



Dear Tony,

Prime Minister



Top JEH
cc: SP
AL
PU
Prime Minister
Excellent ideas.

ph
16/12.

DEVELOPING THE STORMONT ESTATE

When I told you recently about our efforts to attract a wide range of events to Northern Ireland, I mentioned that we have initiated an exercise to explore how we might, over time, change the image of Stormont, starting with measures to make Parliament Buildings and the Stormont Parklands more accessible. The steps being developed include:

Parliament Buildings

- controlled access to public areas by tourists and schoolchildren
- functions for visiting VIPs, charities and public bodies
- a carefully designed permanent historical exhibition
- regular public exhibitions
- mainly classical musical events

Stormont Parklands

- classical and popular musical events (including, following your approach to his manager, an Elton John concert in July 1998)
- other outdoor events, such as a garden party for young people
- developing the Parklands with a children's play area, jogging tracks, nature walks etc
- holding special events, including use of the playing fields as a venue for some of Ireland's international cricket matches

Security considerations remain a significant factor and will continue to be borne in mind in general planning and in maintaining specific events.



I need to take the local politicians along with us in these measures. Nationalists are likely to be sceptical and Unionists will be concerned about devaluing the standing of Stormont. Local residents will be apprehensive about events which attract large numbers of people.

I am planning to invest a relatively modest amount of public money in providing new assets like the historical exhibition and the children's play area. The aim will, however, be to ensure that musical events are run on a commercial basis, with perhaps the venue being free in the first year.

I propose early in the New Year to use a Parliamentary Question to outline my intentions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Marjorie Mowlam", is positioned above the printed name.

MARJORIE MOWLAM

10 December 1997