

# THE SAVE 16 MOORE STREET COMMITTEE

## Submission to the Ministers Consultative Group

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## **Opening Statement.**

As voluntary members of the continuing campaign to preserve and protect 16 Moore Street in its entirety and to develop a 1916 historic quarter in the GPO/Moore Street area we very much welcome the decision to set up of this important consultative body to review report and make recommendations in respect of its proposed development with particular focus on the use and development of the 1916 GPO evacuation route and buildings occupied by rebels in the 1916 Rising. This review is long overdue. We wish to express our appreciation for the support that we have received from TD's councillors, all of the political parties and citizens for a campaign that is now in its 14th year. This is, in our view, the most important conservation campaign in our capital city since the incalculable loss of Wood Quay.

For the record –

The only 1916 relatives groups that we are aware of and support are the Concerned Relatives of the Signatories to the 1916 Proclamation and The 1916 Relatives Association.

The Save 16 Moore Street Committee does not now nor has it ever claimed to represent relatives of 1916 leaders. That is not within our remit. This does not preclude 1916 relatives from supporting the committee in their personal capacity if they so wish. All support is valued and appreciated.

It is a fact that any alterations to the application to develop the Carlton Site have come about as a direct result of the principled and consistent stance of all those groups organisations and individuals opposed to the Chartered Land demolition plan. The fiction that there are only two groups interested in this issue can now be laid to rest – the number of groups and organisations that wish to be involved in this process proves otherwise. There is widespread opposition to the proposal to destroy the Moore Street Battlefield site.

The four buildings of the 1916 National Monument at 14 to 17 Moore Street as listed protected structures can be restored under existing planning regulations under an extant Ministerial consent granted for remedial work. The buildings would not of course, be in their present disgraceful condition if planning enforcement carried out their public duty under the regulations. Almost every building in the Moore Street area is in breach of planning laws whether through change of use, removal of stairwells or the bricking up of windows. No action has been taken to date on this - complaints have simply been acknowledged but not acted upon.

Chartered Land and their representatives have important questions to answer regarding the history of the Carlton site and the production of a glitzy representation of their museum proposal for three protected buildings of the National Monument should not divert the attention of this body from their investigations. Those questions have yet to be addressed and answered.

**Chairman,**

The holder of the highest office in the land, An tUachtarán, Michael D Higgins, on walking the 1916 Battlefield with relatives of the 1916 leaders during the Presidential campaign said:

**'This area belongs to no individual, group or political party. It belongs to the people.'**

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny described the area as a **'confined area but it contains the lanes of history. This needs to be looked at afresh ... the lanes are still there...as is the original brickwork'**.

An Tánaiste Eamonn Gilmore expressed the view **'this is an area dripping in history and I think there is an obligation on the State to respond positively to the relatives of the 1916 relatives to go with this project'**.

We submit that this Moore Street Consultative Group is bound under its terms of reference to consider and address the following:

#### **The Moore Street Area**

There is one original Georgian townhouse left standing in O'Connell Street today – no 42 - a protected structure. It is closed, rundown and in need of restoration. Ministerial consent is not required to carry out work to this historic house but nevertheless under the ownership of Chartered land/now Hammerson's it lies abandoned and is falling into decay through neglect..

In Moore Street we have an intact terrace that pre-dates not only O'Connell Street but Sackville Street itself with no protection. Not all the houses along the terrace have original facades but with a conservation approach the terrace could be restored to its original form without difficulty. That in itself would be a magnet for tourists. The terrace tells us the story of peoples lives - from its housing of trades people serving the needs of the upper classes in the grand houses of Sackville Street/O'Connell St. through generations to the development of the market street we know today. It is a unique part of the capitals history - a physical link to the past. For generations of Dubliners a very special place - the heartbeat of the City.

Moore Street completed in 1773 pre dates the Custom House, Kilmainham Jail and the GPO. It predates O'Connell St/Sackville Street and bore witness to many of the momentous events in our history – from the United Irishmen, the Act of Union, the Great Famine, and the Home Rule Movement. It has been the great survivor of our capitals streetscape and remarkably one of few city centre streets that survived artillery shelling in 1916.

It has played a major part in the social history of the city - a market street of colour character and community. Had the Rising ended in the GPO this street would in its own right be worthy of preservation and protection – a direct link to the birth of our capital.

