



COAKLEY O'NEILL  
town planning

# CREAMFIELDS

## Childcare Needs Assessment

Strategic Housing Development at  
the former CMP Dairy Site (known as Creamfields)  
on Tramore Road/Kinsale Road, Cork City

Prepared in February 2022 on behalf of  
**Watfore Ltd.**

Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd.

## Document Control Sheet

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

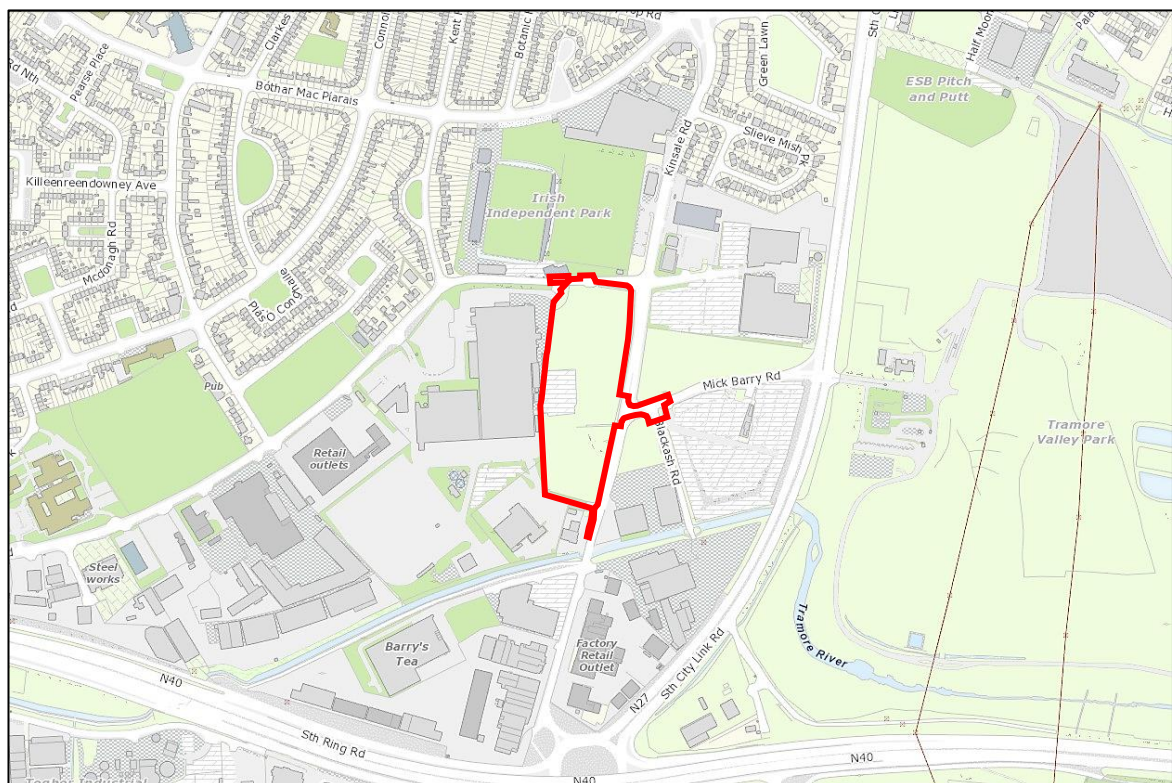
1.1 We, Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd, NSC Campus, Mahon, Co. Cork, have been instructed by Watfore Ltd. to prepare this Childcare Needs Assessment to accompany a planning application for a proposed Strategic Housing Development at the site of the former CMP Dairy Site (known as Creamfields) on Tramore Road/Kinsale Road, Cork City.

The proposed development consists of, amongst other elements, 609 no. residential dwellings (561 no. apartments and 48 no. townhouse apartments, to include 189no. 1-bed dwellings, 338no. 2-bed dwellings, 48no. 3-bed dwellings, and 34no. 4-bed dwellings).

1.2 This Childcare Needs Assessment examines the need to incorporate any on-site creche facilities as part of the development proposal, with specific focus on the relevant planning policy, demographic statistics, and an assessment of existing childcare facilities in the area.

## 2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The site of the proposed development is a 3.39ha south-facing brownfield site with an elongated north-south orientation, which lies mid-way between Cork Airport and Cork City Centre. The site is located in the south-central Cork City suburb of Ballyphehane and is bounded to the east by the Kinsale Road and to the north by Tramore Road. To the west the site is bounded by warehousing logistics complexes belonging to the Musgrave Group and Allied Foods, and to the south by an access roadway for those sites. The site location is indicated in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1. Subject site generally outlined in red. (Base map source: Ordnance Survey Ireland; Annotated by Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd., 2022).**

### 3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.0.1 The requirement for the provision of a creche for residential developments over 75 no. dwellings is outlined in both national guidance under the "Childcare Facilities Guidelines" (2001) published by the Department of Environment and in local planning policy under the Cork City Development Plan 2015.

#### 3.1 Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2001

3.1.1 The *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2001* provide a framework to guide both developers in formulating development proposals, and local authorities in assessing proposals.

3.1.2 The Guidelines list the following as being appropriate locations for childcare facilities:

- New communities/Larger new housing developments
- The vicinity of concentrations of workplaces, such as industrial estates, business parks and any other locations where there are significant numbers working.
- In the vicinity of schools.
- Neighbourhood, District and Town Centres.
- Adjacent to public transport corridors, park-and-ride facilities, pedestrian routes and dedicated cycle ways.

3.1.3 Appendix 2 of the Guidelines states an indicative standard of 1 childcare facility per 75 dwellings in new housing areas. Appendix 2 further states that the threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profiles. The Guidelines' indicative standard that 1 childcare facility be provided per 75 dwellings in new housing areas is no longer considered to be a practical benchmark and childcare provision is, instead, routinely addressed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration existing facilities and capacity.

#### 3.2 Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2020

3.2.1 The *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)* requires that childcare facilities be provided in accordance with the demographic profile of the area, the existing capacity of childcare centres, and the scale and unit mix of the proposed development. These guidelines also specifically state:

*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.*

#### 3.3 Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021

3.3.1 Paragraph 7.11 of the City Development Plan states that suitable locations for childcare facilities include areas convenient to public transport nodes and residential areas.

3.3.2 **Objective 7.7 Childcare Facilities** relates to the provision of childcare facilities and is as follows:

*Cork City Council will support the provision of high quality childcare facilities throughout the city suited to the needs of the given area and will:*

- i) Require purpose built childcare facilities as part of proposals for new residential developments of more than 75 dwelling units. However, where it can be clearly established that existing facilities are sufficient, alternative arrangements will be considered;*
- ii) Consult with the Cork City Childcare Company and the HSE on planning applications where childcare facilities are proposed;*
- iii) Require employers with more than 500 members of staff to provide childcare facilities as part of planning applications for significant new and extended development.*

3.3.3 Paragraph 16.84 of the City Development Plan states the following:

*In assessing applications for childcare facilities, the following (but not limited to) will be considered:*

- Location & Type of Facility;*
- Audit of Existing Facilities in the vicinity;*
- Design and compliance with "We Like This Place - Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities" (DoE, 2005);*
- Adequate traffic management, provision of drop-off & collection Areas & car-parking provision for staff;*
- Outdoor amenity space;*
- Affect on neighbouring amenity in terms of noise generation; storage of waste etc.*
- Hours of Operation and any proposed week-end use;*
- Proposed Signage.*

3.3.4 Table 16.8 of the City Development Plan states that in locations which are accessible to mass transit, 1 car parking space should be provided for every 6 students enrolled in a creche, while Table 16.9 states that 1 bicycle parking space is required for every 25 children in attendance at a creche.

