



PROPOSED LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 'SEA GARDENS PHASE 1 BLOCK A'

Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment

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Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment

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1 INTRODUCTION

RPS, West Pier Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, in association with a multidisciplinary team, has been instructed to prepare this Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment to accompany an application to Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (DLRCC). This application relates to a proposed Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) at lands off the Dublin Road within the former Bray Golf Course lands, Bray, Co. Dublin, on behalf of the LRD applicant Shankill Property Investments Ltd, One Royal Canal Ave, Royal Canal Park, Ashtown, Dublin, D15 DKW4.

The application site forms part of a larger landholding within the Applicant's ownership that is currently being developed as Sea Gardens (formerly *Harbour Point*). Permission was previously granted for residential development in the northern portion of this larger landholding under 2 no. separate Strategic Housing Development (SHD) applications; ABP-311181-21 and ABP-314686-22. This northern portion of the landholding, also referred to as the Coastal Quarter, comprises Phase 1 of the overall Sea Gardens development.

As detailed in **Section 3** of this Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment, a split decision was issued by An Bord Pleanála (the Board) in relation to ABP-311181-21. The decision granted permission for the western portion of Phase 1 only, comprising of 106 no. apartments, 52 no. duplexes, 76 no. houses, a childcare facility, café, commercial units, an internal road network, public and private open spaces and associated car and bicycle parking. However, permission was refused for the eastern portion of Phase 1, which included 166 no. apartments at Block A (located at the subject site) and 191 no. apartments at Block B.

The Applicant is currently progressing with the construction of the permitted western portion of Phase 1 - including the childcare facility at Block C (ABP-311181-21). It is highlighted that this childcare facility was designed to serve the entire Phase 1 development (including the previously proposed apartments 357 no units within Blocks A and B but refused) is now nearing completion.

While permission was subsequently obtained for a revised design for Blocks A and B (under ABP-314686-22), the Applicant no longer intends to provide Build-to-Rent (BTR) apartments as permitted under this second SHD, and is therefore proposing a further revised design for Block A under this subject LRD application furthering the completion of Phase 1. The implementation of this LRD will provide a greater proportion of family-sized homes and ensure its alignment with the requirements of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 and relevant development guidelines. Block B will also be subject to redesigned proposals and an application will be made to Wicklow County Council (WCC).

Following the LRD meeting under section 32D of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act) (Ref no. PAC/LRD2/003/25), DLRCC issued an LRD Opinion on 7 May 2025¹. While the LRD Opinion concluded that the material presented to the planning authority represented a reasonable basis for making a LRD application, 9 no. items of specific additional information were requested, pursuant to article 16A(7) of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001*, as amended (the Regulations). These items included the preparation of a Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment, as set out in section 9(4) of the Opinion:

“Justification to be provided as to why a dedicated childcare facility is not required as part of the subject application and that the quantum, size and form of the childcare facility granted under ABP-311181-21 is appropriate to meet the needs of future residents in the form of a childcare facility capacity assessment”.

In response to this requirement, this Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment provides an analysis of the projected childcare demand in the context of projected population demographics including prevailing household sizes in the surrounding area, and with consideration for relevant guidelines, policies and objectives that relate to the proposed scheme and concludes that the childcare facility at Block C, as permitted under ABP-311181-21 and now nearing completion, has more than sufficient capacity to cater for the demand arising from the subject development.

The report is presented in the following sections:

- **Section 1** – Introduction
- **Section 2** – Site Context and Proposed Development

¹ The LRD Opinion is enclosed as part of the subject LRD application documentation.

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- **Section 3** – Planning History
- **Section 4** – Planning Policy Context
- **Section 5** – Demographic Trends and Facilities
- **Section 6** – Estimate of Demand
- **Section 7** – Conclusion.

2 SITE CONTEXT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site forms part of a larger landholding within the Applicant's ownership that is currently being developed as Sea Gardens within the former Bray Golf Club lands. The subject site is located within the northeast portion of the overall Sea Gardens site (see **Figure 2-1**). The site is bounded:

- To the north by Corke Abbey Valley Park.
- To the east by the Dublin to Rosslare railway. This rail alignment line runs along the eastern boundary of the subject site, with a coastal strip and the Irish sea located beyond.
- To the south by the administrative boundary between DLRCC and WCC, with undeveloped lands located beyond this (future location of Block B). The permitted childcare facility under ABP-311181-21 was designed to serve the wider Phase 1 development (including Blocks A and B). The facility is located in Block C and is nearing completion (see **Figure 2-2**).
- To the west by Shoreside Park which was permitted under ABP-311181-21. This development is under construction and nearing completion, with several units already occupied. Coláiste Ráithín and Ravenswell Primary School are located further to the west of this new development.

