



Chief.Planner@gov.scot

17 August 2026

Dear colleagues

The Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Data Centres exceeding 50MW Power Capacity) (Scotland) Direction 2026

I am writing to draw your attention to a new Direction setting out the arrangements for notifying planning applications for proposed new data centre development exceeding 50MW Power Capacity. The direction includes notification requirements so that the Scottish Ministers are alerted of any such planning applications within 7 days of validation.

This requirement applies to both new planning applications and any that are currently being considered.

The Direction comes in to force today, 17 August 2026. It will enable strategic oversight and monitoring of the progress of the pipeline of applications within and entering the planning system, and of the overall impacts and implications for wider infrastructure.

Yours sincerely

Dr Fiona Simpson, FRTPI
Chief Planner and Director

DIRECTION

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



The Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Data Centres exceeding 50MW Power Capacity) (Scotland) Direction 2026

The Direction is given under powers conferred on the Scottish Ministers by Regulation 31 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and all other powers enabling them to do so:

Citation, commencement and interpretation

(1) This Direction may be cited as the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Data Centres exceeding 50MW Power Capacity) (Scotland) Direction 2026 and comes into force on 17 August 2026.

(2) In this Direction-

“Data Centre” means a proposed structure, or part of a structure, used to house computing and data storage resources.

“Power Capacity” is the total proposed electrical power available to the data centre, typically expressed in megawatts (MW).

"EIA report", "Schedule 2 development" and "screening opinion" have the same meaning as in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

“Validation date” has the same meaning as in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

Information to be given to the Scottish Ministers on receipt of an application for a data centre exceeding 50MW capacity.

(3) Where a planning authority receives an application for planning permission in principle or for planning permission for the construction of a data centre exceeding 50MW power capacity, it must within 7 days of the validation date in respect of the Application, send to the Scottish Ministers the following information—

(a) a copy of the planning application, accompanying plans and associated documentation (e.g. transport/noise assessment), together with the full address and post-code of the site to be developed; and

(b) a copy of any EIA report accompanying the application or, where an EIA report has not been prepared, a copy of any screening opinion given by the planning authority.

(4) Where the planning authority holds the information to be sent to the Scottish Ministers under paragraph 3 on its website, it may comply with some or all of the requirement to provide this information to the Scottish Ministers by means of an email to the Scottish Government containing a link, or a series of links, to the relevant pages on the authority's website.

Submission of information

6. Submission should be made by email to the following address:
Planning.Decisions@gov.scot

7. Where it is necessary to send hard copies of some or all of the required documents, they should be addressed to:

The Scottish Government
Planning Decisions
Planning, Architecture and Regeneration Directorate
Area 2-F South
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