

T: 0131-244-0237
E: chief.planner@gov.scot

18 March 2020

Dear Colleague

CORONA VIRUS COVID 19 – RELAXATION OF ENFORCEMENT WHERE PUBLIC HOUSES AND RESTAURANTS OFFER A TAKEAWAY SERVICE DURING THE CURRENT OUTBREAK

Many public houses and restaurants do not currently have planning permission to operate as takeaway premises selling food and drink for consumption outside the premises.

Given the exceptional challenges facing the country from the coronavirus however, it is vital that support is given to these businesses to allow them to maximise opportunities to maintain a revenue stream and avoid potential closure and loss of small businesses. Similarly, provision of takeaway services from local businesses will enable members of the public to access goods and services with minimum exposure to risk of infection with coronavirus.

As you will be aware, planning enforcement is a discretionary activity and Scottish Government policy and guidance sets out that planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. Impact on business operations should be taken into account when considering appropriate enforcement action in any particular case.

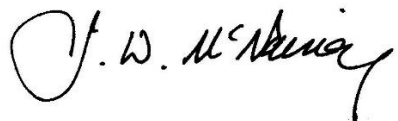
The purpose of this Chief Planner Letter is to make clear that the Scottish Government consider that, as a matter of urgency, planning authorities should not seek to undertake planning enforcement action which would result in unnecessarily restricting public houses and restaurants providing takeaway services on a temporary basis during the current exceptional circumstances.

We will review the need for the measures outlined in this letter after three months, and it is the intention to withdraw it once the immediate urgency has subsided.

Yours faithfully

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
www.gov.scot





John McNairney, Chief Planner



Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning