

Process for consideration of the installation of dual purpose seating and standing areas by a league 1 or 2 club which is not subject to the all-seater requirement

February 2017

Introduction

Celtic FC's recent introduction of a dual purpose seating and standing area at Celtic Park has raised questions about the process for installation of such dual purpose areas in England and Wales. The Government's all-seater policy does not allow standing accommodation at the grounds of clubs who have been in the Premier League or Championship for more than three years. However, standing accommodation is permitted at grounds in leagues 1 and 2 at clubs that have not previously been in the Premier League or Championship for more than three years (and therefore become all seated).

Such standing accommodation must meet the required standards set by the SGSA. These standards are enforced by way of an annual licence to admit spectators issued to the ground by the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA). Therefore, league 1 and 2 grounds could, if they so wished, install dual purpose areas subject to those areas meeting required standards. This process aims to provide clarity to those clubs about the process for applying to the SGSA for such areas to be covered by the licence issued to the ground.

Outline Process

1. The licence holder (club/stadium operator) discusses dual purpose seating/standing area with local certificating authority and Safety Advisory Group and secures their agreement in principle to its installation.
 2. The licence holder writes to the SGSA to inform of their intention to install a dual purpose seating/standing area and requests that the SGSA's licence would apply to this area. This could be done as part of the annual licensing application process or separately, mid-season.
 3. The SGSA seeks information from the licence holder in relation to the planned dual purpose seating/standing area. The SGSA would use a form such as the form at annex A to collect this information.
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4. The SGSA considers the application, including taking views of stakeholders such as the relevant local authority and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
5. The SGSA informs the licence holder of the outcome of the consideration, explaining whether the SGSA's licence would apply to the dual purpose seating/standing area.
6. If the SGSA confirms the SGSA licence would apply, the licence holder installs the dual purpose seating/standing area.

Promotion to the Championship

If the club in question secured promotion to the Championship after three years it would be required to become all seated in line with the Government's policy.

The Government has indicated previously that it does not consider dual purpose seating/standing areas to meet the spirit and intention of the all-seater policy on the basis that the purpose and design of such accommodation would be likely to encourage or facilitate standing. In essence, a dual purpose seating/standing area 'seat' is not sufficient as a seat for the purpose of the all-seater policy. If a club subject to the all-seater policy requested a dual purpose seating/standing area to be covered by the licence, a decision will be taken on that application. However, unless Government policy changes, any club which had installed dual purpose seating/standing areas would be unlikely to be able to secure a licence for this area once they have been in the Championship or Premier League for more than three years.

Further information

Any questions on this process should be sent to the SGSA at info@sgsamail.org.uk or if you would like to discuss this with a member of SGSA staff please contact our Headquarters on 0207 930 6693.

Annex A - information requested from licence holder in relation to dual purpose seating/standing area

DUAL PURPOSE SEATING AND STANDING AREAS COMPLIANCE

Club:

Terrace:

INFORMATION REQUIRED

I attach full details of:

- the layout, spacing, strength, construction, height or positioning of the terrace and of crush barrier, seating arrangements, product specification.
- capacity calculations, sightlines calculations, layout plans and drawing.
- safety management measure to ensure safe and appropriate use of the dual purpose standing and seating area.

Intended action

Details of scheduled timeframe for installation and impact on any ongoing events:

Ground plans / structural details

I attach the following ground plans structural details:

Signed

Name

Position

Organisation

Date

Notes:

1. Separate details should be provided for each standing terrace or area. It may be completed by the applicant or by a professional consultant acting on behalf of the applicant
 2. The SGSA reserves the right to check any or all of the information supplied.
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