

## **POLICY NOTE**

### **THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (TELECOMMUNICATION INSTALLATIONS) (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2018**

#### **SSI 2018/63**

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 resolution procedure.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of these Regulations is to amend the Non-Domestic Rates (Telecommunication Installations) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 to provide for 100% non-domestic rates relief from 1 April 2018 up to 31 March 2029 for new mobile telecommunication masts located in three eligible pilot areas delineated in reference maps and at 17 specific locations determined by grid references. These amendments are being made to incentivise mobile operators to build masts and/or improve the viability of mobile operators' business case to provide mobile services in those areas. It is anticipated that these Regulations will be updated annually to reflect any location changes to the previously published grid references, and to incorporate grid references of any additional eligible new mast locations.

#### **Policy Objective**

Achieving improved mobile coverage in Scotland is a key objective set out in the Scottish Government's Mobile Action Plan<sup>1</sup> (2016), and is referenced in the Scottish Government's Digital Strategy refresh: Realising Scotland's Full Potential in a Digital World (2017)<sup>2</sup> and in the Scottish Government's 2017-18 Programme for Government<sup>3</sup>. 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.

#### **Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment**

BRIA's are prepared where proposals introduce additional burdens or costs on business or the third sector. As this SSI will reduce the rates burden on qualifying businesses, no BRIA is required.

#### **Financial Effect**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Economy/digital/Publications/SGMAP>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/03/7843>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/09/8468>

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

Local Government Division  
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