



# BLACKROCK PARK

SITE ANALYSIS 2020







View of a heritage granite pillar, Blackrock Park entrance  
at Mount Merrion Avenue

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# 01

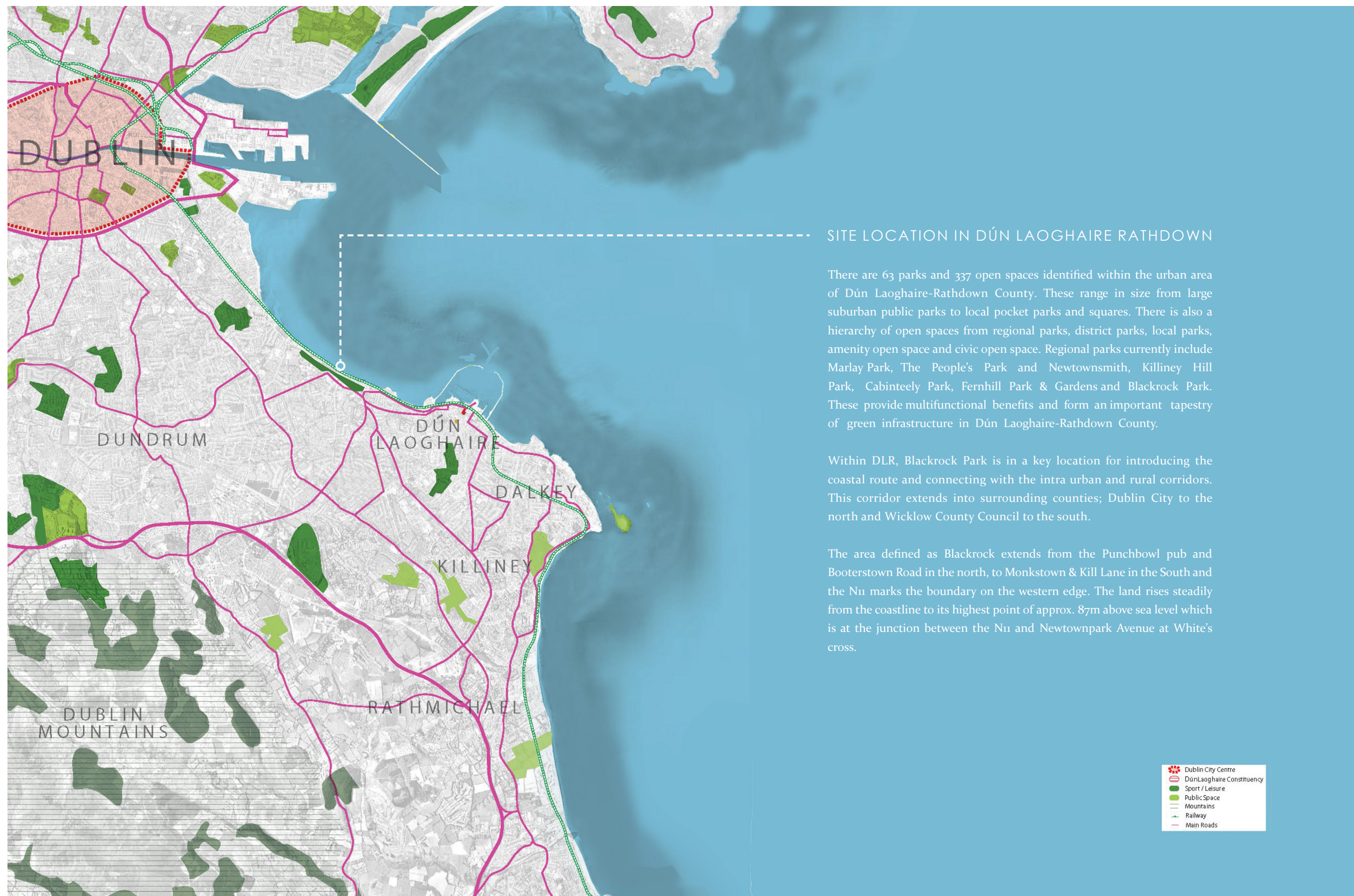
## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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The following aims and objectives are being used in the Blackrock Park Masterplan;development process;

- Develop the park in a holistic and sustainable manner and explore the use of renewable energy for the parks power requirements.
- Maximise tree canopy cover in the park and where appropriate implement nature-based solutions in line with Councils Climate Change Action Plan2019-2024.
- Strategically shape Blackrock Park as a ‘Gateway Park’ on the threshold between Dun Laoghaire Rathdown and Dublin City.
- Establish a unified park connecting the necklace of spaces between Blackrock and Booterstown.
- Put in place a long-term vision for Blackrock Park and arrange the park and its elements into a logical order to exploit the parks amenity value within the context of the historic designed landscape.
- Conserve, restore and integrate the built heritage and provide suitable, sympathetic and sustainable uses for the properties in the context of a Regional Park.
- Protect and enhance the natural heritage, flora & fauna and marine heritage of the park in the context of the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere.
- Reinstate the historic Victorian layout within the heritage section of the park and integrate this with new proposals and uses.
- Increase the horticultural offering of the park in a sustainable manner with an emphasis on bold, naturalistic sweeps of planting suitable for the coastal conditions.
- Encourage greater footfall and daily use with a suitable and appropriate level of visitor facilities provided throughout the park.
- Provide high quality passive recreational facilities including rest and relaxation spaces in appropriate locations.
- Develop high quality, inclusive active recreational facilities, available to a wide range of the population in order to encourage a more active lifestyle.
- Develop a stronger physical connection with Blackrock Village and the surrounding residential areas with high quality cycling/walking and permeability links.
- Create a stronger physical and visual connection with the coastline.
- Upgrade the existing greenway in the park for walking and cycling.
- Develop a way-finding strategy for the park and surrounding areas, integrating with Fáilte Ireland’s Orientation Strategy for Dublin.
- Foster greater community engagement and educational programmes associated with the park, Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere and adjacent Booterstown Marsh.
- Acknowledge the size and scale of the park through strategic interventions that will also benefit the broader county.
- Ensure the final adopted Masterplan is used in its entirety for the development and restoration of Blackrock Park without significant amendment





## SITE LOCATION IN DÚN LAOGHAIRE RATHDOWN

There are 63 parks and 337 open spaces identified within the urban area of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County. These range in size from large suburban public parks to local pocket parks and squares. There is also a hierarchy of open spaces from regional parks, district parks, local parks, amenity open space and civic open space. Regional parks currently include Marlay Park, The People's Park and Newtownsmith, Killiney Hill Park, Cabinteely Park, Fernhill Park & Gardens and Blackrock Park. These provide multifunctional benefits and form an important tapestry of green infrastructure in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County.

Within DLR, Blackrock Park is in a key location for introducing the coastal route and connecting with the intra urban and rural corridors. This corridor extends into surrounding counties; Dublin City to the north and Wicklow County Council to the south.

The area defined as Blackrock extends from the Punchbowl pub and Booterstown Road in the north, to Monkstown & Kill Lane in the South and the N11 marks the boundary on the western edge. The land rises steadily from the coastline to its highest point of approx. 87m above sea level which is at the junction between the N11 and Newtownpark Avenue at White's cross.



## PLANNING AND RELEVANT POLICIES

### 2.1 County Development Plan (CDP)- Strategic Level Vision for the County

The CDP (2016-2022) is informed by both National and Regional policy documents. It is a strategic level document that sets out the long term vision for Dun Laoghaire Rathdown in the form of policies, objectives and high level planning. The Blackrock Local Area Plan (LAP), in turn, is shaped by the objectives and policies set out in the CPD. The park site analysis and masterplan has been

guided by the policies and strategic objectives set out in both the CPD and the LAP.

The CPD is broken down into 10 sections. Section 4-Green County Strategy, is the most relevant. Within this section there are several key policies that feed into the landscape masterplan.

#### Section 4.1-Landscape, Heritage & Biodiversity.

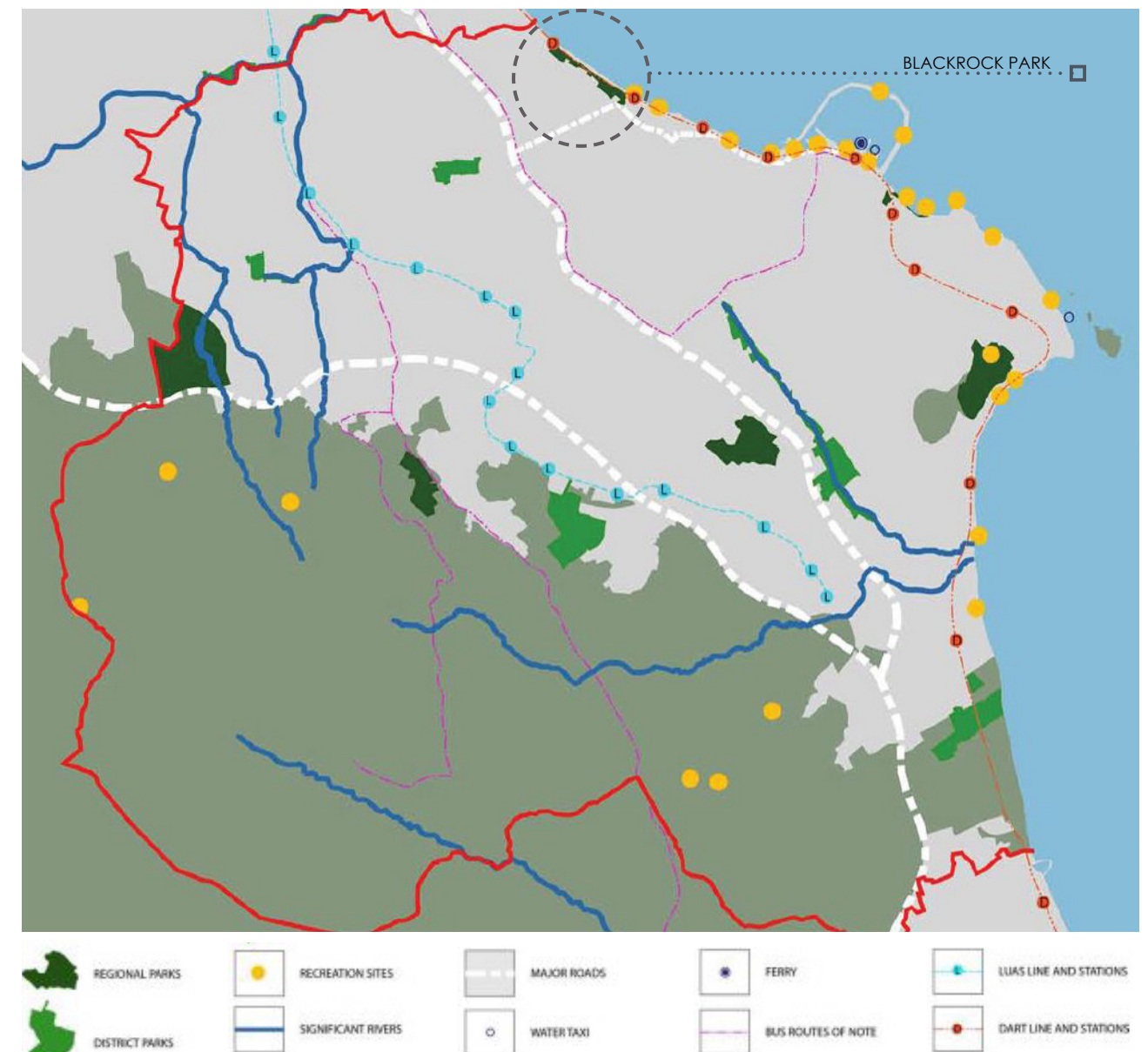
To protect the existing unique heritage within the county.

