

## Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

### SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

#### 1A. Name of Public Authority.

Department of Finance.

#### 1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

NON-DOMESTIC RATES VALUATIONS (CORONAVIRUS) BILL

#### 1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

#### 1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

NON-DOMESTIC RATES VALUATIONS (CORONAVIRUS) BILL

#### 1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

This Bill aims to mitigate the risk of potential challenges to aspects of valuations within a new non-domestic valuation list, brought on grounds of the public health measures implemented by the Executive, resulting from the operation of Article 39A of the Rates (Northern Ireland) Order 1977, and is intended to ensure that the adjustment operates in the context of both future non-domestic valuation lists or any pandemic that may face the Executive in the future.

**1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?**

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

*Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.*

N/A

*Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.*

N/A

*Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.*

N/A

## SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

**2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?**

Yes  No  If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

**2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.**

This Bill has application across the non-domestic taxbase in NI regardless of location.

The Bill aims to mitigate the risk of potential challenges to aspects of valuations within a new non-domestic valuation list, brought on grounds of the public health measures implemented by the Executive, resulting from the operation of Article 39A of the Rates (Northern Ireland) Order 1977, and is intended to ensure that the adjustment operates in the context of both future non-domestic valuation lists or any pandemic that may face the Executive in the future.

The UK Government, alongside the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, have also announced and commenced legislative intervention so as to prevent challenges to net annual values being brought forward on grounds of Covid-19 health restrictions. This Bill brings forward similar provision tailored to a local statutory context so as to address any potential loss of value in valuation lists and to adjust the rating system to prevent this situation arising again.

**2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.**

The mitigation provision in the Bill does not impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas. This Bill has application across the non-domestic taxbase in NI regardless of location.

**2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.**

Rural Businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text"/>

**If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.**

**2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.**

N/A

### SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

**3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?**

Yes  No  If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

**3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.**

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

**3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.**

**3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?**

**If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.**

**3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?**

No steps have been taken in this area as the Bill aims to implement statutory mitigation measures within the non-domestic rating system, made necessary as a result of the public health measures imposed by the Executive in March 2020 to limit the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in Northern Ireland which causes the disease COVID-19 (“coronavirus”).

The Executive has already provided compensatory and mitigating rate relief to those commercial ratepayers in rural areas (and all areas) affected by Health restrictions, through the separate provision of £515 million in Covid-19 related business rate relief for both the 2020/21 and 2021/22 rating years.

## **SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas**

**4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.**

As per 3E

## SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes  No  If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **5C**.

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES** GO TO Section **6A**.



**5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.**

As per 3E, no steps have been taken in this area. The Bill aims to implement statutory mitigation measures within the non-domestic rating system, made necessary as a result of the public health measures imposed by the Executive in March 2020 to limit the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in Northern Ireland which causes the disease COVID-19 (“coronavirus”).

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## SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

**6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.**

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

<b>Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:</b>	Andrew McAvoy
<b>Position/Grade:</b>	Principal Officer
<b>Division/Branch</b>	Rating Policy Division
<b>Signature:</b>	<i>Andrew McAvoy</i>
<b>Date:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:</b>	Sharon Magee
<b>Position/Grade:</b>	Grade 5
<b>Division/Branch:</b>	Rating Policy Division
<b>Signature:</b>	<i>Sharon Magee</i>
<b>Date:</b>	20 October 2021