Dwelling Mix Report

For Development at Carrigaline Road/Churchyard Lane, Douglas, Cork

on behalf of Barry's Field Ltd.

January 2025



McCutcheon Halley

CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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1. Introduction

McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants have been appointed by Barry's Field Ltd. to prepare a Dwelling Mix Report which considers the existing composition of dwellings surrounding the proposed development at Carrigaline Road/Churchyard Lane, Douglas, Cork. The report will inform the proposed development of 124 no. residential units at a site located at adjacent to the Douglas town centre.

This report provides details on the following:

- The site context;
- The methodology of the report;
- The relevant profiles that affect the need for types of dwellings;
- Comparing mix of dwellings by number of bedrooms in the catchment area and proposed development to the targeted mix as per the Cork City Development Plan (CCDP) 2022-2028;
- And concludes by considering the current capacity of existing and proposed childcare facilities in the area together with the demand for places likely to be generated by the proposed development.

Following feedback from a S.247 and a S.32B meeting with Cork City Council, the design has been further advanced, and the proposed unit mix has been altered from the submitted detail lodged at the pre-planning stage held on the 19th June 2024. The revised scheme has introduced a larger no. of 3 no. bed units range which have increased from 5 no. units to 10 no. units (which is 8.1% of the development).

2. Site Context

The proposed development site is in the centre of Douglas. Church yard lane bounds the west and Carrigaline Road is located to the east of the site. The site is neighboured to the north by a mix of residential and commercial buildings and is a greenfield site, approximately 0.83hA in size (net area), bounded by existing trees and stone walls along the eastern and western edges of the site. Directly south of the site is a telecom exchange and St. Lukes Church and graveyard are located to the southwest area of the site.

The site is within Douglas town centre, and most amenities are easily accessible and in close proximity to the site. In addition to this, there are two shopping centres. Douglas Village Shopping Centre is only a 3-minute walk from the site, while Douglas Court Shopping Centre is a 10-minute walk.

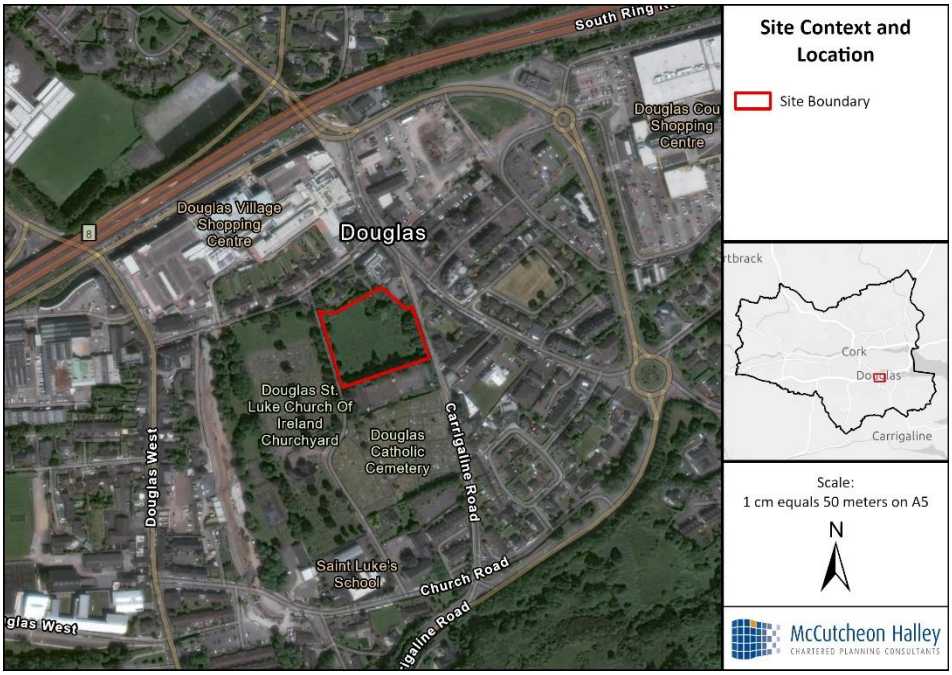


Figure 1: Context and location of the proposed development.

3. Methodology

The methodology to assess the mix of dwellings by number of bedrooms was assessed by defining the catchment area, selecting the Census 2022 boundary data within the catchment, and assessing the Census 2022 tabular data within the catchment area.

The catchment area serves to limit the geographic scope of this research to ensure that only the immediate environment surrounding the proposed development is considered. Therefore, considering the drive toward 15-minute urbanism within the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the catchment area for this report was generated by creating a 15-minute walk time area from the proposed development (Figure 2). To generalise to area further, a 100-meter buffer around the 15-minute walk time area was applied. This was done to ensure that borderline enumerator areas would be included in the final selection. Therefore, the catchment area is defined as the area covered by the blue area in Figure 2.

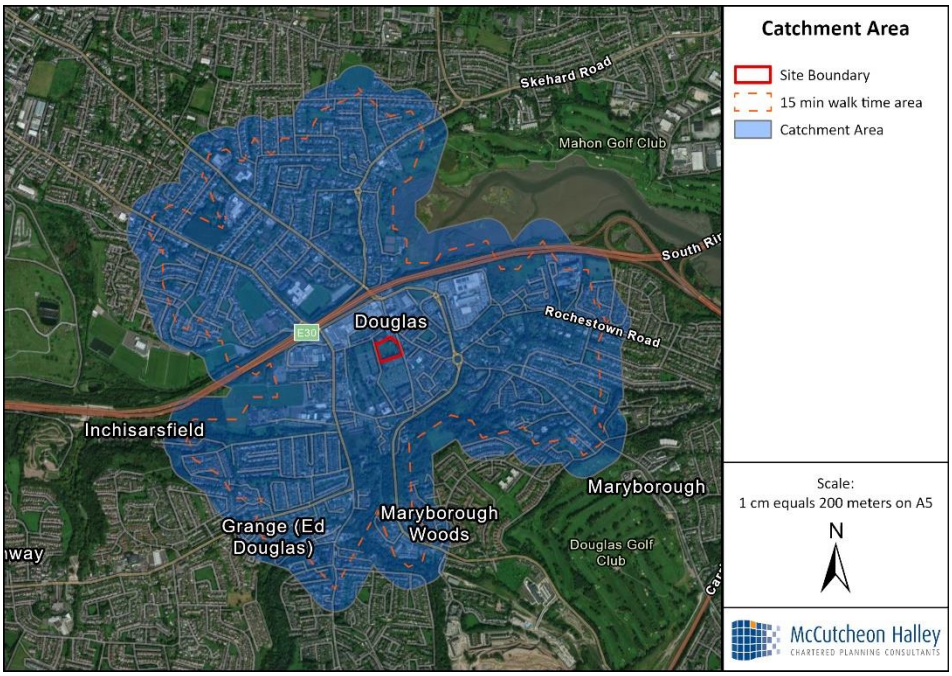


Figure 2: Catchment area based on 15-minute walk time from proposed development.

The selection of enumerator areas was done by a select by location query. Whereby, all 2022 small area boundaries that intersect with the catchment area were selected. Thereafter, the catchment area coverage of each selected 2022 small area boundary was assessed to ensure that the selection was a true reflection of Census 2022 data that falls within the catchment area. In total 37 2022 small area boundaries were selected and Figure 3 provides representation of them.



Figure 3: Small Area boundaries within catchment area (Source: CSO, 2023; Tailte Ireland, 2023)

The last step in this housing mix report was to source and aggregate the tabular data associated with the 37 2022 small area boundaries. Using data provided by the CSO, it was possible to obtain the data for each of the 37 2022 small area boundaries and aggregate the data according to the themes and tables as per the small area population statistics for 2022. Based on this aggregation, this report will compare the current mix of dwellings to the targeted mix of dwellings as set out in the CCDP 2022-2028. However, before making the comparison, it is important to note the demographic, family unit, and household profile of the catchment area.

