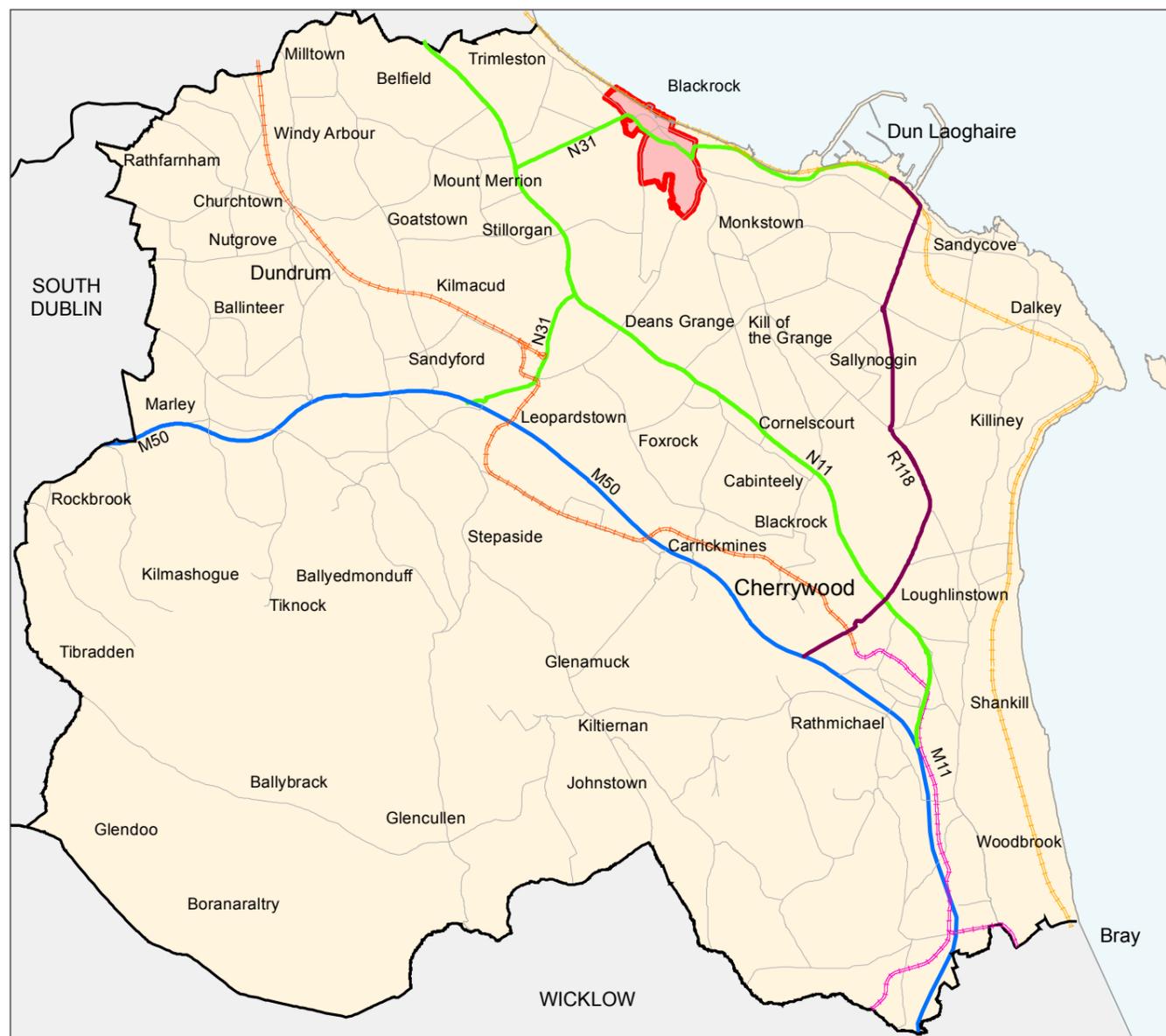


## Blackrock Local Area Plan



# 1. Introduction and Context



Map 1 : Location within Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

## 1.1 Introduction

Blackrock is a historic and well established urban village within the County of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. It is a centre of employment and retailing as well as a focal point for the surrounding residential communities and is located 8 km south of Dublin City Centre and approximately 3 km north-west of Dún Laoghaire town. Blackrock lies adjacent to the coastline of Dublin Bay and east of the N11 National Road. Blackrock is serviced by the DART, with the DART station located close to the village core and the Quality Bus routes along Rock Road and the N11 (Map 1) further enhance the public transport context of the Plan area.

