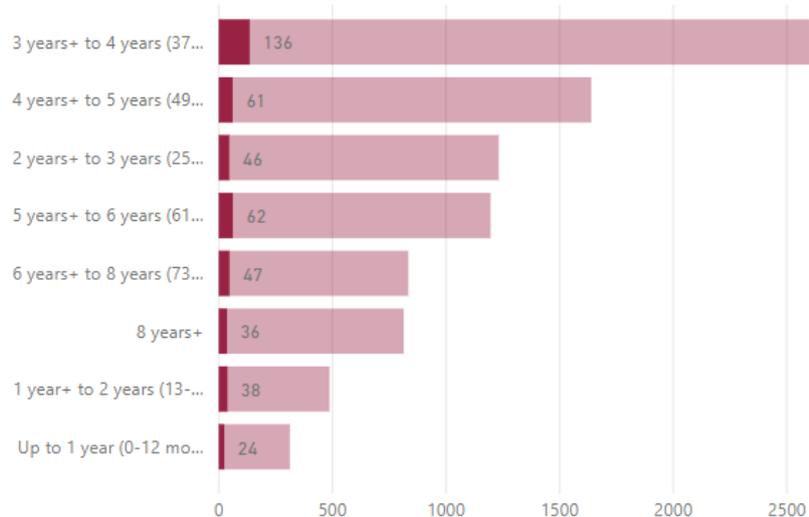


Fig. 2 – Vacant places by Age for Early Years Services (Fingal County).

As shown on Fig. 2, 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 an available capacity of 24 no. spaces.

The subject site is located in an area with 18 no. registered childcare facilities in proximity to the site which show a **maximum potential capacity of 495 no. spaces.**

It is worth noting that if needed, 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. Notwithstanding this, the proposed development provides an additional childcare facility to cater for the childcare demands arising from this proposal as well as the wider area.

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 that the additional childcare facility provided as part of the development is sufficient to cater for the future demand arising from the influx of population generated by the proposed development.

3.2 Demographic Profile of the Area

Based on CSO Population Data, the population of the Kinsaley ED area increased from a total of 8,475 in 2011 to 9,621 in 2016 which represents a growth of 13.52%. It is worth noting that Fingal also showed 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, the Kinsaley ED has a population of 9,621 (Census 2016) of which 1,059 belong to the pre-school attending age group (i.e. 0-4 years), thus representing 11% of the total population for the pertaining ED. This figure, when compared to the 2011 Census result of 933 no. children (0-4 years) out of a total 8,475 population for Kinsaley (also representing 11%), indicates no changes within 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. Kinsaley) with an average of 1.18 in 2011 and 1.37 in 2016, this illustrates a slight increase in the number of children per family for the subject ED.

Population in Pre-school Ages, Kinsaley ED

	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4 years	Total
Census 2016	211	207	222	210	209	1,059 children
Census 2011	205	215	192	180	141	933 children

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

Families by Size, Kinsaley ED

	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons
Census 2016	905	605	638	277
Census 2011	1,010	562	479	173

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, Kinsaley ED

	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons
Census 2016	258	716	1,309
Census 2011	237	685	990

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), Kinsaley ED

	1 child	2 children	3 children
Census 2016	494	483	204
Census 2011	497	362	95

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

Families by Age of Youngest Child, Kinsaley ED

	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20+ years	Total
Census 2016	816	358	222	188	267	1,851
Census 2011	709	254	198	163	186	1,510

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 Kinsaley ED, the quantum of families with children in the 0-4 years category is 816 out of a total 1,851 no. families, which represents a **44.08%** for the area—a decline from the 46.95% 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 Proposed Development Demand

The proposed development consists of the preservation and protection of the existing Protected Structure of Auburn House as 1 no. residential dwelling, the conversion of the existing stables of Auburn House to accommodate 4 no. dwellings and the construction of 406 no. residential dwellings, apartments and duplexes providing for an overall total of 411 no. residential units (102 no. dwellings, 266 no. apartments & 43 no. duplexes) along with 1 no. childcare facility. The breakdown of residential units is as follows:

- 1 no. three storey 11-bed residential dwelling (Auburn House).
- 4 no. two storey residential dwellings (1 no. 1-bed, 2 no. 2-beds, and 1 no. 3-beds) (Auburn House stables).
- 97 no. newly constructed residential dwellings (45 no. 3-beds, 39 no. 4-beds, and 13 no. 5-beds) (detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings ranging from 2, 2.5 and 3 storeys in height).
- 266 no. apartment units (109 no. 1-bed, 147 no. 2-beds, and 10 no. 3-beds).

- 43 no. duplex units (27 no. 1-bed, 14 no. 2-beds, and 2 no. 3-beds) in 6 no. three storey duplex blocks.

