

Gigabit in Scotland

Public Review Report

November 2023

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1. Introduction And Background

In March 2021, the UK Government announced an ambition to deliver nationwide gigabit-capable broadband as soon as possible, recognising that there is a need for government intervention in the parts of the country that are not commercially viable. They have committed a total of £5bn to ensure that all areas of the UK can benefit. This will be spent through a package of coordinated and mutually supportive interventions, collectively known as Project Gigabit¹, with an initial intervention of £1.2bn targeting at least 85% gigabit coverage of the UK by 2025.

The Scottish Government issued a Public Review (**PR**)² to determine the eligible intervention area for investment of public funds into gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure on 23rd March 2023. The period of consultation closed on 24th April 2023, with the Public Review formally closing on 23rd June 2023.

The outcome of this PR will be used to inform eligibility for possible future procurements via Project Gigabit and support the development of other potential public interventions in Scotland. It may also be used to determine eligibility for the current UK-wide GigaHubs and Gigabit Voucher programmes.

2. Purpose Of This Public Review Report

Under the UK Government's Gigabit Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme³ guidelines, public sector intervention in broadband infrastructure investment is limited to those areas where there is no current or planned (within the next 3 years) commercial deployments, to avoid distorting what might otherwise be/become a competitive market.

The Scottish Government carried out an Open Market Review⁴ of all current and planned infrastructure within the scope area between 21st February 2022 and 21st March 2022. The submitted data allowed us to produce a draft intervention area for the Public Review.

¹ [Project Gigabit Guidance](#)

² [Public Review into Broadband Infrastructure in Scotland](#)

³ [Project Gigabit: UK subsidy advice](#)

⁴ [Open Market Review into Broadband Infrastructure in Scotland](#)

The Public Review is now complete and this report sets out the responses to the consultation and the actions that the Scottish Government has taken as a direct result of those responses and subsequent data changes from suppliers.

3. Public Review Response

A total of 17 formal responses were submitted during the consultation period. None of the responses asked to be treated in confidence. The table in Appendix A summarises the responses and the actions that the Scottish Government has taken as a result.

4. Revised Intervention Area

As a result of the Public Review and including supplier data changes during the assessment phase, the Scottish Government has revised the Gigabit broadband map for Scotland. In line with the Gigabit Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme guidelines, the Scottish Government has classified premises as White, Grey, Under Review or Black. We will only subsidise build to premises which have been designated as White.

- **White** - indicates premises with no gigabit network infrastructure and none is likely to be developed within 3 years
- **Black** - indicates premises with two or more qualifying gigabit infrastructures from different suppliers being available, or will be deployed within the coming 3 years
- **Grey** - indicates premises with a single qualifying gigabit infrastructure from a single supplier is available, or is to be deployed within the coming 3 years
- **Under Review** - indicates premises where suppliers have reported current or planned commercial broadband coverage, but where claimed current gigabit coverage has not been verified, or, in respect of planned build, where evaluators are confident that gigabit infrastructure will be delivered, but some risks to delivery remain, or there are some gaps in evidence.

For presentational purposes, postcodes have been used when mapping the proposed eligible areas for this Public Review (note we will only subsidise build to premises which have been designated as White - postcodes are not used to determine intervention areas for subsidy).

For the purpose of mapping only, postcodes have been classified as follows:

1. A postcode is **White** if any 'White' premises are present; else
2. A postcode is **Under Review** if any 'Under Review' premises are present; else

3. A postcode is **Black** if all premises in the postcode are classified 'Black'; else
4. A postcode is **Grey** if all premises are 'Grey' or there is a mixture of 'Grey' and 'Black' premises

The Gigabit coverage map for Scotland can be found in Appendix B.

Premises that are classified as Under Review will be subject to continued monitoring and verification of supplier plans within the proposed delivery period by the Scottish Government and in the event that these commercial plans fall away, these premises will be reclassified as White and form part of the proposed intervention area and therefore eligible for intervention via this aid measure.

The mapping analysis of existing and evidenced planned coverage (within the next 3 years) has identified significant remaining 'White' areas. The outcome of the Public Review is summarised in terms of White, Grey, Black and Under Review premises below and in reference to postcode mapping as described above:

Postcode Classification (All Scotland)	Number of Postcodes	Number of Gigabit Black Premises	Number of Gigabit Grey Premises	Number of Gigabit Under Review Premises	Number of Gigabit White Premises
White	38,377	19,269	195,511	128,210	343,207
Under Review	48,937	63,805	295,347	630,046	-
Grey	52,730	167,296	833,840	-	-
Black	18,256	324,183	-	-	-
Total	158,300	574,553	1,324,698	758,256	343,207

Note that this outcome reflects the whole of Scotland. The PR⁵ document intimated that Highlands and Islands Enterprise (**HIE**) was carrying out a Project Gigabit procurement on behalf of the Inverness and Highland City Region Deal. HIE has since confirmed that it will not proceed with the procurement, therefore in line with the PR document, we have assessed all premises in Scotland.

⁵ [Public Review into Broadband Infrastructure in Scotland](#)

In line with the Gigabit Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme, if commercial plans change and are notified to the Scottish Government, then affected premises can be reclassified accordingly.

For any potential procurements, the Scottish Government will make coverage information available at a premises level within the identified White postcode areas to bidders to ensure that bids can target those premises without Gigabit broadband coverage efficiently.

5. Next Steps

The Scottish Government has used this information to define the eligible Intervention Area for potential future procurements under the Gigabit Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme⁶ and is in the process of finalising the design of procurement areas as a subset of the intervention area. These have been discussed with the market via a Pre-Procurement Market Engagement exercise. In line with the scheme, potential procurements are likely to include both “Local Contracts” using the existing Dynamic Purchasing System and “Regional Procurements” using the restricted procurement procedure.

