

JERRICA STRUTHERS,
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE,
WORKERS PARTY OF IRELAND,
CORK

The Secretary,
An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.

13/04/2026

**Re: Observation, Planning Appeal for Bessborough, Blackrock,
Cork City. Planning Authority Ref: 25/44442 (Cork City Council).
An Commission Pleanála - Case reference: LH28.324153
Applicant: Estuary View Enterprises 2020 Ltd.**

A Chara,

On behalf of The Workers Party of Ireland (Cork Region), I wish to lodge an observation in support of the Planning Appeal (Carmel Cantwell et al) for Bessborough, Blackrock, Cork: Planning Authority Ref. 25/4442 (Cork City Council). Applicant: Estuary View Enterprises 2020 Ltd.

The developer intends to build 140 number apartments within the bounds of the former Mother & Baby Home at Bessborough.

Given the history of high infant mortality at the former institution, the incarceration there of young single mothers, the documented physical and psychological abuse, the neglect, deprivation and enslavement they suffered at the hands of those running the institution, the Workers Party considers the entire Bessborough complex, the buildings and its environs to be a crime scene.

As the situation currently stands, the location of the burial sites of the remains of 859 number children, infants and babies throughout the grounds of the former institution are unknown.

In support of our Observation and in support of the aforementioned Planning Appeal, we have identified and categorised five areas of concern, namely:

- (1) Preservation of a Landscape of National Heritage
- (2) Inadequate Archaeological Investigation
- (3) Conflict with Cork City Development Plan
- (4) Environmental & Biodiversity Impact
- (5) Lack of Sensitivity & Transparency

AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA	
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15 APR 2026	
Fee: €	50 Type: PMO
Time: 9:15	By: neagrost

In relation to:

(1) Preservation of a Landscape of National Heritage

– We consider the site as a *Landscape of National Trauma* and *National Memory*. Developing 140 number Apartments on this sensitive ground and in what we regard as an unresolved crime scene fails to respect the historical and cultural significance of the location, as outlined in the National Planning Framework regarding heritage protection.

In relation to:

(2) Inadequate Archaeological Investigation

– We are concerned that no comprehensive, independent archaeological survey has conclusively ruled out the presence of human remains in the proposed development area. Given that the remains of 859 number children stand unaccounted for, any construction poses a risk of irreversible desecration of burial sites as well as an impediment to any future forensic work to be carried out by the State and its relevant agencies i.e. the Department of Justice.

In relation to:

(3) Conflict with Cork City Development Plan (2022 - 2028)

– The proposed high density residential use conflicts with the need to preserve this specific area for memorialisation and open recreational (*meditational*) space as requested by survivor groups and local residents during the development plan consultations.

In relation to:

(4) Environmental & Biodiversity Impact

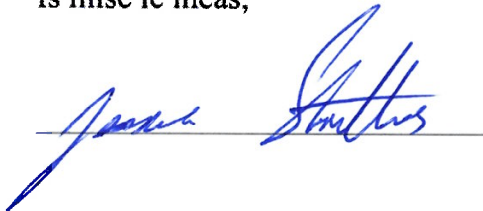
– We contend that there's a strong argument to be made that the scale of the development seems out of character with the surrounding estuary and poses a significant threat to local biodiversity and natural habitats. The site and environs of the former Mother & Baby Home at Bessborough should form the nucleus of a conservation project to serve as a *green lung* for the Blackrock area as it continues its expansion in terms of housing, population density and road traffic.

In relation to:

(5) Lack of Sensitivity & Transparency

– We contend that the developer-applicant has not demonstrated the *highest level of sensitivity* required for a site of this nature. Proceeding with the development prior to completion of a full, state-led, official investigation into the burials seems premature to say the least and contrary to public interest. Such an investigation seems vital in order to ascertain the locations of the remains of the missing children so that post-mortems can be conducted and forensic evidence collected, in determining the cause of deaths. Further criminal investigations involving individual cases may be warranted.

Is mise le meas,



Jerrica Struthers,

Community Representative

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