- Policy LHB2: Preservation of Landscape Character Areas
- Policy LHB3: Seascape
- Policy LHB6: Views and Prospects
- Policy LHB9: Coastline Parks and Harbours
- Policy LHB19: Protection of Natural Heritage and the Environment
- Policy LHB21: Biodiversity Plan
- Policy LHB23: Non-Designated Areas of Biodiversity Importance
- Policy LHB24: County-Wide Ecological Network

#### Section 4.2- Open Space & Recreation

To foster and create accessible open space in close proximity to communities.

- Policy OSR1: Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Policy OSR3: Hierarchy of Parks and Open Space
- Policy OSR4: Future Improvements
- Policy OSR7: Trees and Woodland
- Policy OSR8: Greenways Network
- Policy OSR10: Sports and Recreational Facilities
- Policy OSR11: Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities



Blackrock LAP and Blackrock Park in relation to other regional parks in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

The Blackrock Local Area Plan (2017-2023) makes specific references to Blackrock Park and the land around it. Section 9.2 (Map 17) sets out key objectives.

To avoid a full regurgitation of text, only the most relevant policies are included within this site analysis. A perusal of the CDP and the LAP will give a more detailed understanding of the documents:

#### County Development Plan 2016-2022

<https://www.dlrcoco.ie/en/planning/county-development-plan/county-development-plan-2016-2022>

#### Blackrock Local Area Plan 2015-2021

<https://www.dlrcoco.ie/en/planning/local-area-plans/blackrock-lap-2015-2021>

## 2.2 Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy, Appendix 14 of the Development Plan(2), seeks to provide a vision and a framework to help identify, protect, promote and enhance the GI assets in the urban, rural and coastal environments of the County, and is intended to guide key aspects of planning policy and County and local level. The benefits of GI are recognised as being many, such as improving health and wellbeing through new and improved recreation and better local walking and cycling connections; enhancing social cohesion; protecting, managing and enhancing biodiversity; reinforcing sense of place, and improving water quality and management. GI can also provide potential economic benefits through enhanced opportunities for tourism and local business activities.

The spatial framework identifies Blackrock Park as forming an integral part of the costal GI corridors, linking the entire coast of Dún Laoghaire and providing one two strategic 'gateway hubs' into the county.

### Corridor 1 – Costal

**Shanganagh Park – Killiney Hill – Newtownsmith Park-People's Park-Blackrock Park**

Blackrock Park is a regional park, which is also in a key location for introducing the coastal route and connecting with the intra urban and rural corridors.

This corridor extends into surrounding counties; Dublin City to the north and Wicklow County Council to the south. From a Green Infrastructure perspective the principal role of this corridor is to connect open space and recreational assets. It also links into many local parks and Greenways and cycle routes. It has four major hubs, which provide connections with other GI corridors, at Shanganagh Park, Killiney Hill, Newtownsmith Park and Blackrock Park.

#### Objectives

1. To provide a coastal corridor that connects a number of regional parks and iconic recreational sites within the County and extends into the surrounding administrative boundaries.
2. To improve visitor experience and increase duration of stay by providing a wide range of transport options and linkages to a choice of parks.
3. To provide a multi-functional GI corridor crossing and connecting the mountain, urban area and coast and linking with other corridors.

### Corridor 3 – Blackrock to the Mountains

**Blackrock Park – Deerpark – FitzSimon's Wood – Fernhill Park – rural**

This corridor runs between the regional Blackrock Park and the Dublin Mountains. This provides residents or visitors with opportunities to connect from the urban area of the County to the coast or to the mountains.

#### Objectives

1. To provide a multifunctional GI corridor connecting the mountain, urban area and the coast.
2. Enhance the utilisation of FitzSimon's Wood as a gateway into the mountains.
3. To develop Fernhill Gardens into a Gateway Park / Regional Park

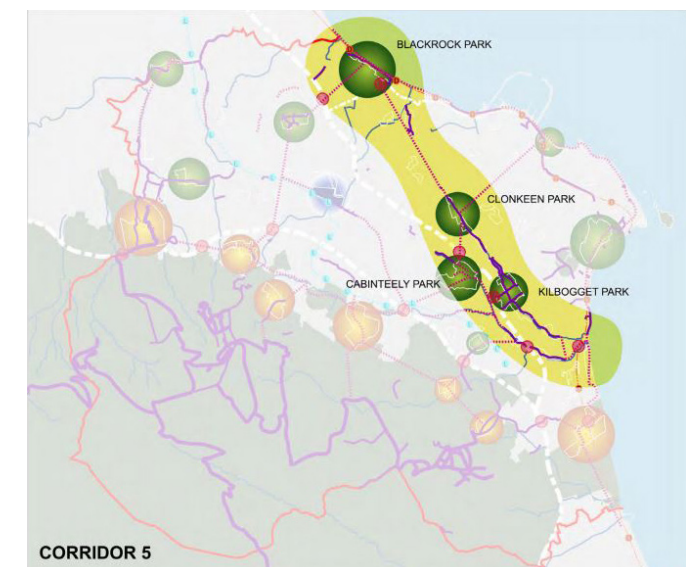
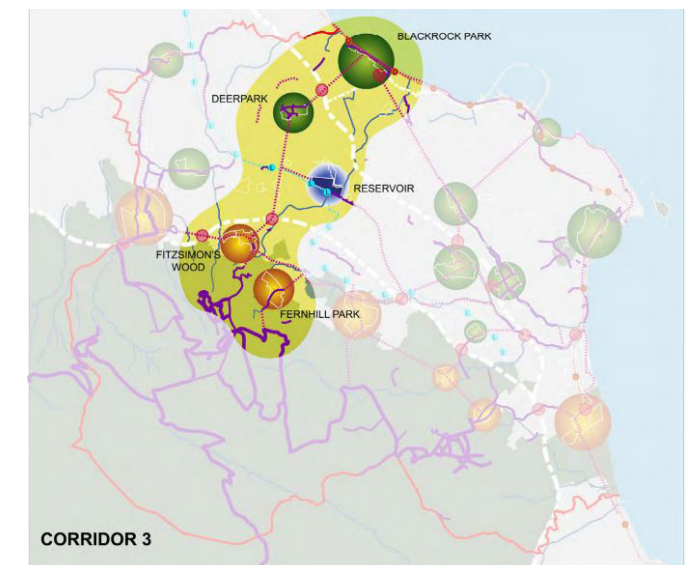
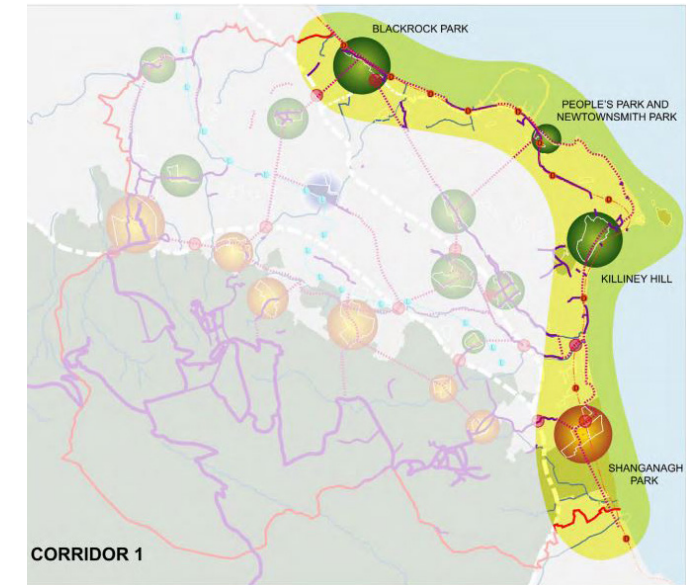
### Corridor 5 – Intra Urban

**Killiney Strand – Kilbogget Park/ Cabinteely Park/ Clonkeen Park – Deansgrange – Blackrock Park**

The location of the Shanganagh and Deansgrange rivers at Killiney Strand are the starting point for the intra urban Green Infrastructure connection. It also connects with the coastal corridor. This is a corridor rooted in its local community but extends access to the coast. Significant recreational activity is centred at Kilbogget Park, and further extension and use of connecting green space will be encouraged with the GI Corridor status. This GI corridor would utilise the existing green and open spaces to develop their full multifunctional potential. An established Greenway runs along most of the corridor, with the Deansgrange River providing a continuity and diversity that can be enhanced by the application of GI techniques. River restoration and opening of the river would be prime of example of the GI potential.

#### Objectives

1. To provide a multi-functional GI corridor connecting the urban area and coast, with links to the mountains via other Corridors and cycle network.
2. Enhancing the urban linear parks adjacent to watercourses with fully integrated wildlife and habitat features.
3. Reduce flood risk in the downstream reaches of Deansgrange River through attenuation within parks, use of SuDs within the Greenways and Green Streets on local roads leading into the park areas.





**2.3.1 Land Use Zoning Objective**

*Blackrock Park is zoned 'F' with a stated objective 'To preserve and provide for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities'.*

Uses Permitted In Principle:  
*Community Facility(g), Cultural Use(g), Open Space(g), Sports Facility(g), Travellers Accommodation.*

**2.3.2 Uses Open For Consideration:**

Allotments, Car park(g), Cemetery, Craft Centre/ Craft Shop(f), Childcare Service(f), Crematorium(g), Education(g), Garden Centre/Plant Nursery(g), Golf Facility(g), Guest House (f), Place of Public Worship(g), Public Services, Tea Room/Café(g).

