

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR - Director of Housing, Operations and Development

**TO: REGULATORY PANEL – LICENSING (SPECIAL)
OF 12th June 2024**

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL INSPECTION AND REVISED SAFETY CERTIFICATES
FOR SOMERSET PARK, AYR**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise the Panel of the outcome of the annual technical inspection of Somerset Park, Ayr, and to seek approval for the issue of revised Safety Certificates for the ground.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:

2.1.1 agrees that the current Safety Certificate remains in force until 30th June 2024, provided that no adverse reports are received at the meeting; and

2.1.2 agrees that the revised Safety Certificate will come into force on 1st July 2024, and that it will include the new Regulated Stand to the North Area.

3. Background

- 3.1 Under the Safety of Sports Ground Act 1975 Somerset Park is designated as a ground requiring a General Safety Certificate. In addition to the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 the ground is covered by the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987, and related Safety of Sports Grounds Regulations. Main guidance is given by the "Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds", (the "Green Guide"). Although the guide has no statutory force, many of its recommendations are made statutory by their inclusion in the General Safety Certificate.

- 3.2 Currently Somerset Park had a General Safety Certificate issued by South Ayrshire Council to Ayr United Football Club (AUFC). Under the terms of the Certificate AUFC are defined as "Holders" of the Certificate. The Certificate set the ground capacity of Somerset Park at 10,185.

- 3.3 The current Certificate is valid until 30th June 2024, unless withdrawn by the Council. The Safety Certificate states that all assessment, surveys and reports required should be completed by 28th February each year, with any remedial works carried out to the satisfaction of the Council by 14th July, prior to the beginning of the new football season.

4. Proposals

Technical Reports

4.1 Building Standards Services, South Ayrshire Council

4.1.1 A annual site inspection was made to Somerset Park on 26th April 2024. It can be reported that all the required assessments, surveys, certification, and reports are now in place. The annual Structural Assessment Report has been received by the Council along with required Structural Safety Certificate. Within the Report there is a number of maintenance works required and as such a schedule of works has been prepared and issued to AUFC for completion prior to 14th July 2024. A further inspection will be scheduled by Building Standards to confirm that all necessary works are completed by the 14th July 2024.

4.1.2 Major development works have been carried out to the North Stand area of the ground with the erection of a new all seated stand and hospitality suite to the rear. Planning permission and a Building Warrant was submitted last year and works commenced on site in August 2023.

A Completion Inspection will be carried out by Building Standards on Monday the 10th June 2024 (after the date of issue for this Report). A verbal update will be provided to the Panel on the status of the completion inspection. It should be noted that the Completion Acceptance will be required prior to the Safety Certificate coming into force on 1st July 2024.

4.1.3 As the newly constructed stand will a capacity of over 500 seats, this will therefore be a Regulated Stand under the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987. This requires a formal application to be submitted and a Safety Certificate issued along with a set capacity.

It can be confirmed that Ayr Utd have submitted the required application, and that Building Standards have reviewed the information submitted in relation to the compliance.

It should also be noted that a multi-agency meeting was held on the 31st May 2024 to go through the information submitted with relevant stakeholders.

As no adverse comments have been received, it is proposed that the Regulated Stand application be accepted and that the New Safety Certificate issued on the 1st July 2024, will include the capacity of the Regulated stand within the overall ground capacity.

- 4.1.4 As part of the Regulated Stand works, new turnstiles have been installed to access the North area of the ground, including the existing terracing to the front. It also included a new road to the rear of the stand and new access stairways at either end of the stand.

As such it should also be noted that as part of the inspection required for the overall Ground Safety Certificate, these areas have also been inspected/assessed for safety and compliance, along with how they interact with the existing stadium.

- 4.1.5 The current safety certificate ground capacity is set at 10,185. As a result of the works to the North area of the stadium and the construction of the new regulated stand, the revised safety certificate will set the capacity of Somerset Park at 10,203.

4.2 Environmental Health Services, South Ayrshire Council

No adverse comments received

4.3 Scottish Fire & Rescue

No adverse comments received

4.4 Police Scotland

No adverse comments received

4.5 Scottish Ambulance Service

No adverse comments received

4.6 St Andrew's Ambulance Corps

No adverse comments received.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The cost of staff time spent on inspections and on the preparation of revised Safety Certificates was met from existing Environment, Neighbourhood & Economy revenue budget.

7. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

8. Risk Implications of adopting the recommendations.

8.1 Risk Implications of adopting the recommendations.

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

8.2 Risk Implications of rejecting the recommendations.

8.1.2 Rejecting the recommendations may impact on the reputation of the Council.

9. Equalities

- 9.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equalities Impact Assessment Scoping Process, and there are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations and therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as Appendix 1.

10. Sustainable Development Implications

- 10.1 Considering Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11. Options Appraisal

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12. Link to Council Plan

12.1 This work contributes to Priority One Spaces and Places, Priority Two Work and Economy Priority Three Pride in South Ayrshire.

13. Results of Consultation

13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this paper.

13.2 Consultation has taken place with SAC Environmental Health Services; Scottish Fire and Rescue; Police Scotland; Scottish Ambulance Service; and the St Andrews Ambulance Corps.

Background Papers Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975.
Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987.
Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (6th Edition) (“The Green Guide”).
Safety Certificate for Somerset Park, Ayr.

Author and Person to Contact

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Date. 5th June 2024

APPENDIX 1

South Ayrshire Council Equalities Scoping Template

1. Policy details

The 2024 Annual Inspection and the issue of a revised Safety Certificate for Somerset Park, Ayr	Lead Officer Hugh Talbot
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2. Which communities, groups of people, employees or thematic groups do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this policy? Please indicate whether these would be positive or negative impacts

Community, Groups of People or Themes	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
The whole community of South Ayrshire	No	Yes
People from different racial groups, ethnic or national origin.	No	No
Women and/or men (boys and girls)	No	Yes
People with disabilities	No	Yes
People from particular age groups for example Older people, children and young people	No	No
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people	No	No
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process to change sex	No	No
Pregnant women and new mothers	No	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	No
People who share a particular religion or belief	No	No
Thematic Groups: Health, Human Rights, Rurality and Deprivation.	No	No

3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that the policy will support the Council to:

General Duty and other Equality Themes	Level of Negative and/or Positive Impact (high, medium or low)
Eliminate discrimination and harassment faced by particular communities or groups	Positive – low Reduced discrimination of disabled
Promote equality of opportunity between particular communities or groups	Positive – low
Foster good relations between particular communities or groups	Positive – low
Promote positive attitudes towards different communities or groups	Positive – low Promotes inclusion in community life
Increase participation of particular communities or groups in public life	Positive – low
Improve the health and wellbeing of particular communities or groups	Positive – low Promotes inclusion in community life
Promote the human rights of particular communities or groups	Positive – low
Tackle deprivation faced by particular communities or groups	Positive – low

4. Summary Assessment

Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (A full EIA must be carried out on all high and medium impact policies)		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rationale for decision: The Annual Inspection and the issue of a revised safety certificates for the designated sports ground at Somerset Park, Ayr will improve safety for spectators using the facility, but has no significant impact on the public in general.			
Signed : Hugh Talbot		Co-ordinator : Building Standards	
Date: 5/6/24		Copy to equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk	