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Maze conflict transformation centre to cost £10m

The proposed conflict transformation centre at the site of Northern Ireland's Maze prison will cost over £10 million (€12.4 million), it was revealed today.

Dubbed a tourism opportunity by some nationalists but a shrine to terrorism by unionists, there were calls today for the project to be scrapped in favour of developments which attract cross-community support.

The Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) confirmed the £10.2m cost in a written answer to Ulster Unionist Assembly member John McCallister.

"It seems incredibly expensive," Mr McCallister said. "A lot of other aspects of our past would be better celebrated than spending that on a conflict transformation centre.

"I don't see it as a runner for many, it would be so divisive an issue that to actually spend £10.2m I think would just be crazy."

Division between unionists and nationalists on the fate of the centre, which is planned to be included in a multi-sports stadium near Lisburn, has resulted in a lengthy delay.

It is one of the issues which Sinn Féin and the DUP are attempting to resolve as the logjam at the Executive remains.

The OFMDFM said the £10.2m figure needed to be finalised.

"This is very much a broad order of cost pending detailed specification and design, and would require updating."

PA

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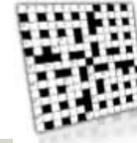
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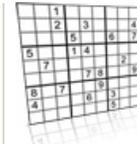
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