*f:* In existing premises

*g:* Where lands zoned F are to be developed then: Not more than 40% of the land in terms of the built form and surface car parking combined shall be developed upon. Any built form to be developed shall be of a high standard of design including quality finishes and materials. The owner shall enter into agreement with the Planning Authority pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, or some alternative legally binding agreement restricting the further development of the remaining area (i.e. 60% of the site) which shall be set aside for publicly accessible passive open space or playing fields. Said space shall be provided and laid out in a manner designed to optimise public patronage of the residual open space and/or to protect existing sporting and recreational facilities which may be available for community use.

**2.3.3 Specific Local Objective: Improved access from the DART Station**

Map No. 17, BP 1:

Improved cycle and pedestrian linkages between Blackrock Park and the DART station to rear of Deepwell - to include increased width of the existing corridor and upgrading of the entrance to Blackrock Park at the location of the existing bridge and adjoining stream area in accordance with Objective PC1, Chapter 4.

**2.3.4 Other Objectives identified: BP6**

*It is an objective of the Council to upgrade the landscaping and public realm around to the Pond and Amphitheatre area and to improve the hydrological environment of the Pond. The existing pond edge and footpaths shall be upgraded and repaired, while the tidal inflow/outflow which previously self cleaned the pond are to be reinstated and improved. Renovations to the pond area will promote and enhance the biodiversity value of the island, while the fountain feature shall be restored. The existing amphitheatre will be enhanced to improve access. A small area of the lake, below the existing amphitheatre will be converted to an enlarged stage, lawn and improved circulation area*

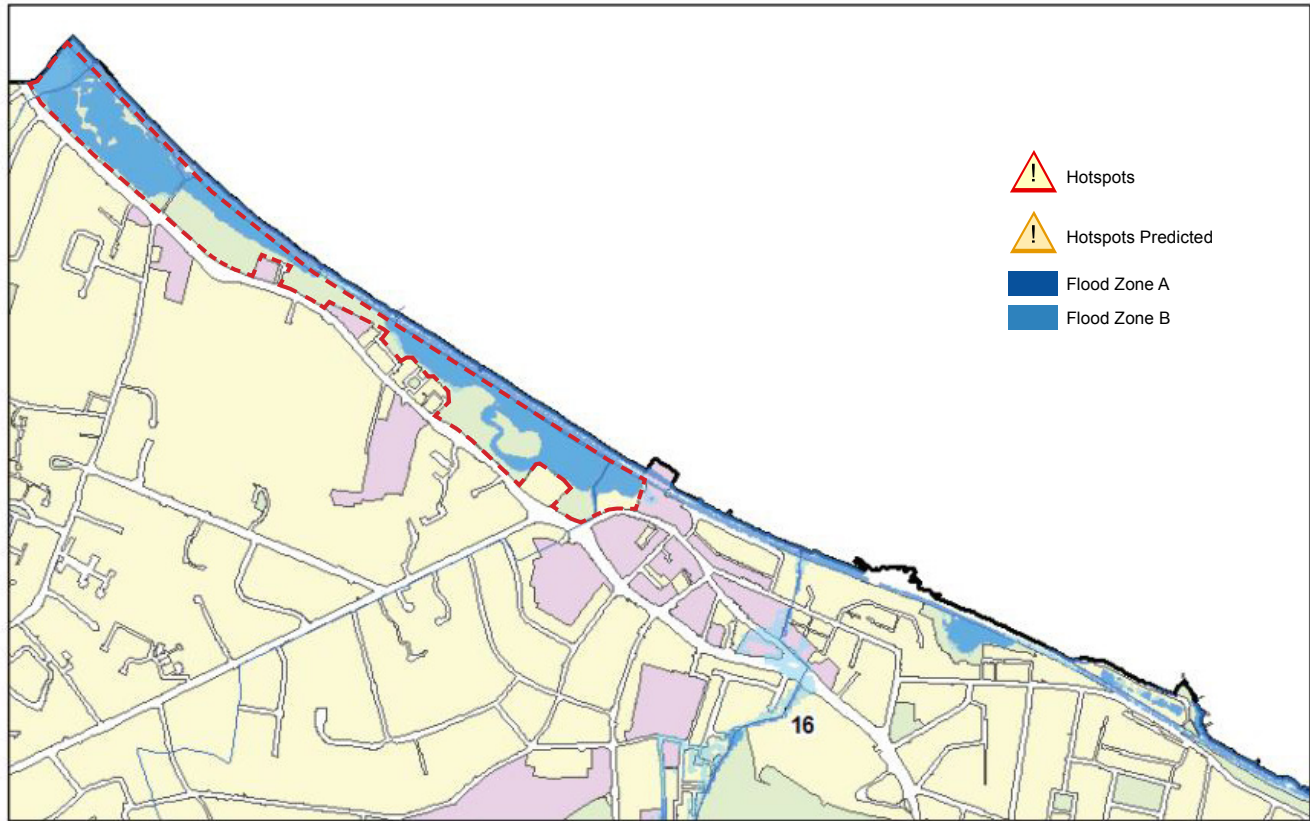


1916 Memorial Garden, Blackrock Park

**2.3.5 Flooding**

There is an ongoing risk of coastal flooding due to high tides and wave overtopping between the West Pier and the County Boundary at Booterstown. This is likely to increase as the impacts of Climate Change worsen. It is predicted that sea levels will rise in Dublin Bay by up to 0.48m by the year 2100 which will have increase the amount of overtopping and some localised flooding in the Park area. The Railway/DART line will be more frequently inundated and closed due to these flood events and a flood alleviation scheme will be required in the short term to protect this critical infrastructure. Any such scheme may also assist with alleviating flooding in the Park. DLRCC will liaise with Irish Rail and also complete any practicable works required to prevent frequent partial inundation of the Park.

Flood Zone Map (below) shows that parts of Blackrock Park (highlighted in red) are within Flood Zones A and B



Flood map (above) illustrates a 1 in 1000 year flood of Blackrock Park

The site analysis and feasibility study of Blackrock Park will tie in with the relevant national and regional policy as outlined in the County Development Plan 2010-2016 as well as the following specific policies;

**Section 4.1.2.1 Policy LHB2: Preservation of Landscape Character Areas:**

It is Council policy to continue to preserve and enhance the character of the County's landscapes in accordance with the recommended strategies as originally outlined in the landscape Character Assessment (2002 and since updated), in accordance with the 'Draft Guidelines for Landscape and Landscape Assessment' (2000) as issued by the Department of Environment and Local Government, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention) and in accordance with 'A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland – Strategy issue Paper for Consultation' 2011.

**Section 4.1.2.5 Policy LHB6: Views and Prospects:**

It is Council policy to protect and encourage the enjoyment of views and prospects of special amenity value or special interests.

**Section 4.1.2.16 Policy LHB17: Trails, Hiking and Walking Routes**

It is Council policy to promote the development of regional and local networks of hiking and walking routes and trails.

**Section 4.1.3.1 Policy LHB19: Protection of Natural Heritage and the Environment**

It is Council policy to protect and conserve the environment including, in particular, the natural heritage of the County and to conserve and manage Nationally and Internationally important and EU designated sites - such as Special Protection Areas, candidate Special Areas of Conservation, proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Ramsar sites - as well as non-designated areas of high nature conservation value which serve as 'Stepping Stones' for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

**Section 4.1.3.3 Policy LHB21: Biodiversity Plan**

It is Council policy to implement the provisions of the County Biodiversity Plan 2009-2013 and to produce a second Biodiversity Plan which will be set within the context of the second National Biodiversity Plan, 'Actions for Biodiversity, 2011 – 2016' prepared by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

**Section 4.2.1.1 Policy OSR1: Green Infrastructure Strategy**

It is Council policy to protect existing green infrastructure and encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of new green infrastructure, recognising the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following, sustainable transport, provision of open space amenities, sustainable management of water, protection and management of biodiversity and protection of cultural and built heritage.

**Section 4.2.2.1 Policy OSR2: Open Space Strategy 2012-2015**

In 2009 the Council prepared a comprehensive audit of the existing and proposed

open space provision in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. This culminated in the publication of the Open Space Strategy for the County, for the period 2012-2015. The actions and recommendations detailed in the Strategy will be implemented as appropriate and as resources allow.

**Section 4.2.2.2 Policy OSR3: Hierarchy of Parks and Open Spaces**

It is Council policy to provide a hierarchy of quality parks and public open spaces which vary in size and nature and are designed to serve the needs of all members of the community, including people with mobility impairments, by being readily accessible and at a convenient distance from their home and/ or places of work.

**Section 4.2.2.3 Policy OSR4: Future Improvements**

It is Council policy to continue to improve, landscape, plant and develop more intensive recreational and leisure facilities within its parks and open spaces insofar, as resources will permit, while ensuring that the development of appropriate complementary facilities does not detract from the overall amenity of the spaces.

**Section 4.2.2.6 Policy OSR7: Trees and Woodland**

It is Council policy to implement the objectives and policies of the Tree Strategy for the County – 'dlr TREES 2011-2015' - to ensure that the tree cover in the County is managed and developed to optimise the environmental, climatic and educational benefits which derive from an 'urban forest'.

**Section 4.2.2.7 Policy OSR8: Greenways Network**

It is Council policy to develop a comprehensive network of County Greenways linking parks and public open spaces and to liaise with adjoining local authorities and other stakeholders to achieve and improve wider external linkages and corridors.

**Section 4.2.2.9 Policy OSR10: Provision and Promotion of Recreational Facilities**

It is Council policy to provide sporting and recreational amenities of both an indoor and outdoor nature. It is the policy of the Council to promote participation in sport and leisure activities among all residents of the County. The Council will endeavour to promote the increased use of these facilities and of the excellent natural resources located throughout the County. The Council will endeavour to ensure access to sporting infrastructure to meet the needs of the community in any major new residential developments.

**Section 4.2.2.13 Policy OSR14: Play Facilities**

It is Council policy to support the provision of structured and unstructured play areas with appropriate equipment and facilities throughout the County and to ensure the needs of all age groups and abilities - children, teenagers, adults and older people – are facilitated in the public parks of Dun Laoghaire- Rathdown.

**Section 6.1.3.1 Policy AR1: Record of Protected Structures**

It is Council policy to:

- i. Include those structures that are considered in the opinion of the Planning

Authority to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social interest in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

- ii. Protect Structures included on the RPS from any works that would negatively impact their special character and appearance.

- iii. Ensure that any development proposals to Protected Structures, their curtilage and setting shall have regard to the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2011)

- iv. Ensure that new and adapted uses are compatible with the character and special interest of the Protected Structure.

**Section 6.1.3.3 Policy AR3: Protected Structures and Building Regulations**

It is Council Policy to protect the character and special interest of Protected Structures when considering or carrying out intervention to comply with the requirements of the Building Regulations – with particular reference to Part B and Part M.

**Section 6.1.3.5 Policy AR5: Buildings of Heritage Interest**

It is Council policy to:

- i. Retain where appropriate, and encourage the rehabilitation and suitable reuse of existing older buildings/structures/features which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a streetscape in preference to their demolition and redevelopment and to preserve surviving shop and pub fronts of special historical or architectural interest including signage and associated features.

