

To: The Chair, Ministers Moore Street Consultative Group
Submission by: Maeve O' Leary, 1916 Relative and Save Moore Street Campaigner
Date: November 1st 2016

I write on my own behalf a proud and passionate 1916 relative and a concerned Save Moore Street Campaigner and as an advocate for my Mother, Sheila O' Leary the only surviving daughter of Thomas F Byrne (Boer Tom) and Lucy Smyth both garrisoned in the GPO Easter Week 1916. The legacy of Tom and Lucy is a vast extended family presently residing in Ireland and worldwide - Canada, Australia, Dubai, England and Europe.

I am currently a member of the The 1916 Relatives Association and I wish to see the 1916 Relatives Association represent my views on Minister Humphrey's Moore Street Consultative Group. However, no nominees of the 1916 Relatives Association have been put forward with democratic consultation to the best of my knowledge. Currently any members of the present 1916 Relatives Association Executive Committee presiding on this Consultative Group do not represent me as a Granddaughter of two GPO Garrison Volunteers and as an advocate for their elderly daughter a 1916 Relatives Association 'first generation' member.

My biggest concern is that the Appeal itself is dropped and this announced by the end of this Centenary Year. I seek democratic representation from the 1916 Relatives Association on my Mothers and my own behalf on this Moore Street Consultative Group. In the absence of this currently I write directly to this group with a list of my main concerns whilst the appeal still stands.

1. That an **independent** architectural, archaeological and historical survey of the entire Moore Street battlefield area and street market is conducted immediately.
2. An **independent** projected economic benefits to the Irish nation of a cultural and historical quarter proposal is conducted and made available for public perusal.
3. The recent planning extension granted to Developers by Dublin City Council Planning Department is cancelled.
4. The question is put to the 'independently' chaired Consultative Group as to why the Save Moore Street From Demolition group who to date represent upwards of 70,000 signatories and thousands more concerned citizens worldwide have been excluded from participating on this Consultative Group to the best of my knowledge apart from being invited to tend a submission. Are other long standing Save Moore Street Campaigns represented and included to add to the Groups representation of a wide variety of stakeholders in the future planning of this area.
5. Why will 1916 Commemoration Funding be used to fund the cost of the Court appeal by Minister Humphreys?
6. What works exactly are taking place now? Who is conducting them? Who is overseeing them?
7. Why is this extant battlefield area not recognised as 'unique' in the world and hence its development independent of any other national 'infrastructure' concerns?
8. Will the public worldwide be invited to make submissions and if not why not? Who is representing non-party politically aligned concerned Irish citizens at this Forum who want to see Moore Street restored and revitalised.
9. Has the Governments Decade of Centenaries Advisory Group been invited to make a submission? And if not why not?
10. Have first generation 1916 relatives been consulted on their thoughts given they are living links to the Volunteers and surely should be asked as to how they would like to see their parents honoured in this area.

Ireland is rich in history and heritage. It is our inimitable natural resource, not to be found anywhere else in the world. Our history and culture defines us as a great and popular nation wherever we reside. In Dublin, the Moore Street terrace and laneways comprise a unique extant 1916 battlefield linked inexorably to the GPO Witness History Centre and the events of that week that make this a world famous building area as well as a centuries old street market.

The tourists come in droves (300,000 upwards to GPO and Kilmainham) to immerse themselves in our interesting culture and revolutionary history. To feel a little of their Irish roots and pride. That which can be seen in our country's national beauty and in the physical history and also what can be felt the moment your feet touch down on Irish soil or walk the evacuation route the GPO garrison took to flee the raging fires. Many tourists will visit for that feeling alone. To rekindle their link to their history and heritage.

We need to protect and preserve as much of our physical 1916 heritage as possible, invest in it, nurture it, promote it and showcase our 1916 story proudly at every opportunity. For ourselves and for future generations. From that connection to our past and history comes an understanding of ourselves. That connection which is vital to our sense of identity and wellbeing no matter where we reside in the world.

It is also clearly a boon for the tourism industry and can provide employment at home and abroad. It is tangible and quantifiable. It can be more than sustainable, create wealth and add to our richness as a nation with the right emphasis and respect placed on it by the current Government which currently falls short in my opinion given the Appeal is still in place. I urge Minister Humphreys to cancel the Appeal and invest in preserving this unique area for the benefit of the 70 million Irish people worldwide and future generations.

Yours sincerely

Maeve O' Leary

1916 Relative – GPO Garrison

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Grandparents Biography

Thomas Francis Byrne (Boer Tom)

Garrison: GPO

Organization: Irish Volunteers, Captain B Company, 1st Battalion.

During Easter Week Capt Thomas Byrne was appointed O/C for Co.Kildare. He mobilised the Kildare Troops and marched into the GPO on Tuesday Morning with the Maynooth 15. They were the only troops outside of Dublin to mobilise **and** make it into the GPO, enduring an overnight arduous journey by foot to arrive safely at the GPO Easter Tuesday morning to a rousing reception from the other Volunteers and Leaders. He was sent to City Hall and also Liffey Street by James Connolly towards the end of the week.

Tom was appointed Commandant of the 1st Battalion after the execution of Ned Daly 1916-1919. Michael Collins appointed him Captain of the Guard, Leinster House 1922-1947. He was awarded a medal by the South African Government for his services in forming the Irish Brigade in the Boer War along with Major John McBride.

Lucy Agnes Smyth

Organisation: Cumann na Mban (Ard Craobh) Central Branch

Garrison: GPO and Hibernian Bank Nursing Contingent.

Lucy evacuated the burning GPO with the wounded and had a life-threatening hazardous journey to Jervis Street Hospital. On the eve of the surrender the GPO was in flames and as the roof was beginning to cave in the Cumann na Mban nursing contingent were evacuated moments before the main Garrison who sought refuge in Moore Street. This group of women endured a life-threatening and hazardous route out of the GPO's Henry Street exit past Moore Street where a bullet took the top off a bottle of ether that one of the women was carrying. No regard was given to the Red Cross flag they carried as they ferried the wounded on stretchers to Jervis Street Hospital and were trapped in between two burning barricades in Williams Lane.