



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Commission Order ABP-320352-24

Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2022

Planning Authority: Donegal County Council

Application by Donegal County Council for approval under section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in accordance with plans and particulars, including a Natura Impact Statement, lodged with An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 1st day of August 2024 and the further information received by An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 10th day of January 2025 and 23rd day of April 2025.

Proposed Development: Conservation led restoration and upgrade of the existing visitor experience known as The Fort Dunree Project, consisting of the following:

- **Redoubt Fort/High Fort:** construction of a new exhibition space, viewing gallery, comprising an events space, exhibition area, new toilets, staff room, lift and external viewing area. Restoration of the existing buildings and stairs and removal of the non-original first floor structure; reinstatement and partial realignment and upgrading of pathways along the external and internal perimeter of the Redoubt Fort Walls; and works to repair and stabilise the Blockhouses.
- **High Guns:** restoration of the High Guns and upgrade of pedestrian access.
- **Lighthouse:** conservation and refurbishment of lighthouse including partial removal of an internal wall and roof repairs. External landscaping including new footpath links between existing paths.

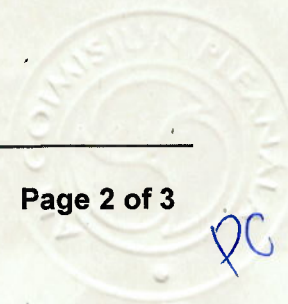
PC

- **Lighthouse/Northern Walkway:** new projecting walkway, with associated metal guarding and flooring.
- **Lower Fort/Lough Swilly Walkway:** construction of new walkway with glass and metal balustrades/guarding. Replacement of existing car park with hard and soft landscaping (native vegetation). Provision of two accessible parking spaces. Construction of new drawbridge to allow a new accessible route to the cafeteria and Lower Fort.
- **"The Village":** conservation and upgrade of four number block houses with new connecting pathways and repair of existing pathways. Conservation and repair of the three existing metal clad billet buildings. Full restoration of four brick buildings. Two of these buildings to facilitate, souvenir shop, pay station, toilets, store and changing facilities (Welcome Buildings) including the upgrade and extension of existing cafeteria and extended hard standing.
- **Infrastructure and Associated Ancillary Works:** upgrade of existing vehicular and pedestrian access points and the associated internal road layout. New internal access road to the Welcome Buildings and High Fort to permit access for a wheelchair accessible electric vehicle. Provision of new carpark with car parking spaces, accessible spaces, electric vehicle charging spaces, minibus/camper-van spaces and coach spaces including an accessible drop off point. Replacement and upgrade of wastewater treatment plants, new toilets, fencing, lighting, landscaping, security gate and barriers. Upgrade of electricity and water supply.

All located in the townland of Dunree, Buncrana in the County of Donegal.

Decision

REFUSE the above proposed development based on the reasons and considerations set out below.



Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the underlying characteristics of the site including the inadequate soil depths, the Commission concluded that the subject site was not suitable to accommodate an on-site proprietary wastewater treatment system and associated polishing filter and that effluent from the development can be satisfactorily treated to a sufficient standard and/or disposed of on site in a manner that would not give rise to the pollution to surface water and/or groundwater. The proposed development would, therefore, be prejudicial to public health and could negatively impact on the Lough Swilly waterbody achieving the relevant water quality status required under the Water Framework Directive. The proposed development is therefore contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



Paul Caprani

Planning Commissioner of An Coimisiún

**Pleanála duly authorised to authenticate the
seal of the Commission.**



Dated this 25th day of July 2025