- ii. Identify buildings of vernacular significance with a view to assessing them for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures.

**Section 6.1.3.6 Policy AR6: Protection of Buildings in Council Ownership**

It is Council Policy to continue to demonstrate the best practice with regard to Protected Structures, Recorded Monuments and often elements of architectural heritage in its ownership and care.

**Section 6.1.3.7 Policy AR7: Energy Efficiency of Protected Structures**

It is Council Policy to have regard to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's publication on 'Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings' and any future advisory documents in assessing proposed works on Protected Structures.

**Section 6.1.3.9 Policy AR9: Protection of Historic Street Furniture**

It is Council Policy :

- i. Preserve the retention of historic items of street furniture where these contribute to the character of the area including items of vernacular or local significance.
- ii. Promote high standards for design, material and workmanship in public realm improvements within areas of historic character.



# 03

## EXISTING ARRANGEMENT

### 3.1 Site Location and Context

Located on the edge of the municipal area it straddles the urban and suburban threshold. It is a key, strategically located park as it is situated in the intra urban area adjacent to the coast. For this reason it is highlighted in the green infrastructure strategy as a key gateway as part of a coastal route and as a coast to mountains route.

### 3.2.1 Park Features

#### 3.2.1.1 Pavilion & Bandstand

The heritage southern end adjacent to the village is considered the heart of the park. This area contains the strongest Victorian influence, the greatest accumulation of features and the most engaging topographical character. The entrance opposite the bottom of Merrion Avenue features an imposing set of 5no. granite piers featuring Beux Arts details as well as substantial gates and historic metalwork.

An unused toilet pavilion flanks the entrance on the right of the entry. The block features rendered blank facades with clerestory windows on each side. The roof cantilevers over the Rock Road footpath forming a canopy which marks the entrances into the separate toilets.

Positioned in the centre of the elevated space, a pavilion dominates the area and creates a focal point. Its centralised location exploits the view of the bay and creates a visual connection with the bandstand below. The kiosk was built sometime in the mid 1890's and functioned as a sweet and cake shop. It is constructed in a half-timbered style with a bonnet type roof. The outer perimeter of the roof forms a veranda sheltering fitted timber benches. Structures of this kind were popular in parks at the time.

An additional pedestrian entrance is located further to

The park features strongly defined edges formed by adjacent infrastructure and the built environment. The park is 8 km from the city centre and 4km from Dun Laoghaire town.

the east of the main entrance on Rock Hill. This entrance features a cut granite lintel & pedimented detail with the words 'To the Railway' printed on it. A network of steps and ramps connect to the lower area of the park. The change in level creates a dramatic feature out of the Priory Stream which flows beneath the Rock Road and into the park. The stream forms a cascade as it travels towards the sea. At this point it is railed off for safety. The banks flanking the paths and ramps have been recently renovated. The mix of woody shrubs has been replaced with sweeps of herbaceous planting.

A haphazard collection of buildings at the bottom of the slope form a visual and physical impediment between the slope and the bandstand space. This collection is made up of 2 temporary type structures and a bunker type permanent building. A set of steps leads onto a concrete bridge which traverses the stream and onto a path which hugs the boundary wall. A T-junction at the end of this path leads right down a lane to Blackrock DART Station.

The lower space is centred around the bandstand. This structure was recently renovated which involved the replacement of the copper roof. The circular hardstand area which surrounds the structure was upgraded at the same time.

The circular hardstand area which surrounds the structure was upgraded at the same time and this work also included the replacement of the cast iron benches. There are several early mature trees including Lime, Sycamore, Weeping

Willow and Hornbeam. The new arrangement has caused the loss of views between the bandstand space and Elm Cliff.



View of the renovated bandstand in Blackrock Park



View of disused kiosk pavilion



'To the Railway' entrance on Rock Hill



View of granite piers featuring Beux Arts details



View of lane into park from Blackrock DART station, behind Deepwell



### 3.2.1.2 Lake and carparking

The lake is the dominant feature within the park. The shape is organic in outline punctuated with a tree covered island. A pump house disguised as a historic folly is nestled amongst the vegetation. This unique saline lake features a rusticated edge and is enclosed by a perimeter pathway. The most unusual aspect of the lake is the circular island stage at the northern end. This feature is part of a grass amphitheatre that encloses the northern end of the lake. Its bank rises sharply in level from the lake to the Rock Road. A path runs along this bank ramping up to provide access with the Phoenix Terrace carpark. A utility box and a commemorative seat are incongruously located along this path. A historic stone structure which resembles a lookout post sits inconspicuously below the Rock Road amongst the trees. This may have served as a changing facility before the construction of the railway line. On the other side of the lake, along the eastern edge, the path doubles as a cycle path. It is the main access route through

the park and acts as a link in a broader commuter corridor.

The carpark at Phoenix Terrace caters for 18 cars. It features an entry and an exit gate. These gates feature similar imposing granite piers and substantial original metalwork to the entrance at Elm Cliff. Access paths from the carpark lead to a 1916 memorial garden and towards the eastern side of the park to the cycle/walking route that parallels the railway line. An ESB substation sits jarringly along the boundary with the railway line opposite this path. Additional space is occupied by the substation which provides parking for service vehicles. The area known as Williamstown is a large featureless space that backs onto the residential developments of Phoenix Square, Emmet Square and Seafront Parade. A grove of trees is the only feature in this space. It is made up predominantly of Lime but there are also Poplar and Ash.



View of saline lake and DART line in the background



View of disused temporary carpark beside the car showroom

### 3.2.1.3 Williamstown & Booterstown

The view north along this space is terminated by the Martello Tower. This structure conveniently acts as a halfway marker along the length of the park. Adjacent to the Martello tower there is a pedestrian access point which links with the bridge across the DART line. At the end of Martello Terrace there is a locked entrance. This entrance features a fine set of cut granite piers and a set of wrought iron gates. The stretches of wall at this point are well constructed granite random rubble with worked capping. Beyond the Martello tower there are several hardstand spaces. The two immediately north of the Martello Tower are a disused 5 a side soccer pitch and tennis court. Further north there is a larger abandoned, temporary carpark area. Beyond this, the park pinches behind a cluster of buildings, including a car showroom. At this point the path is squeezed between the marsh and a boundary wall. To the further side of this the park once again tapers out.

This area features an expansive grass area flanked by trees

and an enclosing footpath. A playground at the northern end of the space is flanked by lines of trees. To the north of the playground a line of early mature beech trees defines this space and separates it from the rest of the park beyond. This area is characterised by its porous boundary onto the Rock Road. It features three identical entrance points. Each entrance contains two benches opposite each other and a stepped access point into the park.

Beyond the line of beech trees a sunken area is laid out with a formal arrangement of narrow paths. This is the remnants of a garden designed and built in the 1980's. The sunken area is flanked on its northern edge by another line of trees. The space between the DART station and the trees is a non-descript expanse of grass. The walking cycling route runs parallel with the Rock Road and exits/enters at the north west corner. This entrance interfaces poorly with the wider public realm. It features a jarring collection of utilities, bollards, barriers and steps.



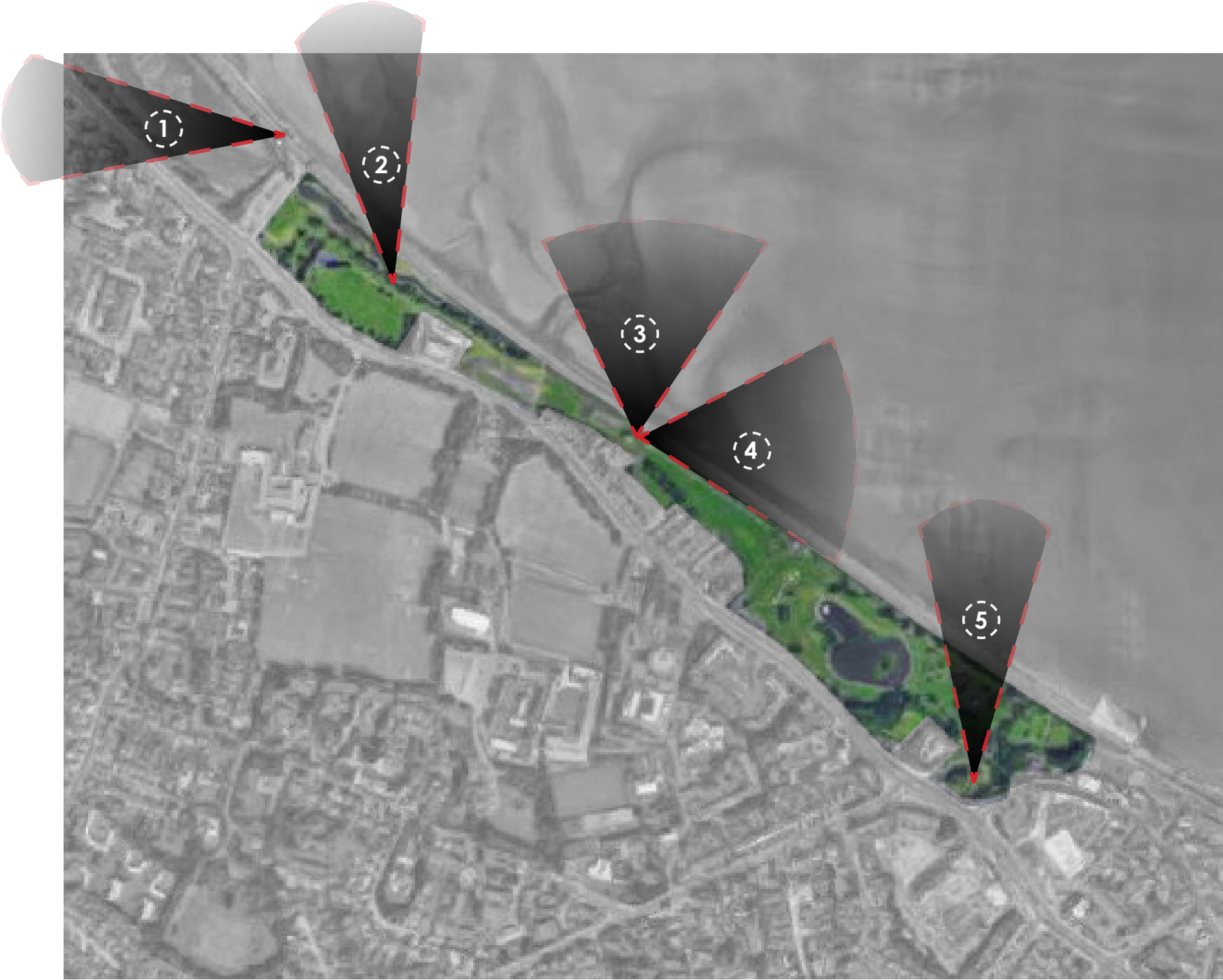
View of the disused Martello Tower



View from the 1916 memorial garden towards Williamstown (Booterstown)

3.2.1.4 Existing Views & Prospects

The selected views and prospects across Dublin Bay from Blackrock Park. As per policy LHB6 of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 ‘It is Council policy to protect and encourage the enjoyment of views and prospects of special amenity value or special interests’.



