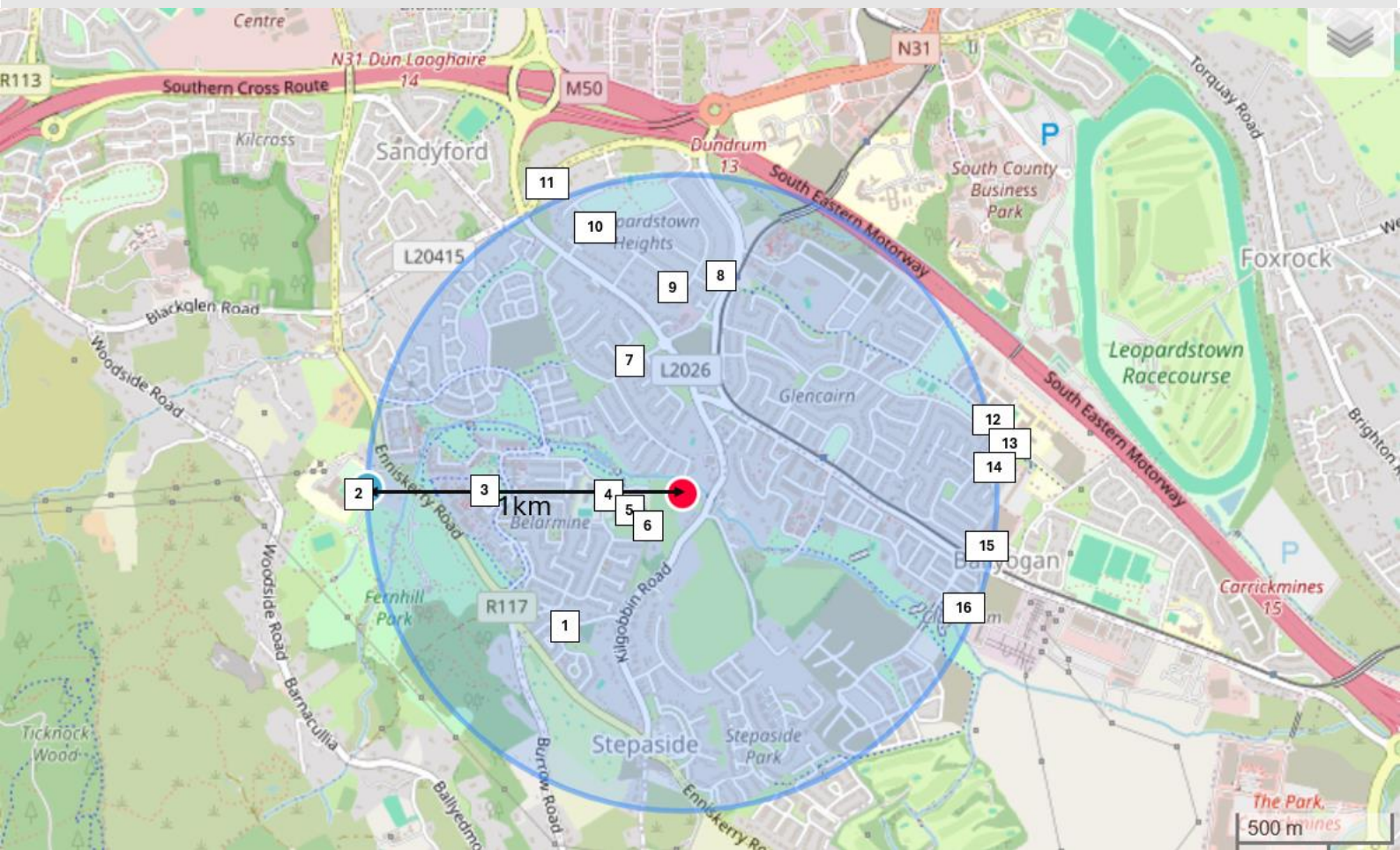


DOWNEY

29 Merrion Square, D02RW64

CHILDCARE DEMAND ASSESSMENT



Proposed Large Scale Residential Development

On Lands at:

**Riverside Cottage,
Kilgobbin Road,
Stepaside,
Co. Dublin.**

Applicant: Kilgobbin Apartment Limited

September 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

DOWNEY, Chartered Town Planners, 29 Merrion Square, D02 RW64, have prepared a Childcare Demand Assessment, on behalf of the applicant, Kilgobbin Apartment Limited. This Assessment has been prepared in relation to a proposed Large Scale Residential Development (LRD) on lands at Riverside Cottage, Kilgobbin Road, Stepside, County Dublin. The development proposed consists of the following:

“Permission is sought by Kilgobbin Apartment Limited, for a Large-Scale Residential Development on lands at Riverside Cottage, Kilgobbin Road, Stepside, Dublin 18. The proposed Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) will provide 120 no. apartment units within 2 no. blocks ranging in height from 4- to 6-storeys. The development will consist of; Block A, consisting of 44 no. units (27 no. 1 bed (2-person), 13 no. 2 bed (3-persons), 1 no. 2 bed (4-persons) and 3 no. 3 bed (5-persons) of 4- to 5-storeys height and roof terrace; Block B, consisting of 76 no. units (40 no. 1 bed (2-persons), 12 no. 2 bed (3-persons), 16 no. 2 bed (4-persons) and 8 no. 3 bed (4-persons) and be 5- to 6-storeys height. All units will be provided with terraces/balconies.

The proposed development will provide all associated public open space and play area, 54 no. car parking spaces including accessible parking and Electric Vehicle parking, 273 no. bicycle parking spaces, 3 no. motorcycle parking spaces, bin/waste store, bulky goods stores and plant room at ground floor levels, 1 no. detached ESB substation and 1 no. detached bicycle store. The proposed development will also provide for all associated site development and infrastructural works including foul and surface water drainage, roads, footpaths, landscaping, boundary treatment, public lighting and a pedestrian and cycling pathway connecting Belarmine Vale and Kilgobbin Road. Vehicular access to the development will be from Belarmine Vale.”

This report is being submitted in support of the justification for the proposed development and to provide a detailed assessment of the existing and recently permitted childcare facilities within the subject area, thus assessing the current capacity of the surrounding environs as to whether the existing childcare facilities 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 the 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 4 no. childcare spaces (pre-school and after-school care). No childcare facility is proposed as part of the development.

This report demonstrates that based on the results provided by this assessment, the existing capacity of childcare facilities in the surrounding area is considered sufficient to cater for the potential demand generated by the proposed development, thus a new childcare facility is not required. The following 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 (2022)
- Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Development Plan 2022-2028

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND STUDY AREA



With an approximate area of 1.21ha, the subject site is currently mainly greenfield in nature, with an existing residential dwelling known as 'Riverside Cottage' being located alongside its western site boundary.

The subject site is bordered to the south by the ruins of Kilgobbin Castle, to the east by Kilgobbin Road, to the west by the Belarmin Vale residential development and neighbourhood centre as well as two separate Primary Schools (Gaeilscoil Thaobh Na Coille Primary School and Stepside Educate Together National School) and other established residential developments such as Sandyford Hall to the north.



Figure 2: Wider context of the area.