#### 4.0 DEMAND CREATED BY THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 This report assesses the likely demand for childcare facilities created by the proposed development of 609 no. residential units (561 no. apartments and 48 no. townhouse apartments) comprising the following breakdown:

- 189 no. 1-bed dwellings;
- 338 no. 2-bed dwellings;
- 48 no. 3-bed dwellings; and
- 34 no. 4-bed dwellings

In calculating the likely demand generated for childcare spaces, significant regard must be had to the planning policies in place pertaining to the provision of childcare facilities as part of apartment developments.

4.2 189 no. of the proposed units are 1-bedroom apartments. Having regard to the planning policies outlined in Section 3 above, these 189 no. apartments have not been included in calculations regarding likely demand for childcare spaces. Accordingly, this assessment was restricted to considering the likely demand arising from the proposed development in respect of the 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom proposed units, which results in a total of 420 no. units.

4.3 Based on the average national household size of 2.75 people per household, it can be estimated that those 420 no. proposed units will result in 1,155 people residing in them. According to the 2016 Census, the average family in the state contains 1.38 children (0-18 age bracket). Therefore, the relevant proposed 420 no. units could theoretically accommodate 580 no. children. However, the demographic composition particular to the local population must also be analysed to determine the number of children the proposed development could potentially accommodate.

4.4 In order to establish a statistical basis for levels of pre-school children utilising creche/childcare services in the southern suburb of Ballyphehane, Cork City, the CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS), Childcare, Quarter 3 2016, is utilised. This is the most recent data available in relation to same. This survey reports:

*Nationally, in 2016 19% of pre-school children were cared for in Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility, as opposed to 62% who were cared for by a parent/partner.*

*For the south-west region (which includes Co. Cork), the figures were slightly lower with 16% of pre-school children being cared for in Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility, while 65% were cared for by a parent/partner.*

4.5 Data extracted from the CSO's Census 2016 Small Area Population Statistics identified that there was a total of 4,023 no. children under the age of 18 with 1,170 no. of those children being aged between 0-4 (4.18% of the total population, 29% of the total population of children under the age of 18) living in the 20 no. Electoral Division areas that have been identified as comprising the catchment area for the proposed development.

4.6 An approximate 2.5km catchment was considered appropriate as the catchment area for the proposed development, as such an area generally comprises locations of approximately 30 minutes-walk/15 minutes-cycle from the subject site of the proposed development.

4.7 Presented in Figure 2 below, for the purposes of this Childcare Needs Assessment, the 2.5km catchment correlates to approximately 20 no. local Cork Electoral Divisions, as per the 2016 Census:

Electoral Divisions Comprising the Defined Catchment Area for the Proposed Development			
<b>Ballyphehane A</b>	<b>Turners Cross D</b>	<b>South Gate B</b>	<b>Pouladuff A</b>
<b>Ballyphehane B*</b>	<b>Tramore C</b>	<b>Centre A</b>	<b>Pouladuff B</b>
<b>Turners Cross A</b>	<b>Evergreen</b>	<b>Centre B</b>	<b>The Lough</b>
<b>Turners Cross B</b>	<b>City Hall A</b>	<b>Gillabbey A</b>	<b>Glasheen C</b>
<b>Turners Cross C</b>	<b>South Gate A</b>	<b>Greenmount</b>	<b>Togher B</b>

\* Denotes Electoral Division in which subject site is located.