The core of Blackrock is zoned District Centre in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2010-2016, and supports major comparison and convenience shopping and other complementary District Centre uses.

Blackrock is identified as an area for 'Development and Regeneration' in the current County Development Plan with a vision 'To encourage the renewal of existing built-up areas through sensitive regeneration and consolidation, and to establish new urban villages in well located greenfield areas that will have their own quality 'sense of place' and community and that will be well served by existing or planned public transport networks'.

This Plan addresses the objectives set out in Section 3.3 'LAPs' of the County Development Plan, which identifies Blackrock as an area for which a Local Area Plan shall be prepared.

## 1.2 What is a Local Area Plan?

### 1.2.1 Statutory Requirements

A Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory document prepared by the Planning Authority in accordance with the requirements of Sections 18 – 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The LAP process is subject to extensive public consultation and, once finalised, the Plan is adopted by the Elected Members.

The Act states 'An LAP shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan, its core strategy, and any regional planning guidelines that apply to the area of the Plan and shall consist of a written statement and a plan or plans which may include –

- Objectives for the zoning of land for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes, or
- Such other objectives in such detail as may be determined by the planning authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies, including the objective of development of land on a phased basis and detail on community facilities and amenities and on standards for the design of developments and structures'.

An LAP may include objectives on any or all of the following topics as determined by the Planning Authority and following consultation with specified bodies and the local community:

- Land use zoning and density
- Population and Housing/Accommodation
- Economic Development and Employment
- Public open space and streets - The Public Realm
- Private open space (gardens, balconies, etc)
- Sustainable transportation, movement and linkages
- Provision of infrastructure, including transport, energy, telecommunications, water supply, waste disposal and waste recovery
- Flood Risk and Assessment
- Conservation and protection of the environment, landscape and structures of architectural, historical, archeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest
- Sustainability, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

- Detail on community facilities such as crèches, schools and amenities
- Standards for the design and development of structures such as scale, form, height, etc....

Once adopted by the Elected Members of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, the Planning Authority must have regard to the provisions of the Blackrock LAP when determining any planning applications for sites located within the Plan area. The Plan will remain in force for 6 years from the date it is adopted, unless otherwise amended or extended by the County Council.

## 1.2.2 Public Consultation

Public consultation is an important aspect of any plan-making process in order to address issues and concerns which relate to the Plan area, and to ensure that the final Plan reflects public and community aspirations as well as government policies, strategies and guidelines. There are a number of opportunities for members of the public to become involved in the LAP process by making written submissions on the Plan, at the Pre-Draft stage, the Draft stage and at the Material Alterations stage, as appropriate (See Figure 1.1: LAP Preparation Process).



### Pre-Draft Local Area Plan Public Consultation

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council formally initiated the preparation of the Draft Blackrock LAP in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). A public notice was placed in the Irish Times newspaper on Wednesday 8th January 2014. The intention of this notice was to invite interested parties or individuals to make submissions, observations, suggestions or forward ideas to inform the preparation of the Draft Blackrock LAP.

As part of this Pre-Draft consultation stage, an Issues Paper was prepared by the Planning Department to stimulate, guide and encourage debate and discussion on the issues in the community and wider environs, to flag important factors and to encourage and assist the public in making submissions and observations to the Planning Authority in respect of the preparation of the Draft LAP. Inputs provided would then help shape the pending Draft LAP for Blackrock. A Map identifying a proposed LAP boundary was also prepared.

This package of information was put on display from 8th January to 5th February 2014 in County Hall and the Dundrum Sub-Office, was available for inspection in all of the public libraries within the County and available for viewing on the County Council's website. Additionally a copy of all relevant documentation was forwarded to interested and affected parties - including local Resident Associations; community fora and interest groups; relevant 'Prescribed Bodies' and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Elected Members. Submissions and observations were invited during the 6 week display period.