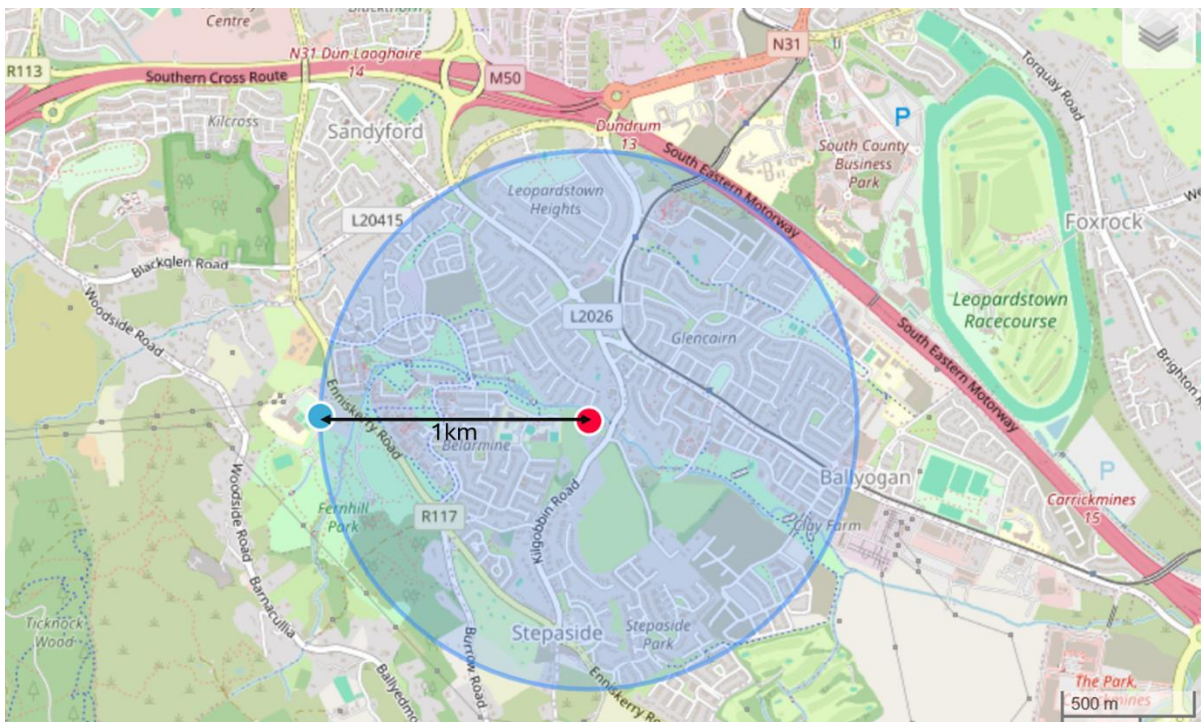


Figure 3: Map illustrating 1km catchment area of the subject site.

Within the context of this urban location, it was deemed appropriate to audit existing childcare provision within a 1km catchment of the subject site, equitable to a c.10 to 15-minute walk time. Given the site's location and access to public transport, this distance is considered to be a reasonable catchment for future occupants of the proposed development to access childcare services.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2001

The Childcare Guidelines (2001) highlight that planning authorities should require the provision of at least one childcare facility for new residential development unless there are significant reasons to the contrary e.g., where there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments.

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' (2022), 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"*.

Excluding the 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom (3 persons) units from the overall provision for 120 no. residential units, this leaves a total of 28 no. units that can be deemed to accommodate families and therefore may generate demand for childcare places. With respect to the foregoing and as per the following calculations, the proposed scheme would require a childcare facility for c. 7 places.

$$(28 \div 75) \times 20 = 7 \text{ childcare places}$$

3.2 Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2023

Regarding the provision of childcare facilities, Section 4.7 the Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (the Apartments Guidelines) (2023) states:

"Notwithstanding the Planning Guidelines for the Childcare Facilities (2001), in respect of which a review is to be progressed, and which recommend the provision of one childcare facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units, the threshold for provision of any such facilities in the apartment schemes should be established having regard to the scale and unit mix of the proposed development and the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic area."

Further to the above, the Apartments Guidelines (2023) also note:

“One bedroom or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any childcare provision subject to location, this may also apply in part or whole, to units with two or more bedrooms.”

Excluding the 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom (3 persons) units from the overall provision for 120 no. residential units, this leaves a total of 28 no. units that can be deemed to accommodate families and therefore may generate demand for childcare places. There is further scope to omit a further 17 no. 2-bedroom (4 person) units under the Apartment Guidelines, which would leave 11 no. 3-bedroom units suitable to accommodate families. However, to ensure a robust demand assessment, the 2-bedroom (4 person) and 3-bedroom units will be included.

3.3 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 includes Policy PHP6 that aims to:

- *Encourage the provision of appropriate childcare facilities as an integral part of proposals for new residential developments and to improve/expand existing childcare facilities across the County. In general, at least one childcare facility should be provided for all new residential developments subject to demographic and geographic needs.*
- *Encourage the provision of childcare facilities in a sustainable manner to encourage local economic development and to assist in addressing disadvantage.*

To satisfy Policy PHP6, this Childcare Demand Assessment was carried out to determine the existing childcare provision in the study area and to ascertain the need, or likely demand, if any, for a creche facility to be provided as part of the proposed development. The Assessment provides evidence that the existing and permitted childcare facilities within the surrounding area has sufficient capacity to service the anticipated childcare demand generated by the proposed development.