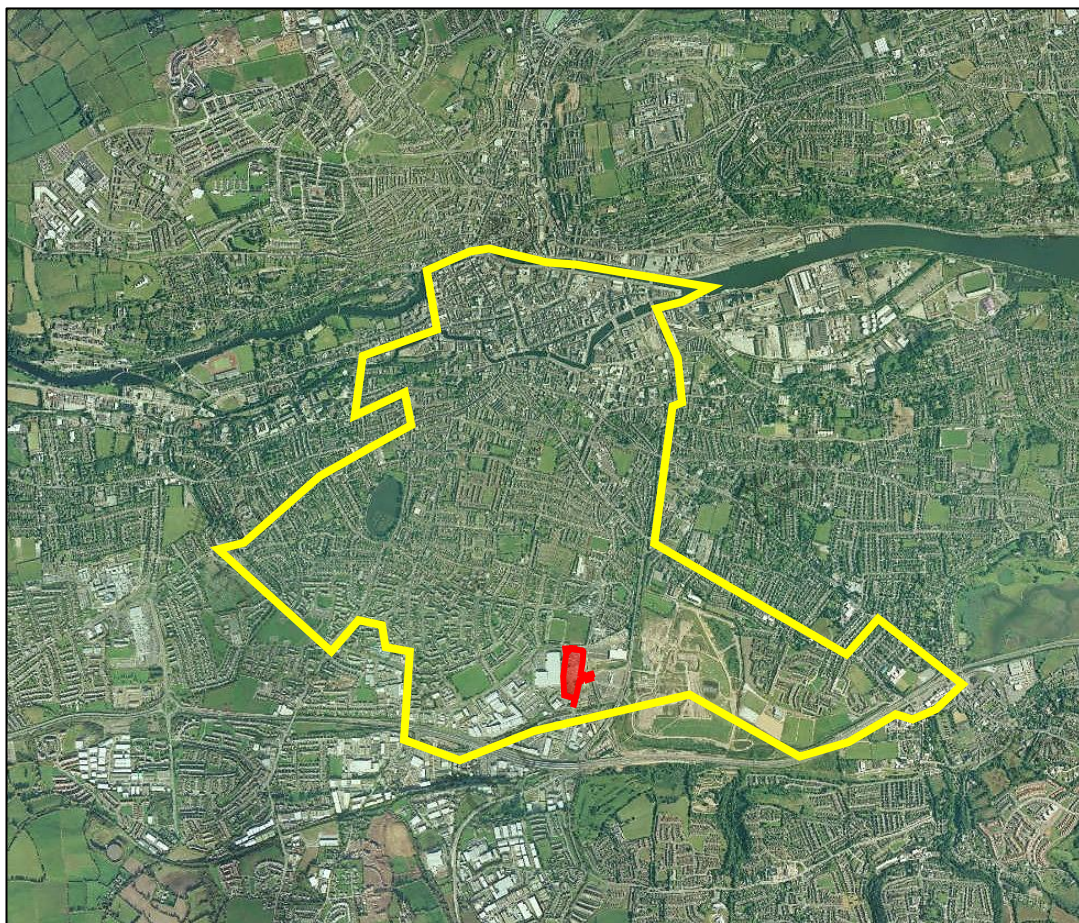


Figure 2. Extent (in yellow) of the 20 no. local Electoral Divisions that define the catchment of the proposed Creamfields SHD site (generally indicated in red). (Sources: Ordnance Survey Ireland and CSO; Annotated by Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd., 2022).

4.8 Based on the demographic trend of the catchment area where 29% of the local population of children under the age of 18 years are aged 0-4 years, and based on the average number of children per household being 1.38, it can therefore be estimated that, of the total population of 1,155 people in the 420 no. proposed 2-, 3- and 4-bed units, 168 no. children will be in the 0-4 age bracket.

4.9 Using the CSO's regional percentage (16%) of pre-school children who are cared for in a Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility, then, theoretically, 27 no. childcare spaces will be generated as a result of the proposed development.

## 5.0 ASSESSMENT

5.0.1 In order to establish the local need for a new creche as part of the proposed development, a thorough examination was undertaken in line with current guidelines. In the first instance, a review of all available and registered facilities was carried out using the TUSLA website. Contact was also attempted with the Cork City Childcare Committee, who are funded by the Government to deliver early childhood care and education programmes which support children and families. The childcare committee was one of 33 no. committees set up in 2001 to encourage the development of childcare locally. Finally, each childcare provider operating within the defined catchment area of the proposed development was also contacted to enquire about the capacity they currently have, or not, to care for additional children.

