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DUP Minister's attitude to IRA Monument **Appalling**

15 May 2008

Traditional Unionist Jim Allister has attacked the failure of a DUP Minister to take action against an illegal IRA monument in Castlewellan. Commenting the MEP said:

“In mid-March I wrote to the Minister of the Environment, Arlene Foster, drawing her attention to an illegal IRA monument which was being re-built on ground owned by Down District Council. No Planning Permission had been sought nor exists for the venture. I therefore urged her to ensure that a stop notice was served immediately.”

“The Minister has replied saying that a stop notice can only be served where there is “a definite imperative and clearly established planning merits in so doing”. I am appalled. I doubt if the small Protestant community of Castlewellan would share the Minister’s analysis that there is no “imperative” to act on this matter. Nor do I accept that there is an absence of clearly established planning merits to act. This is an illegal monument constructed without planning permission. That alone means the Minister can, and should act immediately. I have therefore written to the Minister again demanding that she reconsider her decision to sit on her hands.”

“The Minister’s apparent disinterest is all the more offensive when one considers the three young UDR men – one of them a Roman Catholic - murdered by the IRA just outside the village in 1980”.

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