

Shared Environmental Service  
Silverwood Business Park  
190 Raceview Road  
Ballymena  
Co. Antrim  
BT42 4HZ

05/10/2023

Dear Mr Baker,

**Materials used in the construction of 3G pitches**

On 25 September 2023, the EU Commission adopted the EU REACH restriction on intentionally added microplastics. Once entered into force, the restriction will apply in the EU and Northern Ireland. There is currently no restriction proposal for microplastics under UK REACH for the GB market; although, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is soon going to start an evidence project that will inform any Regulatory Management.

According to the EU, the granular infill material used on artificial sport surfaces is the largest source of intentional microplastics in the environment. A sales ban on granular infill materials will apply after eight years so that affected stakeholders have time to develop and switch to alternative materials.

In the interim and in light of the science underpinning the restriction, SES will require robust evidence of appropriate mitigation for artificial surfaces with linkages to designated sites. The most effective control is avoidance of infill materials entering the aquatic environment and all applicants must be able to demonstrate effective mitigation in this respect.

Yours sincerely,



**Malachy Kearney**

**Principal Environmental Planning Officer**

[ses@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:ses@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)