

Report to North Central Area Committee

RE proposal for Crèche space at Belmayne/Ayrfield
Social Housing Development,
Planning reference 3238/17

October 2019

Introduction

The Social Housing PPP development at Ayrfield/Belmayne is design and being developed to deliver a crèche in conjunction with 150 residential units, 3 no. office / community facilities and a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) on 1.53 hectares of land situated between Malahide Road, Churchwell Avenue and Belmayne Road, Ayrfield, Dublin 13. The planning approval recognised that the provision of a crèche in this area may not initially be commercially viable, but recognised that there may be a need for the space to be developed in the coming years. This report sets out the steps taken by the social housing PPP project team to examine the viability of developing the space as a crèche from the initial occupancy of the residential development.

Crèche Proposal:

In 2017, as part of the design development process, the SHB1 project team commissioned HRA Planning Consultants to undertake the following analysis:

- Childcare Assessment; and
- A Social Infrastructure Audit

The Planning Supporting Statement, prepared by HRA Planning Consultants, for the Part 8 proposal noted the following in respect of the childcare assessment and the need for associated infrastructure:

“Whereas the Childcare Assessment initially considered that there were adequate childcare facilities in the area having regard to developed and permitted facilities, a cumulative assessment of the proposed development on the subject site determined that a childcare facility to accommodate circa 100 no. children should be provided” and further noted that

“Having regard to the scale of the crèche /childcare facility proposed it may be some time before the facility is required and becomes a viable, commercial entity. Accordingly, it is requested that consideration is given to the alternative use of the building as a community facility until such time as there is demand for the crèche facility and it becomes commercially viable”.

In recognition of the analysis undertaken by HRA Planning Consultants, and the conclusions within the planning statement, the decision was taken to include provision within the design proposal for circa a 600 m² space to be utilised as a crèche capable of supporting 100 children. This utilisation of the space as a crèche is subject to the presence of commercial demand of a sufficient scale to ensure that a commercially viable and sustainable childcare service could be provided at the development. As a contingency should the need arise, the Part 8 proposal also provided for the subject space to be used as a community facility until sufficient commercial demand existed to support the operation of a commercially viable crèche.

In October 2017, the elected members approved the proposal to develop 150 residential units, 1 no. crèche facility, 3 no. office / community facilities and a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) on 1.53 hectares of land situated between Malahide Road, Churchwell Avenue and Belmayne Road, Ayrfield, Dublin 13 in accordance with the provisions of

Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and in compliance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001.

Current Childcare Demand

The analysis undertaken by HRA Planning Consultants in 2016-2017 estimated that the proposed 150 unit development, scheduled for completion in Q1 2021, will generate a requirement for an additional 41 childcare spaces. The Social Infrastructure Audit, which was included in the Part 8 application submitted, provides additional detail on this estimate.

In Q1 2019, the SHB1 Project team contacted the Childcare Committee for the Dublin City area to explore childcare capacity in the environs of the Ayrfield-Belmayne PPP Site. High level information obtained by the Childcare Committee from existing local childcare providers regarding their waiting lists appears to suggest a current need for additional childcare places in the local area. In addition, through engagement and consultation with the North Central Area Office colleagues the project team has been informed of the potential need for additional childcare facilities in the local area noting in particular a requirement for additional 'after school' places.

Progress Update

In consideration of the provisions relating to the crèche facility included in the Part 8 approval granted by the City Council and the indicative demand outlined above, the SHB1 Project Team, DCC Valuers section and North Central Area Office representatives have developed a proposal to examine the viability of leasing the space to a commercial crèche operator, who will be in a position to provide a childcare service that will be funded and operated independently from DCC. The proposal includes the appointment of an estate agent to develop a market plan for the space, with a view to establishing a lease in due course. The proposal includes the selection of a crèche operator that demonstrates the best offer in respect of the following areas (as a minimum):

- Community Benefit Proposals including the prioritisation of DCC tenants of the new Churchwell Gardens Social Housing PPP development;
- Requirement for the crèche operator to participate in New National Childcare Scheme as well as the existing Early Child Care & Education (ECCE) scheme;
- Compliance with all national statutory and regulatory guidelines relating to the provision of childcare services.
- Capacity of the crèche operator to provide sustainable childcare facilities reflecting local demand;
- Capacity of the crèche operator to meet all costs associated with the operation of the service;

Lisney acting on behalf of Dublin City Council, will develop the marketing material including a commercial brochure and adverts and will manage the marketing process for the facility. They will commence advertising the space on / about the 30th October 2019 in order to assess market interest/demand. The proposed marketing strategy for the space will include general advertisement on websites and in national newspapers in tandem with a more targeted approach to identify experienced childcare providers that can satisfy the criteria set out above. The proposed closing date for receipt of submissions from childcare providers will be end of November 2019.

A team will be established within DCC to develop a marking system, which will be based on the above criteria, against which the submissions can be evaluated. Subject to the receipt of suitable submissions in Q4 2019, this evaluation will be completed with a view to presenting a leasing proposal and associated recommendations to North Central Area Committee Members in Q1 2020 for consideration and approval - in compliance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

21.10.2019