

CONSOLIDATED LIST OF QUESTIONS

Consultation question 1.

Do you have any further evidence on the state of New Build Development connectivity in the UK? **No**

Consultation question 2.

Do you have any information or evidence to suggest that the costs developers would incur under the proposed policy would prevent homes being built?

No, but as required under the NPPF if the policies were to be transposed through Local Plans this would need to be considered at the viability testing stage to make sure the plan meets the tests of soundness. There would also be the possibility that developers could make the case that such requirements were unviable at planning application stage. It could be an issue in an area such as Gateshead where viability is marginal in certain locations although it is presumed any additional cost to developers could be recouped through the added value on properties. Research should be undertaken to demonstrate whether values increase as a result of improved connectivity to support this case.

Consultation question 3.

We propose that developers would be obliged to provide a simple connectivity plan for their developments to LAs. This plan would demonstrate that developers had consulted with at least two network providers to provide gigabit-capable networks and inform LAs when a site is connected. Do you have any comments on this proposal for a connectivity plan? **It is uncertain as to what stage the connectivity plan would need to be submitted. For instance, would it be at Local Plan-making stage, planning application stage or during Building Regulations stage. If this was at planning application stage, LPAs would need to adjust their local validation lists to include the need for a connectivity plan. It is also uncertain as to which developments this would apply to. Would it be any proposal for new housing, or would it apply to only certain size developments?**

Consultation question 4.

(a) Do you agree with the assumption that deploying the necessary infrastructure to deliver gigabit-capable networks is best achieved when the site is being built?

If the question is whether the infrastructure should be installed when site is being built – yes this would provide best value and least disturbance. Ideally, this would also be addressed at local plan-making stage so that developers and landowners are aware of costs upfront.

(b) What technical specifications should the physical infrastructure (ducts etc) have?

Do not know but should be standardised as far as possible

(c) Do you agree that developers should deploy, and pay for, the necessary infrastructure from the in-building connections to the boundary edge of the Development?

No view unless this affects the viability of the site and consequently the deliverability of the scheme when the infrastructure provider should pay, and the developer should be made to allow access. It is understood that providers currently cover such costs and are happy to do so on the basis of extending their network and coverage.

Consultation question 5.

(a) Do you agree that developers should have to engage with at least two network operators who can provide gigabit-capable connections to the development?

Yes – there are two main providers in this area – but if universal infrastructure is provided that can be used by any provider, this need may be reduced.

(b) What further measures could we consider to promote the availability of networks from multiple providers at an early stage to minimise costs and disruption?

If universal infrastructure is provided that can be used by any provider, ongoing costs and disruption.

Consultation question 6.

Taking £3,000 as a suggested aggregated cost cap per premise, do you agree with the proposed how should costs be divided between developer and operator?

No view

Consultation question 7.

What information and evidence can you provide to help refine the 'in scope sites' policy design choice - aggregated cost cap or number of premises?

None

Consultation question 8.

(a) Do you agree that developers should have the overall responsibility to ensure Gigabit connectivity for their developments (allowing for the fact that developers can oblige operators to connect using the 'duty to connect' provision).

Yes

(b) How would this policy affect small housebuilders?

Potentially through viability, if it costs too much that small housebuilders would be deterred from taking on a site. In addition, it depends on WHEN the costs are levied. At an early stage small housebuilders may have insufficient cash flow. However, it is understood that providers currently cover such costs and are happy to do so on the basis of extending their network and coverage so it should be in the housebuilders/developer's interest to engage with providers/allow access.

Consultation question 9.

Do you have any comments on the proposed legislative approach? Do you have an alternative solution that would deliver gigabit-capable connections to NBDs?

No

This whole approach makes the assumption that there is full fibre connectivity networks within reasonable distance to all development sites. this is not always the case and an arbitrary requirement to deliver on all sites would not allow for sites come forward where it would be economically unviable to deliver connections to the network.