

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND URBAN CONTEXT

2.1 Site Location

The subject site is located between Blackthorn Drive and Carmanhall Road and has an area of 15,426 sq m (1.54 Hectares). The wider surrounding area is referred to as the Sandyford Business District which comprises Stillorgan Business Estate, Sandyford Business Estate, South County Business Park, Central Park, Legionaries and Leopardstown Park Hospital.



Figure 2.1: Location of the Subject Site.

Source: Myplan.ie, OSI Map, Indicative Location Annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019.

2.2 Site Context

The subject site is bound by a constructed mixed use residential scheme (Rockbrook Phase I) and a brownfield site (Rockbrook Phase II) which has recently been granted permission for a mixed use development to the west (Reg. Ref. ABP-304405-19) as indicated at Figure 2.2 below.

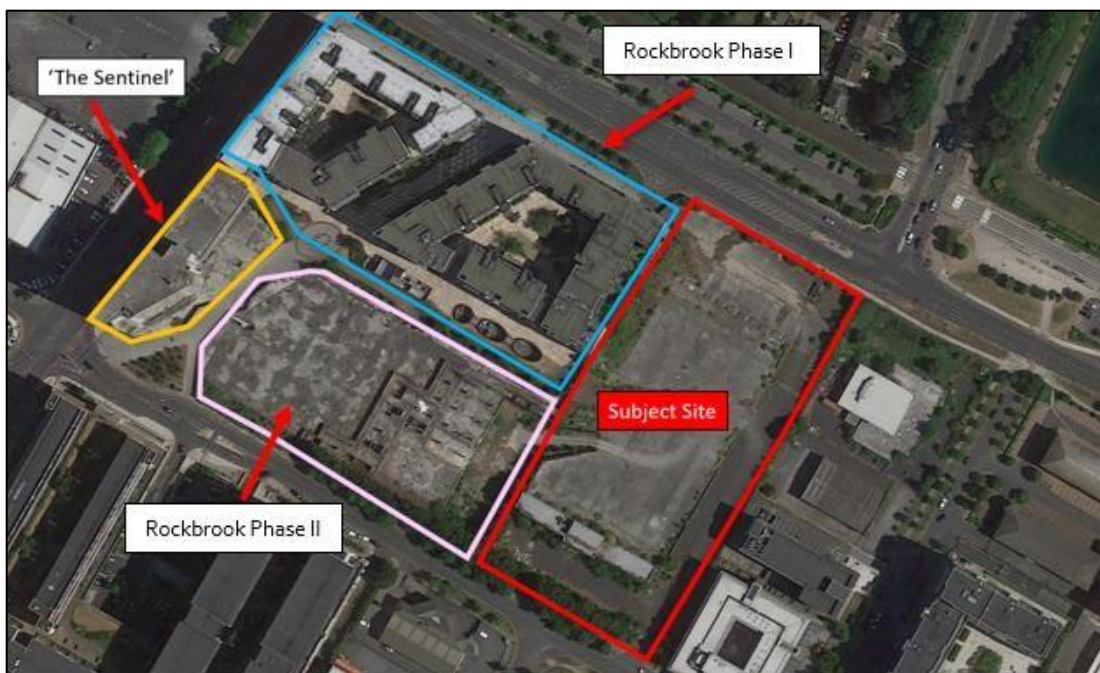


Figure 2.2: Immediate Area of the Subject Site with Recent and Proposed Developments.

Source: Google Earth, Annotated by Thornton O’Connor Town Planning, 2019.

The site is bound to the north by Blackthorn Drive, a large distributor road and the Green Luas line, which is located less than c.100 meters to the north-east. Further north is characterised by suburban low density housing (typically 3 No. bed semi-detached dwellings). The Stillorgan- Kilmacud and Stillorgan-Merville Electoral District’s located directly to the north of the subject site comprise 91 per cent and 77 per cent of House/Bungalows respectfully. The Stillorgan reservoir is located to the north-east. South of the subject site is primarily commercial in nature with the provision of the Beacon South Quarter Shopping Center which includes Dunnes Stores as an anchor unit.



Figure 2.3: Wider Surrounding Context of the Subject Site.

Source: Google Earth, Annotated by Thornton O’ Connor Town Planning, 2019.

Rockbrook Phase I comprises the construction of Blocks A and B of the parent permission (DLR Reg. Ref: D05/1159 and ABP Ref.PI o6D.215205) which is now completed and the partially constructed 14 No. storey Sentinel Building located to the south west of the subject site. The Sentinel Building has been granted subsequent planning permission for the development of 294 No. office suites and 28 No. meeting rooms (DLR Reg.Ref.: D16A/0991). When completed the Sentinel development will create additional employment opportunities in the area. The proposed demolition and construction phases of the subject scheme have been designed with consideration of its interaction with Rockbrook phase I.

