



h w p l a n n i n g

Statement of Rationale on Childcare Provision

Proposed SHD, Banduff, Cork.

Miata Ltd.

June 2020

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Introduction

This statement of rationale has been prepared in response to section 15 of the Form of application to An Bord Pleanála in respect of proposed strategic housing development which states the following:

Where it is not proposed to provide one childcare facility for each 75 houses in the proposed development, the request should be accompanied by a statement of the rationale for this.

The proposed development is a medium density residential scheme consisting of 162 units on the outskirts of Cork City. The proposal aims to deliver one childcare facility with capacity for 40 - 50 child spaces. Given the large proportion of apartments and smaller units within the scheme, we consider that the delivery of a single creche of 404 sq. m will be sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed development, as well as contributing to existing childcare availability in the local area. The level of childcare provision being proposed also compares favourably with the most recently permitted SHD development nearby at Longview Estates, as outlined in more detail below.

Consultation with Cork City / County Childcare Committee.

Following pre-consultation application and the tripartite meeting, a meeting was held between HW Planning and the coordinator of Cork City / County Childcare Committee in April 2019. A number of suggestions were made on the design including:

- An increase in Gross Floor Area from that provided for at pre-consultation stage of approximately 60 sq. m.
- Inclusion of an additional emergency exit from the 1st floor.
- Re-distribution and resizing of certain staff welfare facilities.
- Re-distribution of certain child facilities to ensure younger groups would be accommodated at ground floor level, in order to provide for best practice in terms of health and safety.
- Introduction of toilet facilities accessible from the proposed outdoor play area.

The design of the creche has been revised to take these suggestions into account. In relation to capacity, the childcare committee welcomed any additional capacity in the area and recommended that in the interest of viability the creche should be provided with a capacity of at least 40 child spaces.

Housing Mix

The proposed development consists of the construction of 162 no. residential units comprising 74 no. 2-storey terraced dwelling houses (19 no. 2-bedroom and 49 no. 3-bedroom and 6 no. 4 -bedroom) & 88 no. apartments (82 2-bedroom and 6 no. 1-bedroom) to be provided in 22 no. 3-storey corner blocks.

There will be 55 no. houses in total that will consist of 3 or more bedrooms, representing 34% of units, that will be suitable to cater to the needs of larger families. All apartments within the scheme will be 1 or 2-bedroom.

We note section 4.7 of the 2018 Apartment Guidelines which states 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.

The proposed development has been designed to be inclusive and flexible to cater to the needs of many different demographics. However, the proposed housing mix is reflective of average household sizes as indicated in recent census data. Reflecting the trend in larger urban areas, the Cork Metropolitan area recorded an average of just over 2.6 persons per household compared to the national average of 2.75. We envisage that many of the 1 and 2-bedroom units in the scheme (representing 66% of the development) will be occupied by young professionals or couples working in the north side of the City or areas such as Little Island and Carrigtwohill that are easily accessible from this location.

Therefore, notwithstanding the An Bord Pleanála suggested provision of childcare, we consider that the proposed creche will adequately meet the needs of the Banduff housing scheme.

Recent Precedent

The above assertion and the overall rationale for childcare provision within the scheme should also be considered in the context of the recently permitted Longview Estates development a short distance from the subject lands (Ref ABP 306325-20).

We note from the applicants submitted Childcare Assessment on that scheme, that following a meeting with the acting Coordinator of the Cork City Childcare Committee, the applicants were advised that the proposed single crèche within the development should be increased in size to accommodate 100 no. children. the final submitted proposal provides for a creche with a capacity for 103 spaces and we note there are no conditions on the final grant requiring any alterations to this.

In comparison to this recently permitted development, the Banduff proposal includes a significantly higher childcare provision. the proposed creche with a capacity for 40 – 50 child spaces (in a scheme of 162 residential units) compares to a 103 child creche for a scheme of 750 residential units.

Th Banduff scheme is therefore providing a childcare space for every 3.6 residential units in the scheme. By comparison the Longview Estates permitted development is providing a childcare space for every 7.3 residential units within that scheme.

Conclusion

We consider that the proposed provision of childcare within the Banduff scheme is appropriate considering the quantum of housing and the proposed mix of units. Childcare provision within the scheme compares favourably compared to the recently permitted Longview Estates SHD scheme. Further to this, the applicants have engaged with the Cork City / County Childcare committee and the revised creche design has been informed by these discussions.

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