

Scottish 4G infill programme consultation: Request for information

**Scottish Government
and Scottish Futures Trust**

August 2017



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Introduction

The Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust ('SFT') have been working in partnership to develop the Scottish 4G Infill Programme ('4G Infill' or 'Infill') for Scotland. The programme seeks to develop an initial approach which can facilitate the deployment of 4G LTE infill coverage where this does not yet exist, and where it is unlikely that industry will invest in the near to medium-term future, given the economic challenges of doing so. The programme also seeks to ensure that any infrastructure delivered will support the 5G world through being capable of upgrade.

Purpose of this Consultation

This public consultation seeks to define the proposed intervention locations in the first phase of this programme. To enable this, a series of initial locations have been identified (building upon information currently available to the Scottish Government and SFT). The Scottish Government and SFT wish to test these proposed locations and their applicability for the programme.

Delivering mobile services in non-commercial areas brings significant technical and commercial challenges. This phase of the programme aims to test the market's appetite to deliver 4G mobile infrastructure and services in non-commercial areas of Scotland through Government provision of capital subsidy. It is the first stage of a more comprehensive programme covering Scotland more widely, which will be developed by the Scottish Government and SFT – with the input of industry – over the next 18 months. One of the main reasons preventing the procurement such a more comprehensive programme from the outset is the uncertainty of the extent of commercial 4G rollout. However, this will become clearer as commercial rollouts start to complete towards the end of 2017. As part of the overall programme, the Scottish Government and SFT will continue to work with industry and the regulator to identify and verify 4G mobile "not spots" and consider how these could potentially be addressed through this or future phases of activity.

An additional purpose of this consultation is to meet the requirements of the European Commission's Broadband Guidelines. These are EU Guidelines¹ as to how governments should apply the European Commission's State Aid rules in relation to the deployment of broadband networks. For these purposes, 4G LTE is classified as an next generation access (NGA) broadband service. The objective of this intervention is to provide access to mobile NGA infrastructure which is capable of delivering 4G LTE services.

European Union State Aid rules are designed to ensure that any use of public funding ('State Aid') is targeted at areas of market failure and produces positive market outcomes while minimising any distortion to competition. The State Aid rules require public interventions to be targeted so as to limit the risk of crowding-out or disincentivising existing and/or concrete planned private sector investments that

¹ 'EU Guidelines for the application of State aid rules in relation to the rapid deployment of broadband networks' (2013/C 25/01):

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:025:0001:0026:en:PDF>

would otherwise meet the desired policy objectives. In the context of broadband, the General Block Exemption Regulations permits the use of public funding only to extend broadband coverage in geographic areas where there is no provision of basic broadband or NGA broadband service or network and it is unlikely to be developed in the near future (within the next three years).

In accordance with this requirement, the Scottish Government is holding a public consultation through publication of this consultation document on the Scottish Government's website.

Approach

To ensure the success of the programme, engagement and consultation will help make our overall strategy and performance more effective. We will do this by consulting about our intentions and others' views. We will gather feedback and analyse the results of the consultation, report on the results, and use this to inform our planning and priority setting.

1. Principles

The following principles will underpin all engagement activity. Engagement activity will:

- be **proportionate** both for the group being consulted and to the purpose of the engagement.
- be **open, transparent and focused**, being clear how their views will be used and what they may influence.
- be **consistent and joined up** ensuring no group has undue influence or access, but that engagement is tailored to the commitments and interests of the audience.
- **support and promote improvement** by sharing findings with key stakeholders e.g. partners, colleagues and wider Government departments.
- be **accountable and cost effective**, using the necessary resources and time to make a difference, and properly evaluate findings.

2. Levels of engagement

We will engage with interested parties at the appropriate level, in appropriate ways and at appropriate times. The ways we engage with users, stakeholders and interested parties will depend on what we are trying to achieve. Engagement will operate at a number of levels:

- **information** – providing information about the service (including information about how to engage with services locally) and future changes to the way the service operates.
- **consultation** – seeking opinions about areas of our work and about the services we provide.

- **involvement** – engaging customers and corporate partners in becoming part of the solution by listening to their views and supporting them to bring about improvement.

In all of our engagement with users, stakeholders and interested parties, we will be clear about what we want to achieve and ensure that the means of engagement is designed to achieve that objective. We will tailor our engagement activities and use appropriate methods, and will be mindful of the context from the external perspective. Annex A outlines the likely levels and basis of engagement in relation to the 4G infill programme.

