

November 2016

Dear Sir, Madam,

My name is Colette Palsgraaf and I am from the Netherlands.  
I am saddened and appalled when I see the current state of Moore Street.

The current plan to demolish most of the terrace to build yet another shopping centre is disgraceful and a betrayal to the brave men and women who fought for Irish freedom.  
Moore Street, in its entirety should be a place to honour and remember them and to reflect. A fitting monument to the people of 1916 and a thoroughfare between the GPO (the original headquarters of the Provisional Government) and the Rotunda and Garden of Remembrance.

The popularity of Kilmainham Gaol proves that people are interested in Irish history and the events of 1916.

Moore Street is the place where the Provisional Government decided to surrender, where Patrick Pearse walked towards General Lowe, with Elizabeth O'Farrell by his side. Where a wounded James Connolly lay on a stretcher in No 10. Where The O'Rahilly lay dying in a doorway while writing his last letter to his wife. Moore Street and its laneways should be preserved to tell their stories.

Visitors to Kilmainham Gaol can visit the stonebreakers yard where the leaders of the Rising were executed. These same visitors must also be able to visit the place where many of these men were desperately fighting the British Army.  
So they can understand what happened in 1916.

As a child I read the diary of Anne Frank. It was impossible to imagine how she and the other occupants of the attic hiding place had lived. A few years later, during a school trip, I visited "Het Achterhuis" (Anne Frank House) and only then I realised the conditions they had lived in. The small, cramped rooms, the windows that had to remain shut all the time. Visiting the house gave me an insight that the diary and the photos could not give me.

That is why it is important to preserve historical buildings. Books and photos are only abstract tools, they can never replace the actual buildings.  
Once they have been demolished, they cannot be replaced.

This Centenary year I worked as a tour guide in Glasnevin Cemetery. Adults and children came to the Cemetery to take part in the 1916 tours. Whenever I took a tour with schoolchildren it was clear that they knew all about the Rising, the GPO and Moore Street. They all knew Elizabeth O'Farrell and how she met the soldiers behind the barricade at the top of Moore Street.  
We must save Moore Street for these children and the next generations.

The men and women of 1916 had a vision. Many of them were poets, writers, educators and artists.  
We can turn Moore Street into a street where their vision is remembered. Small independent shops. A music shop, a book shop, art galleries and maybe even a café As Gaeilge.

In most Dutch towns independent shops are thriving, whereas the big chains are struggling to stay open. So it makes sense to focus on this model and not a big shopping centre.  
Moore Street could and should be used to educate tourists and Irish people alike. Should they wish to go shopping in chain stores afterwards, then there are plenty of shops in Henry Street to cater for their needs. There is no need for another shopping centre in Moore Street.

Yours faithfully,

Colette Palsgraaf

colette.palsgraaf@hotmail.com  
087 1903406