

Minutes of Meeting of the Moore St Advisory Group (Online)

5th March 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.,

Members in attendance were:

Tom Collins (Chairman),
Thomas Holbrook,
Catherine Kennedy,
John Daly,
Brian O’Neill,
(Catherine) Carmel Smyth,
James Connolly Heron,
Aengus O’Snodaigh TD,
Neasa Hourigan TD,
Bríd Smith TD,
Senator Mary Fitzpatrick,
Councillor Donna Cooney,
Councillor Nial Ring,
Nessa Foley,
Coilín O Reilly

Seán Ó Muirí, accompanying Deputy O’Snodaigh during presentation.

From the Irish Heritage Trust:

Emma O’Toole, Jo Tynan, Jason King, Matt McNulty.

Apologies:

Councillor Eimer McCormack

Dave Farrell – Secretariat

The Chair opened the meeting and referred to today’s announcement of funding of €12.7 million secured for restoration works and visitor facilities at 14-17 Moore Street under the Urban Redevelopment Fund which was welcomed by all.

1. Presentation from Irish Heritage Trust (IHT)

Emma O'Toole from the Irish Heritage Trust (IHT) updated the group on its work so far, including its consultations to date with the main stakeholders including members of the MSAG.

She outlined the IHT vision for the National Monument, the main theme being the various voices of the 1916 Rising and the potential for the stories of the Rising to be told through those various voices. Key points were as follows:

- The buildings should be kept as close to their 1916 condition as possible and that, due to space limitations, a museum within the buildings would destroy their integrity.
- Access by tours should be restricted to 15 people with a Guide.
- Audio Visual interpretation activation in different rooms. The content would reflect the theme of the final days of the rising.
- Possible interpretation space to the rear.
- Recommendation that consideration be given to a walking trail from the GPO to the National Monument and on to the site of surrender at Parnell Street with the incorporation of plaques at various pause points along the way.
- The high potential for educational activity.

Next Steps – The IHT to consider the rear of the monument and the potential for permanent displays, temporary exhibitions and visitor spaces. Emma clarified that what has been presented is an overview/update and the final scoping document is not yet complete but they hope to submit it at around the same time as the MSAG report to the Minister (Easter).

There was widespread welcome from the Group on the ideas put forward by the IHT.

Deputy O'Snodaigh and Deputy Hourigan queried whether there is any potential for tour group sizes, particularly school groups, to be increased possibly by staggered circulation. James Connolly Heron suggested that Nos 12/13 could be used to accommodate extra people by way of an associated visitor experience and would be ideal given the existence of the creep hole in the party wall. Senator Fitzpatrick suggested that the experience may be richer with small groups and that groups could

be staggered. She referred to the example of the tenement museum in Manhattan. Coilín O'Reilly agreed and referred to the example of 13 Henrietta St.

On the question of use of No's 12/13, Emma clarified that the scope of the IHT project is limited to the National Monument No's 14-17. On the question of tour numbers, Jo Tyan advised that 20 is the typical number for tour groups so 15 is not particularly small.

The Chair thanked Emma and her colleagues before they departed the meeting and requested that they meet with the MSAG again before they (and the MSAG) finalise their respective reports to the Minister.

James Connolly Heron queried whether the IHT report would form part of the MSAG report to the Minister. The Chair clarified that they are separate reports. Senator Fitzpatrick felt the MSAG will need to view and consider the IHT report before reporting to the Minister. Deputy O'Snodaigh pointed out that it is part of the remit of the MSAG to consider the report and that it may be possible to take what has been presented as the main elements of what will form the final IHT report but that is a decision that would need to be taken closer to the time.

2. Sinn Féin presentation on Vision for Moore St area

Deputy O'Snodaigh introduced Seán Ó Muirí (architect) to outline the Sinn Fein vision for the area.

Seán explained that he is speaking on behalf of the Design Group put together by the Moore Street Trust.

Seán shared a presentation (a copy of which he agreed to make available to the MSAG) outlining historical maps of the area/plot grains and the design principle incorporated into the vision presented of linking public buildings to laneways and courtyards/squares and building along plot grains. Other elements of the vision include:

- Use of appropriate building materials e.g. yellow stock brick, cobble stones, granite curbs
- Inclusion of gardens/green lungs.
- Reconstruction of buildings of no historical significance in sympathy with rest of the terrace.
- No break in the terrace at No. 18

- Living quarters above ground level.

Brian O'Neill commented that a lot of what was outlined is similar to the Hammerson proposals and queried how it would be funded and how long it may take? He also pointed out that the Group has already agreed not to look at plans based on Compulsory Purchase Order.

Deputy O'Snodaigh referred to the announcement today on funding and references to acquisitions and that land swaps are also an option, as is a conservation designation of the area to control what can/can't be done.

James Connolly Heron welcomed the vision outlined as meeting the recommendations of the Securing History One report and felt it would be useful to compare it against the Hammerson proposals. On the question of funding, he queried Hammerson's ability to fund its proposals.

The Chair agreed that the design dimension is worth looking at as a way to appraise the Hammerson proposals.

3. Minutes of 26th Feb.

Deputy O'Snodaigh asked that the minutes be amended to include a point he had made with regard to the final MSAG report in respect of the Hammerson proposals, i.e. that:

“in his view, the report should be a commentary rather than a majority/minority position on the Hammerson proposals.”

Subject to amendment above, the minutes proposed by Brian O'Neill and seconded by Nessa Foley, were adopted.

4. Matters arising

James Connolly Heron referred to the reports he received from the National Monuments Service and suggested that they should be distributed and asked if the Hammerson reports (which are still being finalised) will be made available to the members before the planning application is made. Nessa Foley said she would check with Hammerson.

Brian O'Neill, with reference to the issue of leaks raised in the last meeting, pointed out that a still from the Hammerson presentation was posted on the Save 16 Moore Street Facebook page.

Tom Holbrook queried with Coilín O'Reilly the progress in arranging a meeting between DCC, Hammerson and the traders as Hammerson said they are waiting on DCC. Coilín said a meeting could be arranged in the next couple of weeks. Tom stated that the traders don't accept that they will be able to stay in place during the construction phase and that they know, from past experience with Jurys for example, the impact it would have on their livelihoods. The Chair highlighted the vulnerability of the market traders in the context of the ongoing decline of the street considering the fact that their livelihoods depended on the market's viability.

The Green Party presentation was deferred till the **next meeting – Fri 12th Mar 2.30pm**