Progress to Date

The Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust recognise there will be gaps in 4G mobile coverage and the need to fill these coverage gaps. As part of the Programme for Government 2016/17², the Scottish Government stated its intention to develop a 4G infill programme to work with industry and eliminate these coverage gaps.

The 4G infill programme is looking to provide additional mast (and associated) infrastructure and services to underserved locations. We recognise that provision of infrastructure through the programme is a requirement to enable mobile operators to deliver a commercial service in the target areas.

The programme will look to ensure that any infrastructure is open access, future-proofed, be connected to backhaul capable of delivering 4G LTE services and be upgradable to 5G. It will also look to ensure that at least one mobile service provider commits to the provision of 4G LTE services at each location.

We are keen to hear from those who may be able to support the provision of this network infrastructure in the target areas. This could be through ownership of specific telecommunications infrastructure or have plans to build such infrastructure.

Funding has been committed by the Scottish Government to enable the initial tranche of activity. Funding from the European Regional Development Fund ('ERDF') has also been secured to support activity in the Highlands and Islands region. The details and basis of these funding sources and any restrictions on their usage will be explained in the forthcoming tender documentation.

Geographical Scope

Our current understanding of the programme considers activity across Scotland. Annex B provides a brief overview of these locations. As highlighted above, the funding approach will incorporate ERDF funding for those masts in the Highlands and Islands region.

² <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/09/2860/downloads#res505210>

Timescale

This consultation runs for four weeks from 7 August 2017 to 3 September 2017.

Your Response Required

We are sending this consultation to all recognised mobile infrastructure and service providers in our area. In addition, we are publishing this consultation document on our website.

We require responses by 3 September 2017 to the questions set out in Annex C. When responding to these questions, please provide the following information:

- Your organisation's name
- Your organisation's address
- Your name
- Position
- Email address

Please send your response to arrive not later than 3 September 2017. You can respond via email to DigitalPMO@gov.scot or in writing to:

4G Infill Programme
SG Digital Programme Management Office
5 Atlantic Quay
Glasgow
G2 8LU

A Respondent Information Form and Questionnaire is also available in Word format as an associated downloadable document to this consultation.

Please note that the data you provide in your response will be treated as commercially confidential to Scottish Government and SFT, albeit that it may be necessary to share/some all of your response data with our professional advisors and/or BDUK, Ofcom, BIS State Aid Branch and the European Commission in the course of seeking State aid approval for our project.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact:
DigitalPMO@gov.scot.