4.0 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

4.1 CSO Census 2022

In advance of analysing the local demographics of Stepside, some key State and County statistics that emerged from the 2022 Census (CSO) that are of particular relevance include:

- Birth rates in the State are continuing to fall since 2016;
- The number of children aged 0-9 in the State increased by 7.5% between 2016 and 2022;
- The State's 65 years and over age group had the largest increase in population, rising by 21.8%;
- The population aged 65 and over in DLR increased by 18%;
- Old age dependency in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is 29.2%, over six percent higher than the State average;
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown has one of the lowest youth dependency ratios (0-14) in the State, at 30.1%; and,
- The average age in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is 39.4 years, slightly higher than the state average which is 38.8 years.

The site is located within the Glencullen ED. The relevant 2022 Census (CSO) data was retrieved and analysed, as well as for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, and the State. The key statistics relevant to childcare requirements are set out below.

In the 0 to 4 age group:

- 5.7% of the State's population is aged 0-4.
- 5.4% of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown population is aged 0-4.
- 7.4% of the Glencullen ED is aged 0-4.

In the 5 to 12 age group:

- 13.9% of the State's population is aged 5-12.
- 12.7% of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown population is aged 5-12.
- 15.8% of Glencullen ED population is aged 5-12.

In the female 25 to 44 age category:

- 27.3% of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown's female population is aged 25-44.
- 34.6% of the female population in the ED are aged 25-44.

5.0 DEMAND GENERATED BY THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development provides for a total of 120 no. residential units. The breakdown of the proposed units is as follow:

- 67 no. 1-bedroom units,
- 25 no. 2-bedroom (3-persons) units,
- 17 no. 2-bedroom (4-persons) units,
- 11 no. 3-bedroom housing units.

As stated, all 1-bedroom units can be discounted. Furthermore, the Apartment Guidelines state 2-bedroom units may in whole or part be discounted for the purpose of calculating childcare provision needs. Thus, this assessment also discounts the 25 no. 2-bedroom (3-persons) units. As such, there are 28 no. units that would be suitable for families that may generate a demand for childcare spaces. Utilising the State's average household size of 2.71 persons per unit for Dún Laoghaire Rathdown, 28 no. units, capable of accommodating families, will yield a population of 76 people.

5.1 Pre-School: Demand Resulting from the Proposed Development

Data extrapolated from Census 2022 identified that 7.4% of children in the Study Area are aged 0-4 years old. The proposed development would thus generate 6 no. children in the 0-4 age category, i.e., pre-school age.

The Quarterly National Household Survey, Childcare, Quarter 2, 2017 (now replaced by the Labour Force Survey) has published information on childcare uptake in creche settings. The most common non-parental childcare type identified in the survey for pre-school children is a creche/Montessori/playgroup facility. This type of childcare is used by 19% of the State's pre-school age children, while the Dublin uptake is higher at 25%. It is considered that the introduction of the

Government's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme has likely increased the percentage utilising creches. Accordingly, this assessment assumes that all 3- and 4-year old children generated by the proposed development will require care in a childcare facility and that the higher Dublin uptake of 25% for 0–2-year-olds will require care in a childcare facility.

In 2022 there were 1,756 no. 0–4-year-olds in the Study Area and more specifically 1,054 no. (60%) 0–2-year-olds and 702 no. (40%) 3 and 4-year-olds. Applying these percentages to the proposed development, of the 6 no. children generated by the scheme, 4 no. would be in the 0-2 age category and 2 no. would be aged 3-4 years.