4. Demographic, Family Unit and Household Profile

The demographic, family unit, and household profiles of an area are important indicators of the type of dwellings needed within an area. Therefore, this section will touch upon how aspects such as age, family life cycle stage, and household size affect the need for different types of dwellings.

In 2022, the catchment area population stood at 9,054 which represented an increase of 4.8% since 2016. The population composition by age shows that within the catchment area most people tend to be over the age of 29 years. This concludes that the catchment has an older age profile than Cork City, as 66.1% of the catchment population were aged over 29-years compared 61.8% of the population aged 29-years-and-over in Cork City. Between 2016 and 2022 the largest increases recorded by age cohort for the catchment was for the 85-and-over with 36.6%, the 60-64-year-olds at 27.2%, and the 45-49-year-olds with 23.2%. The current composition by age and the change between 2016 and 2022 is indicative of an already mature population which is ageing. Therefore, it is likely that that as the population ages smaller types of dwellings will be needed as people down-size with age.

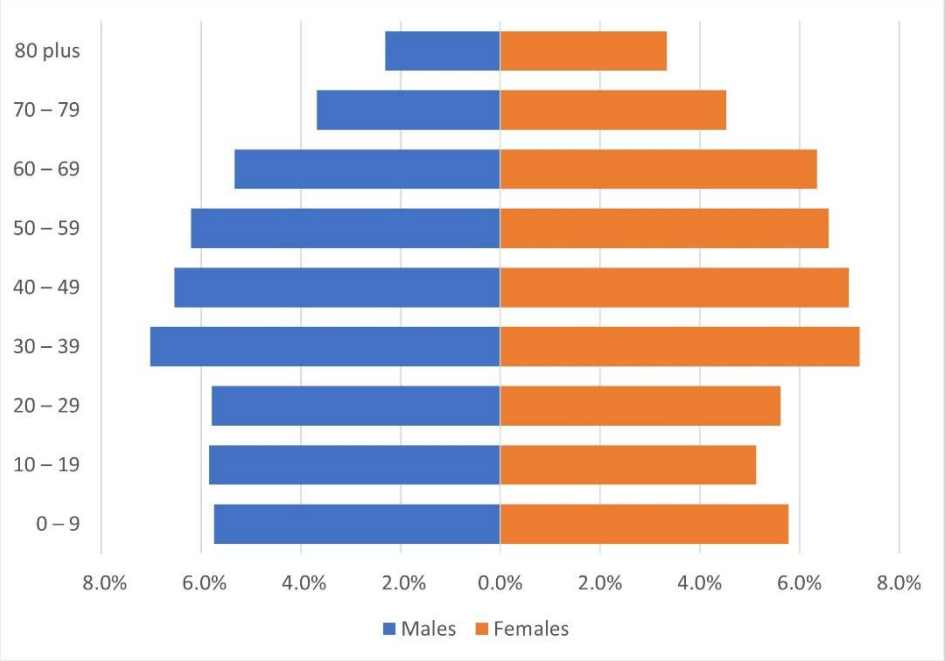


Figure 4: Catchment population by age and sex in 2022 (Source: CSO, 2023)

As of 2022, there were a total of 2,376 family units within the catchment area. Of these family units more than 1 in 3 (36.7%) did not have children. In the case of those families with children 32.2% reported that the youngest child was older than 20-years. Also, in 2022 more than 50% of the families within the catchment area fell within 3 of the 8 life cycle stages, they were “Adult” (26.3%), “Older couple” (9.1%), and “Retired” (15.9%) (Table 1). This was also

the case for Cork City, but the catchment area had a higher percentage of "Older couple" and "Retired" families (Table 1). Interestingly, between 2016 and 2022, the number of families within the "Pre-school" life cycle stage decreased by -25.9%. Whilst the number of families within the "Younger couple" life cycle stage increased by 29.3%. The number of childless families, and the composition and change in families by life cycle stage is indicative of an area where smaller dwelling units are appropriate as the size of families decrease.

