Student Demand and Concentration Assessment

Sandyford Student Accommodation

Avid Technology International,
Carmanhall Road,
Sandyford Industrial Estate,
Dublin 18.

Prime Living Sandyford Ltd

December 2018
1.0 Introduction

Hughes Planning and Development Consultants, 70 Pearse Street, Dublin 2, have prepared this report on behalf of Prime Living Sandyford Ltd in in conjunction with a planning application for a proposed student accommodation development at Avid Technology International, Carmanhall Road, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18. The intent of the report is to assess student accommodation schemes in the vicinity of the subject site to demonstrate that this area does not have an over concentration of student accommodation.

There is presently a significant shortage in student accommodation within Dublin, which has in turn created significant demand on the rental markets both within Dublin and the surrounding ‘commuter towns.’ The current student population of Dublin is 47,000, which makes up 9% of the total population of Dublin. This is expected to increase by up to 20,000 students by 2024, prompting significant strain on an already in demand rental market. An increase in affordable student accommodation in appropriate locations will be of significant value to both students and the wider rental market.

The proposed development of 131 no. student apartments comprising 706 no. student units (817 no. student bed spaces) at Carmanhall Road, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18, is considered to be appropriately sited, catering to 3rd level institutions located south of Dublin City Centre.

2.0 National Planning Policy

As discussed in the Statement of Consistency and Planning Report accompanying this application, recent National planning policies encourage the provision of purpose-built student accommodation, including the below.

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework includes the following commentary in relation to the provision of student accommodation:

‘Demand for student accommodation exacerbates the demand pressures on the available supply of rental accommodation in urban areas in particular. In the years ahead, student accommodation pressures are anticipated to increase. The location of purpose built student accommodation needs to be as proximate as possible to the centre of education, as well as being connected to accessible infrastructure such as walking, cycling and public transport. The National Student Accommodation Strategy supports these objectives.’

The ‘Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness’ was published in July 2016 as part of the Government’s Rebuilding Ireland initiative. This is a whole-of-Government action plan which seeks to address existing issues of housing supply and homelessness in Ireland through five ‘Pillars’. Pillar 4, ‘Improving the Rental Sector’, includes student accommodation and the provision of student accommodation is described as a key action. It is stated that the student population in Ireland is to grow to 193,000 students by 2024, in the ‘Student Accommodation’ section. The provision of well-designed and located student accommodation is stated to be key to relieving pressure on the private rental sector. It is a ‘Key Action’ of the Plan to ‘support greater provision of student accommodation’.

The development of the first National Student Accommodation Strategy was a key action in the Government’s Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness. The National Student Accommodation Strategy – Rebuilding Ireland 2017 was developed by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), together with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPCLG), as key stakeholders to introduce measures to support the delivery of an increased level of supply of purpose built student accommodation. The report highlights that there is a grave need for purpose built student accommodation in Dublin and that this demand/supply disconnect is also pressuring an already strained private rental sector. It details that a shortfall of 17,866 bed spaces in the provision of student accommodation currently exists and this situation is only expected to marginally improve between now and 2024. Even if all schemes in the pipeline are completed in full, excess demand is forecast to be 17,771 and 13,569 in 2019 and 2024 respectively.
It is suggested in the report that increasing the quantum of purpose built student accommodation beds in Ireland will contribute to addressing the rental crisis in the capital and in other rental pressure zones, the report including the following commentary:

“...it is a fair extrapolation to make that every four students housed in either PBSA or in Digs will free up an additional housing unit in the private rented sector that would otherwise have been occupied by students. The impact of an additional 21,000 student accommodation bed spaces, in addition to an additional 1,500 Digs spaces, will free up at least an additional 5,000 rental units for the wider residential rental sector.”

3.0 Current and Projected Student Numbers

Both the Higher Education Authorities (HEA) report, the Student Accommodation: Demand and Supply, which was published in 2015, and The National Student Accommodation Strategy (developed in conjunction with Rebuild Ireland) provide information in relation to student accommodation in the State. The HEA lead the strategic development of the Irish higher education and research system with the objective of creating a coherent system of diverse institutions which respond to the social, cultural and economic development of Ireland. The HEA has a statutory responsibility for the effective governance and regulation of the higher education system. The National Student Accommodation Strategy has been prepared by the Minister for Education and Skills (Richard Burton) and the Minister of State for Higher Education (Mary Mitchell). The strategy is an important action in the Governments overall plan to accelerate housing supply.

It is acknowledged that the projected student numbers are set to increase over the next 12-year period, with the study aimed at identifying the extent of growth, where this will likely occur to help determine how and where future student housing can be accommodated.

The Higher Education Authority data provides that there are 225,628 students in Ireland, with the number of student enrolments set to increase by 27% by 2030. 180,000 students are full time enrolments, 37,633 are part time enrolments and 7,385 are remote enrolments. This is expected to expand by a further 20,000 by 2024 which creates significant strain on students being able to find affordable and appropriate student accommodation. With respect to Dublin, 47,000, or 20% of students are located in Dublin, with 37,329 in full time enrolments and 9,689 in part time enrolments.

