

Atlantic Islands Centre

Ionad Dualchais nan Eileanan A-Staigh



SLATES

Despite the wet and windy weather of the last few weeks, progress on the construction of the Atlantic Islands Centre is being maintained. If you have had a peek through the site fencing you will have seen that the external render on the north block is complete and that the slate walling to the south block is well underway. The slate walling is using the reclaimed stone from the walls of the old engine house and the stonemasons undertaking the work, Rowan Stoneworks, are doing a high quality job in replicating the natural appearance of a traditional wall. Internally most of the partitions are in place and services, such as electrics, heating and plumbing are being installed.

The building is effectively wind and watertight, but the big item that's missing is the slate roof covering. In the last update, I reported that Argyll and Bute councillors had approved the planning amendment to allow new slates to be used on the roof. It has, however, taken 8 weeks to obtain the Planning Authority's approval of the specific type of slate that is to be used and in that period a temporary roof covering has had to be installed to allow work to progress internally.

As reported at the recent Trust AGM, the decision making process within the Planning Authority is being unreasonably influenced by the concerted actions of some island residents, and others from off the island, who seem determined to disrupt the democratic planning process, delay the completion of the building and discredit the legitimate actions of the Trust and its professional advisers. It is disappointing that these actions resulted in the Planning Officers' slate recommendation being referred back to a further meeting of the Council's Planning Committee, but earlier this week, Councillors confirmed that Cupa H3 slates were acceptable for roofing the new building. Cupa H3 is a unique slate specially produced for the Scottish market as an alternative to Ballachulish slate. It is ideally suited to our west coast Atlantic climate and has been widely used on conservation projects throughout Scotland. As it is supplied in a range of sizes, the traditional practice of diminishing courses can be replicated. Work on fixing the slates will start next week

For pictures of progress on site you can follow us on Facebook
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