More importantly, however, this street is where our nation was born. In any other country the preservation of a street of such history would not become the subject of

debate – there would be no debate. City fathers worthy of the name would see it as their duty to guard, protect and preserve it under stringent regulations. The idea that it would be blitzed to make way for a shopping mall would be considered ludicrous – it would not arise. Here in this Republic a voluntary campaign is necessary to save it. The modest terrace of houses from no.10 to 25 Moore Street was the last headquarters of the 1916 Provisional Government. Remarkably it would appear that up to recently not many people knew this – certainly not those charged with the protection of the history and heritage of our capital city. For that is the only conclusion that we can reach at the failure of our public servants to oppose its proposed demolition. This terrace, including its houses outbuildings and back yards, was occupied and held by over 300 volunteers of the 1916 GPO garrison as a last refuge from widespread British machine gunfire and artillery shelling. No 10 Moore Street, the point of entry, housed the leaders overnight and was the location of their first council of war. The decision to surrender was taken by the members of the Provisional Government in no.16 Moore Street – that decision was agreed and accepted by the GPO Garrison in the yards to the rear of Hanlon's at 20/21 Moore Street. Volunteers gathered to the rear of no. 25 Moore Street for a final do or die assault on the British barricade at Parnell Street. The O'Rahilly was left to die in the laneway adjoining no 25 Moore Street.

Moore Street was an appropriate location for the 1916 Rising to end – it ended on the people's street. For it was ordinary men and women who joined the ranks of the volunteers and Citizens Army. And in our time ordinary citizens have, to date, saved this street from obliteration and as a direct result of their efforts no's 14 to 17 Moore Street were designated a 1916 National Monument and have since been purchased by the State. The State finally acceding to the request of relatives and campaigners that it intervene to at very least secure protect and preserve the National Monument in its entirety as required under National Monument and protected structure legislation.

### **The 1916 National Monument, Moore Street/Moore Lane**

The Preservation order of 2007 made on foot of the designation of the National Monument in 2006 reads – 'where it appears to the Minister for the Environment that a national monument is in danger of being or is actually being destroyed, injured or removed or is falling into decay through neglect the Minister may by order undertake the preservation of such monument.

And whereas the Minister is of the opinion that the monument known as Numbers 14,15,16 and 17 Moore Street, Dublin 1 and more particularly delineated and defined in red on the map dated 20 December 2006 is a national monument.

Now the Minister does by this order undertake the preservation of the said monument.'

The protection and preservation of this important National Monument and the development of a recognised 1916 battlefield site is less important than the apparently sacrosanct plans of a private property developer. Official consideration is given to the extent of demolition rather than the extent of conservation. What piece of the National Monument is worthy of preservation? All of it - some of it - none of it? What area of the last extant battlefield is worthy of protection? All of it – some of it – or

none of it. How is it that 14 to 17 Moore Street are deemed more worthy of protection and preservation than no 10 Moore Street or no's 20/21 Moore Street?

### **The Planning Process**

The announcement by former Environment Minister, Phil Hogan that control of planning could not be left in the hands of elected representatives in light of the disclosure of corruption in the planning decision appeared to make sense – that is until we examine the decisions taken concerning the proposed development of the Carlton Site. The TG 4 documentary by Donal O'Maolfabhail on the, to put it mildly, chequered history of the site demanded a response from some quarter in defence of a city under siege apparently from our own publicly funded city planners but incredibly Minister Ruairi Quinn's call for an enquiry on foot of its revelations never happened. And so there are many questions that remain unanswered.

Any modest residents association records minutes of meetings. The startling disclosure by a city official that our city authority does not hold a full written record of all meetings and decisions on the future development of the heart of our capital city is beyond belief. We know that pre planning meetings were held with officials in the very Department charged with the protection of our heritage with a view 'that the legal protection afforded to the monument is made clear to the developer.' Can we assume that there are recorded minutes of those meetings? They should make interesting reading. This review committee should request that they be made available if only to establish whether there is contained within a record of any official in that Department at any time expressing the slightest concern or reservation at a developer's proposal to arbitrarily re draw the boundary of a National Monument in his own commercial interest and build on, over and under it? If not – why not? Given that this is the very Department charged with the guardianship of our heritage and history it follows also that this advisory committee is duty bound to seek clarification on a remarkable memo of a meeting held in the Trinity Hotel, 26th October 2007 in the names of John Conway, John Connolly, then representing the Save 16 Moore Street Committee, and developers Joe O'Reilly and Paul Clinton. It states that 'the Minister's Office has confirmed in writing that development can happen inside the National Monument boundary.' What an extraordinary statement this is. The very Department that made a decision on the necessity to create a specific area of protection around the protected buildings structures and outhouses at 14 to 17 Moore Street/Moore Lane confirmed that the protection is an empty gesture. Where is this written confirmation? Who holds it? Is it on file? Who in the Ministers office 'confirmed in writing' that the designated boundary of a national monument that the Minister and Oireachtas had undertaken to preserve could be breached? Those present at that meeting will, hopefully, be asked to enlighten the review committee on this. Presumably the Department, at least, have recorded minutes of their many meetings with the proposed developer.

