

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT BY: Director of Housing, Operations and Development

**TO: REGULATORY PANEL - LICENSING
OF 29 May 2025**

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL INSPECTION AND SAFETY CERTIFICATES FOR THE
REGULATED STANDS AT AYR RACECOURSE**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise the Panel of the outcome of the annual technical inspections at Ayr Racecourse, and to seek approval for the issue of revised Safety Certificates for the two stands.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:

- 2.1.1 agrees that the current Safety Certificates remain in force until 30th June 2025, provided that no adverse reports are received at the meeting; and
- 2.1.2 agrees that the revised Safety Certificates will come into force on 1st July 2025, for the period of one year.

3. Background

- 3.1 Ayr Racecourse is covered by the provisions of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sports Act 1987. Part III of the Act applies to sports grounds which provide covered accommodation in stands for spectators but are not designated sports grounds in terms of the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975. Safety Certificates require to be issued for grandstands ("regulated stands"), which provide covered accommodation for 500 or more spectators.
- 3.2 Main guidance is given in the "Guide to Safety of Sports Grounds", the ("Green Guide"). Although the guide has no statutory force, its recommendations can be made statutory by their inclusion in Safety Certificates.

- 3.3 Ayr Racecourse currently has two grandstands which are classed as regulated stands, the Princess Royal (also known as the Club Stand) and the Eglinton Stand.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the Safety Certificates cover only the grandstands, their associated entrances and exits and the concourses in front of the stands. The Racecourse is not classified as a designated Sports Ground under the 1975 Act. The certificates do not cover the Eglinton Rooms, Rothesay Stand, Paddock area etc.
- 3.5 The current Certificate remains in force until 30th June 2025, unless withdrawn by the Council.
- 3.6 The Safety Certificates states that all assessments, 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 31st May. It should be noted that inspections are carried out prior to the Scottish National meeting, normally held in mid-April and the Gold Cup held in September each year. Both of which attracts the largest attendances. There are also multi-Agency meetings held prior to both these events and debriefs to learn any lessons learned.

4. Proposals

Technical Reports

4.1 Building Standards Services, South Ayrshire Council

- 4.1.1 The annual inspection was made to the Racecourse on 6th May 2025. It can be reported that all the required assessments, surveys, certification, and reports are now in place, with the exception of, the Structural Certificate, which is signed off after the 2025 Maintenance Programme has been completed.

The 2025 Maintenance Programme contains a number of minor items to be repaired, and these will be completed by the 30th June 2025. Some of the ongoing issues highlighted within the structural report are outlined below.

- 4.1.2 The structural report submitted as part of the required assessments, highlighted concerns regarding the condition of the reinforced concrete structural frame to the Eglinton Grandstand. A series of record photographs were taken as part of the structural survey.

No immediate action is required in relation to safety, however there are works required to prolong lifespan of the structure. We are currently working with the racecourse management team and the safety officers to determine how the work to this area will be programmed.

It should be noted that there is no public access currently to the upper tier of the Eglinton grandstand, and as such the spectator numbers for this stand have been reduced. This area of the stand is not required generally during the year, due to the spectator numbers, and is not included within the capacities for the Safety Certificate.

There is no current proposal to utilise this area for viewing. If it was be used in the future then an amended Safety Certificate would be required to be issued, to include this area again within the approved spectators for the Eglinton Stand.

4.1.3 The Scottish Grand National meeting was held this year on 12th April 2025 and attracted an attendance of 15,451, and the Ayr Gold Cup meeting was held on the 21st of September 2024 with an attendance of 7,595. No adverse reports specifically in relation to the grandstands were received about either meeting.

4.1.4 The Contingency Plan and Evacuation Procedures were updated in June 2024. There have been some training exercises of the updated Plan throughout the year at some smaller race meetings. It has been scheduled to run test on the Plan and evacuation procedures at a larger attendance race meeting on the 21st June 2025.

4.1.5 The current Medical Plan for the Racecourse is going through a review with input from the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Resilience Team. It should be noted that the updated Medical Plan will be in place prior to the issuing of the new Safety Certificate on the 1st July 2025

4.2 **Environmental Health Services, South Ayrshire Council**

No adverse reports received.

4.3 **Scottish Fire & Rescue**

No adverse comments

4.4 **Police Scotland**

No adverse comments.

4.5 **Scottish Ambulance Service**

No adverse comments.

4.6 NHS Ayrshire & Arran

No adverse comments.

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 Planning and Building Standards 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.

8.2.1 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 NHS and Arran

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 Certificates for the Princess Royal and Eglinton Stands, Ayr Racecourse.

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