

Proinsias O'Rathaille

GPO Garrison Committee

Dear Chairman,

As far back as I can remember both my parents used to bring me down to Moore Street and impress on me the importance both historically and culture wise, the area had.

My father brought me to the laneway, now The O' Rahilly Parade and pointed to me, where his father was left to bleed to death after being shot in a charge down Moore Street, the first evacuation from the GPO.

He always spoke of the great sacrifices made by those brave men, ensuring that we as a people could enjoy our freedom in a new Republic. "It was their dream" he used to say.

This street and terrace, including The Evacuation Route is very sacred to The O' Rahilly family. The O' Rahilly was the only Leader to die on it, as the rest were executed. For the past fifteen years I have been campaigning to have all the buildings and The Evacuation Route preserved. After our court victory at The High Court I was dismayed at the present minority Ministers actions when she decided to lodge an appeal.

As this area, The Battlefield Site is quoted by The Imperial British War Museum as our own National Museum as the most important Urban Battlefield site in Europe, I fail to see why the Minister has not taken this aboard.

Although there was a Court consent made on the last day of the hearing, that allowed certain immediate underpinning work to stabilise the National Monument, No.s 14 15, 16 & 17 Moore Street, there seems now a lot of other work going on. It is therefore imperative to have our own separate Consultative Architect, Paul Arnold gain access to the buildings and examine close up, the extent of the work which is being carried out. I may also point out, behind a large screen and hoarding.

Moore Street itself predates the famine, which in turn makes it one of the most historical, significant areas in Dublin, along with the GPO. The Battlefield area, incorporating The Evacuation Route and Moore Lane is unique in itself and is visited daily by hundreds of tourists. A Battlefield off the main street in a European city is unheard of and should be

preserved sensitively with signage and period lighting, retaining the street market and fourth generation Traders whom are an integral part of the street.

Once a piece of history is destroyed it is lost forever. There is nowhere else in the world that this would be allowed to happen. Our Republic was born on Moore Street. It still is and always will be, The Cradle of the Nation.

Nobody wants another shopping mall, our Golden Generation did not die for this. Five of the signatories of our Proclamation spent their last hours of freedom here prior to facing the firing squad.

I personally am disgusted that when the entire area was being disposed of by NAMA under Project Jewel, that the Minister did not step in and purchase the entire Battlefield area. She knew about it as I had mentioned it to her at two social events.

Now that over sixteen million has been spent on The GPO Museum it would be ludicrous not to join the Battlefield up to enable visitors and all our Diaspora to walk in the footsteps of the Volunteers and see the Battlefield site for themselves.

As I have stated previously, this sacred area must be preserved now for our future generations. The Diaspora are now angry over the States failure in doing so and cannot believe that the descendants and relatives, a hundred years on, are fighting for its Preservation.

I could go on for hours but won't. Could I suggest you view the enclosed DVD as it is very informative! Go raibh maith agat.

Is mise,

Prionsias O' Rathaille.

A final thought in this our Centenary Year. A 1916 Commemorative Centre and Battlefield Site dwarfed by an unwanted shopping mall? No greater insult to the brave men and women of 1916, the Golden Generation as we celebrate the pivotal moment in our Nation's history.