

Openreach submission of 22 December 2023

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

We thank the Committee for getting in touch with us to respond to the further questions posed at its meeting on 22nd November 2023. Please find our responses below.

Q1: In light of information that work is sequenced from the primary exchange location out to communities, whether Openreach considers areas with low speeds in the surrounding communities when determining which primary exchange locations to prioritise.

Yes, we do. As outlined in our previous response dated 1st March 2023, we design and build the network in the most efficient way possible to meet the requirements of the R100 programme. These are sequenced to meet the contractual time commitments, which are specific to intervention area contracted premises. There are 114,869 premises to be delivered across 3 contract lots (North, Central and South). Those premises were identified as having speeds of less than 24mpbs and our goal is to connect them as quickly as possible.

We routinely review the sequencing of our build programme to identify if any additional build can be brought into the programme. This additional build is not specific to, or included in the contract, but because of this continuous review, we have been able to deliver to around 25% more premises than contracted within the R100 programme.

We also consistently look to take on any opportunities to utilise the Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme (SBVS) and Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS) funding to extend coverage further, delivering to even more additional premises.

Q2. Whether households with speeds of less than 5 Mbps which sit nearby to an existing fibre area, like the petitioner who lives 800m from fibre, can apply for connection to that area.

The Scotland Superfast website (www.scotlandsuperfast.com) outlines at premise level who is in plan and if so, when they are due to be build to. We have not been asked by the Scottish Government to prioritise any specific premises below 5mps but are instead driven to maximise coverage and reach in the most efficient way possible

We appreciate the build plan is set over a number of years and some individuals will want a solution before their R100 delivery date. We would recommend for those who are not in the R100 plan within the next 12 months and have speeds less than 10mbps, to check if they are eligible for the universal service obligation. They may be able to receive support from BT through either a mobile, fixed wireless or full fibre solution. Further information can be found at: www.bt.com/broadband/USO