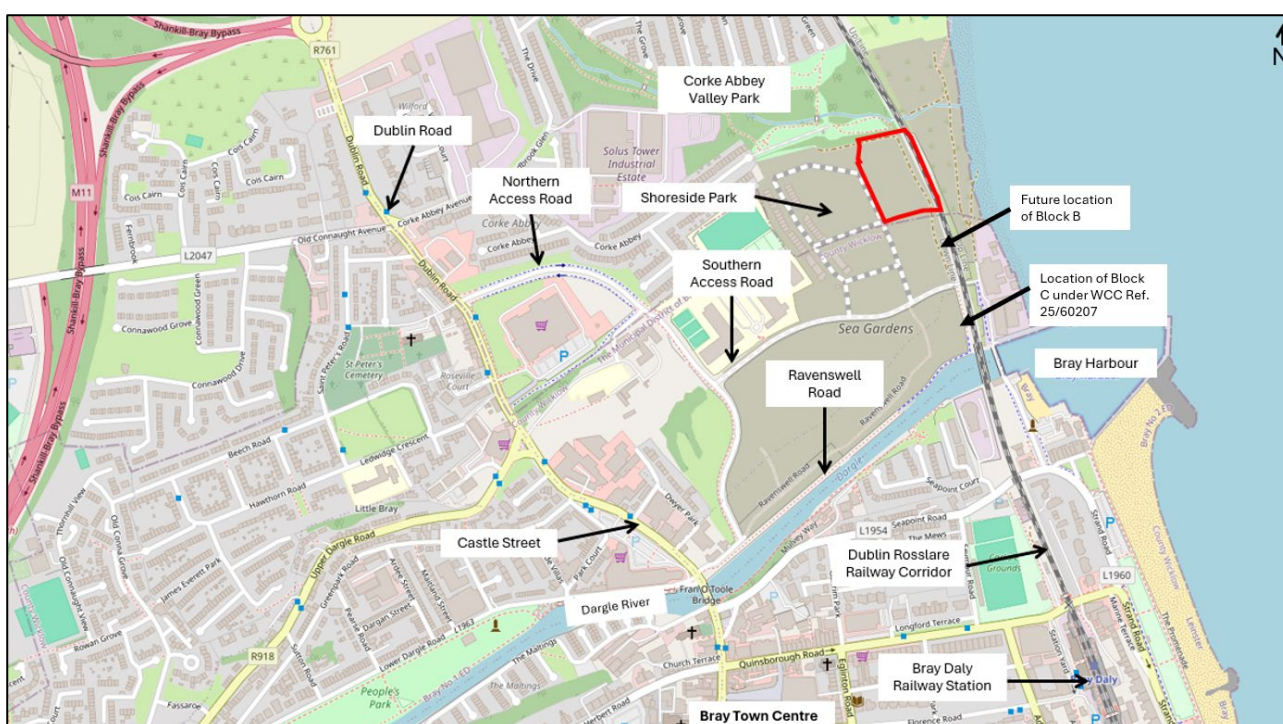


Figure 2-1: Indicative Site Location (outlined in red)

Source: Open Street Maps with RPS annotation

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Figure 2-2: Sea Gardens Phase 1 lands with childcare facility under construction

Source: Ballymore (June 2025)

The proposed development (Block A) will consist of the provision of 159 no. residential units. The proposed residential accommodation is summarised in **Table 2-1**.

Table 2-1: Proposed residential accommodation for Block A

Development Element	Number of Residential Units	Percentage of Total
Block A1	69 no. units	43.3%
1-bedroom apartments	22 no. units	13.8%
2-bedroom apartments	26 no. units	16.3%
3-bedroom apartments	21 no. units	13.2%
Block A2	81 no. units	50.9%
1-bedroom apartments	26 no. units	16.3%
2-bedroom apartments	32 no. units	20.1%
3-bedroom apartments	23 no. units	14.4%
Terraced Houses	9 no. units	5.6%
Western 4-bedroom houses	5 no. units	3.1%
Eastern 4-bedroom houses	4 no. units	2.5%
Total	159 no. units	100%

The proposed housing mix is provided in **Table 2-2** below

Table 2-2: Proposed Housing % Mix

Development Element	Number of Residential Units	Percentage of Total
1-bedroom	48 no. units	30%
2-bedroom	58 no. units	36%
3-bedroom	44 no. units	28%
4-bedroom	9 no. units	6%
Total	159 no. units	100%

A full description of the proposed development is set out in the *Planning Report and Statement of Consistency with Planning Policy* prepared by RPS and enclosed as part of the LRD application package.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

The site forms part of a larger landholding within the Applicant's ownership that is currently being developed as Sea Gardens (formerly *Harbour Point*). Permission was previously granted for residential development within Phase 1 of the masterplan site under 2 no. separate SHD applications under ABP-311181-21 and ABP-314686-22.

3.1 ABP-311181-21

On 20th August 2021, Shankill Property Investments Ltd applied for permission for a SHD comprising 591 no. residential units in a mix of apartments, duplexes and houses. The development proposed 278 no. residential units within the administrative area of DLRCC, and 313 no. residential units within the administrative area of WCC.

The development also included, *inter alia*, a childcare facility, café, commercial units, an internal road network, public and private open spaces and associated car and bicycle parking. The SHD included apartment blocks along the eastern boundary of the site, comprising of Blocks A and B. On 9th December 2021, the Board issued a split decision which refused permission for the development of Blocks A and B (357 no units), while permitting development for the remainder of the proposals, including 234 no. units, the childcare facility (Block C) which was designed to serve the entire Phase 1 development catering for 88 no. childcare places.

The permitted elements of the development (i.e. the western portion of the site including the childcare facility) are currently under construction and nearing completion, with several units now occupied.

3.2 ABP-314686-22

On 23rd September 2022, Shankill Property Investments Ltd applied for permission for a revised SHD on the same site as the previous application under ABP-311181-21. The revised SHD included permitted elements from the previous SHD application, with minor modifications as required by various conditions, and new designs for Blocks A and B, which were previously refused as part of the split decision. The revised SHD proposed the provision of a total of 586 no. residential units, with 274 no. units located within the administrative area of DLRCC and 312 no. units and ancillary uses (childcare facility, café, retail and commercial units etc.) situated within the administrative area of WCC. The revised proposals for Block A included 162 no. BTR apartments. The Board granted permission on 19th August 2024, subject to conditions. The Applicant does not intend to proceed with Blocks A or B as permitted within this application.

3.3 Subject LRD Application

The Applicant is currently progressing with the construction of the western portion of the overall scheme as permitted under the first SHD application (ABP-311181-21). The Applicant no longer intends to provide BTR apartments as permitted under the second SHD application (ABP-314686-22) and is therefore proposing a revised design to Block A to provide a greater proportion of family-sized homes and ensure its alignment with the requirements of the DLRCC Development Plan and relevant residential development guidelines.

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

For the purpose of this assessment the relevant planning policy and guidance regarding childcare facilities is set out under the paragraphs that follow.

4.1 Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (NPF 2040) is the primary articulation of spatial, planning and land use policy within Ireland and provides an overarching framework for all other policies. The first revision (April 2025) of the NPF 2040 continues to recognise the changing demographic of household size throughout the country moving towards a smaller average household size. Notwithstanding this however the NPF 2040 recognises the importance of appropriate childcare provision for future growth with National Policy Objective (NPO) 41 stating:

“Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in:

- *A childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting of investment needs, including identification of regional priorities;*
- *The provision and timely delivery of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, including in support of infill and brownfield development, that meet the diverse needs of local populations and act as a key enabler for housing development, thereby contributing to the development of sustainable communities...*”

With regard childcare provision, the NPF 2040 maintains the importance of sustainable and improved planning in order to provide quality childcare that will meet regulatory and quality environments for future population growth.

4.2 Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) and Circular Letter PL3/2016

The *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (the Childcare Guidelines) provide qualitative and quantitative recommendations for planning authorities to assess planning applications. They seek to ensure that high-quality childcare services that are accessible, affordable, and appropriate for all, are provided as part of future development proposals.