A total of 58 no. submissions were received during the display period. A Report on Submissions was prepared and circulated to the Elected Members for information at the Council meeting held on 14th April 2014. This report provided a summary of the issues

raised in each of the submissions received and an opinion of the Chief Executive on each issue. As far as practical, due consideration was subsequently given to the issues raised at the Pre-Draft public consultation stage in the preparation of the Draft LAP.

### Draft Local Area Plan Public Consultation

The Draft LAP was published and placed on display for 6 weeks from 3rd September to 15th October 2014, during which submissions and observations were invited from the public and interested parties. 25no. submissions were received. A report summarising the issues raised and the Chief Executives recommendation was prepared and presented to the Elected Members.

The Elected Members had 6 weeks to consider the report and adopt, amend or reject the Draft LAP. It was decided by the Elected Members at the council meeting on 8th December 2014 to amend the Draft LAP by way of 1no. material alteration.



Figure 1.1 : Local Area Plan Preparation Process

### Material Alterations Public Consultation

The Material Alteration was put on display on Monday 22nd December 2014. Written submissions were invited for a 4 week period up to and including 29th January 2015. 7 no. submissions were received. A report on the submissions was prepared and issued to the Elected Members. This report was considered at the Council meeting on 9th March 2015. The LAP was adopted with the material alteration.

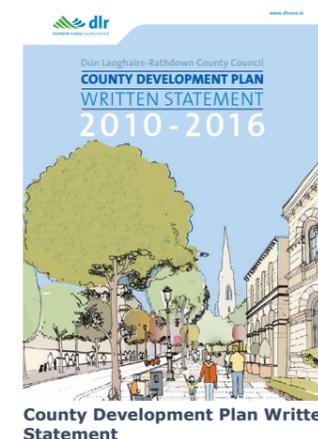
## 1.3 Planning Policy & Context

### 1.3.1 Introduction

The Blackrock LAP is informed by a hierarchy of European, National, Regional and County planning policy documents and guidelines. These are set out in brief in Figure 1.2 and more fully in Appendix A. Any development within the LAP boundary shall be in accordance with the requirements of the relevant EU Directives and associated legislation, National and Regional Guidelines and County Development Plan policy provisions.



Figure 1.2 : Statutory Hierarchy of Plans and Directives



### 1.3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as transposed into Irish legislation through the Planning & Development Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations (SI.436 of 2004) as amended (by SI.201 of 2011), requires a systematic evaluation of likely significant environmental effects of implementing any plan prior to its adoption.

#### Determination

Having regard to the reasoning and considerations as set out in the SEA Screening Document and having consulted the prescribed bodies in accordance with the SEA Regulations 2004 (as amended), Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has determined that the Blackrock LAP is not likely to have significant effects on the environment. It was considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required in respect of the Blackrock Local Area Plan (Appendix B SEA Screening).

### 1.3.3 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The EU Directive on Habitats as transposed into Irish law through the European Communities (Birds & Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI.477 of 2011) requires the assessment as to whether the implementation of an LAP is likely to have any significant effect on any Natura 2000 site(s).

## Determination

Having regard to the reasoning and considerations as set out in the AA Screening Document and having consulted the prescribed bodies in accordance with the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council determined that the Blackrock LAP is not likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites (Appendix C AA Screening).

### 1.3.4 County Development Plan 2010-2016

The current County Development Plan already incorporates a considerable number of policies and objectives relating to the future development of Blackrock. These are set out below. These overarching policies and objectives helped to guide the overall content and direction of the LAP. This LAP is consequently consistent with the objectives and the provisions of the County Development Plan and its Core Strategy.

