

SIPTU Services Division submission to the Moore Street Consultative Group

As both an organisation which is headquartered in the centre of Dublin and which organises numerous workplaces and workers in the locality, the SIPTU Services Division is a key stakeholder in the area.

Our parent organisation, SIPTU, also has treasured links to the events of the 1916 Rising in the Moore Street area. SIPTU's predecessor union, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, played a central role in the revolutionary movement which emerged in Ireland in the first decades of the 20th Century. Members of that union, most prominently its General Secretary, James Connolly, through their involvement in the union's armed force, the Irish Citizen Army, played leading roles in the Rising and the events that led to the Moore Street area being such an important historical site.

In recent months, the SIPTU Services Division as part of its 'Working City Initiative' has engaged with the local government and planning processes in the Dublin area. This has been initiated due to the key impact that these processes play in job creation and job quality and in order to develop the wider social justice role which the SIPTU Services Division is mandated to pursue in the interest of our members.

It is our belief that it would be a fitting tribute to those involved in the 1916 Rising if the Moore Street area is not only developed in a manner which is appropriate for one of such vital historical importance but which also respects the ideals of justice that underpinned the 1916 Rising.

In relation to the work of the Moore Street Consultative Group the SIPTU Services Division has two recommendations which we hope will be considered by the Group in its deliberations.

1) Community Benefit Agreements

That the Consultative Group should consider what steps can be taken to support the SIPTU Services Division and its partners (local councillors, the Local Employment Services, Community Training Centres etc.) in their work to ensure Community Benefit Agreements (which provide for the hiring of local labour, people's right to a decent standard of living and fair working conditions) are made an integral part of the development of the Moore Street area. A form of such an agreement was previously implemented in a limited geographical area of the North East Inner City on a statutory basis under the Docklands Act 1998.

An example of current work being undertaken by SIPTU and our partners in the North Inner City to ensure a Community Benefit Agreement is implemented in the area is in relation to the proposed re-development of the Clerys building and adjacent properties on O'Connell Street. There is considerable potential here to create local employment beyond the development stage into sustainable good operational jobs. Local people could receive training from the Local Employment Services for a range of job roles including hospitality, hotel, restaurant, catering, retail, security, cleaning and facilities management in order to be job-ready at the completion of the re-development when owners and occupiers are hiring.

The Scheme of Special Planning Control O'Connell Street and its Environs 2016 – 2022,

which is a statutory planning scheme in accordance with Section 84 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets forth as its objective,

“To re-establish O’Connell Street and environs as a place of importance in the social and cultural life of citizens and visitors, where buildings and their uses reflect a civic dignity and pride, and property owners and occupiers acknowledge their obligations as stakeholders and workers are assured fair working conditions in this area of special significance to the Irish Nation.”

This *Scheme of Special Planning Control* covers the part of the Moore Street protected battle site area nearest to O’Connell Street.

The Consultative Group should consider how to promote Community Benefit Agreements involving key stakeholders including developers, local government, trade unions and local communities in both public and private developments in the Moore Street area and consider what incentives could be put in place for businesses to sign up to them in order to create more sustainable local employment opportunities for residents of inner city Dublin.

2) Development the area as a historic quarter

The Group should recognize the negative role which low pay, in-work poverty and precarious working conditions have on individuals and communities. Such a future for workers in Dublin runs counter the stated aims of the Easter Proclamation, when it states that the Republic will guarantee:

“...equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all of the children of the nation equally.”

SIPTU Services Division calls on the Consultative Group to recommend that the area is developed into a cultural quarter which emphasizes its key historical role in the story of the Irish state. It should seek to develop the area as a tourist attraction which allows for the development of secure and sustainable good quality service jobs with fair working conditions. Part of the future marketing of the Moore Street, as part of the greater O’Connell Street locality, should be a focus upon the quality of employment created in the area. This should be an integral part of wider regeneration of the North Inner City which is currently the focus of a number of schemes and task forces.

Representatives of the SIPTU Services Division are available at any time to discuss these recommendations or any other relevant issues with members of the Moore Street Consultative Group.

Yours sincerely,

Ethel Buckley
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