View towards Booterstown Marsh



View towards Poolbeg and Great South Wall



View towards Dublin Bay



View towards Dun Laoghaire Harbour



View over Blackrock Park toward Howth

1	2
3	4
5	LEGEND



# 04

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### 4.1 Village & Railway line

There is a documented settlement in Blackrock as far back as Medieval times. The area was a fishing village that developed as a seaside resort during the 18th Century. The shoreline was further inland facilitating easy access to the bay for the local community. Buff granite is the predominant rock in the local area and this helps to explain the name of the village which is derived from an outcrop of limestone situated near to the shore, becoming black when wet. John Rocque's map dating from 1799 depicts a landscape with a dispersed, low density pattern of large estate houses and associated curtilage as well as a light network of roadways. An early layout of the town is identifiable and a close association with the coastline and

Dublin bay is apparent from the map.

1834 saw the completion of the Dublin and Kingstown railway line. The project was conceived as a way of connecting the city centre with the newly constructed Dun Laoghaire Harbour. This was the first commuter train line in the world and it had a profound effect on the population as well as the settlement patterns along the coastline of the county. The train line improved accessibility between Blackrock and the wider metropolitan area. It was a catalyst for the nucleated development patterns which occurred during the 19th Century and marked the beginnings of the sprawling suburban settlement patterns present today.

### 4.2 Coastline

The route of the Dublin and Kingstown railway line hugs the south Dublin coast. This coastal route offered a consistent gradient and a direct line between Dun Laoghaire and the city centre. Dispute with 2 major landowners over the acquisition of land along the proposed route resulted in large compensation and in the case of Lord Cloncurry, the construction of a private culvert, bridge and pavilion to access his bathing spot on the coastline. This ornamental bridge structure is a landmark along the DART route today.

This coastal route had a direct and emphatic impact on the Blackrock coastline. It severed the village and local area from the bay. The most dramatic transformation of the coastline occurred along the stretch extending between Merrion and Blackrock. The construction of the tracks on an embankment offset from the shoreline further into the bay created a landlocked space that subsequently became a coastal wetland. The 6 inch map (1837-1842) lists the space as "Flooded at Hightides". Several culverts through the railway embankment can be seen between Blackrock and Booterstown railway station.

This flooding at high tide created a safe and convenient bathing amenity for local people. The 6 inch map (1837-1842) depicts several bathing spots with separate facilities for ladies and gentleman. Conversely, at low tide, the area became an inaccessible coastal wetland, as can be seen at the Booterstown Marsh today. Blackrock was becoming a wealthy middle class suburb and the marsh would not have agreed with the Victorian sensibilities of manicured and neat landscapes.

### 4.3 Setting Out Blackrock Park

Blackrock saw continued development during 19th century. This created a need for local amenities. The proposal to build a park on the landlocked site originated in 1871. Representatives from Blackrock Township met with Dublin, Wicklow, Wexford Railway Company. The land was owned by Lord Pembroke and he offered the site to the Township on the condition that it was developed as a public facility. The tidal nature of the site and the technical difficulties in reclaiming slobland were considerable. The City Engineer, Bindon Blood Stoney, synonymous with the construction of the quay walls along the Liffey, had drafted up the plans and specifications for the park. The works began in 1875 and were completed in October 1879.

There were several delays due to the challenging nature of the site as well as shortages in funding. Lord Pembroke stepped in on several occasions to provide incentive for the completion of the park. He leased Elm Cliff to the park for a low fee for 200 years. The purpose of this was to annex it to the park and create a formal entrance opposite the bottom of Merrion Avenue. Elm Cliff had been a private residence and the 6 inch map depicts a property directly opposite Merrion Avenue close to the Rock Road. The property was demolished to make way for the large park entrance.

The park was known as "The People's Park", a designation popular at the time. The work on the park continued for several years with the addition of rockeries, the erection

of the bandstand and tree planting continued for several years into the 1890's. The park was not "fenced" until 1909. The 25 inch map (1888-1913) confirms that the majority of the park features are located at the Blackrock end of the park. Beyond Williamstown and the Martello Tower there is a clear lack of any park infrastructure. There are no paths depicted with the only feature being a line of trees along the edge of the Rock Road.

Notable additions to the park over the years include the amphitheatre, designed by Luan Cuffe and built in the early 1960's. A playground, installed in the late 1990's, adjacent to the bandstand and a newer playground close to the entrance at the Booterstown end. A carpark at Phoenix Terrace was added in the late 1990's and a hardstand area to function as a temporary carpark/event space was constructed in 2010. Other elements include the formal Italian garden adjacent to Booterstown DART station designed by Dennis Shannon.

During the late 1970's, a parcel of land along a narrow strip of the park, opposite Blackrock College, was sold and developed as a car showroom. The site was extended to the rear during the mid 1990's to accommodate a permanent traveller settlement.

The scale of this development has created a physical and visual impediment in the park isolating the Booterstown end from the rest of the park.



View of lake in Blackrock Park c.1905



Historic image of the train line



#### 4.4 Broader Landscape

A study of the broader landscape through the historic maps shows the accelerated development of the local area. What was a collection of dispersed large estate lands depicted in the 6 inch map (1856) had transformed into the suburban settlement pattern as seen today by the 25 inch map (1888-1913).

The other notable development evident on the 25 inch maps is the tramline shown running through the main street of Blackrock Village and around the outside of the park along the Rock Road. This route was the Dalkey to O'Connell Street tramline. The presence of the train and tramline would have provided easy access from the city and surrounding areas to Blackrock Park. The completion of the park coincided with the electrification of the tram system. The first tramlines were in operation in 1872, they were horse drawn with the network becoming fully

electrified by 1901. The original concept of the tramway network was to link all the major city train stations. At its peak, the system was known as technically innovative, and was described in 1904 as one of the most impressive in the world.

Another feature of note in the local area is the Public Baths. In 1839 the railway company provided a public bathing area known as Blackrock Baths. In 1887, the Baths were rebuilt in concrete. The Baths comprised of a sea-pool, multi-height diving board and public seating. The Urban District Council acquired the Baths in 1928 and they operated until the late 1980's. The baths were in close proximity to the park and were a complimentary public facility, encouraging footfall and helping to establish a collection of destination points within the town. This would have benefitted local traders and businesses.



View of Blackrock Village c.1875



View of Blackrock Village c.1900

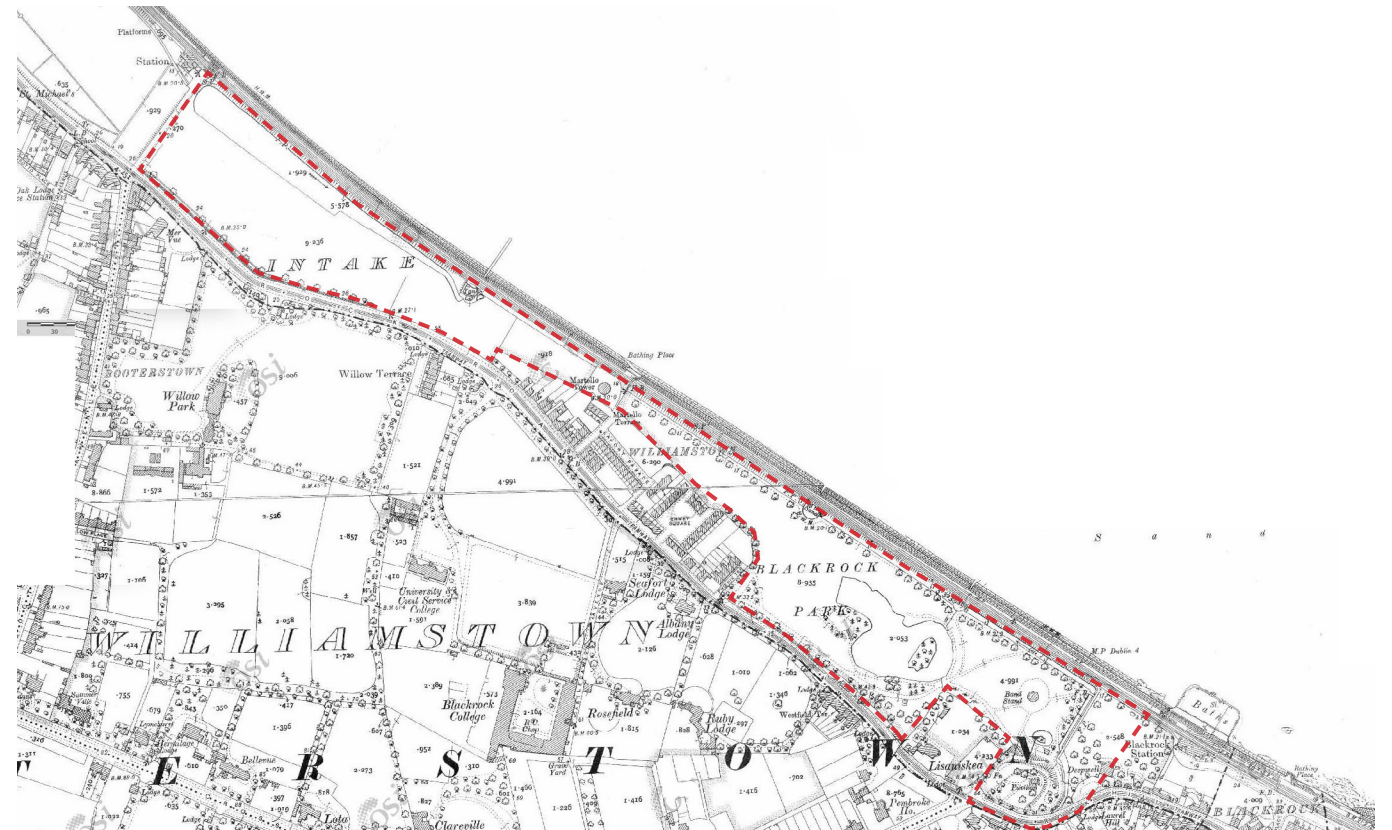
#### 4.5 Martello Tower

Fortunately, the alignment of the Dublin & Kingstown train line swept around the seaward side of the South 15 Williamstown Martello Tower. This has protected it from coastal erosion over the last 200 years. It was constructed in the inter-tidal beach area which could have made it vulnerable to undermining and damage. The Martello Towers are iconic structures along the Dublin coastline. The tower is a great addition to the park and marks the

halfway point along its length. Over the years it has been a private residence, used as commercial premises and as sports clubhouse. The squat appearance of the building is a result of the major changes in the ground levels with the construction of the train line and the development of the park. A large proportion of the building is now submerged in the park.



Historic 6" map 1837-1842



Historic 25" map 1888-1913



# 05

## GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

### 5.1 General

Blackrock Park is a linear urban coastal park nestled on the southside of Dublin Bay. It is approximately 4km from Dun Laoghaire Harbour and 9km from Dublin city centre and comprises of green spaces, running for 1.3 km between the Rock Road and the railway line. The total area of the park is 14 hectares in size stretching from Blackrock Town Centre to Booterstown Marsh.

The area defined as Blackrock extends from the Punchbowl pub and Booterstown Road in the north, to Monkstown & Kill Lane in the South and the N11 marks the boundary on the western edge. The

land rises steadily from the coastline to its highest point of approx. 87m above sea level which is at the junction between the N11 and Newtownpark Avenue at White's cross. The area is characterised by its low rise suburban collection of housing estates. The majority of the housing is made up of two storey dwellings with front and rear gardens. The low density sprawl is the result of the relatively large plot sizes as well as the generous provision of local green spaces. Blackrock village is the main retail area. The area is serviced by several primary, secondary and third level educational facilities.



A. Poolbeg Chimneys B. Great South Wall C. Howth D. Dún Laoghaire Harbour

### 5.2.1 A man-made Coastline

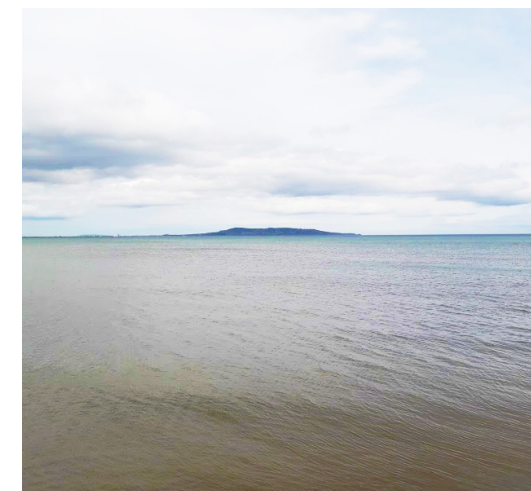
The geography of the park has been heavily influenced by manmade interventions. There is a unique and direct relationship between the local geography and history. An examination of Rocque's "Exact Survey of the City and Suburbs of Dublin" (1756) highlights Blackrock as a bathing destination. Men's and women's bathing shelters are described. The area occupied by Blackrock Park is called "Blackrock Lake" and the map depicts the space as covered in rock outcrops which are typical of the local coastline. The high water mark is also included and this is indicated along the edge of what is now the Rock Road, continuing on to Booterstown (Booterstown). The concentration of settlement, at what is now Blackrock main street, sits right on the coastline.

As detailed in the previous chapter, the construction of the railway line had a direct, transformative effect on the geographical character of the coastline. The landlocked area created by the route of the railway between Merrion Gates and Blackrock village created a saltwater marsh. The entire area would have resembled Booterstown Marsh as it exists today but the majority of the area was filled in during the creation of Blackrock Park. The loss of connection with the bay and the coastline for the local community has been an unfortunate result of the railway line.

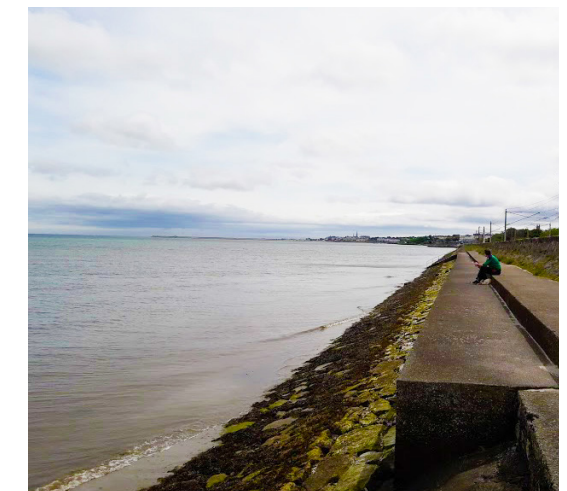
### 5.2.2 Dublin Bay

The view from the pavilion at Elm Cliff in the Park captures a striking vista. The sea including the great south wall and the city skyline is all set against the backdrop of the rising headland of Howth Head beyond. It gives a great sense of the shape and scale of the bay and puts Blackrock Park in the context of the broader county. The

Williamstown Martello Tower highlights the strategic location of the area. The park occupies a spot which sits almost at the crux of the southern bay. It is half way between the rivers estuary at the south wall and the peninsula of Dun Laoghaire harbour.



View north towards Howth Head



View southeast towards Dún Laoghaire Harbour



### 5.3 Straddling the Municipal Boundary

Blackrock Park is classified as a Gateway Park in the DLR Green Infrastructure Strategy (2016-2022). It is also acknowledged as occupying “a key location for introducing the coastal route and connecting with the intra urban and rural corridors.” Within the Strategy it is an important element of the proposed Corridor 1-Coastal route. It is a gateway and threshold between the urban district of Dublin City and the coast and hills of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown.

The municipal boundary is located close to Merrion Gates which is a natural pinch point and threshold.

The ribbon of spaces made up of the vacant land north of the marsh, Booterstown Marsh and Blackrock Park mark a transition from the built up character of the city into the greener suburbs. The campus of Blackrock college also helps to reinforce this change of character.

### 5.5 East/West movement

Generally, the land rises up moving west towards the Dublin Mountains. The main east west routes are composed of minor roads classified as local. The exception is Merrion Avenue which forms part of the main national route connecting Dún Laoghaire Harbour with the city centre and onto the M50. The N11 on the western edge of the area and the Coast Road (R118) are connected with several minor roads including Booterstown Road,

Carysfort Avenue, Newtownpark Avenue and Kill Lane. Dublin and the broader metropolitan area have evolved with a series of radial approaches to the city centre. Orbital routes running around the circumference of the city are less conducive to movement. Between the N11 and R118 are a network of local routes serving the collection of residential estates.



### 5.4 North/South movement Rock Road & Railway

The primary movement runs in a north/south direction corralled by the coastline to the east and the rising landscape to the west. This carriageway route follows the coastline and maintains a relatively flat topography. It is a historic thoroughfare which has served the local community and formed part of a larger route over the centuries. Dalkey was founded by the Vikings in the 10th century. A harbour was established there which became one of the major ports serving Dublin. The coast road connected Dalkey with the city. Rocque's map (1756) depicts the line of the Rock Road as it appears today. This route is well serviced by bus services currently

The train line was built in the 1830's and exploited the flat character of the shoreline in the bay. The 6" map (1837-1842) (Refer to Chapter 04 Historic 6" map 1837-1842) includes the recently completed railway route. It connected the new commuter town of Dún Laoghaire as well as the harbour with Dublin city. The 25-inch maps (1897-1913) depicts the now defunct tram line. Tramways were the main transport infrastructure in the city at that stage. The tramline is labelled along the Rock Road and two lines are clearly visible running both north and south. Today, the dominant mode of travel is via private car. The Rock Road is shared by both public bus services, private cars and bicycles.



### 5.6 Blackrock Village

Blackrock Village is immediately adjoining Blackrock Park along its southern boundary. A laneway connects the DART station and the park which runs along the rear boundary of a large private property called Deepwell. A fine pedestrian entrance at the western end of the main street connects the village with the south west corner of the park.

The village has seen a fluctuation in vitality over the years. From a sleepy seaside village during the 18th century to a bustling commuter suburban settlement in the 19th century. The 1960's saw the car become the dominant mode of transport. The expansion of the Frascati road in the 1960's helped to cater for vehicle based shopping trips and

week day commutes. The construction of Blackrock (1984) and Frascati (1985) shopping centres created a new type of urban dynamic in the village. These shopping centres were successful in their own right but at the detriment to the main street and the small local businesses. Blackrock shopping centre has had an enduring, negative impact as its external elevation offers no vitality to the day to day life of the village. Blank facades, tall elevations, carpark entrances, vast surface carparking have all had an adverse impact on the local built environment. The dual carriageway while catering for trips in and out of the city centre has created a large obstacle that has isolated the village from the surrounding expanding suburbs.



## S.W.O.T ANALYSIS

## 6.1 STRENGTHS

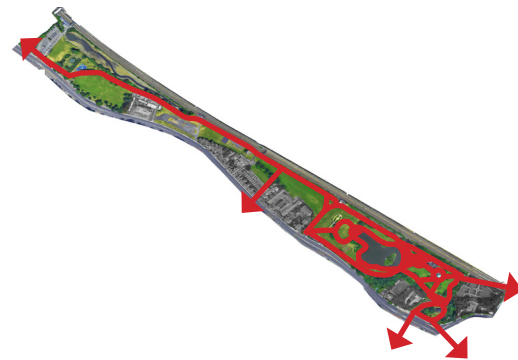
## 6.1.1 Location

The park occupies a location that benefits from its immediate proximity to both the coastline and the urban centre of Blackrock.



## 6.1.2 Paths &amp; Circulation

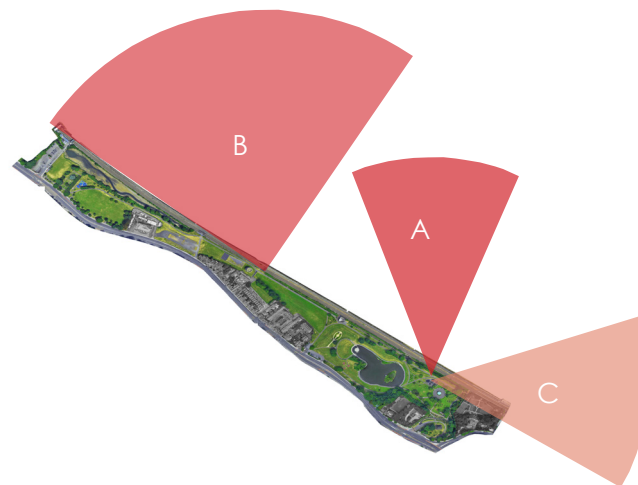
The park benefits from a diverse network of paths providing a range of experiences. They exploit the changes in level to offer expansive views of Dublin Bay and contrasting experiences through enclosed intimate spaces in the park.