In accordance with the childcare guidelines, we subsequently established the following:

- The emerging demographic profile of the area.
- The existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities in the area.
- The capacity of just over 47% of those childcare providers.

## 5.1 Demographic Trends

5.1.1 The demographic profile of the defined catchment area of the proposed development (i.e. the 20 no. Electoral Divisions outlined in Section 4 above) was examined using the CSO Census of Population Statistics 2016. The population of the defined catchment area was recorded as being 27,974 in 2016, with 1,170 no. children (i.e. 4.18% of the total population) aged 0-4 years.

5.1.2 In terms of commuting times within the defined catchment area, it is noted that, in the 2016 Census, 9,185 no. people over the age of 5 years travelled between 15 minutes and 45 minutes to work, school or college each day, representing just over 53% of the total commuting population of the catchment area for the proposed development. In addition, a further 737 no. people travelled between 45 minutes and 90 minutes to work, school or college each day, representing a further 4.25% of commuters in the catchment area. This represents a considerable level of commuting in respect of the subject population and, owing to the proximity of the area to larger established employment centres outside the city centre, such as Little Island, Ringaskiddy, Mahon, and Ballincollig, it is considered likely that a sizeable portion of the existing and future population of the defined catchment area will avail of childcare outside the area.

5.1.3 With 4.18% of the population of the catchment area for the proposed development being made up of pre-school age children, using national average family-size statistics, it is estimated that the future population of the proposed development could consist of 168 no. pre-school children. In addition, and using the regional percentage of pre-school children who are cared for in a Creche / Montessori / Playgroup / After-school facility, as per CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS), Childcare, Quarter 3 2016, then theoretically, 27 no. childcare spaces will be generated as a result of the proposed development.



## 5.2 Distribution of Childcare Facilities in Cork City

5.2.1 In addition to the above analysis, it was deemed appropriate to audit existing childcare provision within the defined catchment area of the proposed development.

5.2.2 Data from TUSLA's website was used to ascertain the number of existing registered childcare facilities in the defined catchment area. The latest information (December 2021) available on the TUSLA website indicates that there are 19no. existing early years childcare services in the catchment area. In the course of carrying out this assessment, each of these 19 no. facilities were contacted, either by phone or by email, in order to determine whether they are currently operating at full capacity and, if not, how many additional children they can currently accommodate. Details of these childcare facilities, including maximum capacity, are presented in Table 1 below. The location of these facilities is indicated in Figure 3 below.

