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'Vandalism' rap for IDB after trees bulldozed

By MARY KELLY

THE Industrial Development Board has been accused of "institutionalised vandalism" after bulldozers uprooted mature trees and hedgerows to make way for an industrial site in the Poleglass area.

An alliance of environmental groups is now considering a court injunction to halt further work in the area.

James McCabe, secretary of the Colin Conservation Society, said they were horrified to discover part of the wall of a historic millhouse at Pantridge Road, and trees more than 100 years old, were destroyed along with hedgerows in four fields.

'Crazy'

"We had a walk organised recently which attracted 150 people to the area and now it has been completely ruined, with no prior consultation with the local community."

He added that it was "crazy" for the DoE to be involved in promoting the Forest of Belfast scheme to increase public awareness of trees, while allowing such "insensitive development" to go ahead with no consideration of the environment.

"We were shocked to see such a disgraceful example of institutionalised vandalism in the area, which we have been trying to have recognised as a location of historic interest."

Historical

He said the old millhouse had been owned by Luke Teelin, one of the leaders of the United Irishmen's 1798 rebellion.

"There was only the stone wall remaining from the mill, now that is partly demolished," he said.

The IDB said the land was to be cleared for potential factories and a spokeswoman said it would be re-seeded and landscaped to provide a "quality environment."