Rockbrook Phase II has recently been granted permission by An Bord Pleanála (Reg. Ref.: ABP-304405-19) for the construction of 428 No. apartments, creche (486 sq m) and 4 No. retail units (862 sq m). The scheme subject to this EIAR has been designed to provide key pedestrian linkages with Rockbrook Phase I and II. Furthermore, the Applicant and Design Team have been cognisant of the architectural composition of the entirety of the Block and its role in addressing a key node of public transport in Sandyford through the examination of alternative design approaches (refer to Chapter 4) which were informed by reviewing the extant planning history of the subject site, the surrounding urban context and relevant planning policies

The *Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022* and Appendix 15 of the *Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 - Sandyford Urban Framework Plan (SUFP)* have identified an area directly to the south of the subject site for Open Space. The Open Space site is zoned Objective F which aims to '*preserve and protect for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities*' as shown at Figure 2.5 below. The provision of public open space in such close proximity to the subject site will further enhance the high quality and quantum of public, communal and private open space being provided for future residents of the Build-to-Rent scheme.

2.3 Zoning

The subject site is zoned 'MIC' (*Mixed Inner Core*) in the *Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022*, where the stated objective is '*to consolidate and complete the development of the mixed-use inner core to enhance and reinforce sustainable development*'. The lands zoned MIC form Zone 2 within the SUFP.

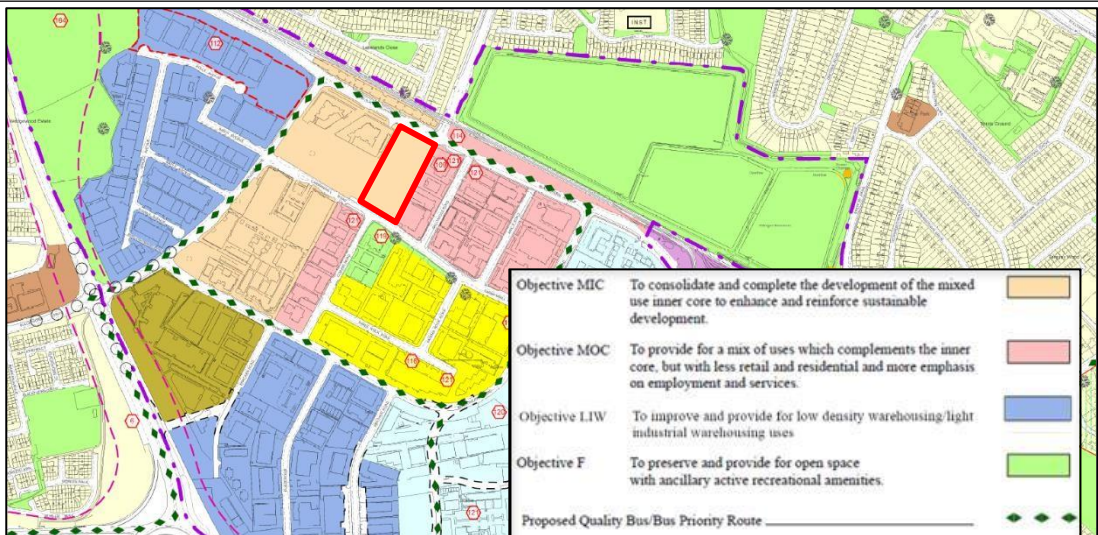


Figure 2.4: Zoning Map with Subject Site Outlined Indicatively in Red.

Source: Zoning Map Extract (Map No. 6) from *Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022*.

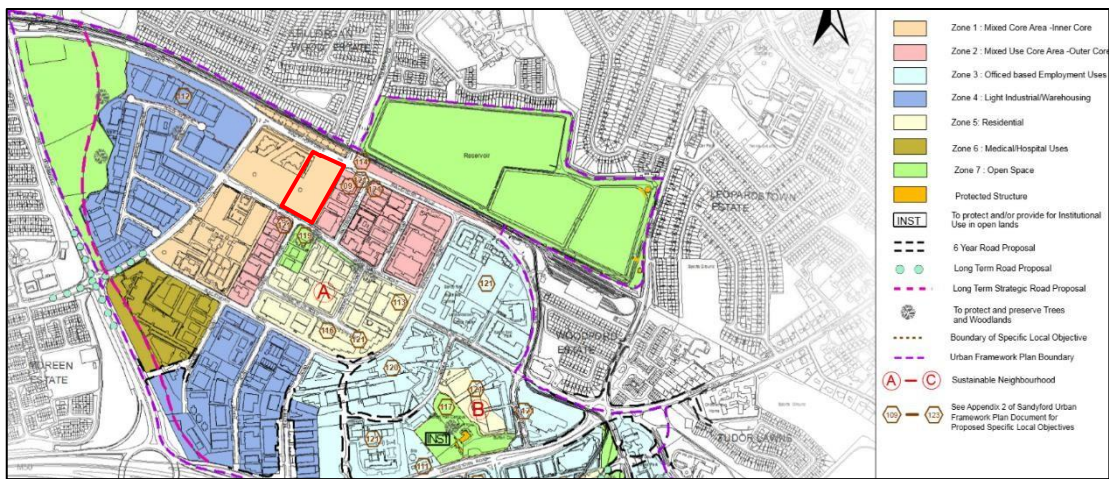


Figure 2.5: SUFP Zoning Map with Subject Site Outlined Indicatively in Red.