It is a mandatory requirement of the planning regulations that notification of an application for planning relating to protected structures must be sent to the Heritage Council. It is our understanding that no such notification exists. That being so the planning application is invalid as the Heritage Council is a prescribed body under the Planning Act. If they were notified where is their response? It is not on file. It is not listed in the Inspectors report to An Bord Pleanala. It was not produced at the oral hearing of An Bord Pleanala. Perhaps this review committee can locate it.

## Planning Behind Closed Doors.

The apparent secrecy surrounding this proposed development of our city centre is extraordinary and must end. At a city council meeting of November 19<sup>th</sup> 2012, a remarkable document headed 'Information Note' was circulated to councillors. This outlines a plan that no 16 Moore Street will be 'open for guided tours and the preferred option is to have it state run with involvement by a Save 16 group in the names of John Conway and Mark Price. This contravenes the terms of the Dublin City Development Plan that 'no. 16 will be under the ownership and control of DCC'. It contravenes the policy of the City Council on the preservation of the terrace. It refers to a courtyard to the 'rear' of the National Monument that in fact is situate within the protected area of the monument as delineated and defined. Who drew up this document? To whom does the 'preferred option' refer? What involvement is envisaged for this Save 16 group? What are their qualifications? Who do they represent? Are councillors aware of the terms of this agreement? Is it in writing? Who drafted the terms? Has this been discussed by the elected members of DCC? We don't know – yet this was circulated to councillors as information on what is intended in relation to this Monument of National importance – the private development and management of a 1916 Museum financed by public funds with the blessing of NAMA. Then in financial control of the site.

A group styled The 1916 Museum Group then surfaced and has made a presentation to the City Council on a proposed museum plan for 14 to 17 Moore Street. What is the make up of this group and what is their interest in the proposed museum? Who do they represent – what are their qualifications or expertise in drawing up this proposal? Are they acting on behalf of Chartered Land? Is this Museum proposal a Chartered Land proposal, a Save 16 proposal or 1916 Museum group proposal?

If this is the applicant's proposal it represents a material alteration to the planning application and so Ministerial Consent is now being sought on foot of a planning application that is no longer valid. This is an abuse of the planning process – a craggy Island approach to planning – if you don't like this plan – hey presto – here's another one – if this group has no legitimacy well here's another one. How can ordinary

members of the public follow this process? That the integrity of the 1916 National Monument can be reduced in this way to a form of a horse trading exercise in an attempt to gain planning permission for which there is no public support represents a new low in the history of planning in this city and shows a breathtaking lack of respect for those the Monument purports to honour and their descendants.

This has unfortunate echoes, of course, of an earlier infamous private arrangement made between the developer and City Management behind closed doors.

That elected city councillors were unaware of the terms of that contract drawn up in their names that was in direct conflict with City Council policy as outlined to the Supreme Court in *Clinton v An Bord Pleanála* on the development of the Carlton site is, a matter of the gravest concern.

Was any other Government department or official in a Government Department aware of this contract drawn up in secrecy behind closed doors? Who signed the contract? Why was it not placed before councillors since it represented a fundamental change in council policy and was in conflict with normal tendering procedure relating to the sale of public property? Who drew up its terms? Was the Law agent consulted on its legal

standing? What was his opinion or advice? Was there precedent for this unilateral decision making procedure?

The startling revelations in the TG4 documentary on the history of the Carlton site planning history culminating in the drawing up of this secret contract must be addressed in this review.

At one time City Management proposed to dispose of the Dublin City Council storage depot at 24/25 Moore Street for the sum of 12.000.000 euro to facilitate this proposed development. Compensation was paid out of the public purse to a number of traders to vacate the premises. Since councillors are entitled to know of any arrangements or agreements made in relation to the disposal of public property we are entitled to know of financial details of that compensation. To date this figure has not been revealed.

There has been surprisingly little response so far to what has rightly been described in the Dail by Mary Lou Mc Donald TD as a scandal - and scandal it is.

To date there has been an abject failure on the part of state agencies public officials and those charged with protecting our more recent history and heritage to act rather than react to protect the very heart of our city – the GPO/Henry Street/Moore Street area.

