



Statement of Rationale on Childcare Provision

Site at Horgan's Quay, Railway Street, Cork.

HQ Developments Ltd.

August 2019

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Connecting places.

Introduction

This statement of rationale has been prepared in response to part 7 (c) of the pre-consultation application form 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 high density apartment scheme that is intended to primarily cater to the significant numbers of people employed in the City Centre and the emerging office quarter in the vicinity of the site. The scheme consists of a mixture of 1 and 2-bedroom dwellings. The proposed creche of 272.1 sq. m has been increased from what was proposed at pre-consultation stage and is intended to cater for 30 – 35 no. childcare spaces with added kitchen facilities to allow a future operator to cater for full day care.

Consultation with Cork City / County Childcare Committee.

Following the tripartite meeting between An Bord Pleanála, the applicant's design team and Cork City Council, dated 21st May 2019, An Bord Pleanála issued their pre-consultation opinion on the proposed Horgan's Quay Scheme. While the Opinion did not request any specific additional information regarding childcare provision to be submitted as part of the final application, it did specify that the Cork City / County Childcare Committee be notified as a statutory consultee on the application.

HW Planning made contact with the Childcare committee in advance of submitting the final application and provided draft plans and details of the proposed crèche within the scheme. The Childcare committee responses indicated that notwithstanding the housing mix proposed, there is an identified deficit of childcare spaces within the City Centre at the current time and CSO figures from the 2016 Census indicate a disconnect between available childcare spaces and the population of 9 years and under in the City Centre Area.

In response to the above feedback the applicant has revised the proposed creche which provides an increase in floor area of over 66 sq. m bringing it to a total of 272.1 sq. m. The enlarged facility also includes for a kitchen facility following on from the correspondence from the Childcare Committee. This increase in floor area has been facilitated due to a reduction in the amount of bicycle parking being proposed at ground floor level. This reduction follows on from the opinions of both An Bord Pleanála and Cork City Council that the standards on bicycle parking in the 2018 Apartment guidelines are excessive in the context of this development and its central location close to public transport hubs.

Housing Mix

The proposed scheme will consist of approximately 36% 1-bedroom apartments, with the remaining 64% comprising 2-bedroom units. This housing mix is consistent with the latest 2018 Apartment Guidelines (as outlined in the accompanying Statement of Consistency).

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.

We envisage that the primary market for the proposed apartments in Horgan's Quay will be young professionals working in the City Centre and other nearby employment centres such as Mahon, Little Island and Holyhill. The site is located in an emerging Office quarter in Cork City. The Board will note that recently permitted, completed and ongoing developments such as One Albert Quay, Navigation Square, the adjacent Penrose Wharf development, the Prism

development as well as the permitted Horgan's Quay office development (17/7253) will significantly boost the working population within the City Centre in the coming years. The proposed development will therefore aim to provide sustainably located residential accommodation that will allow workers to live close to their employment source as well as the City Centre and the wide array of associated services and amenities that provides.

Given the location of the proposal and the proposed housing mix it is envisaged that it will house relatively few families when compared to an average residential scheme. As a result, we do not expect that the demand for childcare at Horgan's Quay will be comparable to an average suburban residential development and the proposed provision of same will be sufficient to serve the future residents of the scheme.

Demographics

The proposed development site is located within the CSO Small Area (SA) designated as 048056002. The total population of the SA in 2016 was 291. Within this figure the total population between the ages of 0 and 5 years amounted to 12 individuals or just over 4% of the population of the SA. A similar trend can be observed in adjacent SA's within the City Centre area, indicating that families tend to make up a small proportion of the population living in these areas. However, the figures in outlying areas in the north inner city indicate a higher proportion of families inhabiting these areas.

In summary, we consider that the proposed childcare provision within the scheme will be sufficient to cater to the expected population profile of future residents of the scheme. Given its location close to existing and future employment centres, it is envisaged that the proposed development will be attractive to young professionals and will consist of a smaller proportion of families, as reflected in the existing population profile of the area.

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