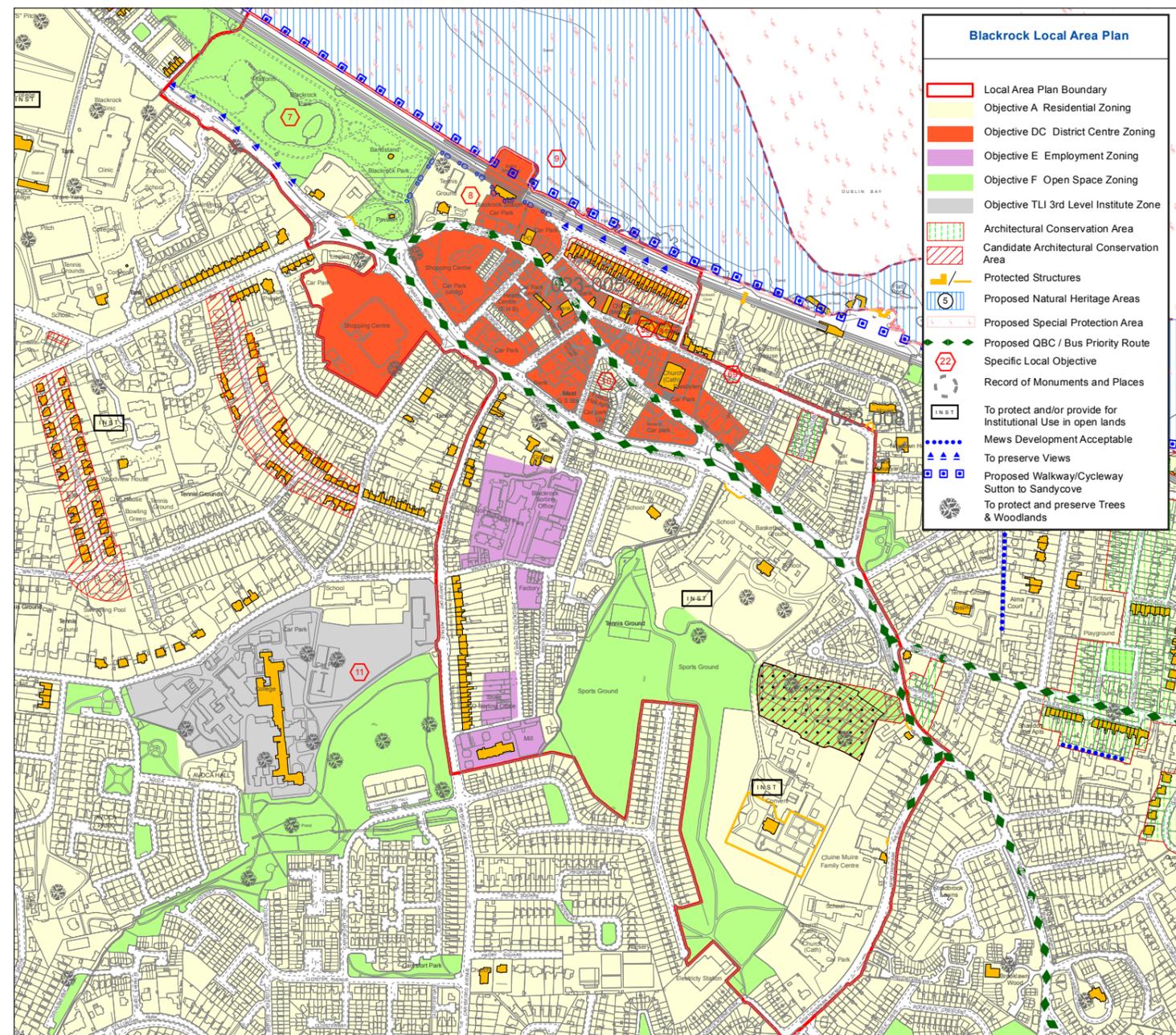
Within the current County Development Plan the core of Blackrock - comprising, Main Street, Rock Hill, Temple Road and the two shopping centres, is zoned Objective 'DC' 'To protect, provide for and or improve mixed-use District Centre facilities'. The surrounding areas are predominantly zoned Objective 'A' 'To protect and/or improve residential amenity' with the exception of open space zonings at Blackrock Park and Rockfield Park and the economic development and employment zoning at Blackrock Business Park and a small site adjacent to Brookfield Terrace (Map 2).