## 6.1.3 Views

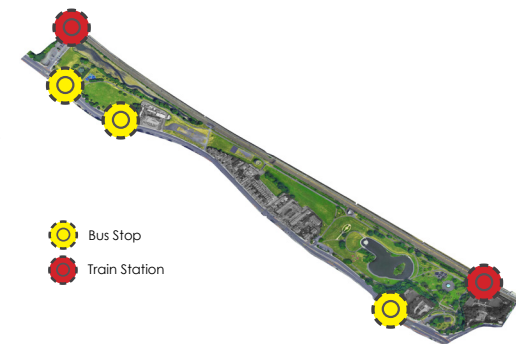
The long views in a northern direction towards the elevated parts of Dublin and Dublin Bay are one of the main assets of the park. Its location further benefits from some of the most impressive views within Dún Laoghaire Rathdown.

- A: Views towards Howth Head
- B: View towards the Dublin Bay & Great South Wall
- C: View towards Dún Laoghaire Harbour



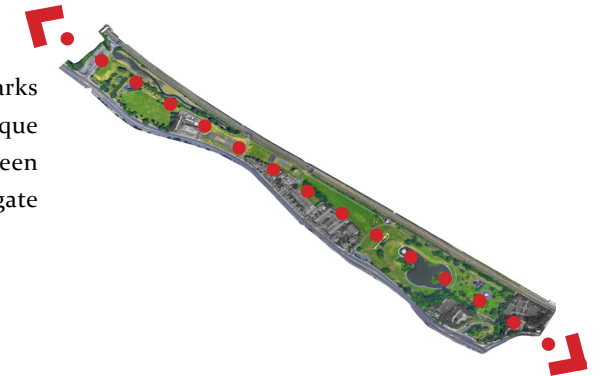
## 6.1.4 Transport &amp; Movement

Ideally located, with transport corridors punctuating its east and west thresholds. It is neatly bookended with Booterstown DART Station to the north and Blackrock Station to the south. The Rock Road is the major north/south traffic corridor in the local area and is serviced by the 7 and 7a bus routes. The main cycle/ footpath route through the park serves as a link in a wider commuter corridor.



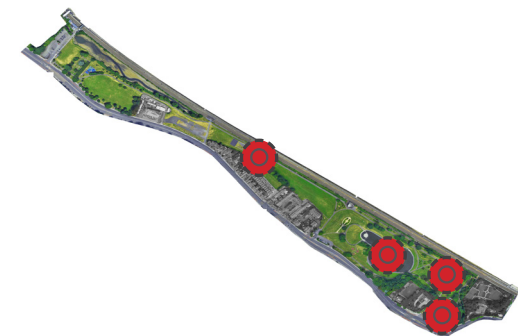
## 6.1.5 Linear character

Characterised by its linear shape, it varies from the other flagship parks within Dún Laoghaire Rathdown. This gives Blackrock park a unique character within the municipality. On a strategic level, the linear green space forms a section of a future greenway that could circumnavigate Dublin Bay.



## 6.1.6 Historic Features

Containing a large range of historic features and details, Blackrock Park has several layers of history that can be clearly read in the landscape. The park is a fine example of Victorian landscape design with features including, and not limited to, the bandstand and pavilion. The Martello Tower is one of the most prominent and oldest built features in the park. Other more inconspicuous surviving details such as railings, gates and stonework provide a rich historic narrative.



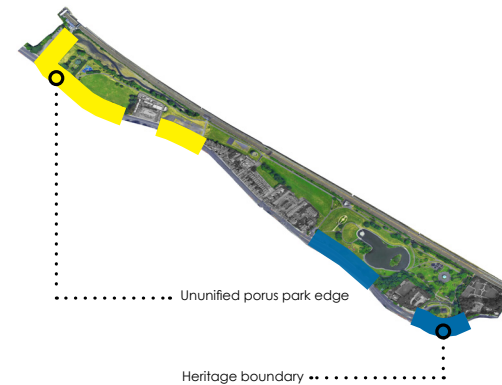
## 6.2 WEAKNESSES

### 6.2.1 Boundaries & Entrances

The southern section of the park between Phoenix Terrace and Blackrock Village features a strong boundary with impressive heritage entrances featuring original ironwork. This contrasts with the northern Williamstown parish section of the park where the boundary and entrances are a poorly conceived mix of haphazard elements. The issue is compounded by a couple of key factors. The site is completely porous from Booterstown DART station to College House, opposite Blackrock College. This section is approx. 350m long and there are 6 individual entrance points. This proliferation is completely undermined by the general porous nature of the boundary. There are short sections of solid masonry wall, but the boundary is predominantly made up of bollards and individual barriers.

At the broader scale, the interface of the park boundary with the Rock Road is broken by buildings at several points.

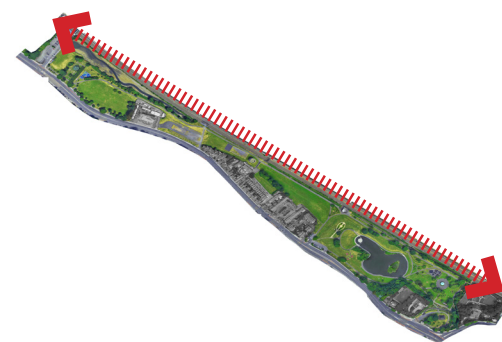
There is a general lack of coherence along the entire boundary of the park. At the time the park was built, the construction was concentrated in the Blackrock section of the park with the Williamstown parish being left as open space (See section 6.4.2) This has had the adverse effect of diminishing any sense of presence or feeling of arrival at an important, flagship park.



### 6.2.2 Railway Line

The railway line was the catalyst for the creation of the park. Unfortunately, it is the railway line that creates a physical barrier between the park and the coastline. The overhead line infrastructure is also a visual intrusion when attempting to view the bay from the park.

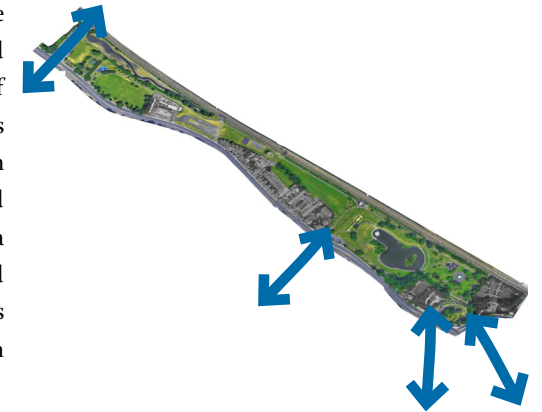
The existing protective boundary fencing and safe overpass crossings provided by Iarnród Éireann are utilitarian in design and detract from the heritage granite tidal walls and coastal vista from within the park.



### 6.2.3 Pedestrian permeability

The Rock Road (R118) is a major traffic corridor. It is classified as a regional road, but this belies the scale of the carriageway, up to four lanes in some sections, and traversed by large volumes of traffic on a daily basis. The road creates an intimidating obstacle between the park and the main bulk of the local residential catchment. At present, there are 3 signalised crossings along the entire 1.2km stretch of the park on the Rock Road. There is an improved crossing at the bottom of Merrion Avenue, with other signalised crossings at Blackrock Clinic and Booterstown junction. This equates to a pedestrian crossing every 600m. In its current arrangement; the Rock Road fails to provide a safe and conducive pedestrian/walking environment as per Section 4.3.2 Pedestrian Crossings of the Design Manual for Urban Road and Streets.

The interface between Blackrock Park and the town is weak. The large entrance at the bottom of Merrion Avenue is impressive but it is isolated from the footfall around the town. The smaller Railway entrance is closer but features a precarious set of historic steps. Access to the park from Blackrock DART station is via a narrow, isolated laneway to the back of Deepwell. At 1m wide this laneway currently cannot accommodate wheelchairs, buggies, cyclists and pedestrians simultaneously.



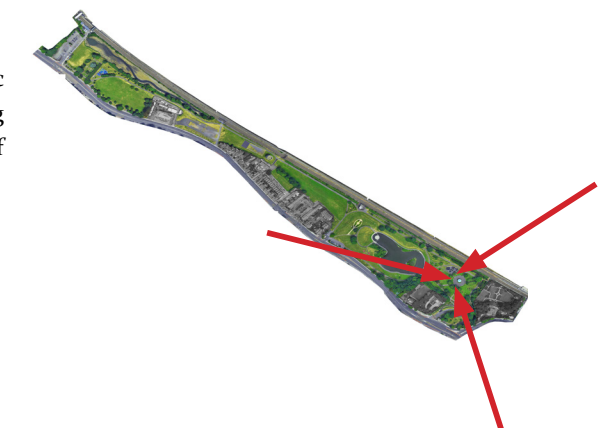
### 6.2.4 Park Facilities

Generally, Regional Parks provide a wide and varied visitor facilities, such as public toilets, regional playgrounds, tearooms and active and passive recreation opportunities. As is evident in other DLRCC Regional Parks (Marlay, Cabinteely, Killiney, People's Park). In Blackrock Park there is a clear absence of these facilities at present.



### 6.2.5 Lack of Identity

At present, the park suffers from a lack of identity as it has no public building or congregation point at its centre. There is no amenity providing food & drink or a facility for people to meet and linger. A public park of this scale needs to offer more as a destination point.





## 6.3 OPPORTUNITIES

### 6.3.1 County Boundary

Blackrock Park is defined as a strategic 'Gateway Park' in the Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS). There are 6 strategic, green corridor routes proposed in the GIS and Blackrock Park forms part of 3 of these (See 2.2). This highlights the importance of the park and its key, geographic location on the threshold between the city and the suburbs. It is a starting/ finishing point on three of the routes including a coastal, estuarine and mountain route. The Dublin Bay Trail cycle route can also be factored into the confluence of important routes. A focal point such as a pavilion or an information hub would act as an anchor and a destination point for park users.

