



Planning Ref: 260142

March 2026

Planning Section
Cork County Council

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: 260142 Permission for: a) construction of a private dwelling, b) new treatment system and percolation area, c) all associated site works AT Ballymacraheen, butlerstown, Co. Cork.

Comment

The Heritage Council was established in 1995 as a statutory body under the Heritage Act 1995 with a Council (the Board of the body) appointed by the Minister. The Heritage Council is a prescribed body under the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 and S.I. No. 600/2001 of the Planning and Development Regulations, section 28 inter alia, in accordance with its functions under Section 6 of the Heritage Act, 1995. We seek to provide submissions on forward planning, development management and strategic infrastructure developments as they relate to Ireland's heritage, namely built, cultural and natural heritage.

We have reviewed the documentation submitted with the application. The proposed development lies wholly within the **Seven Heads Special Protection Area (SPA)**, This SPA comprises a highly sensitive coastal landscape supporting an internationally important breeding population of **Chough** alongside species such as Fulmar, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Cormorant and Peregrine. The Qualifying Interest for the SPA is Chough, and therefore the site's ecological integrity depends not only on cliff-nesting areas but also surrounding coastal grasslands, heath and arable lands which may serve as foraging habitat.

Policy/Objective 15.2 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 seeks to protect sites, habitats, and species, with particular references to Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Marine Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas. The planning application material has no Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report, and therefore the Heritage Council cannot give a view on likely significant impacts on the SPA.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires screening of any project that may affect a European site. Without such screening, it cannot be concluded that the proposal would not adversely affect the Qualifying Interests associated with SPA.

The site also lies within a High Value Landscape, as identified in the adopted county development plan. Policy **GI 14.10** puts obligations on developments within High Value Landscapes namely higher development standards (layout, design, landscaping, materials used). Therefore, the local authority may be justified in applying this policy in this case.

Baill na Comhairle | Council Members

Martina Moloney (Cathaoirleach | Chairperson), John Burgess, Damian Downes, Deirdre McDermott, Muiris Ó Céidigh, Dr. Patricia O Hare, John G. Pierce, Sheila Pratschke, Prof. Mark Scott, Dr. Mary Tubridy

Aras na hOidhreachta, Lana an Teampaill,
Cill Chainnigh, Eire, R95 X264

Aras na hOidhreachta, Church Lane,
Kilkenny, Ireland, R95 X264

T 056 777 0777 | E mail@heritagecouncil.ie

www.heritagecouncil.ie



Conclusion

Given the site's location within both a high value landscape and a Special Protection Area, there is a remarkable lack of environmental information with the application. The local authority needs to determine whether the development is likely to have significant effects on the qualifying interests of the SPA in which the development is located. However, the Heritage Council has concern about the principle of development in European designated sites which should be avoided.

We trust these observations will assist Cork County Council in determining this application.

Yours sincerely

Virginia Teehan

Virginia Teehan

Chief Executive Officer

Bail na Comhairle | Council Members

Martina Moloney (Cathaoirleach | Chairperson), John Burgess, Damian Downes, Deirdre McDermott, Muiris Ó Céidigh, Dr. Patricia O Hare, John G. Pierce, Sheila Pratschke, Prof. Mark Scott, Dr. Mary Tubridy

Aras na hOidhreachta, Lana an Teampaill,
Cill Chainnigh, Eire, R95 X264

Aras na hOidhreachta, Church Lane,
Kilkenny, Ireland, R95 X264

T 056 777 0777 | **E** mail@heritagecouncil.ie

www.heritagecouncil.ie