Source: Zoning Map Extract from Appendix 15 of the *Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 - Sandyford Urban Framework*.

The site does not contain any Protected Structures or any conservation designations. Blackthorn Avenue located to the north of the subject site is designated as a proposed quality bus/bus priority route. The proposed development which comprises residential units with ancillary resident amenities, creche and café are permitted in principle on the subject lands.

2.4 Employment Locations

To demonstrate the suitability of the location for Build-to-Rent development, it is noted that there are a significant number of large scale employers located in Sandyford, including the Beacon Hospital and it is considered the primary node of employment in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County as illustrated below at Figure 2.6.

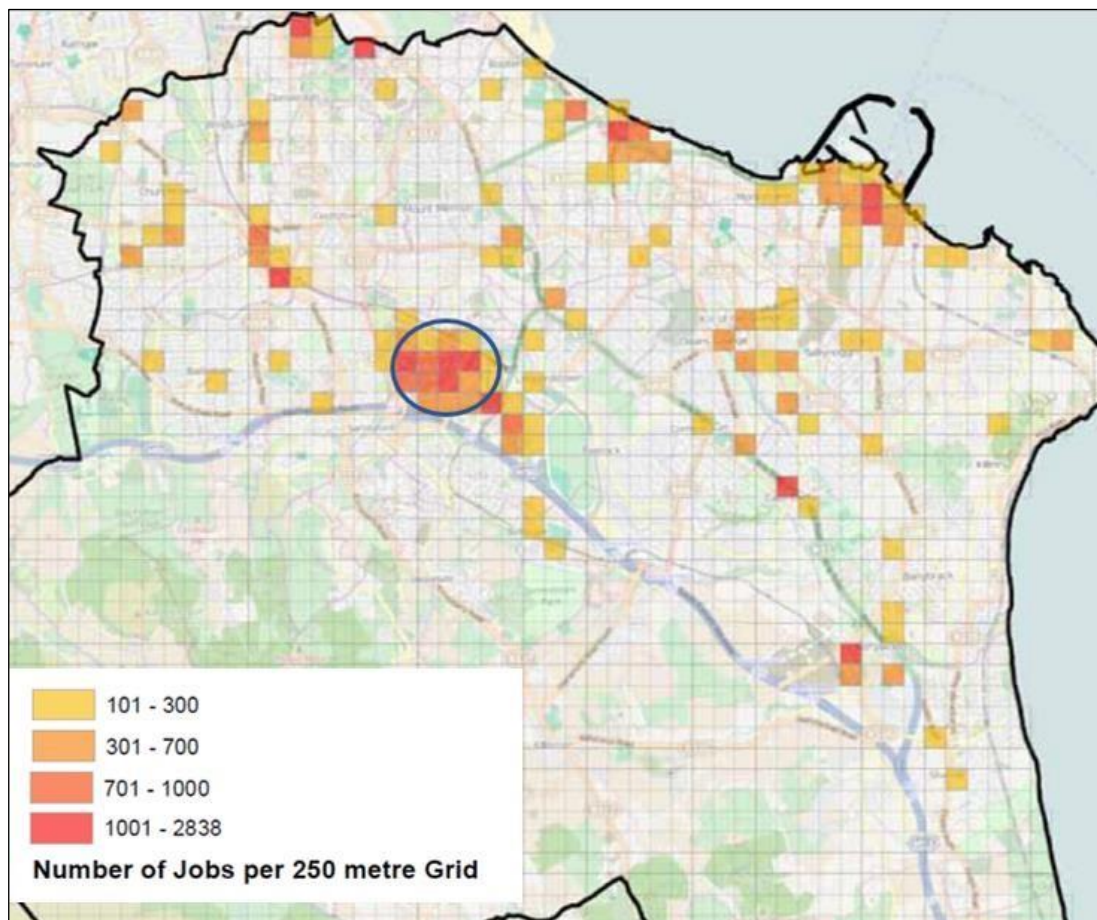


Figure 2.6: Map indicating Sandyford (Circled in Blue) as the Major Employment Location in the Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown County.

Source: *Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022*, Annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019.

2.5 Location of Existing Services, Social and Community Facilities Within Walking / Cycling Distance of the Site that will Serve the Needs of Future Residents

In addition to the proposed resident facilities and communal amenity spaces provided within the scheme, there are many services in proximity to the application site. There are a number of supermarkets, restaurants, cafés and gyms within walking and cycling distance of the subject site as illustrated on the aerial photograph below illustrating the site's sustainable location and support of local infrastructure. The Beacon South Quarter comprises a number of services and facilities including health and wellbeing; food and wine; entertainment; and interior and lifestyle.



Figure 2.7: Aerial Photograph Demonstrating the Location of Supermarkets, Restaurants, Cafés and Gym within Close Proximity of the Subject Site.

Source: Google Maps, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019.