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. Therefore, the proposed development comprises a total of 192 no. units which could be potentially family-occupied.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposed scheme at Auburn may accommodate a maximum of 192 no. families. Additionally, the average number of children per family for the Kinsaley ED is 1.37 children/family, resulting in 263 no. children (0-18 years age band) generated by the proposed development. Section 3.2 of this report indicates that, as an average, 44.08% of families have children within the pre-school age category (0-4 years), based on this percentage it is submitted that the proposed development would generate a demand of approximately 116 no. children (aged 0-4 years). The calculations can be found below.

Number of children generated by the proposed scheme:

$$192 \text{ no. families} * 1.37 \text{ children/family} = 263 \text{ no. children (0-18 years)}$$

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

$$263 \text{ no. children (0-18 years)} * 44.08\% = 116 \text{ no. children (0-4 years)}$$

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. 3) 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 a **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
Total pre-school children using non-parental childcare	45	47	49	46	45	53	45	45	46
<i>Unweighted sample</i>	<i>198</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. 3 – 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 (17 no. children) it is predicted that the development would need 25 no. childcare spaces for children in the pre-school age band (0-4 years).

Proposed development potential demand:

$$116 \text{ no. children (0-4 years)} * 21.7\% = 25 \text{ no. childcare spaces}$$

Within the Auburn and Malahide area, there are 18 no. existing childcare facilities according to data provided by the Tusla and Pobal websites. It is noted that the area shows a total maximum capacity of 495 no. childcare spaces. According to the calculations shown above, the proposed development would generate an approximate demand of 25 no. childcare spaces. The proposed development provides for an additional childcare facility at ground level of Apartment Block 4 which could cater for c.34 children. It is considered that the proposed additional childcare facility would provide some flexibility should there be an increase in the quantum of potential families within the proposed scheme. As such, this additional facility put forward by the scheme is considered to provide sufficient capacity cater for the demand arising from 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 Malahide as preferred destinations for childcare, as some parents would drop-in and pick-up their children on their way to and from work nearby their respective workplace instead. This would reduce the demand within Auburn.

Furthermore, there is a permitted childcare facility within the Brookfield residential development on the Broomfield LAP lands granted under Reg. Ref. F13A/0460 (ABP Ref. PL06F.243821) and Reg. Ref. F13A/0460/E1 which would provide for an additional 36 no. childcare spaces to the area. It is important to note that a decision to grant permission for modifications to the aforementioned development was made by the Planning Authority under Reg. Ref. F20A/0113 on 18th June 2020. These revisions do not include any modifications to the childcare facility.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the additional childcare facility proposed as part of the development is appropriate, given the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area, the capacity for same and the potential demand arising from the proposed scheme. The calculations provided within this report indicate that the proposed scheme generates a quantum for childcare spaces which the proposed additional childcare facility on the subject lands would be able to cater for, as well as the childcare facilities within the area. The proposed development considers prudent the addition of 1 no. childcare facility as part of the residential scheme which could cater for 34 no. children and which is considered justified in this instance.

4.0 Conclusion

Downey Planning have prepared this Childcare Provision Assessment Report on behalf of Kinwest LTD., to accompany a planning application for a proposed Strategic Housing Development on lands at Auburn House (Protected Structure), Little Auburn and Streamstown off the R107 Malahide Road/Dublin Road and Carey's Lane, Malahide, Co. Dublin.

This report identifies the provision of childcare facilities within the vicinity of the subject site and their pertaining capacity, as well as the demand for childcare spaces likely to be generated by the proposed development, which consists of the preservation and protection of the existing Protected Structure of Auburn House as 1 no. residential dwelling; the conversion of the existing stables of Auburn House to

accommodate 4 no. dwellings and the construction of 406 no. residential dwellings, apartments and duplexes providing for an overall total of 411 no. residential units (102 no. dwellings, 266 no. apartments & 43 no. duplexes) along with 1 no. childcare facility.

An assessment of the local area shows that there are 18 no. childcare facilities located in close proximity of the subject site with a maximum capacity of 495 no. childcare spaces, and that there is a granted permission under Reg. Ref. F13A/0460 (ABP Ref. PL06F.243821) and Reg. Ref. F13A/0460/E1 pertaining to additional childcare facilities within the area.

As per the calculations shown in Section 3.3 of this report, the proposed development is foreseen to generate a demand of 25 no. childcare spaces. The proposed additional childcare facility would accommodate c.34 children with the intention to provide some flexibility if there is an increase in the number of families residing within the development. Given the quantum of childcare facilities within the area, the calculations within this report and overall assessment of the area, it is submitted that the provision of a childcare facility at this location would seem sufficient to cater for the proposed development and surrounding environs.

Another factor to consider is the accessibility of future occupants to employment centres outside of the Malahide and Swords area, 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 Auburn.

It is important to emphasise that 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". Given the nature and scale of the proposed scheme, this is acknowledged for the calculations submitted as part of this report.

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 construction of 1 no. childcare facility on site is justified in this instance.

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 the additional childcare facility to be provided as part of the proposed residential development is sufficient to cater for the future demand generated by the proposed development and surrounding environs.