Of the increase in students studying in Ireland, both Irish nationals and international students, Dublin is seeing the biggest growth in new entrants. Of the 43,569 full time undergraduate students in the year 2016/2017, 23% were studying in Dublin, with 6% in Galway and 12% in Cork. It is therefore reasonable to assume that, as the largest city and capital city of Ireland, Dublin is set to experience the largest growth in student population over the coming decade.

4.0 Demand for On-Campus Accommodation

The Higher Education Authority found that Dublin has a low provision of purpose-built student accommodation in comparison to the student population of the city, and that demand for purpose-built student housing is highest in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick. The demand is set to increase in the coming years as the student population and enrolment numbers increase.

The Rebuilding Ireland report identifies that there are a number of on campus projects on the way, which includes 300 bed spaces at Maynooth University and 350 units at UCD, and the view that an additional 3,000 bed spaces will be available by 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Projected PBSA (HEI &amp; private)</th>
<th>Projected Demand for PBSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>33,441</td>
<td>57,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>40,687</td>
<td>66,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2024</td>
<td>54,654</td>
<td>75,640</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.0 The National Student Accommodation Strategy outlining the projected totals and demand for purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) by higher education institutions (HEI) and the private sector.
The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 recognises ‘that demand for student accommodation in the County is significant and has to be addressed.’ Due to this demand and given the growth in recent years of the numbers of third level students, along with the competitive rental market in Dublin, there is an identified demand for specific residential accommodation to cater for students.

5.0 Rental Trends and Implications on Students

The Daft.ie Rental Price Report provides an analysis on the trends for the particular quarter in relation to the current rental market. Among the many concerns which specifically focus on the continuing increase in high rental prices and high rental demand, is the subsequent impact on the student population. With demand for rental properties/rooms 34% above the previous rental spike, students are being forced into significant commutes from regional or commuter towns, reliant on friends’ couches, cars and even on the streets. This is a clear indication of the extreme circumstances that are facing students attempting to study and rent in Dublin.

The current student housing market is now heavily reliant on the private sector, with purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) slowly bridging the supply vs demand differential. However, this has currently led to a niche market whereby the majority of students are priced out of such developments due to the expensive weekly prices, with some recorded in excess of €230. This has in turn become more attractive and affordable to international students, placing more constraints on local students. Whilst the use of Digs is certainly helping the current student accommodation crisis, it cannot be seen as a sustainable long-term solution. Daft has also suggested that a lack of funding to the education sector is a potential reason behind higher education institutions using the market rates to increase the price of accommodation and rooms, which further contributes to the financial strain placed on students finding affordable accommodation.

![Figure 1.0](image.png)

The average rental prices within the Dublin metropolitan core, and the year on year percentage increase (graph taken from Daft.ie).
The above table illustrates the continual growth in rental prices, which is seeing students seeking accommodation in commuter and regional towns as well as competing for accommodation against families and young professionals within Dublin and the inner suburbs.

6.0 Surrounding Population

The population of the area surrounding the subject site (Dundrum-Balally Electoral division) is 8,035 people. The population of student base (18-29) came to 1,677, which equates to 21% of the population area. This is relatively on par with the Ireland as a whole, with 18% of the population aged between 15-29. It is acknowledged that not all 3rd level students are aged between 15-29, however the high majority of students seeking student accommodation would be aged between this age bracket. Mature aged students generally have residential accommodation and would not be seeking student accommodation as a means of residence during the timeframe of their studies.

The population within the Sandyford Industrial Estate in comparison is 3,852 people. High density residential development within the business park makes up the majority of the population, with much of the remaining land utilised by retail and commercial buildings. There are a number of existing apartment buildings within the industrial estate, along with a recent SHD approval for 460 no. apartments in 6 no. five to fourteen storey blocks (Ref. ABP - 301428).

7.0 Profile of Existing Student Accommodation

The National Student Accommodation Strategy identifies that there are presently 12,432 student accommodation bed spaces. 5,285 of these are privity run, whilst the remaining 7,147 are located within the Higher Education Institutions. With almost 45,000 students in Dublin, there is a significant shortfall between supply and demand, which has had a ripple effect on the rental markets in Dublin and the surrounding commuter towns. The below Figures 2.0 and 3.0 identify the location of the subject site in context with the existing third level institutions south of Dublin, as well as the existing student accommodation facilities. Figures 4.0 and 5.0 illustrate the same for central Dublin.
Figure 3.0  The subject site outlined in red with the existing student accommodation facilities located to the south east of Dublin’s city centre in red, and a recently approved PBSA at the Blakes and Esmonde Motors site in yellow.

Figure 4.0  Existing third level institutions located within the Dublin City Centre.
There is presently one SHD application being assessed by An Bord Pleanála for student accommodation. The application is for 289 no. bedspaces located at the Nolan Seafoods Limited, Rathdown Road, Dublin 7 (ABP Case No. 302749). This is identified in orange in Figure 6.0 overleaf.