For new communities/larger new housing developments, the Childcare Guidelines state:

*“Planning authorities should require the **provision of at least one childcare facility for new housing areas unless there are significant reasons to the contrary** for example, development consisting of single bed apartments or where there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments.*

For new housing areas, an average of one childcare facility for each 75 dwellings would be appropriate. (See also paragraph 3.3.1 and Appendix 2 below). The threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas.

Authorities could consider requiring the provision of larger units catering for up to 30/40 children in areas of major residential development on the basis that such a large facility might be able to offer a variety of services – sessional/drop in/after-school, etc.”

“In relation to new housing areas, a standard of one childcare facility providing for a minimum 20 childcare places per approximately 75 dwellings may be appropriate”. (RPS emphasis in bold)

In connection with the above, Appendix 2 of the Childcare Guidelines states that 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*”. Departure from the set indicative standard, i.e., a childcare facility per 75 dwellings, should have regard to:

“The make-up of the proposed residential area, i.e. an estimate of the mix of community the housing area seeks to accommodate. (If an assumption is made that 50% approximately of the

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housing area will require childcare then in a new housing area of 75 dwellings, approximately 35 will need childcare. One facility providing a minimum of 20 childcare places is therefore considered to be a reasonable starting point on this assumption. Other assumptions may lead to an increase or decrease in this requirement.)

The results of any childcare needs analysis carried out as part of a county childcare strategy or carried out as part of a local or action area plan or as part of the development plan in consultation with county childcare committees, which will have identified areas already well-served or alternatively, gap areas where there is under provision, will also contribute to refining the base figure.”

Circular Letter PL3/2016 issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government outlines Government’s policy with respect to increasing access to childcare and until new Childcare Guidelines are issued requesting planning authorities to expediate planning consultations, applications and referrals relating to the provision of childcare facilities. The Circular Letter advised that the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 set out a range of childcare related standards for these facilities and that An Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, is responsible for inspecting services and enforcing compliance with these Regulations. Planning Authorities are therefore requested to exclude matters relating to Appendix 1 set out in the Childcare Guidelines including minimum floor area requirements per child from their considerations.

Section 6 of this Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment details the anticipated childcare demand arising from the development. The guidance set out in the Childcare Guidelines has been taken into account when calculating this demand.

4.3 Planning Design Standards for Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)

The *Planning Design Standards for Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2025*, (the Apartments Guidelines) offers additional guidance on childcare provision. It is noted that while the Childcare Guidelines recommends one childcare facility for every 75 dwelling units, the actual threshold for childcare provision in apartment schemes should be based on:

- The scale and unit mix of the proposed development.
- The existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area.
- The emerging demographic profile of the area.

Further guidance states that one-bedroom or studio units generally do not contribute to childcare requirements. Depending on the location of the development, this exclusion may also apply to some two-bedroom units.

Section 6 of this *Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment* details the anticipated childcare demand arising from the development. The guidance outlined in the Apartments Guidelines has been taken into account when calculating this demand.

4.4 Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028

Policy Objective PHP6 of the Development Plan seeks 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.”

The Development Plan notes that, in general, where a new residential development is proposed, with more than 75 dwellings (or as otherwise required by the Planning Authority), one childcare facility shall be provided on site in accordance with Section 2.4, Section 3.3.1 and Appendix 2 of the Childcare Guidelines. It further highlights that the provision of childcare facilities within new residential areas shall have regard to the geographical distribution and capacity of established childcare facilities in the locale, and the emerging

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demographic profile of the area. The Development Plan notes that in considering applications for new childcare facilities, the Planning Authority will refer to the Apartments Guidelines.

Section 6 of this Childcare Facility Capacity Assessment details the anticipated childcare demand arising from the development, with consideration for the policy objectives set out in the Development Plan.

4.5 Planning Policy Summary

The importance in providing childcare facilities in order to facilitate the future growth of Ireland, is highlighted in the NPF 2040 and national guidelines. The need is acknowledged in all policies and guidance that provision of such facilities should be established with regard to the scale and unit mix of the proposed development, the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities within the surrounding area and demographic trends.

5 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND FACILITIES

In undertaking this analysis of trends and facilities, the following data sources were consulted:

- The Census 2022 data and the Labour Force Survey were used to create a profile of the study area including population statistics and childcare figures.
- An Tulsa, the Child and Family Agency, website provides information on existing childcare facilities.
- The Board, DLRCC and WCC online planning search facilities also provided information on both existing and permitted childcare facilities within and near the study area.

5.1 Study Area

In order to assess the demographic trends and the level of childcare facilities within the vicinity of the subject site, an area within 3km of the subject site was selected as a fair representation of the study area. This study also aligns with the study area used in the Childcare Demand Analysis that was submitted as part of the previous SHD applications for Sea Gardens Phase 1 (under Ref. ABP-311181-21 and ABP-314686-22).

Population figures from the Census of Population 2022 were used to create an area profile for the study area. These were examined at Electoral Division (ED) level. The subject site for this LRD falls within the following Electoral Division (ED):

- **Shankill-Shanganagh ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1e19-13a3-e055-000000000001) in County Dublin (Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown).

The remaining EDs within the study area are:

- **Rathmichael (Bray) ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1eee-13a3-e055-000000000001);
- **Shankill-Rathmichael ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1e17-13a3-e055-000000000001);
- **Bray No.1 ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1ee2-13a3-e055-000000000001) in County Wicklow;
- **Bray No.2 ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1eed-13a3-e055-000000000001);
- **Bray No.3 ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1e99-13a3-e055-000000000001); and
- **Kilmacanoge ED** (CSO Area Code: 2ae19629-1e78-13a3-e055-000000000001).

The study area and subject site are illustrated in **Figure 5-1**.