#### **The 1916 Battlefield Site.**

The GPO/Moore Street area is a 1916 Battlefield site – aptly described as the ‘Theatre of the Rising’ by Frank Myles, architect, in his battlefield assessment of the Moore Street area on behalf of Chartered land. The Easter Rising was the only land engagement of any size fought in Britain and Ireland in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is now general agreement among all interested parties that this area warrants that description. It can be said that this is progress given that the assistant City Manager Mr Sean Carey in a letter to city councillors in November 2002 referred to no.16 Moore Street as ‘being of limited historical importance.’ or the developer himself who in 2006 disputed both its historical and architectural significance considering the retreat and surrender of the volunteers ‘morbid and martyrological’ (Irish Times April 19<sup>th</sup>). Despite a belated recognition of its historical significance now we still await an independent assessment of the area by suitably qualified battlefield experts – a pre requisite of any proposed development let alone one that includes demolition on the scale proposed.

All buildings and structures that bear witness to and form part of a battle are historic. The difference between a battle that is written about and taught to our children and one that is largely forgotten can be summed up in one word – preservation. At its most basic, battlefield preservation is about securing historic landscapes ensuring that they are forever removed from the threat of inappropriate development. The Battle of the Boyne site is a case in point. In receipt of millions of taxpayers funding nothing exists today of the battle that took place there- not a scrap of evidence. But no expert analyst has been produced to diminish the importance of the Boyne site as worthy of battlefield status because there is a lack of battle evidence as such. Yet that is the case being made against the preservation of the GPO/Moore street area. Indeed the very existence of a breakthrough in a sidewall of no 10 Moore Street is dismissed because the adjoining property is post 1916. This is a nonsense. We don't need physical

evidence to tell us the story of the battle of Moore Street when we have direct evidence from the participants themselves. Any physical evidence that may be found is a bonus.

If we need a warning about what is to become of Moore Street if left solely under the control of a private property developer with no State input or intervention we need look no further than Moore Street today – its called the ILAC centre. Is there anybody today who believes that the ILAC centre improved or improves Moore Street? More importantly does anybody seriously believe that we need another one? Certainly not the developer and owner of the site who only in a letter to members of the Dail stated that 'now is not the time to be building more retail and restaurant space' nor the City Manager who has stated that the plan is 'stalled' It is clear that Chartered Land are now engaged in a catch up exercise. Their belated acceptance of this area as a recognised 1916 Battlefield site – the theatre of the Rising - renders a planning application that took no cognisance of that fact redundant and they know it. No amount of meddling with it will overcome this central truth - we need a new plan. That this area is in need of development is a given - the issue is how we develop it.

#### **Ministerial Consent:**

The application for Ministerial consent to carry out 'work' to the Monument is made under the planning application to develop a retail and restaurant development – it is not a separate application. Ministerial consent for work to the Monument is one of many conditions of the grant of permission for the Carlton site.

This begs the question – why would a Minister consider a consent application submitted under a planning application for a development that by the developers own admission will not go ahead and is stalled? If the passing centenary year of the Rising is a concern there is adequate protection afforded to the protected structures of the National Monument under existing planning laws – were there a will to enforce them. A consent application for remedial work to 14 to 17 Moore Street has been granted already and went ahead. Under existing planning regulations owners of protected structures can be compelled to carry out work to buildings that are neglected. Furthermore a planning authority may compulsorily acquire a protected structure if it is necessary to do so for its protection.

National Monument legislation brought into being specifically to protect National Monuments is being rewritten in this application. The Ministerial consent clause is there to prevent any interference with the Monument. Chartered Land sought to use that clause as a means to demolish a National Monument. This is turning legislation to protect national monuments on its head. It represented a misuse of the consent clause in the Act. There is simply NO provision in the legislation for building on or under the protected area of a national monument. How could there be if the purpose of the legislation is to protect historic buildings? Furthermore the applicant does not seek in the planning application nor in his ministerial consent application the consent required under the Act to 'excavate, dig, plough or otherwise disturb the ground within around or in proximity to it'. The application to date is restricted to 'work' to the national monument itself. The consent required under the Act for work 'in its proximity' does not appear in the planning file and was not therefore considered by the City planners or An Bord Pleanala. This omission is now belatedly addressed by reference to 'an



agreed area in its proximity' - no's 13,18 and 19 Moore Street in the Environmental Impact Study requested by the Minister.

#### **NAMA.**

There were at one time 30 buildings or locations in the city directly linked to the 1916 Rising some of them marked with display cases.

