

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

9th April 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,
Senator Mary Fitzpatrick,
Councillor Donna Cooney,
Councillor Nial Ring,
Nessa Foley,
Coilín O Reilly

Dave Farrell – Secretariat

Apologies:

1. Minutes of 26th March 2021

Minutes as circulated approved. Proposed by Councillor Ring and Seconded by John Daly.

2. Matters Arising

James Connolly Heron queried why correspondence is not included on the agenda. He referred to correspondence he had made via the secretary concerning allegations made against him which the Chair had replied to and had deemed not relevant to the workings of the MSAG. The Chair advised that the person who reported these allegations to James Connolly Heron should write to the MSAG via the secretary if he wishes to do so.

The Chair said that he has met with both Minister Darragh O’Brien and Minister of State Malcolm Noonan and that they are taking a deep interest in the work of the Group. They would have preferred if the MSAG had finalised its report by the 31st

March but the Chair explained to them that the MSAG wished to hear from the Irish Heritage Trust (IHT) and the Transport Authority of Ireland (TII) before doing so and it was agreed to extend the deadline for the report to 23rd April.

Nessa Foley informed the Group that the IHT will present at its next meeting (Friday 16th 2.30 pm) and that TII will present on Monday 19th at 12 pm. She has also asked the Chief Archaeologist if he can be present for the IHT presentation.

Nessa Foley committed to check if a copy of the OPW drawings can be provided but advised that they are technical in nature and will evolve in light of the IHT report.

3. Discussion on Hammerson plan:

The Chair made reference to the Hammerson proposal presented to the Group and the presentations from Sinn Féin and the Green Party outlining party visions for the area. He stressed that the Group is being asked under its Terms of Reference to comment on the vision outlined by Hammerson and suggested the headings below may be useful to frame a discussion around what to report to the Minister:

- **Vision for the area:**

Councillor Cooney questioned if there is an overall vision for the area. Deputy Hourigan described the Hammerson proposals as a vision for the site – not the area.

James Connolly Heron described the Hammerson plan as commercial with a nod to history.

Brian O’Neill was optimistic that development can take place in a way that allows the story of 1916 to be told.

- **Plans to commemorate events of 1916:**

Councillor Cooney was of the view that commemorating the events of 1916 is not a function of a developer. Deputy Hourigan agreed that it is a matter for the State. The Chair agreed that the heading should be changed to ‘Is the plan respectful of 1916 Heritage?’.

James Connolly Heron referred to a number of buildings which he said have National Monument status (e.g. - the party wall between 17 and 18) which would be demolished in full or in part according to the Hammerson plans. He claimed that asking the Minister to consent to works at these buildings would put the Minister in a very awkward position. Councillor Ring asked James Connolly Heron to provide a list outlining same to the Group so that items could be verified as factual or not factual. James Connolly Heron also

objected to the demolition of No's 1 – 9, No. 18, of the cellars to the rear of No's 13 and 14.

Brian O'Neill pointed out that the Minister is a statutory consultee by virtue of the presence of the National Monument and that it is not for the MSAG to advise the Minister on the matter of power of consent but to stick to a commentary on the Hammerson proposal.

Deputy O' Snodaigh felt the Group could and should reflect on whether some pre-1916 buildings should be part of the National Monument and pointed out that a National Monument does not have to be state owned. James Connolly Heron was of the view that many of the other building in the area meet the criteria to be part of the National Monument. He referred to the High Court Ruling of Judge Barrett which found that the entire area should be a National Monument. The Chair pointed out that the judgement was overruled at the Court of Appeal which found that Judge Barrett was acting 'Ultra Vires' in designating the area a National Monument and that the only buildings that are legally a National Monument on the terrace are No's 14-17. There was some conversation on this topic with some members asking James Connolly Heron to refrain from referring to the High Court judgement as if it still stood and was not overturned.