There are a number of sports clubs operating in the area including Sandyford Badminton Club and Kilmacud Crokes GAA. It is evident that there are a variety of facilities and services located in close proximity to the subject site that the future residents of the scheme can utilise on foot or bicycle. In addition, there are a range of resident facilities provided on site which are discussed in Chapter 3 – Project Description.

2.6 Public Transport

The subject site is located adjacent to the Green Luas line as illustrated in Figure 2.8 below which demonstrates the immediate proximity (c.100 m/ c. 1 min walk) of the application site to the Stillorgan Luas stop. This high capacity public transport node provides easy access from the application site to locations such as the City Centre (north and south), Cherrywood and Dundrum for example.

The subject site is thus strategically positioned to avail of the benefits of high-quality public transport access.

Green Luas Line

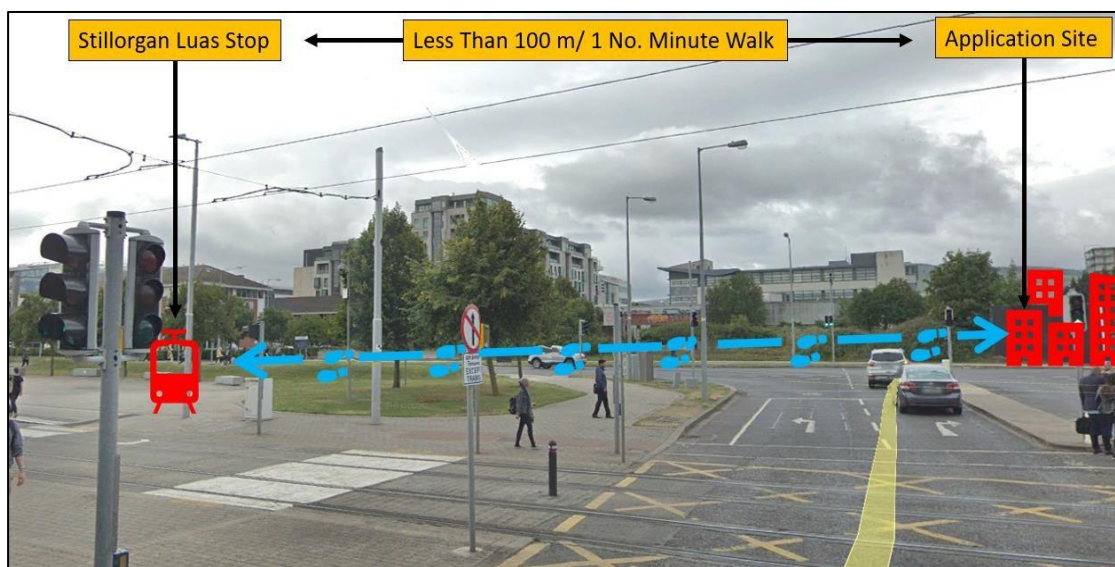


Figure 2.8: Image Illustrating the Immediate Proximity of the Stillorgan Luas Stop to the Application Site.

Source: Google Earth, Annotated by Thornton O’Connor Town Planning, 2019.

The subject site is located less than 100 m from the Stillorgan Luas stop as illustrated above at Figure 2.8. The Stillorgan Luas stop also benefits from Park & Ride facilities. The stop is also in close proximity to the Sandyford stop which is an additional 445 m to the east as shown below at Figure 2.9. The Sandyford stop was originally the terminus of the line and still contains the main maintenance facility for the Luas Green line.