Table 1. Estimated Childcare Generation from the Proposed Development

Estimated Childcare Generation from the Proposed Development		
State (CSO 2022)	Average Household Size	2.71
Proposed Development	No. of family units (exc. 1 bed and 2 beds (3-persons))	28
	No. of residents within family units	76
	No. of children 0-4 category	6
	No. of children 0-2 category	4
	No. of children 3-4 category	2
	Q2, 2017 QHNS Childcare (Dublin 25% of 0-2 utilise creche)	1

Based on the following calculations:

- 0-2 year olds: 4 no. children \times 25% = 1 no. childcare spaces.
- 3-4 year olds: 2 no. children \times 100% = 2 no. childcare spaces.

Total demand = 1 no. spaces (for 0-2 year olds) + 2 no. spaces (for 3-4 year olds) = 3 spaces.

Therefore, the scheme would generate a total pre-school demand of 3 no. pre-school childcare spaces.

5.2 Primary After-School Care: Demand Resulting from the Proposed Development

Census 2022 data identified that 15.8% of children in the Study Area are aged 5-12 years. The proposed development would therefore generate 12 no. children in this age category, i.e., primary after-school care age. The Quarterly National Household Survey, Childcare, Quarter 2 2017 identifies that nationally 8% of primary school children are cared for in a crèche/Montessori/playgroup/after-school facility, with parental/relative care accounting for 90%. In Dublin, 11% require external after-school care.

Table 2. Estimated Primary After School Generation from the Proposed Development

Estimated Primary After School Generation from the Proposed Development		
Proposed Development	No. of residents within family units	76
	No. of children 5-12 category (15.8%)	12
	Q2, 2017 QHNS Childcare (Dublin 11% utilise after school care)	1

Applying the Dublin rate of 11% to the proposed development, then the number of primary after school places likely to be generated by the proposed development will be 1 no. spaces.

Therefore, the proposed development would generate a combined requirement (pre-school and after-school care) for 4 no. childcare spaces.

5.3 Existing Childcare Facilities

DOWNEY carried out an analysis of the provision and capacity of childcare facilities in the surrounding area that will help to serve the proposed development. It is noted that these facilities were identified within an approximate 1-kilometre radius of the subject lands.

There were a recorded no. 16 childcare facilities identified in the study area, catering for pre-school and afterschool. The facilities are geographically concentrated at Leopardstown Valley/Ballyogan and Bellarmine areas within c.10 to 15-minute walking distance from the subject site.

