

Openreach submission of 1 March 2023

PE1931/C: Improve the R100 rollout by prioritising properties who currently have speeds of less than 5 Mbps

Our approach to the delivery of c. 114,000 premises included in our three Reaching 100% contracts across Scotland has been consistent. We strive to deliver connectivity as quickly as physically possible, but also in the most efficient way using public funding.

When we tendered for and subsequently signed the R100 contracts, we gave a view of the build sequence from beginning to end, noting there were significant timescales associated with each area.

When scheduling the sequence of work, we work whenever possible from an inside-out approach, building from the primary exchange location where the main fibre control unit (known as a headend) is located out into communities. Significant dependencies, including backhaul requirements, determine the build sequence.

Whilst we recognise the appeal of working from the outside in, the most efficient use of public subsidy and build sequencing is to work from the inside out, extending the network as far and as deep as possible with the funding available.

We appreciate that tens of thousands homes and businesses are still be connected as part of this programme but they do form part of a co-ordinated build sequence designed for maximum efficiency.

In addition, careful consideration must also be given to the logistics of deploying and building a network in those locations from a supply chain perspective – is the contractor base able to resource to work in those locations? In many cases in rural Scotland, local supply chains that live and work in those communities are not available.

Availability of resources; network topography and requirements; infrastructure and logistics are all factors we need to consider when planning an efficient build. Building network in rural Scotland is a very complex undertaking and we are doing all we can to maximise build over and above the contractual commitments made.