

Safer Streets-Healthy Business - East Renfrewshire

Guidance for 'streets, spaces & places' business support during COVID-19

1. Introduction

The East Renfrewshire [Transport Response to COVID-19](#) recognises the profound changes made to travel patterns and how people use streets and spaces in the area.

As restrictions ease and businesses reopen, those who rely on footfall and face-to-face customer contact may find conditions particularly difficult. For people to return to Town & Neighbourhood Centres, they must feel safe in doing so, with physical distancing the main tool available to mitigate COVID-19 transmission.

This means businesses may have to consider new ways to trade safely while providing adequate space for customers to queue outside businesses and for others to be able to pass them safely on footways.

In recognition of this, East Renfrewshire Council support a 'safer streets - healthy business' approach through empowering businesses to find creative ways to re-imagine public space outside premises to support safe trading.

We are committed to assist businesses adapt to the 'new normal' and will consider requests to re-purpose space on adopted roads (such as footways and car parking) for commercial use. These measures effectively allow businesses to temporarily adopt public space to support safe business trading during COVID-19.

Any proposal will however need to be planned and managed to balance the needs of businesses while protecting public health and safety. Any application must therefore consider the impacts of any changes, such as reduced footway widths (and the need to maintain a safe two-way flow of foot traffic), as well as impacts on neighbours and potential road safety impacts



Examples of road space reallocation to support businesses during COVID-19

2. Background

Under normal circumstances any application from businesses to re-determine public space such, as outdoor seating or extension into the adopted road, would require Planning and Roads Consent. Under current proposals the council will consider applications, free of charge, that are deemed reasonable to support business trading and that take into account the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, such as the need for safe physical distancing and other provisions under the (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. Although a Section 59 consent under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 will be required to form outdoor provision, this process will be expedited and included within a [single application process](#).

Further guidance notes contained below '*how to make an application to adopt or reallocate street space*'.

3. What will be considered:

East Renfrewshire Council support the principle of temporary and flexible streetscape interventions, namely to

- support business recovery
- enable safe physical distancing
- improve accessibility for walking, cycling and wheeling

This includes requests to utilise space on adopted roads (footways, car parking spaces etc) for commercial uses such as dining, retail, portable hygiene stations, merchandise displays. This principle strongly encourages businesses to work together to coordinate requests for temporary measures.

Although this requires plans and supporting information to ensure relevant criteria and/or conditions are considered, this will be achieved through a simplified application process. For example, where footway constraints are identified, businesses should consider whether adoption or reallocation of on-street parking provision would be appropriate to support business trading, allow queuing and enable the safe two-way flow of foot traffic through maintaining a desirable 3 metre width on footways.

It must be noted that any changes are not assumed to be permanent. Temporary consents will be issued for a maximum of 6 months. Appropriate timeframes therefore need to be considered and longer term changes post-COVID-19 should be subject to usual planning and consent process.

Although this is a business-led approach, and East Renfrewshire Council's primary responsibility is to ensure wider public safety, assistance can be provided to help develop plans in order to help balance the needs of business with the wider functions of the public realm. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action which in turn would harm customer confidence and the overall ethos of the approach being put forward.

4. How to make an application to adopt or reallocate street space:

In order to make an application, the first stage is to complete an online enquiry form available via our [online Business Proposal Portal](#). Necessary information includes:

- Contact details and location of proposal
- Details on how you would like to use the space
- What you would like to put in the space
- Whether you have engaged neighbouring businesses and the outcome of these discussions
- Hours of operation
- Whether you plan to serve alcohol
- How you propose to facilitate safe physical distancing during and outwith operating times
- Impacts on servicing arrangements, such as deliveries
- Potential road safety issues
- Potential impacts on groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (Scotland) 2011
- Any other information that may be of use to help process application
- It is essential that you produce a basic sketch or layout plan to demonstrate how measures will be outlined.

If for any reason you are unable to complete an enquiry via the online portal, a downloadable enquiry form is available at <https://covid.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/road-and-pavements> - Safer Streets Healthy Business.

For further information or to submit plans electronically please email roads@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk and planning@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk for the attention of COVID-19 Transport Response Team - Business Support

Notes for guidance:

General

1. There is no charge for this application.
2. Plans detailing the area to be formed for seating and its position on the footway are to be submitted for approval
3. No seating or other provisions should be formed until a Section 59 Roads Consent has been issued.

Design & operation

1. Appropriate delineation of the adopted space must be considered with the needs of disabled people catered for in the design
2. The general pedestrian area should be maintained at a desirable width of around 3 metres.
3. There shall be no permanent structures within the enclosed area. All service shall be from within the building.

4. No part of the enclosure shall obstruct direct egress from any fire exits to the public road.
5. The rights of the public utilities to enter the enclosed area in order to gain access to their services in accordance with their rights under law will be maintained, as the enclosed area will remain part of the public road.
6. No illuminated signs or lights will be located in such a manner as to distract or confuse drivers or pedestrians at any adjacent traffic controlled junction or crossing.
7. All areas must be kept in a clean and tidy manner at all times with businesses responsible for appropriate hygiene control.
8. If, at any time in the future, the road requires to be restored to use for vehicular or pedestrian traffic, the proprietor will be required to restore the area to a suitable condition for its former use at no expense to the Roads Service.