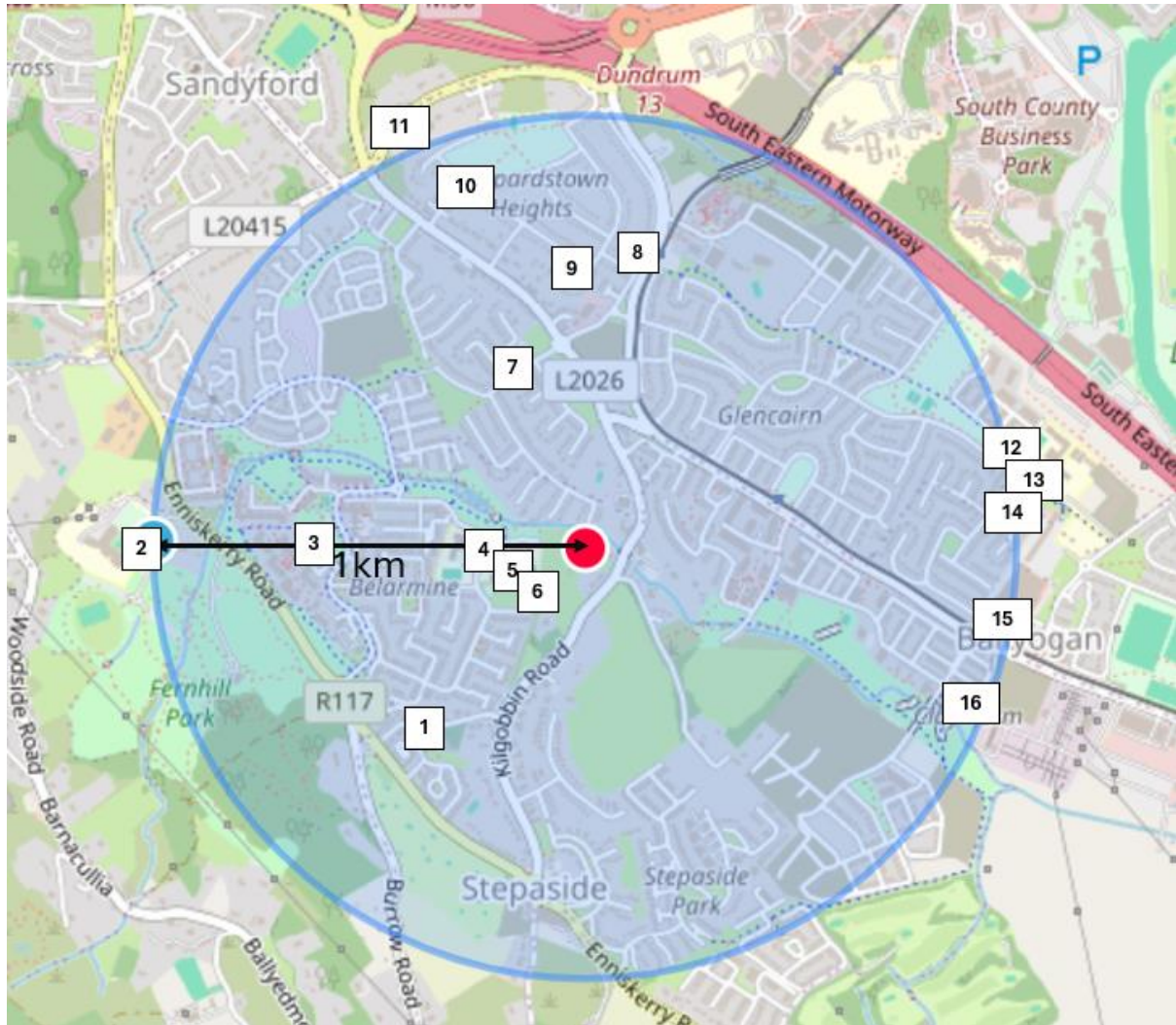


Figure 4. Location of Childcare Facilities within 1km of the Subject Lands

Table 3. Childcare Facilities approximately 1km Radius of Subject Lands updated 27/08/2025.

No.	Facility	Address	Type of Service Age Profile	Max Capacity	Available Spaces
1	Daisy Chain Montessori & Childcare Stepside	15 The Rectory, Kilgobbin, Dublin 18	Full day / Part time / sessional After school	38 6	At Capacity
2	Rosemont Preschool	Enniskerry Rd, Sandyford, Dublin, 18	Part time After school	66 60	2 Available Spaces

3	Giraffe Childcare Stepaside	Belarmine, Enniskerry Road Stepaside, Dublin	Full day / Part time / sessional	137	At Capacity
4	Explorers After School Stepaside Educate Together	Belarmine Vale, Kilgobbin, Dublin 18	After school	72	At Capacity
5	Naíonra Thaobh na Coille	Belarmine Vale, Belarmine, Dublin 18,	Sessional	22	7 Available Spaces
			After School	20	
6	Kid's Biz Day Nursery	1 Sandyford Hall Pl, Murphystown, Dublin, D18	Full day / Part time / sessional	36	2 Available Spaces
			After school	16	
7	Park Montessori School	Mount Eagle Pk, Leopardstown Heights, Sandyford, Dublin	Sessional	12	At Capacity
8	Roola Boola Creche & Montessori - Kilgobbin	Rear Cul Na hArrigle, Kilgobbin Road, Sandyford, Dublin	Full Day	24	10 Available Spaces
9	Giant Steps Montessori	85 Mount Eagle View, Leopardstown Heights, Sandyford, Dublin	Sessional	18	At Capacity
10	Cedar Montessori	Applewood Cottage, Sandyford, Dublin	Sessional	30	6 Available Spaces
11	Kids Inc After School Holy Trinity	Glencairn Dr, Carmanhall and Leopardstown, Dublin	After school	136	At Capacity
12	Mountainside Montessori	Glencairn Dr, Carmanhall and Leopardstown, Dublin	Part time	22	At Capacity
13	Tigers Childcare Leopardstown	Block E, Leopardstown Shopping Centre, Ballyogan Rd, Leopardstown, Dublin	Full day / Part time	111	3 Available Spaces
			After school	36	
14	Roola Boola Creche & Montessori - Leopardstown	Leopardstown Valley, Leopardstown, Dublin	Full day	22	1 Available Spaces
			After school	22	
15	Links Childcare Leopardstown	Birch Hall, Clay Farm Dr, Carmanhall And Leopardstown, Dublin	Full Day / sessional	159	At Capacity
16	Links Childcare Leopardstown	Clay Farm Dr, Ballyogan Rd, Kilgobbin, Dublin	Full Day / sessional	151	At Capacity
Pre-School (Full Day/Sessional/ Part-Time):				848	31
After School:				368	5
Total (16 Facilities)				1,216 Places	36 Places Available

