

Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop Calls for the Protection of the Former Murueta Tileworks Ahead of Its Possible Incorporation into the Maritime-Terrestrial Public Domain

The platform has requested that the Basque Government, the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, and the Municipality of Murueta grant heritage protection to the complex consisting of the chimney, the Hoffmann kiln, and the remains of the former tile and brick factory.

Busturialdea, June 8, 2026

The platform Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop has formally requested heritage protection for the former Murueta Tileworks (*Teileria de Murueta*), located on the left bank of the Urdaibai estuary, in response to the procedure initiated by the Basque Country Coastal Authority to modify the boundary of the maritime-terrestrial public domain in this area.

On May 5, 2026, a site demarcation inspection took place during which the Coastal Authority presented the provisional boundaries of the new demarcation. This review affects the section located approximately between boundary markers M-56 and M-65 and follows the Authority's verification that, during the maximum spring equinoctial high tide of September 19, 2024, water virtually flooded the entire site, reaching the embankment of the railway tracks.

The Coastal Authority's own documentation acknowledges that this area is known as *Teileria* because it was once home to a tile factory, of which the firing kiln and chimney still remain. For the platform, this fact is crucial: the reclassification of the land cannot be treated as a merely administrative matter. This is a site of historical, industrial, architectural, landscape, and cultural significance.

The former tileworks preserves a brick industrial chimney approximately 32 meters high, a Hoffmann-type kiln, the remains of factory buildings, areas associated with ceramic production, and infrastructure linked to transportation, such as the railway halt and the pier. It is not simply an isolated chimney; it is a complete industrial landscape connected to the Urdaibai estuary.

In response to this situation, Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop has submitted requests to three institutions:

- **To the Basque Government**, requesting the initiation of proceedings to designate the site as a Cultural Asset of Special Protection or, alternatively, as a Cultural Asset of Medium Protection.
- **To the Provincial Council of Bizkaia**, requesting an official heritage assessment of the site and the promotion of protection and conservation measures.
- **To Murueta Town-Hall**, requesting the inclusion of the chimney, the kiln, and the associated remains in the Municipal Catalogue of Protected Assets with an appropriate level of protection.

The platform notes that the possible incorporation of these lands into the maritime-terrestrial public domain would significantly alter the legal framework governing the area. However, the Coastal Authority does not protect cultural heritage: it may regulate uses and interventions

within the public domain, but heritage protection falls under the responsibility of institutions with authority over culture, heritage, and urban planning.

For this reason, Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop considers it essential to act before or during the demarcation process, rather than waiting until deterioration, demolition, or inappropriate intervention has caused irreversible loss.

The Murueta Tileworks is not a worthless ruin. It is industrial memory, a cultural landscape, and part of the heritage of Busturialdea. Protecting Teileria means protecting the living history of Urdaibai.