Over half – nineteen - have been demolished – the display cases long gone. This continues to this day - the most recent being the demolition of the Fianna Hall in Camden Street and the Forresters Hall off Parnell Square.

Permission has been recently granted to demolish the four corner buildings opposite the Henry Street GPO entrance – occupied as an outpost during the Rising – dismissed by city planners and An Bord Pleanála as of no great significance.

The Moore Street/Henry Street/Henry Place and Moore Lane battlefield area is the last remaining intact location linked to the event in our history that directly led to our Independence. And it lies derelict and in danger of demolition under recent ownership and control of a property developer in receipt of a NAMA salary of 200,000 euro per annum paid out of the public purse. And nobody in authority shouts stop.

At very least members of the public have a right to know the extent and nature of financial support that the applicant (Chartered Land), now insolvent, has received from NAMA in relation to the planning application to date including the Ministerial Consent Application, The 1916 Museum Proposal and the Environmental Impact Study and relevant consultancy fees.

#### **The 1916 Museum**

No restoration of the buildings at 14 to 17 Moore Street though long overdue, or the provision of a 1916 Museum should divert attention away from the applicants overall plan for the area – the plan is to demolish the last remaining intact 1916 battlefield site and replace it with a suburban style shopping centre. The restoration plan for 14 – 17 Moore Street presented by Chartered Land in their planning application and now adopted by the State is not a restoration of the National Monument buildings in line with their status as protected structures or their historical importance. The mere retention of 18<sup>th</sup> century fabric alone ignores the very reason these buildings were listed as protected structures – their direct link to 1916. All structures within the designated area are protected by virtue of their historical importance – their link to the Rising. The proposed retention by the applicants of only 18<sup>th</sup> century fabric in effect means gutting the buildings and redrawing the footprint of all four. This is unacceptable. The protection of these buildings is not an option – as listed buildings the owner is duty bound under planning regulations to ensure that they do not deteriorate. The slick presentation of a proposed museum by a self-appointed 1916 Museum group should not distract from the central issue – the obliteration of the surrounding battlefield site. The Chartered Land presentation of the plan for the battlefield area is that they have no plan. They plan to demolish 1916 buildings singled out as 'historic' by their very own architect. (see Shaffrey report to DCC). They plan to dissect and destroy the building fabric along the evacuation route. They plan to transform a battlefield site into a shopping destination despite their own admission 'that now is not the time' to build shopping centres.

The proposed 1916 Museum is simply a quick fix solution by the applicant to paper over the cracks of a flawed planning application and a smokescreen for the demolition

of an entire battlefield site. Any development of this site under the terms of the Dublin Development Plan has to make provision for a 1916 Museum – the museum is not a gift from the developer, it is a condition of planning. The provision of a 1916 museum is a condition of any planning application for this site. It is not optional.

### **The Flawed Planning Application.**

This is a flawed planning application from the original misleading public notice to apply for permission through to the misleading drawings accompanying the application – all visuals submitted throughout the planning process limit the area of the monument to four buildings and refer to building ‘to the rear’ rather than ‘on’ the national monument. In the entire planning file there is no reference to building ON the national monument or that the development would infringe upon let alone demolish a national monument. No mention is made to the demolition of the protected rear structures fronting Moore Lane – the coach house entrance singled out as a ‘fine example of urban back lands architecture’ in the Shaffrey report to the City Council, not mentioned anywhere in their support documents for Chartered Land, but now belatedly considered important enough for relocation in the latest plan. This is a nonsense – a musical chairs approach to planning.

There is no record on the planning file or in the Inspectors report to An Bord Pleanála that the Heritage Council was notified of the application – a material breach of the regulations.

Recent amendments make the application completely different from that originally lodged with the planning authority and considered by An Bord Pleanála.

The new 1916 Museum proposal is clearly a smokescreen and a last ditch attempt to force the Ministers hand to grant consent. The proposed kitchen/toilet areas underneath the four buildings are now depicted as video rooms. The side addition to no 17 is now referred to as a support structure – a belated admission that there is a threat to the stability of the national monument with the demolition of no.18 Moore Street (The Paris Café). No mention is made to the extent of excavation to the rear of the buildings to allow for car parking. There is of course no reference whatsoever to the demolition of protected structures or fabric and material linked to 1916. Indeed material to the rear has already been removed without the specific expert supervision regarded as essential in the Shaffrey report.

The much touted anchor tenant John Lewis, a major selling point for the developers plan, is reported as ‘still thinking about a store in the Republic, although this was unlikely to be in the near future’ (IT 2/2/13).