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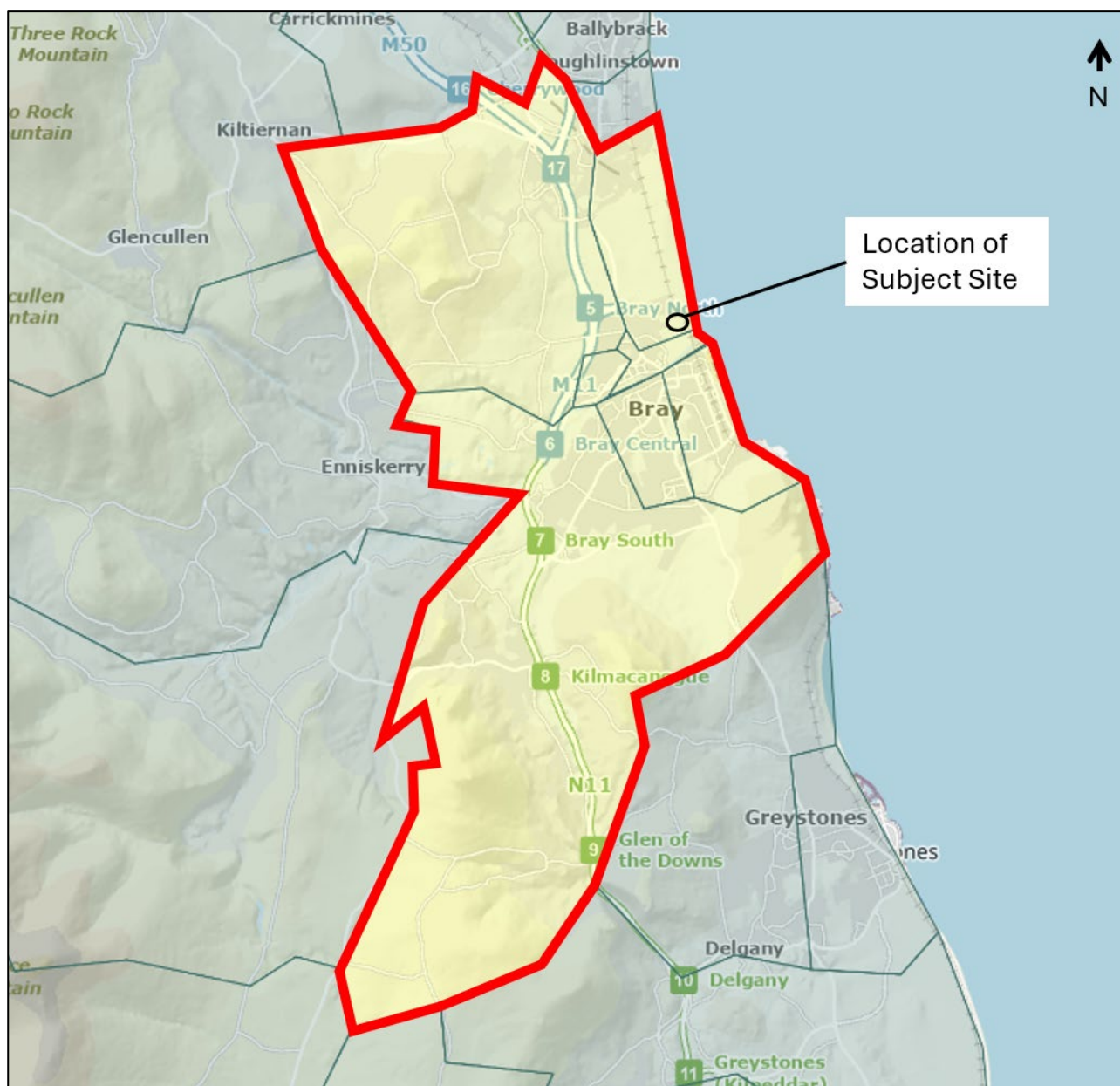


Figure 5-1: Study Area for the Childcare Analysis

Source: CSO.ie Census Map Viewer with added RPS annotation

5.2 Demographic Profile

Throughout 2023, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) released the collected results and data from Census 2022. The data shows the population of County Dublin and County Wicklow has increased in the intercensal period from 1,347,359 to 1,450,701 (+7.7%) and 142,425 to 155,485 (+9.2%). The natural increase in population in County Dublin and County Wicklow was respectively 5.7% and 6.1%.

Table 5-1 shows the 0-4-year old demographic profile of the State, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Wicklow and the study area in 2022.

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Table 5-1: 0-4 Year Old Population in the State, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Wicklow and the Study Area, 2022 and 2016

Location	Total Population 2022	Total Population 2016	% Change 2016 – 2022	Total 2022 0 – 4 yrs	Total 2016 0 – 4 yrs	% Change 2016 – 2022 0 – 4 yrs
State	5,123,536	4,761,865	7.6%	295,415	331,515	-10.8%
Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown	233,860	218,018	7.2%	12,654	13,810	-8.3%
Wicklow	155,485	142,425	9.1%	8,947	10,173	-12.0%
Study Area	43,479	42,281	2.8%	2,241	2,860	-21.6%
Bray No.1	1,864	1,839	1.4%	119	160	-25.0%
Shankill- Shanganagh	5,493	5,488	0.1%	304	401	-24.0%
Rathmichael (Bray)	2,312	2,415	-4.3%	117	155	-24.0%
Shankill-Rathmichael	5,716	5,488	1.7%	268	373	-28.0%
Bray No.2	6,786	6,414	5.8%	334	357	-6.4%
Bray No.3	6,602	6,459	2.2%	309	407	-24.0%
Kilmacanoge	14,706	14,043	2.1%	790	1007	-21.5%

Source: CSO.ie (<https://data.cso.ie/table/SAP2022T1T1ACTY>)

Based on the 2022 data, there was a 0-4 age cohort population of 2,241 no. children within the study area. This represents a decrease of 21.6% between 2022 and 2016. This decrease was significantly greater than the state which decreased by a lesser extent of 10.8%.

Table 5-2 shows the demographic profile of females between the ages of 24-55, 45+ and the total population 65+ for the State, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Wicklow and the study area in 2016.