6.0 CUMULATIVE DEMAND

6.1 Existing Demand

In 2022, there were 1,756 no. 0–4-year-olds in the Study Area and more specifically 1,054 no. (60%) 0–2-year-olds and 702 no. (40%) 3 and 4-year-olds. For consistency, the same assumption has been made to the existing population as has been applied to the demand generated by the proposed development (section 5) i.e.:

- 25% of 0-2 age category would requires a creche space.
- 100% of 3-4 age category would require a creche space.

The existing demand for pre-school childcare spaces in the catchment is 966 no. spaces and based on the audit undertaken to inform this report the existing capacity is 848 no. spaces. In addition, there are 3,732 no. primary school children located within the study area. As previously mentioned, 11% of children in the Dublin area require external after-school care. Therefore, the existing demand is 411 no. spaces, with existing facilities having capacity for 368 no. children.

6.2 Future Demand from Permitted Development

In addition to the proposed development, a further 4 no. permitted developments have been granted permission in the local area for residential-led developments that include childcare facilities. These include:

- **ABP Ref. 314546-22:** Strategic Housing Development at Aikens Village, Woodside and Kilgobbin, Stepside, Dublin 18, granted permission by An Bord Pleanála for 436 no. 'Build-to-Rent' apartments (154 no. 1. bedroom and 284 no. 2 bedroom units) and 1 no. childcare facility (c. 515 sq.m) for c. 60 no. spaces.
- **ABP Ref. 307415-20:** Strategic Housing Development at Lisieux Hall, Murphystown Road, Dublin 18 was granted permission by An Bord Pleanála for 200 no. apartments comprising of 20 no. studio units, 72 no. 1-bed units, 100 no. 2-bed units and 8 no 3-bed units and a 356 sq.m creche with capacity for c. 60 children.
- **ABP Ref. 304288-19:** Strategic Housing Development – Phase 1C at Clay Farm was granted permission by An Bord Pleanála for 192 no. residential units comprising of 12 no. studio units, 70 no. 1-bed units and 110 no. 2-bed units. The proposed development also included a childcare facility of 399 sq.m for c. 50 no. spaces.

It is estimated that approximately 20% of this childcare facility would be reserved for support facilities such as staff rooms, toilets, kitchenet, storage and circulation etc. The remaining 319.2 sq.m can be considered 'clear floor space' for children. It is estimated that the capacity of this creche will be 117 no. children.

- **ABP Ref. 301522-18:** Strategic Housing Development – Phase 2 at Clay Farm, Stepside was granted by An Bord Pleanála for 927 no. residential units of 115 no. 1-bed units, 391 no. 2-bed units, 200 no. 3-bed units, 221 no. 4+ bed units. The proposed development also included a neighbourhood centre and childcare facility of 604sqm. It is estimated that the capacity for this creche will be 177 no. children.

Table 4. Estimated Childcare Generation from the Permitted Development

Estimated Childcare Generation from the Permitted Development		
State (CSO 2022)	Average Household Size	2.71
Permitted Developments	No. of family units (exc. 1 bed and 2 beds (3-persons))	1,314
	No. of residents within family units	3,614
	No. of children 0-4 category	267
	No. of children 0-2 category	160
	No. of children 3-4 category	107

	Q2, 2017 QHNS Childcare (Dublin 25% of 0-2 utilise creche)	40
	No. of children 5-12 category	572
	Q2, 2017 QHNS Childcare (Dublin 11% utilise creche)	63

The same methodology, where only 2 or more bedrooms are considered as a family unit shall apply. The combination of all permitted schemes would provide for 1,314 no. units suitable for families which would yield a population of 3,614 no. people, including 267 no. children aged 0-4 years and 572 no. children aged 5-12 years old. In total, the schemes would generate a demand for 147 no. childcare spaces and 63 no. after school care spaces. In total the permitted developments would generate a combined requirement (pre-school and after-school care) for 210 no. childcare spaces. It is noted that the four approved childcare facilities, comprising of approx. 464 no. spaces are sufficiently sized to accommodate the demand that is likely to be generated by these permitted developments.