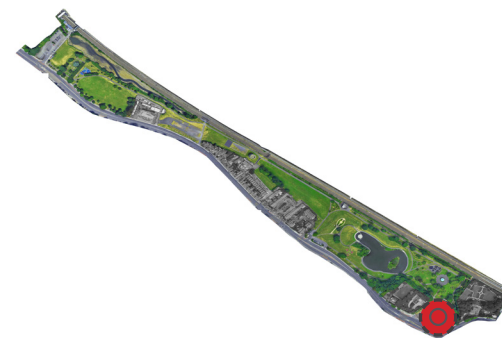
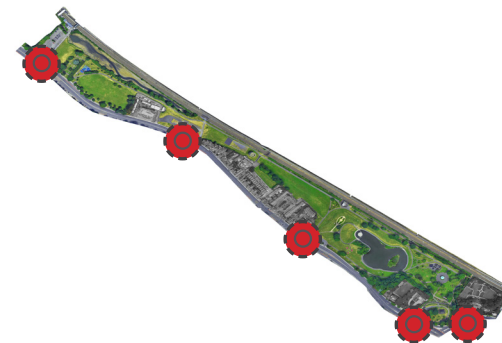
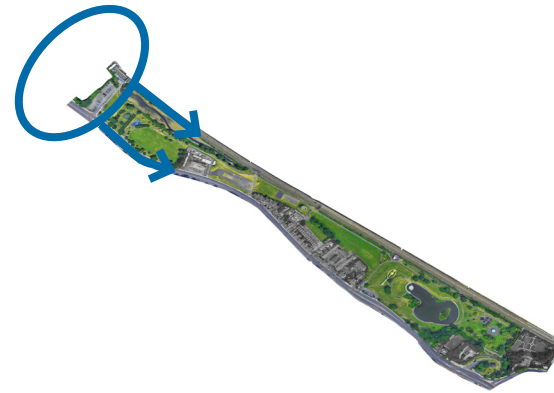
Straddling the county boundary, Blackrock Park is strategically located to create a powerful entry point into Dún Laoghaire Rathdown. Approaching from the city centre, an arrival into the municipality should be a transition from an urban setting into a nature rich, greener landscape. A sense of your location in close proximity to Dublin Bay is important.

### 6.3.2 Greater pedestrian permeability and accessibility

In conjunction with other departments in DLRCC, additional signalised crossings could be added along the Rock Road to improve access to the park and create a safer, more pleasant urban realm, in line with DMURS guidelines.

### 6.3.3 Renovation of the kiosk pavilion

The kiosk occupies a central, dominant position in the elevated hertiage area of the park at Merrion Avenue. Strategically, this area is the strongest within the park. It interfaces with both the public realm and Blackrock village. It also has the most prominent views out over the bay. Unfortunately, the kiosk has deteriorated as a result of its exposed coastal location, antisocial behaviour and the fact that it is an open structure with no windows to keep it water tight. Its location has the potential to create a café/ public building that exploits the views of the bay and the dramatic change in level. The kiosk should be restored and extended in situ if it is feasible to do so. An additional adjoining pavilion of high architectural value with a link to the pedestrian crossing at Rock Hill will also be considered.



### 6.3.4 Tree Planting and greening

The park is endowed with a generous proportion of open grass space, however, the opportunity to accommodate field sports is not feasible due to its dimensions and topography. Currently, there is a greater emphasis on passive recreation in Blackrock Park and this can be underpinned by improving the nature value. In the context of Climate Change and carbon offsetting, Blackrock Park has the potential to contribute to the greening of the County through tree planting. This would have multi-faceted benefits for the local population and the health of the bay.

The wetland areas are a unique feature of the park. There is a mosaic of habitats including the stream, woodland, open grassland, lagoon and the large salt water pond. Each of these supports wildlife. There is great potential to develop thriving habitats while facilitating increased footfall in the park.

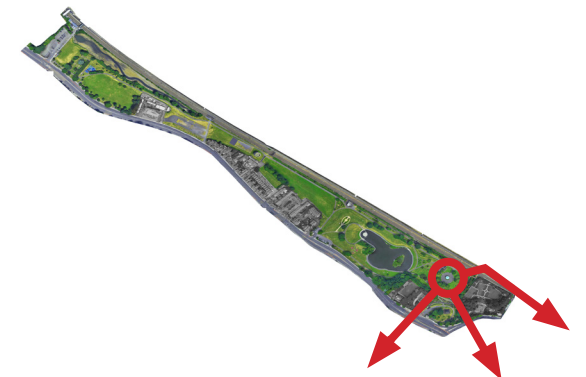
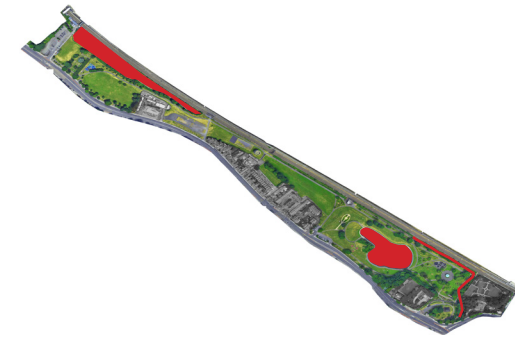
### 6.3.5 Interface with Blackrock Town

The park and town have the potential to benefit from improved connections. Both are destinations that could benefit from improvements in footfall and vibrancy from one and other. Improved entrances at Rock Hill will be considered as part of the masterplan to create a better interface with the village and to exploit the parks view over Dublin Bay.

As part of the Dublin Bay Trail cycle route and the Blackrock masterplan, the widening of the laneway behind Deepwell at the Blackrock DART station will be examined. This process would involve acquiring land to suitably widen it. This has the potential to increase pedestrian flow and create a safer, more inviting route.

### 6.3.6 Inventory

As part of the masterplan a full inventory of items within the park will be collated and assessed. It is proposed to develop a guiding document for the parks within DLRCC to assist with individual projects and the co-ordination of materials and elements. This inventory will include; hard and soft landscape elements as well as larger scale features.



### 6.3.7 Uniform boundary and entrances

A unified boundary will help to anchor the park into the local landscape and give it a stronger presence along the Rock Road. A solid barrier, like that which is at the norther end of the park will act as a safer boundary to help contain children in the park.

### 6.3.8 Provision of niche sports facilities

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown has some of the highest participation rates for supervised sports in the country. Throughout the municipality there is generous provision for the most popular sports such as soccer and gaelic games. While Blackrock Park does not have the potential to cater for field sports; the park lends itself to niche sports such as bouldering, skateboard and BMX which will be examined through the Masterplan of the park

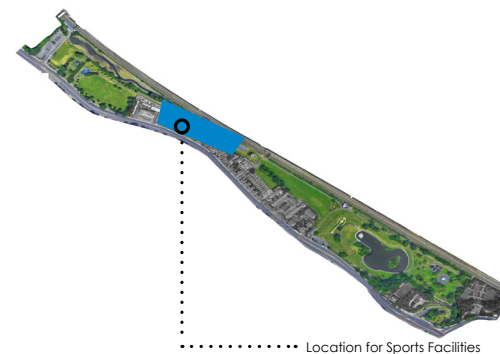
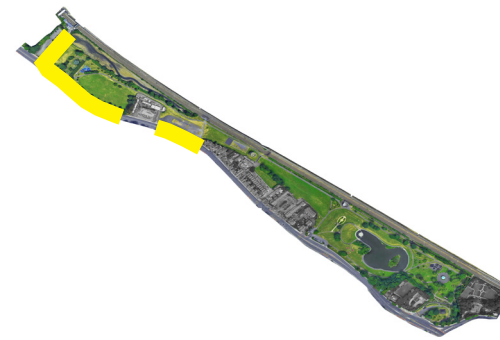
### 6.3.9 Martello Tower

The Martello Tower remains completely unused at present. It is essential that the structure is utilised. This could be as a holiday let accommodation, an interpretive centre or as facility for hosting local groups. Part of its re-appropriation will involve establishing the original ground level that surrounds the former defensive fort.

## 6.4 THREATS

### 6.4.1 Future Local Developments

The proposed Sutton to Sandycove (S2S) cycle route has the potential to have a detrimental impact on the park if not properly designed and integrated into the park fabric. The route could develop into a cycling dominated thoroughfare which may negatively affect pedestrian usage along the main corridor of the park.



### 6.4.2 Historic fabric

Blackrock Park is recognised as a unique resource within Dún Laoghaire Rathdown under the designation of a Regional park. DLRCC has attempted to conserve and manage the historic fabric of the park, with ongoing repairs and improvements throughout the site, most notably the bandstand. It is recommended that a detailed inventory compiled of the original fabric including lampposts, benches and railings is undertaken. Additional structures within the park must be preserved to secure the historic fabric and, where applicable, a new use sought for them, these include the Martello Tower and kiosk. Overall, the park is a fine example of picturesque Victorian landscape design. The unique salt water pond, bandstand and formal layout form the architectural character of the site and require regular maintenance.

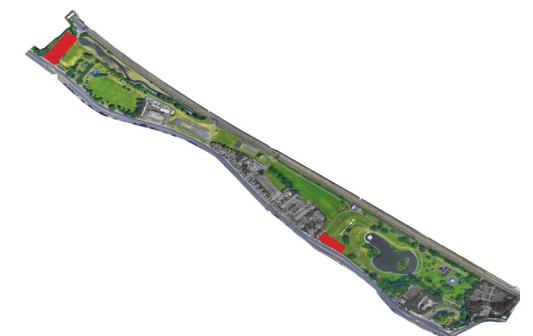
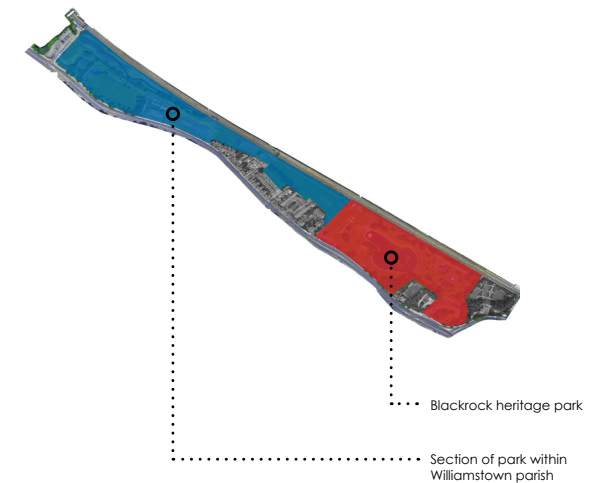
Going forward, a management plan will inform and guide the removal of invasive and inappropriate planting without impacting the character of the established plantations.

The underlying principles for the Masterplan within Blackrock Park focus on conservation, protection, and enhancement. The Masterplan aims to find the balance between conservation and development. It is essential that the intrinsic qualities of the park are maintained and restored where required while managing the ever-increasing visitor numbers and pressures for facilities. Through the site analysis, the key attributes of this Victorian landscape park have been identified. As part of the Masterplan, the Council seeks to implement a co-ordinated, heritage-led approach to the management and development of the park.

### 6.4.3 Carparking

The provision and demand for car parking is an issue not only effecting Blackrock Park but the broader county as well. The provision of car parking requires the use of an expansive amount of land which is only fully utilised intermittently.

As part of the Masterplan a case study of vehicles using the park will be undertaken, which will guide the provision or reduction of parking allocated within the park.



#### Key Challenge - Masterplan:

The current park facilities will be reviewed in terms of quality and suitability with a view to upgrading these where required and providing new suitable and sympathetic facilities where appropriate. This will include a review of the public toilets throughout the park to ensure the locations and standards meet the demands of the park users and are suitable for persons of all ages and abilities. The use of smart technologies will be considered to ensure they are catered for in an integrated yet user friendly manner.