There have been 4 no. SHD applications approved for student accommodation in Dublin outlined in Table 2.0 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>ABP Ref. No.</th>
<th>No. bedspaces applied for</th>
<th>Total bedspaces approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fassaugh Avenue, Cabra, Dublin 7</td>
<td>300666-18</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakes and Esmonde Motors sites, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin</td>
<td>300520-17</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University College Dublin (UCD)</td>
<td>TA0001</td>
<td>3,006</td>
<td>2,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariavilla, Moyglare Road and Dunboyne Road, Maynooth, County Kildare</td>
<td>301230-18</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,273</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,431</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.0  Approved student accommodation developments through the SHD process
Figure 6.0 Map of Dublin illustrating the approved purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) in yellow, PBSA currently in with the Board (orange) and the subject site (red).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Reg. Ref. No.</th>
<th>Year Approved</th>
<th>No. bedspaces applied for</th>
<th>Total bedspaces approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>former Montrose Hotel, Stillorgan Road, Stillorgan, Co Dublin</td>
<td>D14A/0552 &amp; ABP PL06D.244601</td>
<td>21 May 2015</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409 Stillorgan Road, Stillorgan, Co Dublin</td>
<td>D17A/1088</td>
<td>13 February 2018</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409 Stillorgan Road, Stillorgan, Co Dublin</td>
<td>D18A/0348</td>
<td>11 June 2018</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current application being decided</td>
<td>Reg. Ref. No.</td>
<td>Registration date</td>
<td>No. bedspaces applied for</td>
<td>Total bedspaces approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409 Stillorgan Road, Stillorgan, Co Dublin</td>
<td>D18A/0995</td>
<td>22 October 2018</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.0 Previously approved (past 4 years) and current student accommodation applications with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

8.0 Proximity of Site to Higher Education Institutions

As identified in Figure 2.0, there are 5 no. third level institutions located within a 3.8km radius of the subject site. These include the University College Dublin (UCD); the College of Media and Artistry; Dundrum College of Further Education; Stillorgan College of Further Education; UCD Graduate Business School; Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology; and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) Sandford.

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 outlines in policy RES12 the requirements for the provision of student accommodation:

*"It is Council policy to facilitate student accommodation on student campuses or in locations which have convenient access to Third Level colleges (particularly by foot, bicycle and high quality and convenient public transport) in a manner compatible with surrounding residential amenities. In considering planning applications for student accommodation the Council will..."*
UCD is the largest third level institution and is located within Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County. The 2016/2017 figures note that there were 33,724 students enrolled at the University. The population of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County is 218,018 people, with 16% (or 35,816) aged 18-29.

The subject site is considered to be appropriately sited to cater for numerous third level institutions located to the south of Dublin. The Sandyford Luas stop is within 450 metres from the subject site, along with a number of bus routes which includes nos. 11, 47, 114, 116 and 700. Figures 7.0 and 8.0 below identify the proximity of the subject site to the Luas (Green line) and the various bus stops. The bus and Luas service are approximately a 30 minute trip into the Dublin City Centre.

It is therefore considered that the subject site is appropriately located to adequately support students attending third level institutions both within the city centre and to the south.
9.0 Consultation

Prime Living Sandyford Ltd. have consulted Dublin Institute of Technology and Trinity College Dublin directly in relation to potential for the subject development to serve their student accommodation needs. More specifically, they met with Dr. Paul Horan, Head of Campus Planning for Dublin Institute of Technology, on 23rd July 2018, and Shane de Ris, President of the Trinity College Dublin Students Union, on 30th July 2018. In both instances, they received a positive reception regarding the proposed development. Further to this, Prime Living Sandyford Ltd. consulted Brendan Byrne, one of the authors of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) 2015/16 Report – ‘Key Facts and Figures’ relating to Student Accommodation in Ireland, in Jan 2017 and Karolina Pietkiewicz, Housing Welfare Officer at the Union of Students of Ireland, in March 2017, in relation to the wants and needs in today’s Student Accommodation sector. Their advice informed the design of the proposed development.

10.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is submitted that given the limited no. of existing, approved and proposed student accommodation developments within the surrounding area, the proposed development will not result in an overconcentration of student accommodation to the south of Dublin within the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County.

There is significant demand for student accommodation, and the proximity of 5 no. third level institutions (within a 3.8km radius) strengthens the subject sites ability to cater for a wider range of institutions. The availability and proximity of public transport connects the subject site not only to the surrounding third level institutions in the south of Dublin, but the City Centre institutions also.

The existing and approved high density development within the Sandyford Industrial Estate identifies the objectives of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown to promote and encourage high density development within Sandyford. Student housing is an appropriate form of residential accommodation given the current demand and is considered to be an essential form of infrastructure to service the wider area.

Kevin Hughes MIPR MRTPI
Director
For HPDC Ltd.