Annex A Engagement Plan

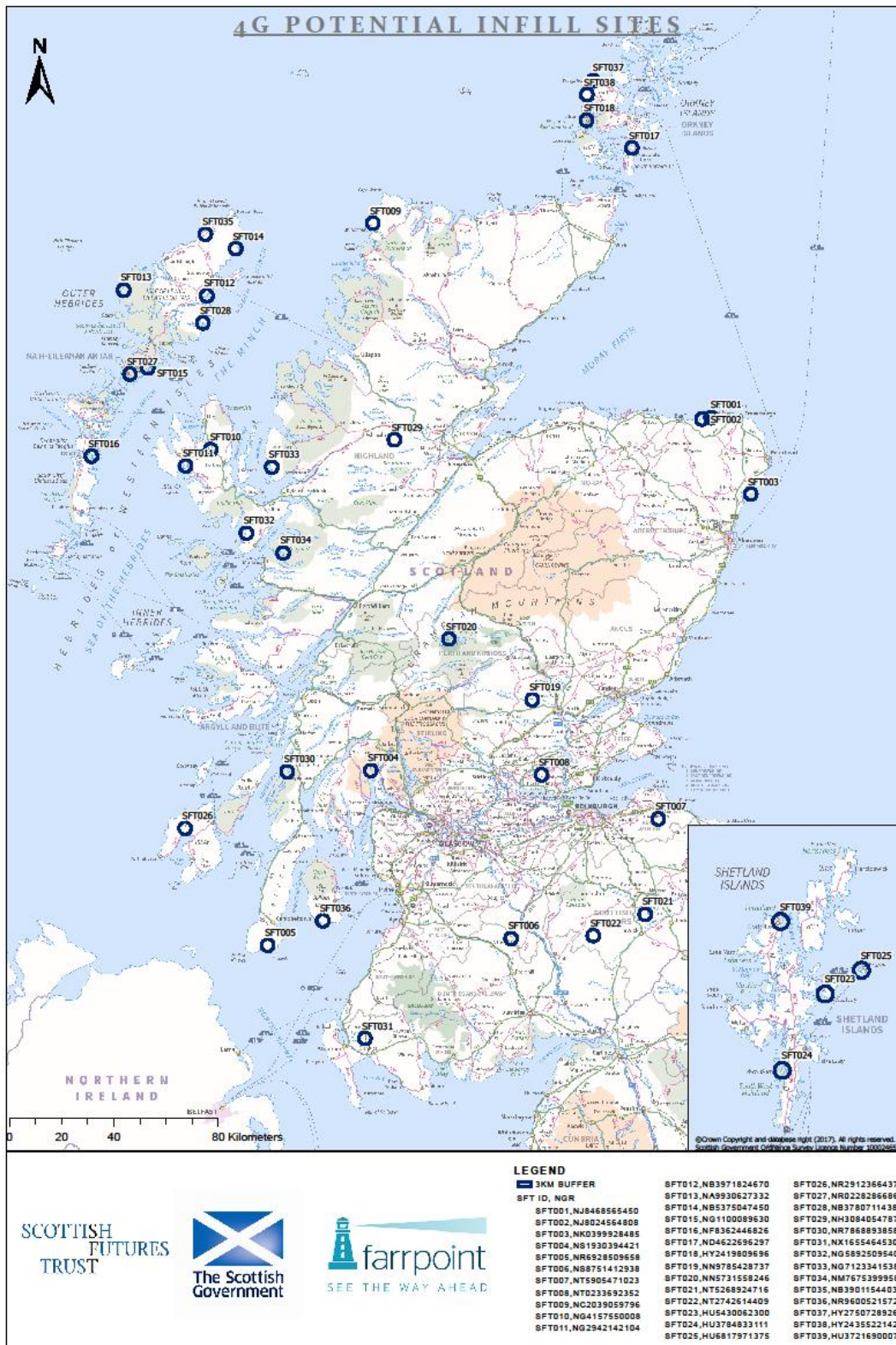
Engagement Plan Group	Engagement Method	Communication Method	When	Frequency
Providers of mobile infrastructure services	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Verbal messages • SMS • E-mail • Customer survey 	Within the consultation period	Throughout consultation period
Other interested parties	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Verbal messages • SMS • E-mail • Customer survey 	Within the consultation period	Throughout consultation period
Strategic partners, Delivery partners	Inform	• Dictated according to preference and proportionate to the significance of the issue.	Within the consultation period	As appropriate Throughout consultation period

Annex B

Map

Map 1 - Map indicating target areas for 4G Infill sites.

For more detailed maps please contact: DigitalPMO@gov.scot.



SCOTTISH FUTURE TRUST



Annex C

Consultation Questions

Question 1

If you are a provider of mobile infrastructure services, do you have any current or planned (next 3 years) investments in the target areas indicated on the map?

Question 2

If you are provider of mobile services, do you have any current or planned (next 3 years) investments of commercially available (open for public use) 4G LTE services in the target areas indicated on the map?

Question 3

If you are an interested party regarding mobile infrastructure services, do you have any current or planned (next 3 years) investments in the target areas indicated on the map?

Question 4

If you are a fixed telecommunications provider, do you or are you developing fibre solutions that could provide cost effective >1Gbps service in remote rural areas.

Question 5

If you are a member of the public, do you have or are you aware of any current or planned (next 3 years) mobile telecommunications investments in the target areas indicated on the map?

Question 6

If you have answered yes to any of the questions above, please provide information concerning these current or planned (next 3 years) investments in the target areas indicated on the map.

Responding to this Public Consultation

When responding to these questions, please provide the following information:

- Your organisation's name
- Your organisation's address
- Your name
- Position
- Email address

Please send your response to arrive not later than 3 September 2017. You can respond via email to DigitalPMO@gov.scot or in writing to:

4G Infill Programme
SG Digital Programme Management Office
5 Atlantic Quay
Glasgow
G2 8LU



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2017

OGL

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.scot

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-78851-136-0 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, August 2017

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS276626 (08/17)

W W W . G O V . S C O T