Table 5-2: Demographic Profile: State, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Wicklow and the Study Area, 2022

Location	Total Population 2022	Females 25-44 2022	Females 25-44 (%) 2022	Total Population 2016	Females 25-44 2016	Females 25-44 (%) 2016	Change 2016 – 2022 Females 25-44	% Change 2016 – 2022 Females 25-44
State	5,123,536	730,736	14.2%	4,796,186	719,363	15.1%	11,373	1.5%
Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown	233,860	33,311	14.2%	218,018	31,684	14.5%	1,627	5.1%
Wicklow	155,485	20,993	13.5%	142,245	20,655	14.5%	338	1.6%
Study Area	43,479	6,129	14.0%	42,944	6,346	15.0%	-217	-3.4%
Bray No.1	1,864	314	16.8%	1,839	300	16.3%	14	4.6%
Shankill- Shanganagh	5,493	745	13.5%	5,488	779	14.2%	-34	-4.3%
Rathmichael (Bray)	2,312	356	15.3%	2,415	376	15.6%	-20	-5.3%
Shankill- Rathmichael	5,716	765	13.3%	5,623	832	14.8%	-67	-8.0%
Bray No.2	6,786	987	14.5%	6,414	940	14.7%	47	5%
Bray No.3	6,602	870	13.1%	6,459	933	14.4%	-63	-6.7%
Kilmacanoge	14,706	2,092	14.2%	14,706	2,186	14.9%	-94	-4.3%

Source: CSO.ie (<https://data.cso.ie/table/SAP2022T1T1ACTY>)

It is most likely for females to have children between the ages of 25 and 44. In 2022, within the State, 25-44 year old females comprised 14.2% of the total population, while within the study area the same demographic comprised 15% of the total population, giving a slightly higher than the state percentage.

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5.3 Childcare Patterns

Census 2022 as reported in August 2023 provides detail on the types of childcare being used in Ireland. Nationally, the majority of children are not in a childcare facility. The most commonly used, non-parental childcare type for children under the age of 15 is “a creche or a similar facility” with 14% of children in this type of childcare in 2022, followed by an “unpaid relative or family member” with 9%. **Table 5-3** indicates the types of childcare used in County Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and the State.

Table 5-3: Children under 15 years of age in types of childcare facilities in the State, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Wicklow

Location	Population of children under 15 years of age	Not in childcare	Unpaid relative or family	Paid relative or family member	Childminder	Au Pair/ nanny/ childminder	Creche/ Montessori/ playgroup/ after school	Other / Not Stated
State	1,012,287	680,504 (67%)	92,118 (9%)	18,292 (2%)	52,775 (5%)	20,263 (2%)	139,899 (14%)	8,436 (1%)
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	42,303	26,444 (63%)	2,869 (7%)	360 (1%)	1,427 (3%)	2,321 (5%)	8,504 (20%)	378 (1%)
Wicklow	32,254	22,156 (69%)	2,966 (9%)	678 (2%)	1,589 (5%)	651 (2%)	3,927 (12%)	287 (1%)

Source: CSO.ie [Childcare Census of Population 2022 Profile 3 - Households, Families and Childcare - Central Statistics Office](#)

The Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) was first introduced in January 2010 for children who turn 3 years old. The programme seeks to provide children with their first formal experience of early learning prior to commencing primary school. In 2021/22, 107,711 children benefitted from the ECCE programme with 95% of the eligible cohort availing of at least one year of the ECCE programme. It is estimated that more than 800,000 individual children have benefitted from the programme since its inception².

Table 5-4 below illustrates the level of the preschool population within the 0-2 and 3-4 years age categories in the study area.

Table 5-4: Total, 0-2 Years and 3-4 Years Profile of the Study Area, 2016-2022

Year	Population	0-2 yrs	%	3-4 yrs	%
2016	42,479	1,636	3.9%	1,224	2.9%
2022	44,063	1,329	3.0%	912	2.1%

Source: <https://data.cso.ie/table/SAP2016T1T1ED> & <https://data.cso.ie/table/SAP2022T1T1AED>

The data presented in **Table 5-4** indicates a reduction in the 0-2 and 3-4 year groups within the study area, with both demographics making up a smaller percentage of the study area’s overall population in 2022 than they did previously in 2016.

5.4 Existing Childcare Facilities

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Childcare Committee and Wicklow Childcare Committee were consulted and the Pobal online portal reviewed in order to appraise existing childcare service providers within the study area. The Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Childcare Committee advised in 2025 that childcare provision within the

² [Early Childhood Education and Care](#)

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catchment area of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown was currently at full capacity with continued high demand for spaces. The Wicklow Childcare Committee also advised in 2025 that information received from parents over recent years in particular strongly indicate a need for childcare places in the Bray and wider North Wicklow areas.

The Annual Early Years Sector Profile Report 2020/2021 published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs reports that in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown 3,784 no. children were enrolled in childcare and there were 403 no. vacant places. This is a vacancy rate of 11%. This report also states that in Wicklow 2,518 no. children are enrolled in childcare and there were 410 no. vacant places. This is a vacancy rate of 16%. These findings indicate there is significant spare capacity within Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and County Wicklow though it should be noted the vacancy rate is considered unlikely to be sustained once the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the enrolments and vacancy rates lessen.

Figure 5-2 below illustrates the location of existing childcare services within 1km, 2km and 3km of the subject site as per the An Pobal website.

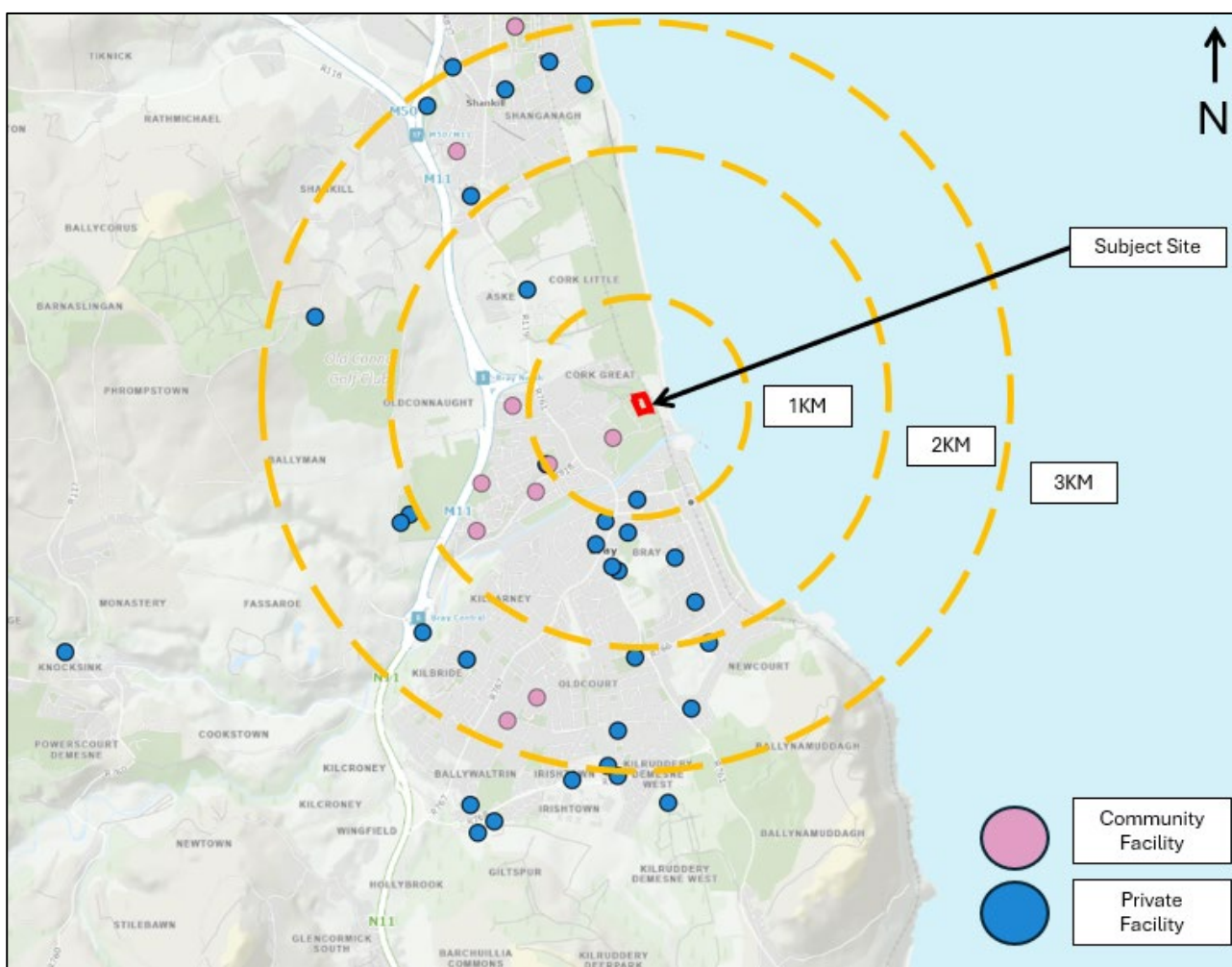


Figure 5-2: Existing Childcare Facilities located 1km, 2km, and 3km from the subject site.

Source: *Pobal.ie* (2025)

A list of childcare providers within the study area based on information provided on the Tusla website, by the Wicklow County Childcare Committee and by the Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown Childcare Committee is provided below in **Tables 5-5, 5-6 and 5-7**.

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Table 5-5: Childcare Facilities within 1km of the subject site

No.	Name	Address	Services Provided	Age Profile	Capacity
1.	Marian Centre - Ravenswell	Ravenswell Primary School, 4 Ravenswell, Dublin Road, Bray.	Sessional	5-11 years old	41
2.	Little Bunnies, St. Andrews	St Andrews (Old School), Eglinton Road, Bray.	Part-time	2-6 years old	44
3.	Little Bunnies Montessori	Unit 1, Aubrey Court, Parnell Road, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	44
4.	Clare Elizabeth Creche	1 Ellerslie Villas, Sidmonton Road, Bray.	Full Day & Sessional	1-6 years old	51
5.	An Naionra, c/o Gaelscoil Ui Cheadaigh	Vevay Road, Bray.	Part-time & Sessional	2-6 years old	33
6.	Marian Centre	Greenpark Road, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	53
7.	Marian Centre (St. Peters School)	Ledwidge Crescent, Little Bray, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	32
8.	Hollyoaks Montessori	St. Peters NS, Hawthorn Road, Old Connaught, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	22
9.	LMNO Childcare	9A Purcell Lane, Rear Main Street, Bray.	Full Day / Part-time / Sessional	2-6 years old	39
Total:					359

Source: [Tusla.ie](https://tusla.ie), [Search for Childcare - Wicklow County Childcare Committee](#), [Search for Childcare - Dun Laoghaire County Childcare Committee](#)

Table 5-6: Childcare Facilities within 1km - 2km

No.	Name	Address	Services Provided	Age Profile	Capacity
10.	Cois Cairn	Cois Cairn Youth & Community Facility, Cois Cairn, Old Connaught Avenue, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	22
11.	Discoveries Montessori	St. James Church, Crinken, Cork Little, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	22
12.	St Gerard's Montessori	St. Gerard's Montessori, Thornhill Road, Bray.	Full Day	2-6 years old	22
13.	Little Bray Afterschools Service	Little Bray Community Centre, Old Connaught View, Fassaroe, Bray.	Sessional	5-11 years old	35
14.	Westfield Montessori School	Westfield House, Sidmonton Road, Bray.	Part-time / Sessional	2-6 years old	11

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No.	Name	Address	Services Provided	Age Profile	Capacity
15.	Cuala Montessori	3 Cuala Grove, Newcourt, Bray.	Part-time / Sessional	2-6 years old	22
16.	Mother Goose Montessori	Wolfe Tone District Youth Club, Vevay Road, Oldcourt, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	40
17.	Little Oaks	21 Vevay Road, Oldcourt, Bray.	Part-time	2-6 years old	33
18.	Little Rascals, Little Bray	Family Resource Centre, New Ard Chualann, Fassaroe, Bray.	Part-time / Sessional / Drop-in	0-6 years old	14
Total					186

Source: [Tusla.ie](https://tusla.ie), [Search for Childcare - Wicklow County Childcare Committee](#), [Search for Childcare - Dun Laoghaire County Childcare Committee](#)

Table 5-7: Childcare Facilities within 2km - 3km

No.	Name	Address	Services Provided	Age Profile	Capacity
19.	Cherry Blossom Grove Montessori	23 Corbawn Drive, Shankill, Dublin 18.	Part-time / Sessional	2-6 years old	22
20.	Safari Childcare	Unit 3 Southern Cross Central, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow	Full Day / Part- time / Sessional	1-6 years	95
21.	Little Eaton Montessori	1A Eaton Brae, Corbawn Lane, Shankill, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin	Part-time / Sessional	2-6 years	20
22.	Naionra Pobail Seanchill CTR	Croí na Coille, Lower Road, Shankill, Dublin 18.	Full Day/ Part- time/ Sessional	2-6 years old	50
23.	Discoveries Creche & Montessori Ltd	Olcovar, Shankill, Dublin 18.	Full Day / Part- time / Sessional	0-6 years old	54
24.	Heatherfield Playgroup	Heatherfield, Quarry Road, Shankill, Dublin 18.	Sessional	2-6 years old	18
25.	Neverland Pre School	Stonebridge Community Facility, 7 Stonebridge Grove, Shankill, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin	Part-time	2-6 years old	18
26.	Little Harvard Creche & Montessori	Upper Dargle Road, Riverdale, Bray.	Full Day / Sessional / Part time	2 -6 years old	199
27.	Coillte Academy Preschool	2 Cill Sarain, Herbert Road, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	22