It is remarkable that, to date, no state agency has of its own volition acted to protect and preserve this area from the threat of a wrecking ball. NAMA could have – they controlled the purse strings. Dublin City Council can – they control license granting, CPO procedure and disposal of public property. The Minister can - by refusing consent and acting on her undertaking to preserve the monument.

Any protection afforded such as it is, is a direct result of the voluntary efforts of campaigners over many years. Without them Moore Street would have been levelled and lost to us and to future generations forever. We owe them a great debt of gratitude. They cannot be dismissed and marginalized. Their views deserve respect.

## **The Evacuation Route.**

Is historic Moore Street now to be sacrificed in the interest of private commercial profit – a stark contrast between a golden generation and a golden circle?

That 1916 golden generation are no longer with us - but the buildings streets and laneways that they occupied are. They form part of a shared past and a connection to past generations. When we visit them that connection is deepened.

These buildings cobbled streets and laneways – the lanes of history – as described by An Taoiseach - are our lasting physical link to that momentous event – the birth of the Nation. Moore Street to this day mirrors the terrace of houses held by the GPO garrison in 1916 – the only intact 1916 location that still stands. What we see today the volunteers saw. The space we can occupy today is the space in which they sought refuge. The very buildings laneways and streets that we walk today bore witness to acts of heroism, selflessness and even death. In this area even in its present state of shameful decay and dilapidation we can reach out and touch history. This area is a priceless State asset – a national treasure. It needs to be protected and preserved with great care and respect under National Museum supervision - immediately. The evacuation route through Henry Place and Moore Lane is intact with many 1916 buildings lining it. To rearrange or in any way interfere with its footprint or existing building mass to facilitate a mall arrangement in a shopping centre and claim to be preserving it as the volunteers escape route to the terrace of houses is a nonsense.

Six of the 1916 leaders spent their last hours of freedom in the terrace – five of them Signatories to the 1916 Proclamation of Independence – before their execution by firing squad. This is sacred ground.

Moore Street was the location of the last HQ of the 1916 Provisional Government. All of our political parties can trace their lineage directly to the Moore Street terrace and what happened there. Among those who occupied and held the terrace were Michael Collins, Sean Lemass, Sean Mc Entee and Oscar Traynor. This area is the very birthplace of this Republic and yet the future of this city treasure remains threatened.

Not a single public representative supports the present planning application. Former Lord Mayor Gerry Breen called for an enquiry into the planning history of the site. We supported his call. He can now present this advisory committee with all the information in his possession. Dublin City Councillors are seeking NM protection for the entire 1916 terrace. And Minister Ruairi Quinn TD proposed that Councillors enquire into the planning history of the site as a result of the Tg4 documentary.

Somebody in authority must now act in our interest – the public interest. This consultative group has that opportunity.

## **State Intervention:**

There must be immediate State intervention to ensure that ALL buildings and sites associated with the Rising in the Moore Street area are fully protected and preserved in line with the position of our National Museum that this area is 'the most important historic area in modern Irish history'. They are not the property of any one generation to be disposed of at the whim of a transient Government Minister and certainly not in the commercial interest of property developers. As historic buildings we hold them temporarily in trust for future generations. They cannot be disposed of. They are not

ours to give away. Nor should they be subjected to a form of cherry picking exercise as to their order of importance. The building where the decision to surrender was taken is, of course, important. So is the building where the 1916 leaders spent their last night of freedom before their execution – no 10 Moore Street – due to be demolished. As is the building and yard where the surrender decision was reluctantly accepted by volunteers – Hanlons at 20/21 Moore Street – to be demolished. The yard of no 25 is where volunteers gathered for a final do or die assault on the British barricade on Parnell Street. All were singled out as being of historic importance in the Shaffrey Report commissioned by Dublin City Council (copy submitted) but strangely absent from the Chartered Land/Shaffrey submission to An Bord Pleanala. Upon what basis are these buildings no longer worthy of mention? When, how and upon what basis did they suddenly lose their historical importance? Why have Shaffrey Architects decided now to ignore them? We need to know given that the only reports that are being relied upon to date are those compiled by Shaffrey Architects. Immediate state intervention is a reasonable and modest call or demand. Dublin City Council policy to extend protection to the 1916 terrace must not be ignored. Public representatives are elected to act in the public interest not in the interest of - or acting lobbyists for - private property developers. We have seen where this has led to in the past.

