

Conditions placed on SF Belfast parade

ÉANNA Ó CAOLLAÍ

The Parades Commission has given the go-ahead to a Sinn Féin parade in Belfast next month planned in protest at a homecoming parade for the British soldiers who have returned to Northern Ireland from Iraq and Afghanistan.

The commission placed conditions on the Sinn Féin parade which is due to take place on Sunday, November 2nd.

The Commission said it felt it was necessary to restrict the timing of the parade, and protesters will not be allowed to depart from the notified assembly point at Bank Square before 11.30am. The organisers wanted to leave at 12.00.

Sinn Féin must also 'adequately' marshal the parade and must obey any directions given by the PSNI, according to the conditions imposed.

The Parades Commission said its decision to impose restrictions on the parade was made "against the background of continuing community tension."

It said that had the parade proceeded as planned, "there may be an adverse effect on community relations and a potential for public disorder."

Speaking last month, Sinn Féin's Paul Maskey had urged support for his motion opposing a civic reception which was passed by the city council.

"There are many people in this city who are opposed to the war," he said, adding that the plan to hold a homecoming march was divisive."

Republican anti-agreement group Éirigi also planning to hold a protest in Belfast on the day

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