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28.	Jolly Tots	St. Fergals Resource Centre, 107 Oldcourt Avenue, Oldcourt, Bray.	Sessional / Part time	0-6 years old	13
29.	Marian Centre	Marian Centre, Ballywartrim Centre, Boghall Road, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	30
30.	Nuture Childcare Limited/ Once Upon A Time	Lidl Neighbourhood Centre, Corbawn Lane, Shankill, Shankill, Co. Dublin	Full Day	0-6 years old	65
31.	Scallywags Childcare	25 Bentley Avenue, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	22
32.	Belmont Montessori	235 Belmont, Kilruddery Demesne West, Bray.	Sessional	3-6 years old	11
33.	Naíonra Ghleann na Darach	20 Oak Glen View, Bray.	Sessional	2-6 years old	20
34.	Park Academy Childcare Nature Kindergarten	Pigwood, Killruddery Estate, Bray.	Full Day	2-6 years old	35
Total:					694
Total childcare spaces within 3km of site:					1,239

Source: [Tusla.ie](https://tusla.ie), [Search for Childcare - Wicklow County Childcare Committee](#), [Search for Childcare - Dun Laoghaire County Childcare Committee](#)

Table 5-5, Table 5-6 and Table 5-7 show there are 34 no. childcare facilities within 3km of the subject site, of these, 16 no. are within 2-3km of the site, 9 no. are within 1-2km of the site, and 9 no. are within 1km of the site. Based on the above information it calculated that there are currently at least **1,239** no. childcare places within the study area. It is also noted that within 1km of the site there are currently 359 no. places. The closest childcare facility to the subject site is 'Marian Centre – Ravenswell' which is located c. 350m from the subject site.

5.5 Permitted Childcare Facilities

A desktop review of planning history for the surrounding area in the vicinity of the subject lands was undertaken using the DLRCC and the WCC planning application search facilities. Recent planning permissions for new childcare facilities within 3km of the subject site are listed below:

ABP-311181-21: On 9th December 2021 issued a split decision (ABP-311181-21), to refuse permission for proposed Block A and Block B (357 no. units) and grant permission for the remainder of a proposed SHD development. Permitted development includes 234 no. residential units in a mix of apartment, duplex and house units, a childcare facility, café, commercial units all associated and ancillary development and infrastructural works, hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment works, associated car and bicycle parking spaces at surface, undercroft and basement levels. The permitted childcare facility has capacity for c. **88 no.** spaces. With regard to this childcare facility the Inspector's report considered the scale of the facility to be acceptable to meet the demand generated by the full 591 no. residential units proposed. The proposed Block A replaces the Block A proposed as part of ABP-311181-21. The permitted childcare facility within Block C is under construction. In this regard the childcare facility permitted is above the requirement for the number of units permitted. This facility is within Sea Gardens.

D19A/0422: Permission for amalgamation of existing ground floor medical consulting room unit and existing vacant childcare unit into one combined unit for childcare use at Unit 1 Quinn's Road, Shankill, Dublin was granted on 18th June 2020. Information provided by the applicant as part of a response to further information states a maximum of 33 no. 3 – 5

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years old and **36 no.** 5 – 12-year-old children would be accommodated per morning and afternoon session respectively. This facility is within xxkm of the subject site.

ABP-305844-19: On 27th February 2020, the Board granted planning permission for a SHD comprising 685 no. residential units. Condition no. 2 attached to the decision to grant permission required that the proposed childcare facility accommodate approximately **148 no.** full time equivalent children on lands at Cork Little, Woodbrook, Shankill, Dublin. This accords with the DLRCC recommendation based on discounting the one-bedroom units and providing 20 no. childcare places per 75 no. units. This facility is within xxkm of the subject site.

ABP-306583-20: On 8th July 2020, the Board approved an application under section 175 of the Act for the construction of 597 no. residential units and other facilities including a creche facility with capacity to accommodate **107 no.** children at the townlands of Shanganagh, Cork Little and Shankill, Dublin. Provision has been made for 20 no. childcare places per 75 no. residential units, excluding 1 bed and studio units. This facility is within xxkm of the subject site.

Overall, 379 no. new childcare places have been permitted within 2 km from the subject site.

Table 5-8 summarises the total overall places in the area from both existing and permitted facilities.

Table 5-8: Summary Table of Childcare Places in the Study Area

KM from the Site	Existing Childcare Places	Permitted Childcare Places	Total Childcare Places
1km	359	88	447
1-2km	186	291	477
2-3km	694	0	694
Total:	1,239	379	1,618

Source: *Tulsa.ie, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Wicklow County Council, An Bord Pleanála*

In the study area, there is a total of approximately 1,239 no. existing childcare places provided between 34 no. childcare providers within a 3km radius from the subject site and 4 no. permitted childcare facilities with approximately 379 no. childcare places. Overall combining existing and permitted childcare facilitates there is a total of approximately 1,618 no. childcare places in the study area.

5.6 Proposed Additional Childcare Facilities in Sea Gardens

An application for development of Phase 2 of the Sea Gardens Masterplan was submitted to WCC on 24th March 2025 (Ref. 25/60207). The proposed mixed-use development consists of 341 residential units (houses, duplex own-door units and apartments), a hotel, a public house, a childcare facility, a medical centre, retail/retail services units, open spaces, car and bicycle parking, and associated supporting development infrastructure.

The development provides for an additional 150 no. space childcare facility within Sea Gardens (in addition to the 88 no. space facility nearing completion in Block C). This provision is 116 no. spaces above the expected demand generated by Phase 2 (34 no. spaces) and can cater for additional demand in the masterplan area if required.

This application is currently being assessed by WCC.

6 ESTIMATE OF DEMAND

6.1 Estimated Demand for Childcare Places

The Childcare Guidelines, Apartment Guidelines and local planning policy recognise the need to assess proposals based on their locational merits. With regard to the proposed development, the threshold for the provision of facilities should be established having regard to the following considerations:

- Scale and unit mix of the proposed development;
- Existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities; and
- Emerging demographic profile of the area.