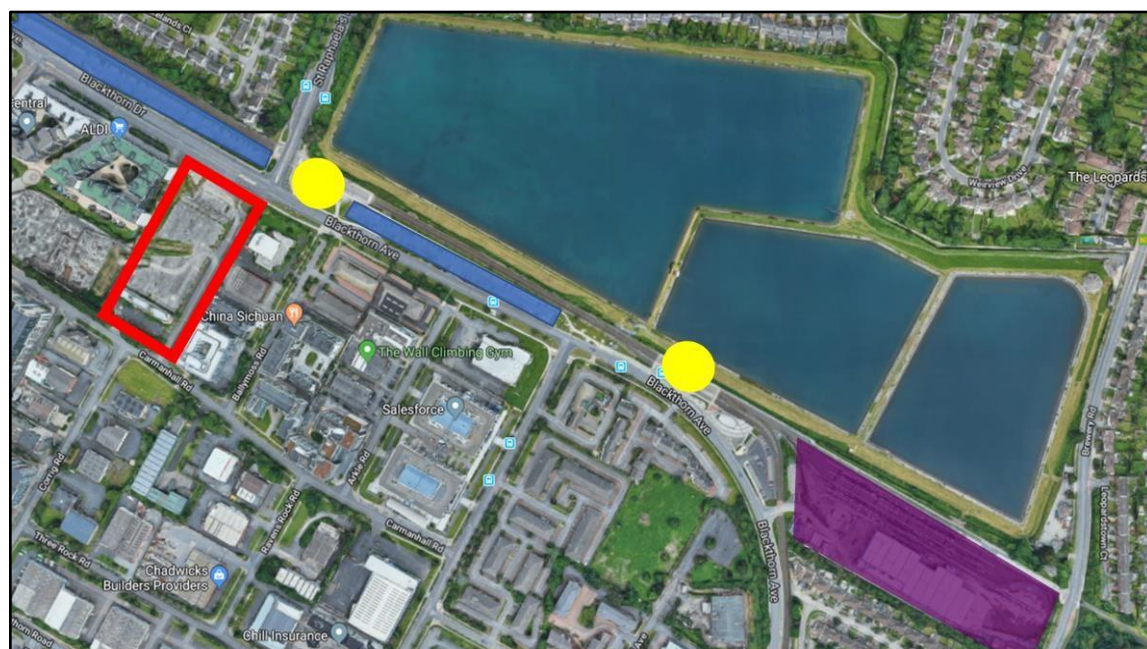


Figure 2.9: Aerial Photograph Illustrating the Proximity of the Application Site to the Green Luas Line.

Source: Google Maps, Annotated by Thornton O’Connor Town Planning, 2019.

The Green Luas line features significant trip generators along its length and therefore it provides accessibility to a large number of employment, retail, services and entertainment/cultural institutions. The Stillorgan stop benefits from some of the highest all-day frequency of services on the green line due to its proximity to the depot/terminus and the interchange with the Brides Glen Branch¹. The route of the Green Luas line is provided in Figure 2.10 below.

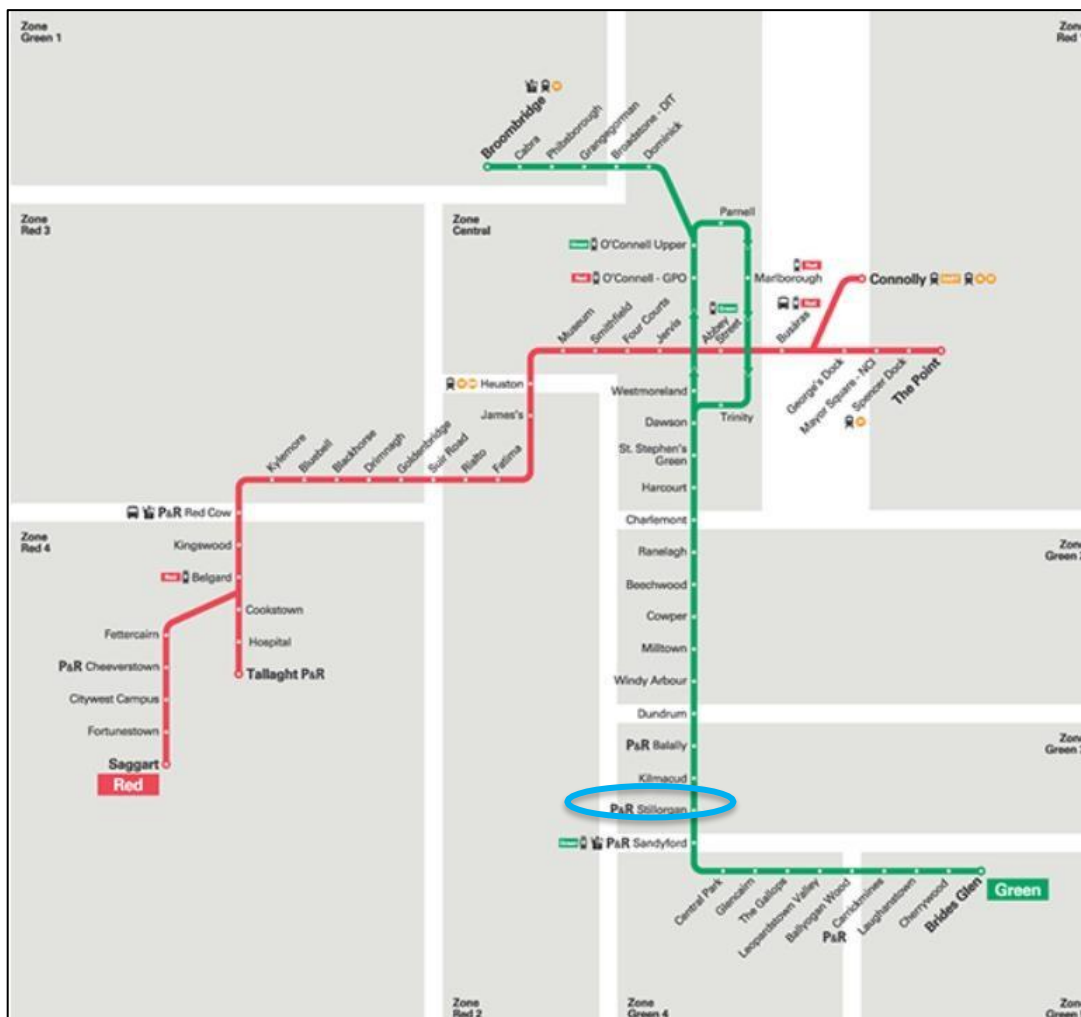


Figure 2.10: Luas Network Map, 2019 with the Stillorgan Stop Circled in Blue.