Once agreement has been reached with UK Government on potential procurements, the Scottish Government plan to publish a Prior Information Notice notifying the market of the intended procurement route(s). The process required for the provision of gigabit broadband infrastructure under the scheme is expected to take around 5 years with the first contracts awarded in the second half of 2024.

The UK Government plans further interventions beyond those described above as part of Project Gigabit.

6. Further Information

Information about the Gigabit in Scotland Programme can be found at:
<https://www.gov.scot/policies/digital/>

For further information on the project, please write to:

Gigabit in Scotland Programme Team
Digital Directorate
The Scottish Government
5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw
Glasgow G2 8LU

Or by email: gigabit@gov.scot

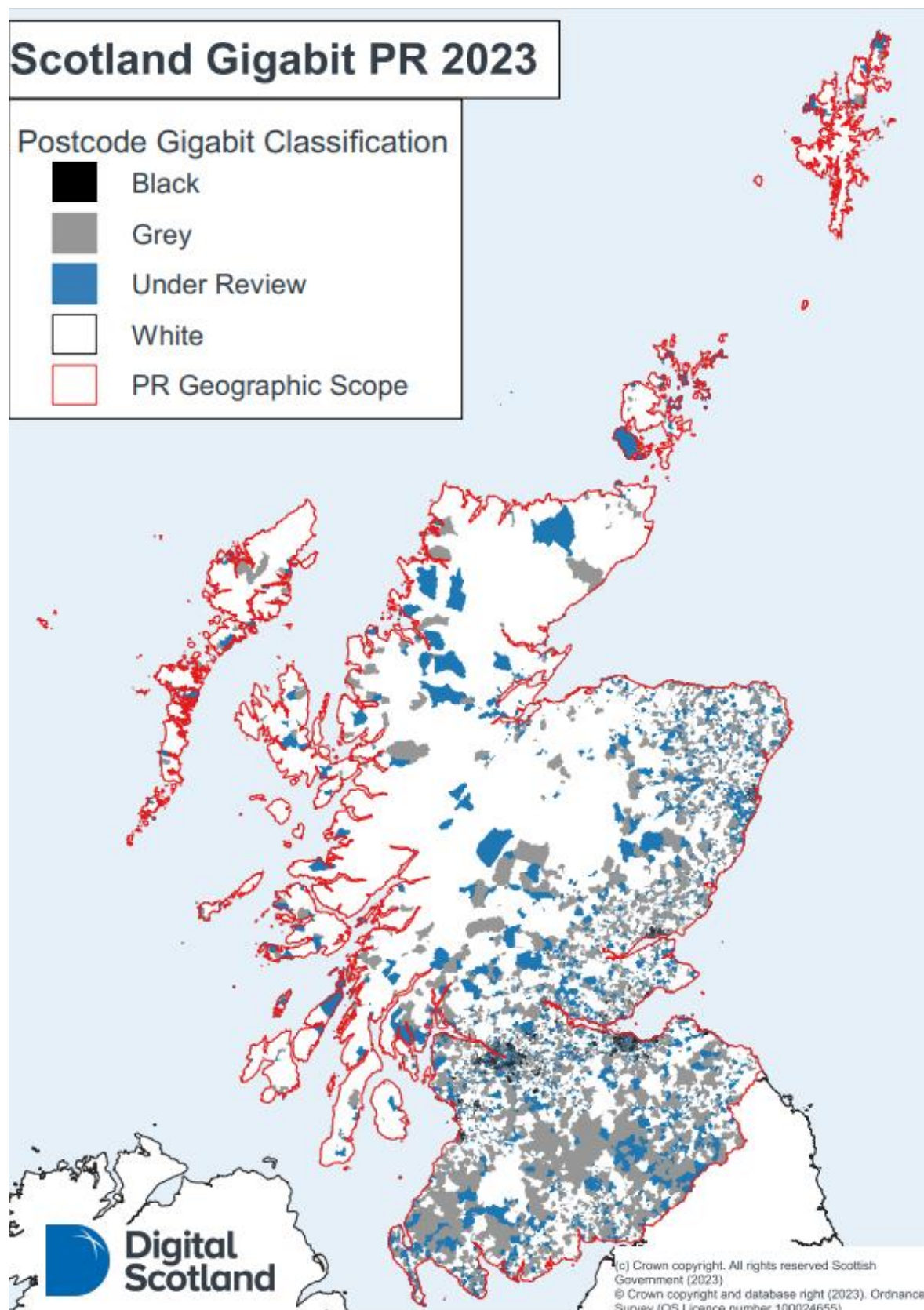
⁶ [Detailed Overview of the Gigabit Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme](#)

Appendix A – Public Consultation Response

Response	Responder	Comment	Resultant Action
1	Peter Yule, member of public	Lack of available fibre in Gorebridge, Midlothian	Advice provided – no change to intervention area
2	Richard Kirk, member of public	Lack of available fibre in Redhill, Moray	Advice provided – no change to intervention area
3	Axione	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
4	Aberdeenshire Council	Report on availability across Aberdeen City and Shire. Request to prioritise North East.	Report noted – no change to intervention area
5	Openreach	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
6	Netomnia	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
7	GoFibre	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
8	Lothian Broadband	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
9	Glide	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
10	Broadway Partners	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
11	Hyperoptic	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
12	City Fibre	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
13	Cromarty Firth Wireless Networks Ltd	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
14	Gigaloch	First time coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
15	VMO2	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
16	Nexfibre	First time coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly

17	Balquhidder	Updated coverage response	Response assessed and intervention area amended accordingly
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Appendix B - Gigabit Broadband Map



A map of Scotland showing the gigabit classifications at postcode level. The white areas are eligible for public intervention.



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