

Date: 18 April 2026

Name: Cllr. Isobel Towse

Address: Rosscarbery, Co. Cork

Re: Appeal against grant of planning permission at Bessborough, Ballinure, Blackrock, Cork (An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Ref: LH28.324153)

I hereby submit my formal observation in support of the appeal against the decision of Cork City Council to grant planning permission for the construction of 140 residential apartments at the above site.

My grounds for opposition are as follows:

1. There is substantial evidence to indicate that the site of the proposed development at Bessborough contains an unmarked burial ground associated with the former Mother and Baby Home. Records show that 923 infants died at this institution, with 859 of these children remaining unaccounted for and therefore highly likely to be buried in unmarked graves on or in the vicinity of this site, as acknowledged by An Coimisiún Pleanála. The site is a place of profound human and historical significance, where considerable trauma and loss were endured. Development on this land would be wholly inappropriate and deeply insensitive.

We do not build on burial grounds. This should be no exception.

Instead, the site warrants a sensitive and thorough investigation, followed by its preservation as a memorial space. It is essential that survivors of the Mother and Baby Home are placed at the centre of any decision-making process regarding the future of this site.

2. The Environmental Impact Assessment submitted in support of the development is insufficient, particularly in its consideration of alternative locations. There has not been an adequate exploration of more suitable sites for housing that would avoid disturbing land of such significance and causing further pain to survivors and their families.

In light of the above, I respectfully urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse planning permission for this development.