Table 1: Composition of family unit by life cycle stage for the catchment area and Cork City (Source: CSO, 2023)

Family Life Cycle Stage	Catchment	Cork City
Younger couple	11.7%	12.9%
Pre-school	7.1%	8.1%
Early school	10.3%	9.2%
Pre-adolescent	10.4%	10.3%
Adolescent	9.2%	10.7%
Adult	26.3%	28.3%
Older couple	9.1%	8.4%
Retired	15.9%	12.1%
All family units	100%	100%

In 2022, there were 3,589 households within the catchment area. The average household size stood at 2.54 which presented a decrease from the average household size recorded in 2016 that was 2.58. A total of 57.9% of households in the catchment area consisted of two persons or less (Table 2). The proportion of households with two persons or less in the catchment area was higher than the proportion for Cork City where 55% of households consisted of two persons or less (Table 2). Between 2016 and 2022 "1 person households" (7.5%) and "2 person households" (7.1%) recorded the second and fourth largest increases, respectively. The average household size and the composition of households by size show that the households in the catchment area are getting smaller. Therefore, it is to be expected that that smaller dwelling units will be more appropriate and attractive within the catchment area.

Table 2: Composition of households by size for the catchment area and Cork City (Source: CSO, 2023)

Households	Catchment	Cork City
1 person households	25.4%	24.4%
2 person households	32.5%	30.6%
3 person households	17.7%	18.6%
4 person households	14.8%	15.7%
5 person households	7.3%	7.4%
6 person households	2.0%	2.3%
7 person households	0.2%	0.6%
8 or more persons households	0.1%	0.3%
Total households	100%	100%

There are two overarching trends in all three profiles discussed above. The first is that the population in the catchment area is growing older which will increase the need for smaller dwelling units. The second trend is that families are having less children which is driving down the average household size in the catchment area. This in turn increases the need for smaller dwelling units. Therefore, it is important to note the composition of dwellings by number of bedrooms for the catchment area and to compare it to the targets as set in the CCDP 2022-2028.

5. Comparative Analysis

The suitability of the dwelling mix of a proposed development is not solely dependent on whether it conforms to the targets for city suburbs as per Table 11.8 in the CCDP 2022-2028. Rather, the proposed dwelling mix should be compared to both the dwelling mix targets of the CCDP 2022-2028 and the current state of the dwelling mix in a catchment area. The purpose of this dual comparison is to ensure that a proposed development is not considered in isolation but rather within the context of the urban environment wherein it will be placed. Thereby, ensuring that a proposed development that redresses the lack of housing options in an area is not refused solely based on whether it conforms to the targets in the CCDP 2022-2028.

In 2022, the catchment area had a total of 3,589 dwellings with almost 90% of these dwellings categorised as “House/Bungalow”. In contrast, only 1 in 10 of the dwellings in the catchment area were categorised as “Flat/Apartment”. When considering the composition of dwellings by number of bedrooms the tendency to uniformity is consistent. More than 80% of the dwellings in the catchment area are units of 3-bedrooms or larger (Table 3). Thus only 1 in 5 of the dwellings in the catchment area are 2-bedrooms or less (Table 3). The dwelling profile of the catchment area is characterised by lack of diversity in the type of dwellings and an average age of dwellings of more than 50 years.

When comparing the dwelling mix of the catchment area and the proposed development to that of the targeted mix in the CCDP 2022-28, the following observations arise. The current dwelling mix of the catchment area is unaligned with the targeted housing mix as per the CCDP 2022-2028 (Table 3). As the mix of 1-and 2-bedroom units in the catchment area is below the targeted mix but over the targeted mix for 3- and 4-bedroom units (Table 3). Therefore, the current mix of dwellings by number of bedrooms in the catchment area needs to be redressed to increase the share of 1- and 2-bedroom dwellings whilst decreasing the share of 3-and 4-bedroom units. This would require the council to consider applications which are slanted toward the provision of 1- and 2-bedroom units which would increase the share of these dwelling types in the catchment area.