Members of the Oireachtas must now ensure that their undertaking to preserve the National Monument will not be undermined. The minister must not consent to the present planning application to demolish this historic area and redraw and redesign the volunteer's evacuation route. All buildings that flank that route must be retained. The plan before her is a demolition plan. His decision must be a political decision in the national interest. She has expressed uncertainty as to how this area can be designated as a battlefield site.

It's very simple. At the stroke of a Ministerial pen she undertakes to preserve all buildings in the Moore Street area linked to the Rising – the State must act to protect the area from the wrecking ball.

#### **Dublin City Council:**

All City Councillors must on principle stand by their decision to extend national monument protection to the 1916 terrace in its entirety in line with Venice Charter principles. Property under public ownership must not be disposed of to facilitate any proposal that includes the demolition of buildings streets and laneways linked to the Rising.

Licenses to close public streets and lanes and relevant CPO procedures must be withheld until the future conservation of the battlefield site is guaranteed. The plan can and must be changed by returning it to the drawing board. Senior Planner Dick Gleeson at the Bord Pleanala hearing stated – 'there are many ways to develop a site'. We couldn't agree more – that is our case.

#### **The Reports.**

All reports relevant to this planning application must be made available to this group if its deliberations are to be seen to be all embracing, open and transparent. These

include a report from The Heritage Council (a prescribed body), The Shaffrey report to DCC, The Frank Myles report, the report of the Director of the National Museum, The Department Report on the Consent Application, the Failte Ireland Report, the Battlefield and Independence Trail reports requested by Minister Varadkar, The Oireachtas Task Force Report, The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Heritage report, The Venice Charter and Hq 16 – A Citizens Plan for Dublin.

The Committee should insist that a long overdue independent battlefield assessment of the GPO/Moore Street area is carried out by suitably qualified battlefield experts to assist you Chair in your deliberations.

Anything less is a continuation of a process to date best described as planning behind closed doors.

More importantly anything less insults the very memory of those the Moore Street/Moore Lane 1916 National Monument purports to honour.

The men and women of 1916 were our golden generation. Indeed as time goes on we realise just how golden they were in their time. Among their number were poets, playwrights, teachers, writers, union men and women – citizens. They volunteered to fight for the freedom of their country – They contributed to the cultural revival of the nation. They were prepared to sacrifice their very lives for their country in contrast with a golden circle generation that in our time were prepared to sacrifice their country for their lifestyles. The designation of a national monument in their honour is fitting. Any attempt to diminish its standing in any way by any individual, group or servant of the state is a disgraceful insult to their memory. Their supreme sacrifice did not end at a wall in Kilmainham Jail – it is carried on through families to later generations.

That it is left to relatives of those executed to defend the integrity and standing of a monument designated in honour of the memory of their forbears over years past is simply shameful and insulting.

### **The Decision.**

The final decision on the proposed development of the Carlton site, we are assured, will be a Cabinet one. It is, therefore, incumbent on this committee to fully review the extraordinary history of this site as well as the other matters listed in its terms of reference with a view to presenting its findings not only to Dublin City Council but also to the Oireachtas as guardians of the National Monument. Only in this way can faith be restored in the planning process, tarnished to date, by a deeply disturbing lack of openness and transparency concerning the most important development in our capital since the incalculable loss of Wood Quay.

### **Campaign Support.**

Great credit is due to the founders of the campaign – the National Graves Association and the members of the Save 16 Moore Street Committee now supported by relatives of the Seven Signatories to the 1916 Proclamation and The 1916 Relatives Association – for their tireless efforts in highlighting what is an assault on an area of great historic importance in our capital city. We are honoured to have the support in particular of family members of the The O’Rahilly including his grandson Prionsias O Rahilly and a grandson of Henry Coyle who along with four other volunteers Michael Mulvihill, Paddy Shortiss, Frances Macken and Charles Carrigan lost their lives in the

battle of Moore Street. The O Rahilly, the only 1916 leader to fall in action, died from wounds suffered in the battle of Moore Street.

The very corner where he lay dying alongside Francis Mackin and Charles Carrigan referred to by generations of Dubliners as 'dead mans corner' is to be obliterated to facilitate a vehicular entrance in to the proposed shopping mall. Is this how their sacrifice is to be remembered – the location of their deaths is to be a vehicular entrance to a shopping mall?

We remember that civilians also died in these streets and laneways. Bridget Mc Kane (16) Henry Place, William Mullen (9) Moore Place, Robert Dillon (65) Moore St, P McManus (61) Moore Street, J Doyle, (36) Moore Street, W Heavey (32) Moore Street.