#### Section 3.3.8 of the County Development Plan 2010-2016 states:

*'The centre of Blackrock is in need of renewal and investment, if it is to provide for a coherent and vibrant District Centre with improved public spaces and pedestrian linkages. The LAP is envisaged to set out measures to rejuvenate the locality and, in particular, the area centred on the Main Street and the two existing Shopping Centres (Frascati and Blackrock). The context of the Plan will take cognisance of potential developments over an extensive area from Dunardagh to Blackrock Park and from Carysfort Avenue to the Baths. Overall, the anticipated purpose of the LAP will be to develop a clear and integrated vision for Blackrock primarily for the delivery of a vibrant retail core and a comprehensive range of community facilities that will meet the needs of the local community into the future. Specific local issues will include physical improvements to the public realm and traffic management proposals for the Main Street. The primary objective for the area around the two Shopping Centres is to improve the pedestrian permeability across the Blackrock Bypass (Frascati Road) and to enhance the quality of the retail offer. Other components of the plan will explore the potential for additional residential development to the south and southeast of the centre and the comprehensive redevelopment of the area framed by the Baths, DART station, Idrone Terrace and Blackrock Park.'*

#### Section 7.8.2 of the County Development 2010-2016 sets out a number of guiding principles for Blackrock as follows:

- To promote the future redevelopment of Blackrock as a sustainable mixed-use District Centre.



Map 2 : Extract from CDP – Zoning & Specific Local Objectives

- To manage the potential redevelopment of the Frascati and Blackrock Shopping Centres to improve linkages and pedestrian permeability across the Bypass.
- To examine improved car parking facilities (multi-storey and/or underground) at Frascati Shopping Centre.
- To actively promote good quality residential development into a broader mix of uses within Blackrock core.
- To prepare detailed traffic management plans for Blackrock – to be incorporated as an integral component of the proposed LAP.
- To seek renewal of the area between Blackrock DART Station and Main Street opening vistas to the shoreline.
- To ensure that any future development in the environs of Main Street respects the height, scale and mass of existing structures and reflects the importance of the seashore as a public facility. Net retail sales area in Blackrock District Centre zoned lands to be 25,000sqm maximum.

#### Chapter 17 and Map 2 of the County Development Plan 2010-2016 identify a series of Specific Local Objectives (SLOs) for Blackrock as follows:

- SLO7** To develop Blackrock Park in accordance with an approved Plan.
- SLO8** To improve pedestrian permeability from Rock Road to the DART Station and to improve pedestrian/cycle way provision in the corridor between Blackrock Park and the Dart Station. A high grade pedestrian/cycle link shall be provided across the Blackrock Bypass (N31) between the Blackrock and Frascati Shopping Centres, which shall include consideration of readily accessible grade-separated options to segregate these modes from traffic.

**SLO9** To encourage the redevelopment of the area encompassing Blackrock Baths, Bath Place and Blackrock Dart Station, including the provision of improved pedestrian/cycle access to Blackrock Park. Any redevelopment of the Blackrock Baths shall include a substantial swimming pool(s) for public use.

**SLO10** To prepare a Local Area Plan for Blackrock to guide future development of the area.

**SLO81** To facilitate, support and enhance educational facilities in the County, in particular the activities of Blackrock VEC that will foster strong links between education, community and the business sector in the County.

**SLO93** To promote the development of the Sutton to Sandycove (S2S) Promenade and Cycleway. (It should be noted the alignment shown on Maps 2, 3 and 4 of the CDP is not absolute but indicative only). The necessary EIS will commence during the term of this Plan.

**SLO98** That public access be maintained for Community Uses at the former Blackrock Town Hall and Blackrock Library’.

Having regard to EU Directives, in particular the Directive on SEA and the Habitats Directive, the current County Development Plan and National and Regional Guidelines, a number of planning policy context objectives have been identified for future development within the LAP area.

#### Objectives: Planning Policy Context

##### PP1

It is an objective of the Council that any development within the Plan boundary shall be done so in accordance with the requirements of EU Directives and associated legislation and County Development Plan policy and shall be consistent with National and Regional Guidelines.

##### PP2

It is an objective of the Council that the overarching policies and objectives of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2010-2016 will equally apply to any development and any associated works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects within the LAP boundary.

