POLICY NOTE

THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATIONS) (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2019

SSI 2019/41

The above instrument is made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 153 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994. The instrument is subject to the negative procedure.

These regulations amend The Non-Domestic Rates (Telecommunication Installations) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 to reflect mast location changes to the previously published grid references, and incorporate grid references of additional eligible new mast locations.

Policy Objectives

Relief for new mobile telecommunications masts in specified locations is aimed at incentivising mobile operators to build masts and/or improve the viability of mobile operators' business case to provide mobile services in those areas.

Achieving improved mobile coverage in Scotland is a key objective set out in the Scottish Government's *Mobile connectivity: action plan* (2016).[1] It is referenced in the Scottish Government's Digital Strategy refresh: '*Realising Scotland's full potential in a digital world: a digital strategy for Scotland'* (2017)[2] and the Scottish Government's '*A nation with ambition: the Government's Programme for Scotland 2017-2018'* (2017).[3] The non-domestic rates relief is part of the Scottish Government's commitment to working in collaboration with the mobile industry to set the right conditions to incentivise infrastructure investment in non-commercial areas (so-called "notspots"). The Scottish Government's expectation is that new mobile masts built in the eligible areas will provide 4G mobile services to notspots in (and potentially around) the eligible areas.

Consultation

There is no statutory obligation to consult on these Regulations.

Impact Assessments

No Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment is required because the present instrument will not impose new regulatory burdens on businesses, charities or the voluntary sector.

Financial Effects

The decrease in the amount of non-domestic rates payable is in line with the policy objective as outlined above.

Scottish Government
Local Government and Communities Directorate
February 2019

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[1] https://www.gov.scot/policies/digital/broadband-and-mobile/
[2] https://www.gov.scot/publications/realising-scotlands-full-potential-digital-world-digital-strategy-scotland/
[3] https://www.gov.scot/publications/nation-ambition-governments-programme-scotland-2017-18/