



Derry City & Strabane
District Council

Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSratha Báin

Derry Citty & Strabane
Districk Council

Ref: EIR / 1622

February 2, 2018

Mr [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].info

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

Environmental Information Regulations 2004 Request Delay to Brandywell Stadium Refurbishment

I refer to your EIR request as above and respond as follows:

Request:

- 1) **Can you confirm the expected completion date the council was working to on this project at the point at which the work first began?**

Response: It was originally envisaged that the whole of the construction works would be complete by the end of 2017, with the overall new stadium facilities being open to the public in early 2018.

- 2) **A Council spokesperson is quoted in the Derry News as saying "*The recent inclement weather conditions are among some of the issues that have contributed to a delay to the completion works and the final and full handover of the project*". Please detail all the other issues that have led to this project being delayed.**

Response: The causes of the delay have not been determined contractually yet but issues that are pertinent to these ongoing discussions include the exceptionally wet weather over the autumn, discovery of some historic buried contaminated ground on site and the ordering of specialist glazing units.

- 3) **The information given to the media by the council states that the new playing surface at Brandywell Stadium is "believed to need between three to six weeks of dry weather to settle". Can the council therefore confirm**

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Response: It would appear that this statement was compiled by the Derry Now website and not Council, so Council is not in a position to explain what Derry Now meant by this statement. What Council can confirm is that the synthetic carpet is now laid and seams joined and the remaining operations to complete the new pitch surface include the partial infilling of the carpet pile with sand and then topping off with rubber crumb. The contractor has confirmed to Council that these two operations will take 5 to 10 working days of reasonably dry weather.

a) The precise period of dry weather required for the new surface to settle, rather than such a vague and broad timespan?

Response: Refer to response to Point No. 3 above. We understand that Derry Now appear to have produced this 3 to 6 week timescale. Council's understanding of the current timescale to complete the synthetic pitch surface is 5 to 10 working days of reasonably dry weather.

Presumably the council has this information to-hand for a surface it has only just bought.

Response: Council is in possession of the specification for the new synthetic pitch surface.

b) Given that the work plan for the refurbishment project always had the new surface at the Brandywell scheduled to be installed in the winter from the start, why has it only now dawned upon the council that the requirement for up to 6 weeks without rain might pose an issue re when the facility can be completed?

Response: Refer to response to Questions No. 3 & 3a above.

c) Can the Council clarify when was the last time the city of Derry had periods of dry weather that lasted for both 3 weeks and for 6 weeks? Estimates will suffice if the exact dates of such dry spells aren't known.

Response: Council does not record such information as a matter of course. This information should be available from the Met Office.

d) Given the reported dry weather requirements for the installation of this surface, combined with the weather in Derry, has the Council not either bought the wrong surface or planned for its installation at the wrong time of year?

Response: Council is satisfied with the synthetic playing surface specified by our specialist consultant team, which we have been informed complies with the required UEFA criteria. In the north west region of Ireland inclement weather is an all year round risk for weather dependant activities on construction sites.

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4) The Council spokesperson quoted in the Derry News also states that Health and Safety is a consideration in the delay to the project being completed: *"The safe operation of the completed facility was the key priority for Council and that it was keen to continue to work closely with all stakeholders involved with the project to keep them up to date on the work progress and to work with them to facilitate their needs."* Can you please clarify what Health and Safety issues are causing the refurbished stadium to not open in time for the start of the 2018 League of Ireland season? Is it because the work to the stadium will not be completed on time?

Response: There are no Health and Safety Issues that will cause the stadium not to open in time for the new league of Ireland season. The issuing of a stadium license once construction work is complete will determine when the stadium is available for league of Ireland use.

5) Can you confirm the expected completion date the council is now working towards for the refurbished Brandywell Stadium to be made fully available for the public to access?

Response: The stadium will be available for public use by Mid-March.

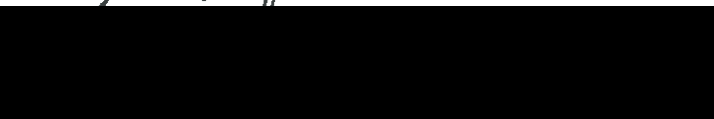
If you are dissatisfied with our response you have rights of review and appeal; these rights consist of two review processes. Firstly our internal review procedure is available by contacting:

John Kelpie
Chief Executive
Derry City and Strabane District Council
98 Strand Road
Derry BT48 7NN Tel 028 71253253 or email john.kelpie@derrystrabane.com

Secondly, you can appeal directly by contacting the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
CHESHIRE SK9 5AF Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or email: casework@ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely



Head of Service Capital Development & Building Control

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