##### PP3

It is an objective of the Council that the EU Directives for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the Planning & Development Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations (SI.436 of 2004) as amended by (SI.201 of 2011) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), are the fundamental policy framework of environmental protection measures and legislation for the delivery of the policies within this document and full compliance with the EIA and SEA Directives shall be provided.

##### PP4

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that all plans and projects in the County which could, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, have significant effect on a Natura 2000 site (or sites) will be subject to Appropriate Assessment Screening.

##### PP5

It is an objective of the Council to ensure the implementation of the European Communities Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).

## 1.4 Structure of the Blackrock LAP

The LAP consists of Written Text and a set of Maps, Drawings and Figures, divided into 9 no. Chapters and 5 no. Appendices. Each Chapter, listed below, identifies a number of policies and objectives which are intended to be implemented throughout the lifetime of the Plan:

#### Chapters

1. Introduction & Context
2. Heritage & Conservation
3. Urban Structure & Character
4. Movement
5. Population, Housing & Social Infrastructure
6. Employment
7. Retail
8. Environmental Infrastructure & Services
9. Open Space, Recreation & Green Infrastructure

#### Appendices

- A Planning Policy Context
- B Strategic Environmental Assessment
- C Appropriate Assessment
- D Protected Structures / Recorded Monuments
- E Shopfronts & Signage - Design Guidance
- F Maps

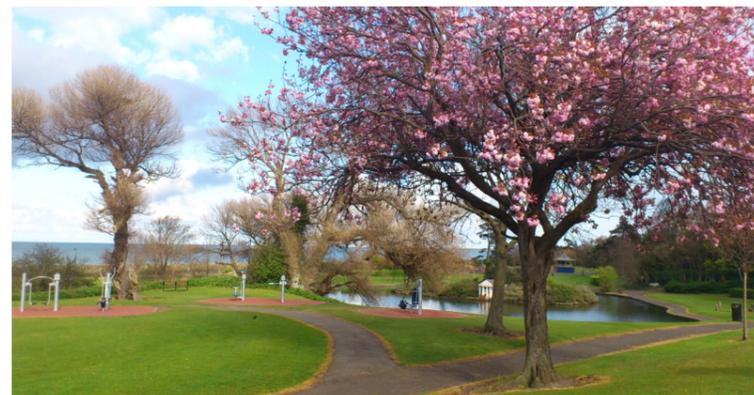


Photo 1: Blackrock Park

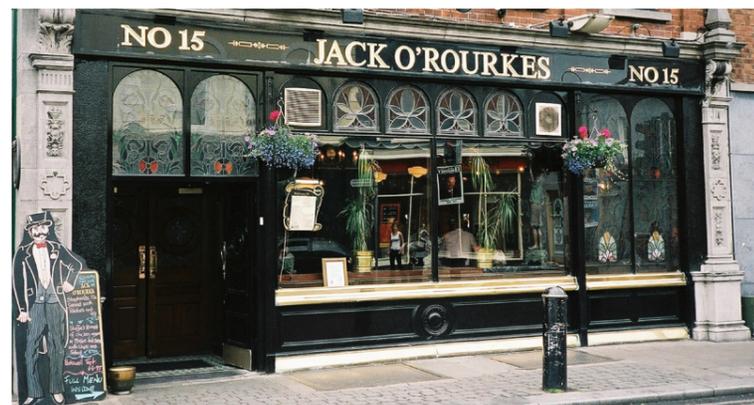


Photo 2: Jack O'Rourke's Pub, Main Street

## 1.5 Local Area Plan Boundary

Map 2 of the current County Development Plan identifies a boundary around an area in Blackrock for which an LAP shall be prepared. The rationale for this boundary was to ensure:

- That the rejuvenation of the Blackrock area was focused around the Main Street and the two existing shopping centres.
- That the redevelopment potential within the area from Dunardagh to Blackrock Park and from Carysfort Avenue to the Baths was optimised.

The LAP boundary (Map 3) was slightly amended from that identified in the County Development Plan to include an additional section of the Frascati Shopping Centre car park and part of Blackrock Park. Blackrock Park has an important role to play within Blackrock. To include the eastern section of the Park within the Plan boundary will allow the LAP to focus on the relationship between the Park with the adjacent village core and in particular improved accessibility and connectivity with its immediate environs. The total area within the LAP boundary is 76.12 hectares.