6.3 Cumulative Demand

The cumulative demand has regard to the following:

- i. Existing Demand, as per Section 6.1 (966 no. pre-school places and 411 no. after-school care places).
- ii. Future Demand from Permitted Developments, as per Section 6.2 (147 no. pre-school places and 63 no. after-school care places).
- iii. Demand Generated by the Proposed Development, as per Section 5 (3 no. pre-school places and 1 no. after-school care places).

Therefore, the calculated combined demand is 1,116 no. pre-school places and 475 no. afterschool spaces. The total calculated demand for both preschool and after school spaces is 1,591 spaces.

7.0 ASSESSMENT

The Childcare Guidelines indicate that in new communities/new housing areas, planning authorities should require the provision of at least one childcare facility for new housing areas and other areas of residential development unless there are significant reasons to the contrary. For housing, a benchmark provision of one childcare facility per 75 dwellings is recommended.

The proposed development includes 28 no. units capable of generating childcare needs and the combined demand for pre-school and primary after school care is 4 no. spaces. The total pre-school demand is 6 no. spaces of which 4 no. are in the 0-2 age category and 2 no. are in the 3-4-year category. 1 no. child would be in the 5+ age category for after school care.

DOWNEY is of the considered opinion that there is an appropriate quantity of available childcare facilities within the subject assessment area, which can accommodate the proposed development as well as the cumulative demand from other permitted developments within the surrounding area. Therefore, no childcare facility is proposed as part of this residential development.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Downey have prepared this Childcare Demand Assessment on behalf of Kilgobbin Apartments Limited, in support of this planning application for the proposed Large-Scale Residential Development on lands

adjacent to Riverside Cottage, Kilgobbin Road, Stepside, County Dublin. Planning permission is sought for the construction of a Large-Scale Residential Development comprising a total of 120 no. residential units including the provision of vehicular access, car parking, bicycle parking, open spaces and all associated ancillary site development and infrastructure works including foul and surface water drainage, internal roads, cycle paths and footpaths, boundary treatments and landscaping.

This Assessment has been carried out to determine the existing childcare provision in the study area and to ascertain the need, or likely demand, if any, for a creche facility to be provided as part of the proposed development. According to the Childcare Facilities Guidelines, the proposed development requires to provide for a childcare facility capable of accommodating 7 no. children. However, after examining the existing childcare capacities in the vicinity, analysing the demographic profile, and considering the anticipated growth in the area alongside the demand generated by the proposed development and broader context, it is evident that there is ample capacity available.

A demographic study of the locality confirmed that the study area has a higher rate of children compared with the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County and State averages. 7.4% of the population of the study area is aged 0-4, compared to 5.4% in the county and 5.7% in the state. 15.8% of children are aged between 5-12 years are within the study area. This contrasts with 12.7% in the County and 13.9% in the State.

The childcare assessment identified 16 no. childcare facilities within the catchment area with a capacity of 848 no. pre-school and 368 no. after school places (1,216 spaces in total). Furthermore, 4 no. childcare facilities have also been approved as part of residential developments within the catchment area with an estimated capacity of 464 no. places to serve the future developments. The anticipated childcare demand generated by the permitted developments is 210 no. children, leaving a surplus of 254 no. places.

Based on the methodology applied, the proposed development would generate a demand for 3 no. pre-school childcare spaces and 1 no. afterschool spaces for children of primary school age (i.e. 4 no. total).

In light of the foregoing, DOWNEY 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 generally sufficient capacity of childcare facilities in the surrounding area to cater for the demand generated the proposed development.