The mix of units by number of bedrooms for the proposed development is contained in Table 3. The proposed mix for 1- and 2-bedroom units is larger than the targeted mix as per Table 11.8 of the CCDP 2022-2028. However, the proposed mix of 3- and 4-bedroom units is smaller than the targeted mix. Therefore, the proposed development will ensure that the share of 1- and 2-bedroom units in the catchment area will increase relative to the share of 3- and 4-bedroom units. Thereby, increasing the range of housing options in the catchment area through redressing the current uniform mix of dwellings by number of bedrooms in the catchment area.

Table 3: Composition of housing by number of bedrooms in catchment area, for the proposed development, and CCDP targets (Source: Cork City Council, 2022; CSO, 2023)

Number of bedrooms	Catchment	Proposed development	CCDP target
Studios / PBSA	N/A	N/A	10%
1 bedroom	3.1%	40.3%	20%
2 bedrooms	14.3%	51.6%	34%
3 bedrooms	43.6%	8.1%	28%
4 bedrooms or larger	33.3%	0%	8%
No. of bedrooms not stated	5.7%	N/A	N/A
Total	100.0%	100%	100%

The impact of the proposed development on the existing dwelling mix is presented in Table 4. The proposed development will add 124 dwellings and thereby increase the dwelling stock of the catchment area by 3.5%. The proposed development will contribute to achieving the dwelling mix targeted in the CCDP 2022-2028 by increasing the proportion of 1-bedroom dwellings by 1.2%, increasing the proportion of 2-bedroom dwellings by 1.3%, decreasing the proportion of 3-bedroom dwellings by -1.2%, and decreasing the proportion of 4-bedroom dwellings by -0.9%. Therefore, the proposed development will serve to rebalance the current mix of dwellings by bedroom type to a dwelling mix which is more in step with the targeted mix of dwellings as stated in the CCDP 2022-2028.

Table 4: Impact of Proposed Development on the Dwelling Composition of the Catchment Area (Source: CSO, 2023)

Number of bedrooms	Catchment	Proposed development	Impact (#)	Impact (%)
Studios / PBSA	N/A	N/A	0	
1 bedroom	111	50	161	4.3%
2 bedrooms	514	64	578	15.6%
3 bedrooms	1,564	10	1,574	42.4%
4 bedrooms or larger	1,195	0	1,195	32.2%
No. of bedrooms not stated	205	N/A	205	5.5%
Total	3,589	124	3,713	100%

6. Conclusion

The preceding sections of this dwelling mix report serves to outline the context of the proposed development, the methodology of the analysis, the profiles affecting the need for housing, and a comparison of different dwelling mixes. The context of the site illustrates that the proposed development will be placed within an already functioning urban environment and will add to this environment by sustaining the demand for services in the wider Douglas area. The methods used to analyse the dwelling mix serves to detail the sequential steps taken to enable a comparative analysis. Lastly, the comparative analysis found that the current state of dwelling mix in the catchment area is uniform and that measures to redress this uniform composition of dwellings will be needed.

The proposed development will address the gaps in the current supply of dwellings through the following two design elements. Firstly, the design of proposed development will increase the number of apartments on offer in the catchment area by 124 no. apartments, representing an increase of more than 50% on the figure recorded in 2022. Secondly, the proposed development is designed to add 114 no. 1- and 2-bedroom units to the catchment area, which will increase the number of 1- and 2-bedroom by more than a quarter. Therefore, it can be concluded that proposed development is an example of a measure that will serve to achieve the housing mix targets for areas within the city suburbs of Cork City.

7. References

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