Source: Luas.ie

The high frequency and capacity of the Green Luas line facilitates excellent connectivity with a wide range of locations throughout the city for future residents of the scheme. A Traffic Chapter has been prepared by O'Connor Sutton Cronin Consulting Engineers.

¹ www.luas.ie

Bus Services

The following bus services are provided within the immediate area of the subject site:

| Bus Services | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Route No. | Direction/ Bus Stop | Distance to Stop | Peak Frequency | Off-Peak Frequency |
| 11 | Wadelai Park to Sandyford Business District | c. 50 m | 10-20 mins | 30 mins |
| 47 | Poolbeg Street to Belarmine | c. 115 m | 30 mins | Hourly |
| 116 | Ticknock to Blackrock Dart Station | c. 115 m | - | Daily |

Table 2.1: Bus Services Serving the Site.

Source: Dublin Bus, compiled by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019.

It is noted that the Aircoach (Route No. 700) serves the Sandyford Luas stop (every c.15- 30 mins) which is located c. 445 m to the east of the site. There are a number of additional bus routes accessible within a short distance as illustrated below.

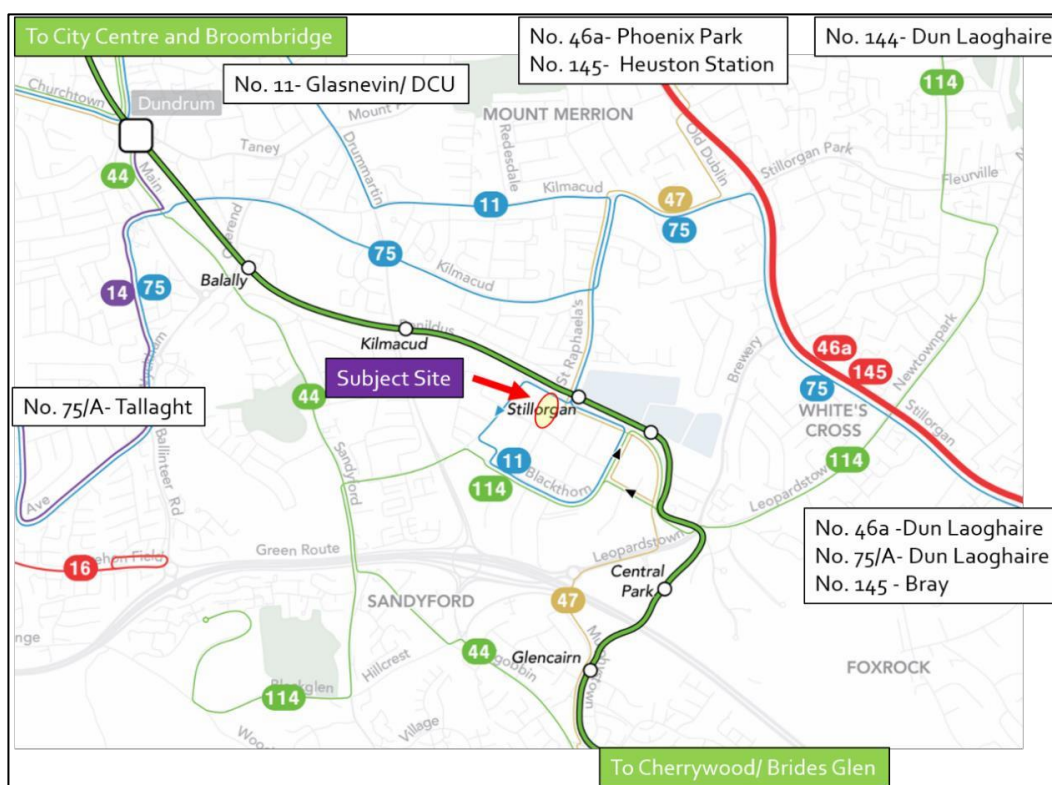


Figure 2.11: Existing Bus Services Surrounding the Subject Site.

Source: Busconnects.ie, Map No. 1 Existing Bus Network, Annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019.

The *Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035* and *Rebuilding Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018-2027* outline the proposed provision for upgrades to the Greater Dublin Area bus network. Figure 2.12 below demonstrates the proposed new bus routes that will operate in the area surrounding the subject site following the upgrade works of Bus Connects:

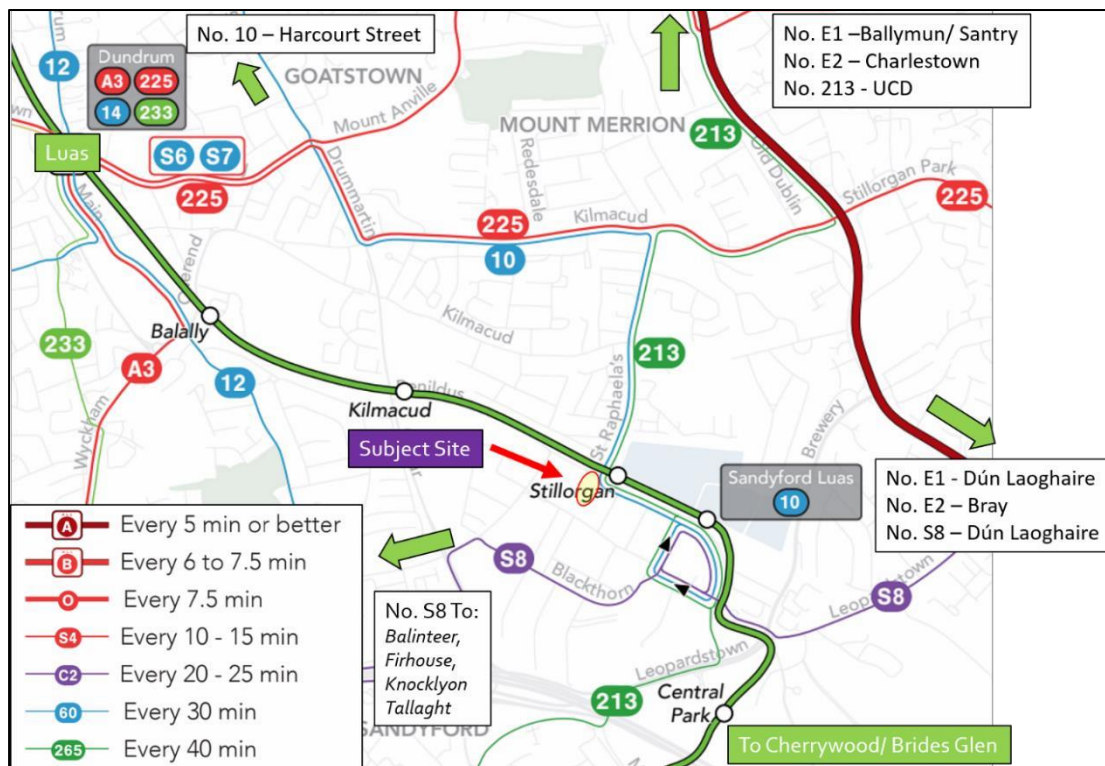


Figure 2.12: Proposed Bus Network New Routes Surrounding the Subject Site.

Source: Busconnects.ie, Map No.2 Proposed All Day Network, Annotated by Thornton O’Connor Town Planning, 2019.

The existing bus network that serves the site, in addition to the proposed bus network improvements will provide for a high quality bus service for future residents of the scheme.

2.7 Cycle Network

The National Transport Authority – *Greater Dublin Area Cycling Network (2013)* proposes regional cycle network upgrades for Dublin City and satellite settlements. We refer to the existing and proposed cycle networks as illustrated in Figures 2.13 and 2.14 below which clearly demonstrate that the subject site and the surrounding locale will benefit from significantly improved cycling infrastructure which will reduce car dependency in the area.



Figure 2.13: GDA Cycle Network Plan Illustrating the Existing Cycle Facilities Surrounding the Subject Site.

Source: NTA Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (2013), Annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019.



Figure 2.14: GDA Cycle Network Plan Illustrating the Proposed Cycle Facilities Surrounding the Subject Site.

Source: NTA Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (2013), Annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2019

On a local level, the *Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Development Plan 2016-2022* sets out a plan to provide radial and orbital cycle routes through the County as shown below:

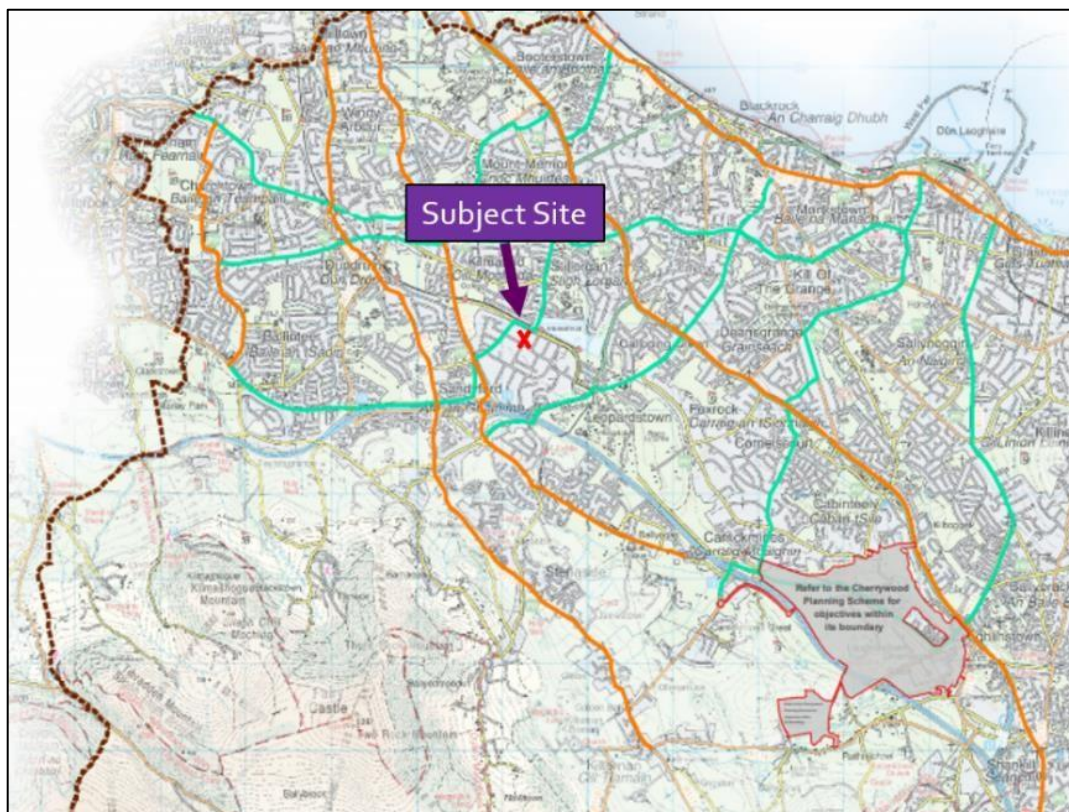


Figure 2.15: Map Illustrating the Existing Radial Cycle Route (Orange) and Orbital Cycle Route (Teal) Surrounding the Site (Red X) (Indicative Only).

Source: *Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Development Plan 2016-2022.*

The *Sandyford Urban Framework Plan 2016-2022* (SUFF) has also made provisions for improvements to the walking and cycling facilities of the area as illustrated at Figure 2.16. The SUFF proposes improvements and connections which will make the environment safer for pedestrians, including elements of traffic calming and a 30 Km/h zone which encompasses the subject site.

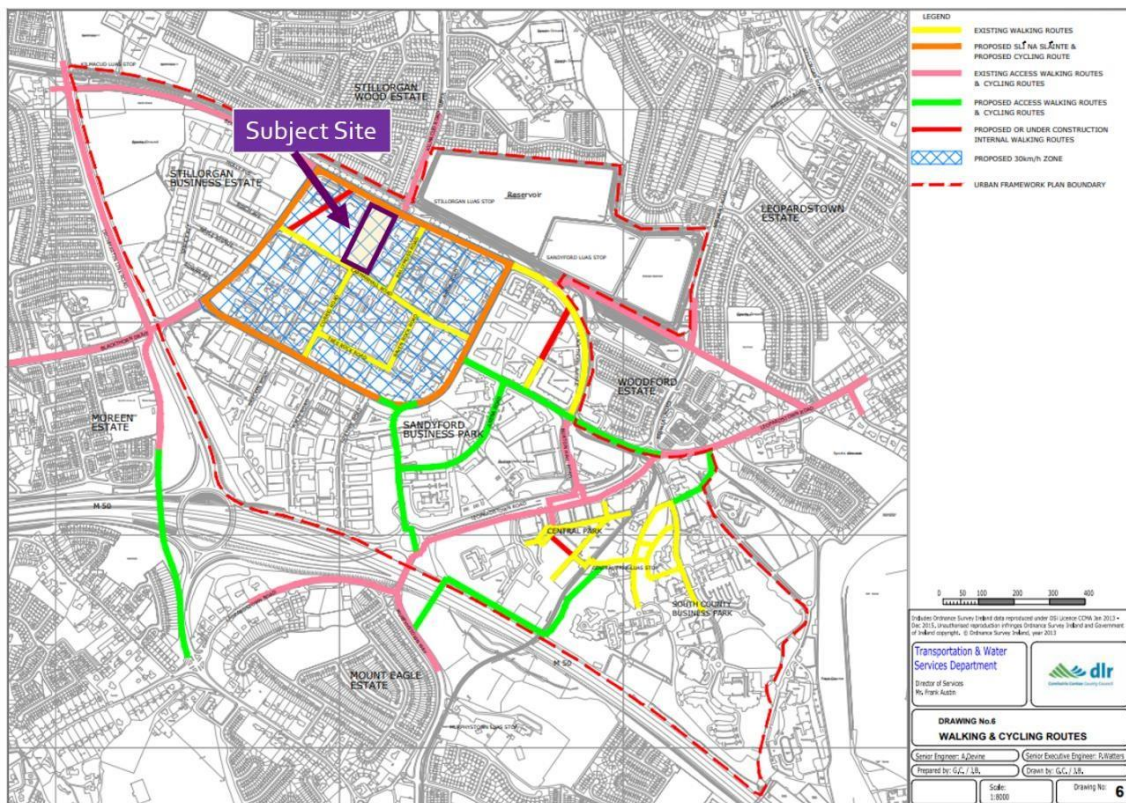


Figure 2.16: Local Level Walking and Cycling Improvements Proposed within the SUFP.

Source: *Sandyford Urban Framework Plan 2016-2022, Walking & Cycling Routes, Annotated by Thornton O’Connor Town Planning, 2019.*

It is considered that the existing and proposed cycle networks that serve the site will allow for residents to easily commute to their place of employment and/or utilise existing services and amenities in the surrounding area whilst promoting a healthy and active lifestyle.