

YOU ARE HERE: [21 May 2007](#) / [tribune.ie](#) / [News](#) / Home News
[This Issue](#)
[Archive](#)

[Contact](#)

[Home](#)

[Search](#)

## In this issue

### News

[Home News](#)
[International](#)
[Comment](#)
[Sport](#)
[Business](#)
[Property](#)
[Tribune Review](#)
[Tribune Magazine](#)

## Home News

### Site of 1994 Loughinisland massacre up for sale

Terry McLaughlin and Suzanne Breen


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THE Co Down pub where six Catholics were shot dead by the UVF while watching Ireland play in the World Cup is up for sale.

The Heights Bar in Loughinisland is on the market with Downpatrickbased estate agent Peter Fitzpatrick and Co. The asking price for the building and additional lands is between £1.5 and £2m. The property package comes with full planning permission for a housing development.

The pub became the focus of world attention after two loyalist gunmen opened fire on customers who were sitting with their backs to the door watching Ireland play Italy in June 1994.

Five people were also injured. The two north Belfast UVF gunmen laughed after firing more than 170 bullets.

The pub's landlord, Hugh O'Toole, who still runs the Heights, wasn't present that night but was in Romania, with several of his regulars, helping rebuild an orphanage.

The getaway car, driven by a third gang member, was found abandoned a few miles away. It was destroyed two years later by the RUC on the grounds that it had supplied all available DNA evidence.

However, the decision to get rid of one of the most direct links to the Loughinisland killers remains controversial. It later emerged that a north Belfast Catholic, who had joined the north Belfast Mount Vernon unit of the UVF, had supplied the car. The unit was controlled by Special Branch agent Mark Haddock.

After being sworn into the UVF, the Catholic man went out of his way to prove himself to his new paramilitary colleagues. Codenamed 'the Mechanic', he was reportedly a Special Branch informer and has allegedly been linked to several murders.

He now runs his own bar in Wales but returns regularly to north Belfast to visit his ex-wife and children.


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[Back To Top >>](#)

13/05/2007

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[Won't make a blind bit of differencef](#)
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