6.1.1 Scale and unit mix of the proposed development

As set out in **Table 2-2**, there are 48 no. 1-bedroom apartments, 58 no. 2-bedroom apartments, 44 no. 3-bedroom apartments, and 9 no. 4-bedroom houses.

The formula set out in the Childcare Guidelines states that the number of places to be provided within a childcare facility is 20 spaces per 75 units. Based on the proposed development of 159 no. units, this would generate a need for 42 no. childcare places.

However, as stated within the Apartment Guidelines 1-bedroom or studio units generally do not contribute to childcare requirements. Depending on the location of the development, this exclusion may also apply to some 2-bedroom units.

There are 48 no. 1-bedroom apartments proposed, excluding these units the proposed development would generate a need for childcare places based on 111 no. dwellings as set out below:

$$(111 \text{ no. units} / 75 \text{ dwellings}) * 20 = 30 \text{ no. childcare places}$$

There are 58 no. 2-bedroom apartment proposed. Excluding half of these units would result in 29 no. 2 bedroom units being excluded from the calculations. This would generate a need for childcare places based on 82 no. dwellings as set out below:

$$(82 \text{ no. units} / 75 \text{ dwellings}) * 20 = 22 \text{ no. childcare places.}$$

Based on the guidance provided in the estimated demand generated by Block A is between 22-30 no. childcare places.

6.1.2 Existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities

As set out in **Section 5**, in total combining current facilities and permitted facilities, there are a total of 1,618 no. places within the study area.

The permitted childcare facility ABP-311181-21 has a capacity of 88 no. childcare spaces, this facility was designed to cater for the demand for 591 no. units. However, just 234 no. units were permitted. It is highlighted that ABP-311181-21 is under construction and Block C which will accommodate the childcare facility is nearing completion.

As stated in **Section 5.6**, an application submitted to WCC for Phase 2 of Sea Gardens (WCC Ref. 25/60207) is currently being assessed by WCC and provides for an additional facility with 150 no. spaces which is 116 no. spaces above the expected demand generated by Phase 2 and can cater for additional demand in the masterplan area if required.

6.1.3 Emerging demographic profile of the area

xxx

Between 2016 and 2022 there was an increase in the overall population of both the state and the study area. The state saw a much more significant increase of 7.6% while the study area's population only rose by 2.8%. In contrast to the overall population increase, the state's 0-4 age demographic saw a decrease of 10.8%

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between 2016 and 2022. This trend was more pronounced in the study area with the decrease in the 0-4 age demographic amounting to 21.6% over the period.

Based on the *Childcare of the National Household Quarterly Survey (2016)* which recorded that 25% of preschool children attended a childcare facility in the Dublin Region and 14% preschool children attended a childcare facility in the Mid-East Region and that all preschool children over 3 years can avail of 2 years of National Childcare Schemes such as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme it is assumed for robustness that:

- 25% of those aged 0-2 years will attend a childcare facility; and
- 100% of those aged 3-4 years will attend a childcare facility in order to avail of national childcare schemes.

Based on the 2022 national average household size of 2.74, the anticipated population of Block A is 436 and applying these childcare attendance assumptions the demand for childcare spaces within Block A is set out in **Table 6-1** below.

Table 6-1: Anticipated Demand for Childcare Places

Anticipated Demand for Childcare Places			
Cohort	Population 0-4 Years	% Requiring Childcare	No. of Required Places
0-2 years	$436^1 * 3\%^2 = 13$	$13 * 25\%^3$	4
3-4 years	$436 * 2.1\% = 10$	$10 * 100\%^4$	10
Total	-	-	14

1. Units (159 no.) * average 2022 household size (2.74).
2. % of population in age demographic within the study area based on 2022 figures presented in **Table 5-4**.
3. % of preschool population which attended Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facilities in Dublin region.
4. Assume all (100%) within the 3-4 year demographic intend to avail of national childcare schemes.

The permitted childcare facility under ABP Ref. 3111181-21 will provide for 88 no. spaces. With regard to this childcare facility, the Inspector's Report considered the scale of the facility as proposed acceptable to meet the demand generated by the full 591 no. residential units proposed under that application, which represented Phase 1 of the Sea Gardens development including the Block A site.

Given the analysis above and the considerations of ABP under Ref. 3111181-21, the proposed childcare facility with capacity for 88 no. spaces is considered sufficient to meet demand generated by the proposed development.

7 CONCLUSION

RPS has prepared this report on behalf of Shankill Property Investments Ltd to accompany an LRD application for the development of 159 no. residential units within the former Bray Golf Course Lands.

An analytical approach has been deployed to develop a projected demand for the childcare places for this proposed development. In addition to the policy context set out in Section 4 above, the following factors were assessed:

- Proposed Housing Mix;
- Quantum of childcare facilities currently within the vicinity;
- Level of permitted childcare facilities in the vicinity;
- Demographic profile; and
- Estimated demand for childcare places.

The proposed development comprises 48 no. 1-bedroom units, 58 no. 2-bedroom units, 44 no. 3-bedroom units and 9 no. 4-bedroom terraced houses units.

This report provides an overview of the proposed development and highlights the relevant planning policies and objectives relating to the provision of childcare facilities as outlined in policy documents.

Considering existing and permitted childcare facilities within a 3km radius of the subject site alongside policy documents, CSO data and consultations with the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and Wicklow Childcare Committees, it is concluded that demand for childcare services is high.

Within the study area, a 3km radius from the subject site, there are 34 no. existing services providing 1,239 no. childcare places and 4 no. permitted services providing 379 no. places. There is therefore a total existing and permitted provision of 1,618 no. childcare space in the study area.

The Quarterly National Household Survey Q3 2016 Module on Childcare stated that 25% of those of preschool age used a creche / Montessori/ playgroup / afterschool service in comparison to 62% of this age group who used a parent as their childcare in the Dublin Region.

Based on the guidance provided the estimated demand generated by Block A is between 22-30 no. childcare places.

The childcare facility in Block C was designed to cater for a 591 no. unit development however only 234 no. units were granted permission with refusal of Blocks A and B. This permission is being implemented by the Applicant. In this regard, the permitted childcare facility has capacity to cater for 88 no. places (as permitted under ABP Ref. 311181-21) which is more than sufficient to meet demand generated by the subject development.