No plaque honours their memory.

### **The Environmental Study**

An Environmental Impact Study carried out by the developer before the Minister. makes interesting reading. The developer now seeks Ministerial consent for a two-phase development with a 1916 Museum as Phase 1. This is an admission on the part of Chartered Land that they cannot guarantee that the project for which they seek planning permission can be delivered. Major changes to the plans include new alterations to the proposed work to the national monument that were not considered by the Planning Authority, An Bord Pleanala or interested parties. The ministerial consent is no longer the consent sought under the planning application. It has been altered and amended. It is clear that a new planning application must now be submitted for approval by the planning authority.

The EIS is illuminating in many ways.

Vol. 4 accepts the premise that this area is a battlefield site. It points to evidence of a tunnelling route through the four buildings of the Monument fronting Moore Street.

The proposed extension of the Museum to no's 14 and 15 is a belated recognition of the historic importance of the buildings. The investigation shows evidence of openings in the party walls of no's 10 and 11 Moore Street on the second floor and first floor of no's 13 and 14 - proof that the foot print of these buildings mirrors their layout in 1916.

No 17, however, is to be altered beyond recognition with the replacement of the first floor and complete demolition of the party wall with no.18. This is not restoration – this is demolition.

More alarmingly the investigation shows that the parapets of all four buildings on Moore Street require dismantling and reconstruction as they are 'unstable and have been the subject of movement' These protected buildings have been allowed deteriorate under the ownership of Chartered Land, under the watch of our City Authority as protected structures and by the inexplicable failure by successive administrations to enforce a Ministerial and Oireachtas undertaking to preserve them. A copy of this study is now with the National Museum and Dublin City Council. Has anybody in authority read this alarming report carried out some twelve months ago? The case for an immediate independent assessment of the National Monument by

fully qualified conservation experts under the supervision of the National Museum could not be clearer and is now a matter of urgency..

### **The Future.**

We think of history as something only in the past often forgetting that we too are part of history. And we too are going to be judged by history, just as those who came before us....

and so the question for us today is – how will we be judged on this issue. – what will future generations make of us in our time? What is our gift to them?

Oireachtas members in adopting preservation order no 1 of 2007 undertake the preservation of the NM. It is their duty to protect and preserve the Monument in the interest of the people.

Consensus is not a pre requisite for preservation – action is. It is time to act.

As the actor Sam Waterston put it in relation to the preservation of the threat to battlefields in the US – ‘these places that we cherish had better be defended: because development is so swift, so efficient and rather final’. Or actor Robert Duvall who said in support of the US Civil War Trust ‘I urge local decision makers to plan carefully. The choices they make will be felt by generations to come making this the time to be thoughtful and deliberate, not rash’.

We trust that this committee will facilitate and allow ALL interested parties to present their case to this committee in the interest of openness, transparency, proper planning, the protection of our heritage and history and more importantly, in the national interest. All matters relevant to the history of the Carlton site and the Chartered Land planning application must be addressed and reviewed, however controversial, by your committee if faith is to be restored in the planning process. Members of the public unable to make a submission in writing must be allowed a hearing in a public forum. There must be no outstanding questions left unanswered and contributors should be recalled to assist the review committee, if necessary, for clarification of issues in the public interest.

## Supporting Documents

I now wish to refer to ~~the~~ ~~list~~ copy files and information that are relevant to this review.

National Monument Preservation Order no 1 of 2007.  
1916 National Monument Ground Floor Plan - Applicants proposed demolitions.  
The Carlton Site Planning History.  
The Contract between Dublin City Council and Joe O'Reilly.  
The Save 16 Moore Street Committee. - correspondence/minutes.  
The Shaffrey Report - commissioned by Dublin City Council.  
Planning Inspectors Report - prescribed bodies.  
The Heritage Council  
Disposal of Public Property.  
Tendering procedure.  
Dublin City Council - debate on proposed disposal of 24/25 Moore Street.  
TG 4 Documentary on the Carlton Site and Chartered land.  
Question sheet - Shaffrey Architects.  
Media reports

### Fact File

The Boston Freedom Trail.  
Walking Tour of Philadelphia.

### In conclusion

We wish the committee well in their deliberations. We look forward to your findings. In the meantime, on this the centenary of the founding of the Irish Volunteers, the Campaign to Save 16 Moore Street and preserve and protect the 1916 National Monument in its entirety continues in memory of the people it purports to honour - the ordinary and extraordinary men and women of 1916.

*Jan Comerford*

*Moore's secretary*