**Table 1. Existing TUSLA Registered Early Years Childcare Facilities as of December 2021. (Source: TUSLA, 2021).**

	TUSLA Ref. No.	Facility Name and Address	Maximum Capacity	Current Attendance
1.	TU2015CC017	An Cliabhán Community Creche, Lower Friar's Walk, Ballyphehane.	23	
2.	TU2015CC108	Coiste Naionra an Teaghlaigh Naofa Teo, Tory Top Road, Ballyphehane.	26	
3.	TU2015CC118	Cuddles Creche, 107 Douglas Street.	57	52
4.	TU2015CC216	Lios na nÓg, Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa, Tramore Road.	49	
5.	TU2015CC237	Little Star Preschool, Morning Star Primary School, Connolly Road, Ballyphehane.	22	
6.	TU2015CC257	Maria Assumpta Pre-School, Pearse Road, Ballyphehane.	55	54
7.	TU2015CC091	Oakview Village Cork City, Cork City Hall, City Hall, Eglinton St.	41	
8.	TU2015CC389	Stepping Stones Montessori, 51A Capwell Rd., Turners Cross.	11	10
9.	TU2015CC408	The Chalet Montessori School, Heather Leah, Lough Villas, The Lough.	11	11
10.	TU2015CC413	The Farmacyard Kindergarten, Quaker Meeting House, Summerhill South.	38 morning 38 afternoon	38 24
11.	TU2015CC450	Turner's Cross Community Playgroup CLG, 25 Capwell Rd., Turner's Cross.	18	8
12.	TU2015CC451	Turner's Cross Pre-School, Bunscoil Chríost Rí, Evergreen Road, Turner's Cross.	66	
13.	TU2017CC503	Hope Montessori Autism Care Centre, Deerpark CBS, St Patrick's Road.	60	45 <sup>1</sup>
14.	TU2015CC173	Greenmount Community Playgroup Ltd., Greenmount School, Green Street.	36	
15.	TU2020CC008	Classes Childcare, 2 Maryville, Friars Walk.	25	
16.	TU2015CC377	St Anne's Day Nursery, Sharman Crawford Street.	49	
17.	TU2019CC005	Orchard Montessori School, Mount Vernon Crescent, South Douglas Road.	44	33
18.	TU2015CC315	Orchard Childcare, 6 The Mews, Riverway, South Douglas Road.	21	21
19.	TU2015CC293	Naionra Na Dúbhglaise, Gaelscoil na Dúbhglaise, Willow Park, Douglas.	74	
<b>Total:</b>			<b>726</b>	<b>Unknown</b>

<sup>1</sup> Hope Childcare advised in a phone call that they are running below capacity because of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which some parents have chosen to keep their children at home in order to eliminate the cost of childcare.



**Figure 3. Locations of 19 no. existing early years childcare services within the defined catchment area of the proposed Creamfields SHD site (generally indicated in red). (Sources: Ordnance Survey Ireland and TUSLA; Annotated by Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd., 2022).**

- 5.2.3 As can be seen in Table 1 above, the 19 no. existing childcare facilities in the defined catchment area offer a total maximum of 726 childcare places and, of the 9 no. childcare providers who responded to efforts made to contact them, 8 no. of them advised that they were running at or close to full capacity. Several childcare providers stated in phone calls that there is an acute demand in the area for further full-day creche facilities, especially for children in the 6 months-3 years age bracket.
- 5.2.4 In addition, Cork City Childcare were also contacted regarding advising on the capacity of childcare facilities within the general catchment area. It is our understanding that while there is some capacity within the area for sessional preschool services catering for ages 2 years and 8 months to school going age, there also exists a demand for full day care, particularly catering for the 0-3 years age range.
- 5.2.5 Having regard to the existing capacity of the defined catchment area as outlined above, it is considered that there is not adequate capacity within existing local childcare facilities to cater for the potential demand generated by the proposed development i.e. 27 no. childcare spaces, which are likely to involve a requirement for full-day services.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The above assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001), the Apartment Guidelines 2020 and the Cork City Development Plan 2015.
- 6.2 Based on the demographic trends noted in Section 4 of this report and the unit mix provided by the scheme, it is likely that the proposed development could become home to 168 no. children in the 0-4 age bracket. Furthermore, and based on the regional percentages of pre-school children who were cared for in a creche/childcare facility, it is likely that 27 no. childcare spaces will be generated by the proposed development.
- 6.3 Having reviewed available information in relation to the capacity of existing childcare facilities within the defined catchment area of the proposed development site, it has been established that there is not adequate capacity in existing facilities to cater for the potential demand that could be generated by the proposed development.
- 6.4 In considering the existing demographic trends in the Cork City area, the nature of the proposed development, the likely demand for childcare spaces to be generated as a result i.e. 27 no. childcare spaces, and the shortfall in existing childcare spaces in the defined catchment area, it is considered that a childcare facility should be provided as part of the proposed development.
- 6.5 As a result, a creche facility with a maximum capacity to accommodate 63 no. children is considered appropriate in that it will not only comfortably cater for the demand created by the proposed development, but it will also contribute towards positively addressing the deficit of childcare spaces in the local area.