Map 3 : LAP Boundary



Photo 3: Blackrock Dolmen by Rowan Gillespie

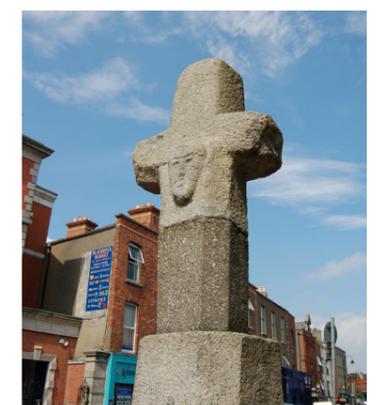


Photo 4: Blackrock Cross

## 1.6 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis (Figure 1.3) is a study of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that exist within the Blackrock LAP boundary. Such analysis identifies both the key issues in Blackrock and the opportunities that exist to address these issues. This SWOT Analysis has helped inform the overall Development Strategy for the Plan Area.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Established village core	Frascati Road is a physical and visual barrier	Enhanced access between the District Centre, the seafront and the Park	Traffic volumes
DART Station	Inadequate pedestrian and cyclist connectivity	Improved pedestrian and cycling environment	Vacant units in the retail core
Historic character	Poor relationship between the village and the seafront and access to it- rail corridor restricts access	Enhanced retail provision and redevelopment of the Shopping Centres	Larger competing retail centres
Blackrock Park	Under utilised amenity at the seafront	Potential redevelopment sites for residential	Risk that existing underutilised sites will not be redeveloped
Rockfield Park	Poor legibility and accessibility to public open spaces/parks	Improvement to the public realm within village core along Frascati Road and at the Seafront	
Coastal Location	Poor public realm in parts		
Long established residential community			
Established employment centre			
Key retail destination			

Figure 1.3: SWOT Analysis

### Strategy: Key Objectives

- To direct and co-ordinate future development in a manner that protects and builds on the village's existing character and qualities and embraces development opportunities.
- To further develop Blackrock as a thriving and attractive urban village with a mix of uses and appropriate retail provision to animate and support daytime and evening activity.
- To improve access to and encourage uses which embrace the amenity of the Seafront at Blackrock.
- To consolidate the existing built environment in a manner that enhances the architectural fabric of the area.
- To implement a range of public realm improvement works which in particular improve the environment for the pedestrian.
- To improve movement, connectivity and legibility within the area for users of all forms of transport particularly pedestrians and cyclists.
- To enhance the existing parks and open spaces and connections between them.



Photo 5: Blackrock Shopping Centre

## 1.7 Development Strategy

The purpose of the Blackrock Local Area Plan is to set out the policies and objectives that when implemented, will provide for the delivery of a distinctive, coherent and vibrant urban village that is well connected with its surrounding hinterland and makes for an attractive place to live, work and visit. The essence of the Plan is based around improving the local environment, both physical and visual, for all users.

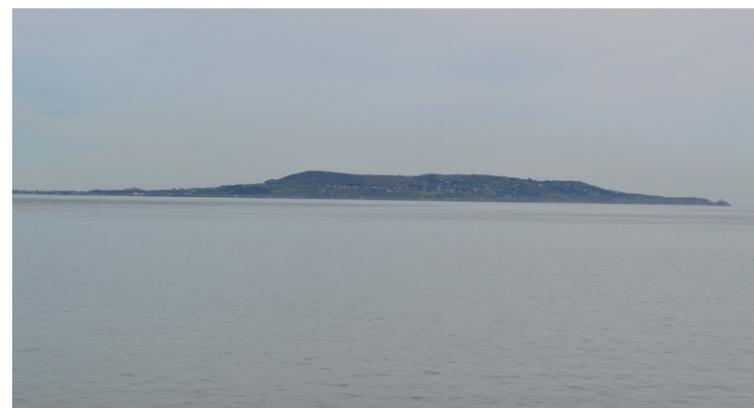


Photo 6: Coastal View from Blackrock