Deputy O' Snodaigh stated that the Hammerson drawings for No's 12 and 13 show that the creep hole would be in someone's front room. James Connolly Heron reiterated his suggestion that these buildings be incorporated into the National Monument and be purchased by the State in order to facilitate access and to accommodate increased visitor numbers to No's 14-17. Catherine Smyth noted Hammerson's commitment to retain the party wall between No's 12/13 and advised that the buildings don't need to be National Monuments to facilitate access.

Catherine Smyth pointed out that none of the plans will portray exactly what the patriots encountered but was of the view that the Hammerson plan is broadly acceptable and fitting with the context of the street in 1916.

Deputy O' Snodaigh was not in favour of the proposal for a public square at the location of the yard where the Garrison gathered before surrender. Brian O'Neill made the point that the proposal for the square delineates the plot lines in paving. John Daly agreed that this had been taken into consideration in the plans as a way to tell the story. Deputy O' Snodaigh reminded the Group that Hammerson had asked for feedback on this element of the plan and others.

- **Recognition of architectural significance and aesthetic appeal**

Catherine Smyth said that to put the buildings in the same brick as the original street would be ideal and Councillor Cooney outlined a motion for an Architectural Conservation Area but the architectural significance of the Hammerson proposals were not discussed in any detail.

- **Mix of uses**

This was not discussed in any detail other than an acknowledgement that the mixed use plans were an improvement on the shopping centre proposed by Chartered Land (Deputy O' Snodaigh).

- **Feasibility, including commercial feasibility**

Councillor Ring suggested renaming this heading to 'Examination of Contribution to Economic and Social Regeneration of the area'. The Chair agreed.

James Connolly Heron queried how important the metro is to the Hammerson plans and whether they would still be feasible if the metro does not go ahead. He also alluded to an article in the press in which he said Hammerson stated it did not know yet who it intended to partner with to deliver the capital.

Deputy O' Snodaigh pointed out that Hammerson had referred a lot to the increased footfall from the metro in its presentation. The Chair recalled that the Hammerson plans were well developed before the metro plans. Councillor Cooney felt it would be useful for the Group to have some clarity on the timeframe for the metro and the direction of footfall.

Brian O'Neill questioned the current commercial feasibility of the Street and suggested that the area needs development whether in the form of the Hammerson plan or another plan.

- **Plans for particular buildings and the terrace (archway)**

Councillor Cooney said she personally does not like the archway as did John Daly who clarified that his issue is not so much to do with a break in the terrace. He suggested that if just the ground floor level was opened up with apartments on the 1st floor that would satisfy his reservations.

- **Synergy with the market**

Councillor Ring suggested that this be re-named 'Relationship and Synergy with Market'. The matter was not discussed in any detail.

- **Synergy with the National Monument**

This was not discussed in any detail.

Other Points/Matters Arising made in the course of the discussion:

Senator Fitzpatrick emphasised that the proposal and details presented to date are a long way off a planning application and may well be subject to change and suggested that the Group should drive the State to maximise what can be achieved at the National Monument and the Street Market.

James Connolly Heron asked Coilín O Reilly whether DCC had made any progress in relation to a motion to list other buildings on the Street and if access had still not been granted. He also queried if buildings must be treated as protected while the process is ongoing. Coilín O Reilly committed to check and come back on this.

Thomas Holbrook advised that the traders were hoping to be on the Street in July and queried whether the National Monument buildings were now structurally sound. Nessa Foley confirmed that they are being maintained by the OPW and are structurally sound for now but that work needed to be done to strengthen them and that they certainly are not at the point where they could be safely opened up to the public.

Councillor Cooney outlined a motion before DCC from the Lord Mayors forum to designate the Moore Street area as an Architectural Conservation Area which would mean that any building of architectural heritage would be protected and that neighbouring buildings should be in keeping with them.

Councillor Ring asked if there was any update on the status of the Moore Street Trust. James Connolly Heron advised that the Moore Street Preservation Trust is to be formally launched this week, that it will be registered with the Irish Authorities and is a not for profit organisation.

Next Meeting Friday April 16th 2.30 p.m.