

Council says some of the hundreds of tramline snagging items disputed by contractor

The new part of Edinburgh's tram line from York Place to Newhaven had almost 600 defects to be fixed just weeks ahead of its planned opening, it has emerged, as the council admits there are ongoing disputes with the contractor over some issues.

City residents have been assured that services to Newhaven are on track to launch this spring, but a date is still to be announced.

A project snagging list from February obtained through a Freedom of Information request revealed there were 590 outstanding defects, with the majority along Leith Walk.

At that time 83 of a total 673 had been signed off and The City of Edinburgh Council said more have been dealt with in the interim period.

Updated figures were requested by the Local Democracy Reporting Service but were not provided by the council.

The local authority said there are "ongoing discussions with the contractor regarding disputes relating to defects".

In a statement it added: "I consider that if this information were to be released into the public domain at this time, it would prejudice the discussions which are currently taking place."

The vast majority of the defects – nearly 400 – were about 'hard landscaping' along the route, while more than 100 were associated with trackslab – the concrete blocks underneath the tram lines.

A map of the £207 million Picardy Place to Newhaven extension highlighting problem hotspots showed that Leith Walk between Annandale Street and Pilrig Street was the section with the most defects, with more than 75 in that one stretch.

Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: "As would be expected on a project of this scale and complexity, there will be snagging and defects which will be carried out by the contractor as part of an ongoing rectification programme.

"The project will be delivered as specified, and to ensure this there will be regular updates to the Transport and Environment Committee on snagging."

There will be a two year snagging period which will obviously continue after the launch of passenger services, similarly to the first project, according to the council.

An update on the project going before the Transport Committee on Thursday states: "The project remains on schedule to be operational by Spring 2023 and within the £207.3m budget approved by Council in March 2019.

"Testing and commissioning is continuing with the project currently undertaking a set of tests on performance and timetable.

"Separately, the project is continuing with public realm works

along the route.

“To note, works on the Picardy Place island site started during February 2023 and are scheduled to be completed by June 2023.”

by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter.

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