

ToveValley Communities Superfast Broadband Broadband Programme

State aid public consultation

START DATE:	July 2013
END DATE:	December 2015

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1 Introduction

This document lays out the proposed Tove Valley Communities Superfast Broadband (TVCSB) project area, which has been defined after consultation with DEFRA, BDUK, Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and various telecommunications providers.

TVCSB invites comment from telecommunications providers, businesses and residents regarding the scope, aims and objectives detailed in the following report.

The purpose of the TVCSB project is to deliver superfast broadband to all parts of our community by 2015. The programme aims to deliver 24Mbps or more to 100% of premises in the project footprint.

1.1 Policy perspective

It is the stated aim of the UK Government that Britain should have the best broadband market in Europe by 2015 and has set aside £530m to help achieve this. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) has been tasked by the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to deliver this at national level.

The main rural programme aims to ensure that 90% of UK premises have access to superfast broadband, and that all premises can receive at least 2Mbps. This is being delivered through Local Authorities and Devolved Assemblies, including NCC.

BDUK together with DEFRA launched the Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF) to support communities in the hardest to reach areas that were at risk of not receiving a superfast broadband service under the main rural programme.

The RCBF is supporting this project with a grant of £117,914.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The project aims to deliver superfast broadband to 100% of our community by 2015.

1.2 Procurement Approach

TVCSB will commence an open procurement process approved by BDUK and DEFRA once this consultation is complete. Bids will be assessed according to published criteria and metrics.

Our project has been awarded a grant of £117,914 and we have committed to at least matching this from our own resources.

2 The Programme Area

The TVCSB area is described by the following:

The area is 15 sqkm situated in South Northamptonshire in the heart of rural England and encompasses the villages of Abthorpe, Lois Weedon, Slapton, Wappenham and Weston. The area can be viewed at <http://www.tovevalley.com/coverage.aspx>.

The area is home to approximately 1022 people living in 450 properties. There are also 172 properties with business interests in the area.

Information obtained by TVCSB indicates that 98% of households and business properties in the project area will have access to superfast broadband in the next three years (end 2015). The remaining 2% will be socially and economically disadvantaged in this hard to reach rural area.

Table 1 shows the number of premises in each postcode that form part of the intervention area and are considered as Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband White – premises without access to NGA broadband.

Our project will be permitted to apply public subsidy only to White areas to achieve our aim of 100% Next Generation Access broadband coverage across our community.

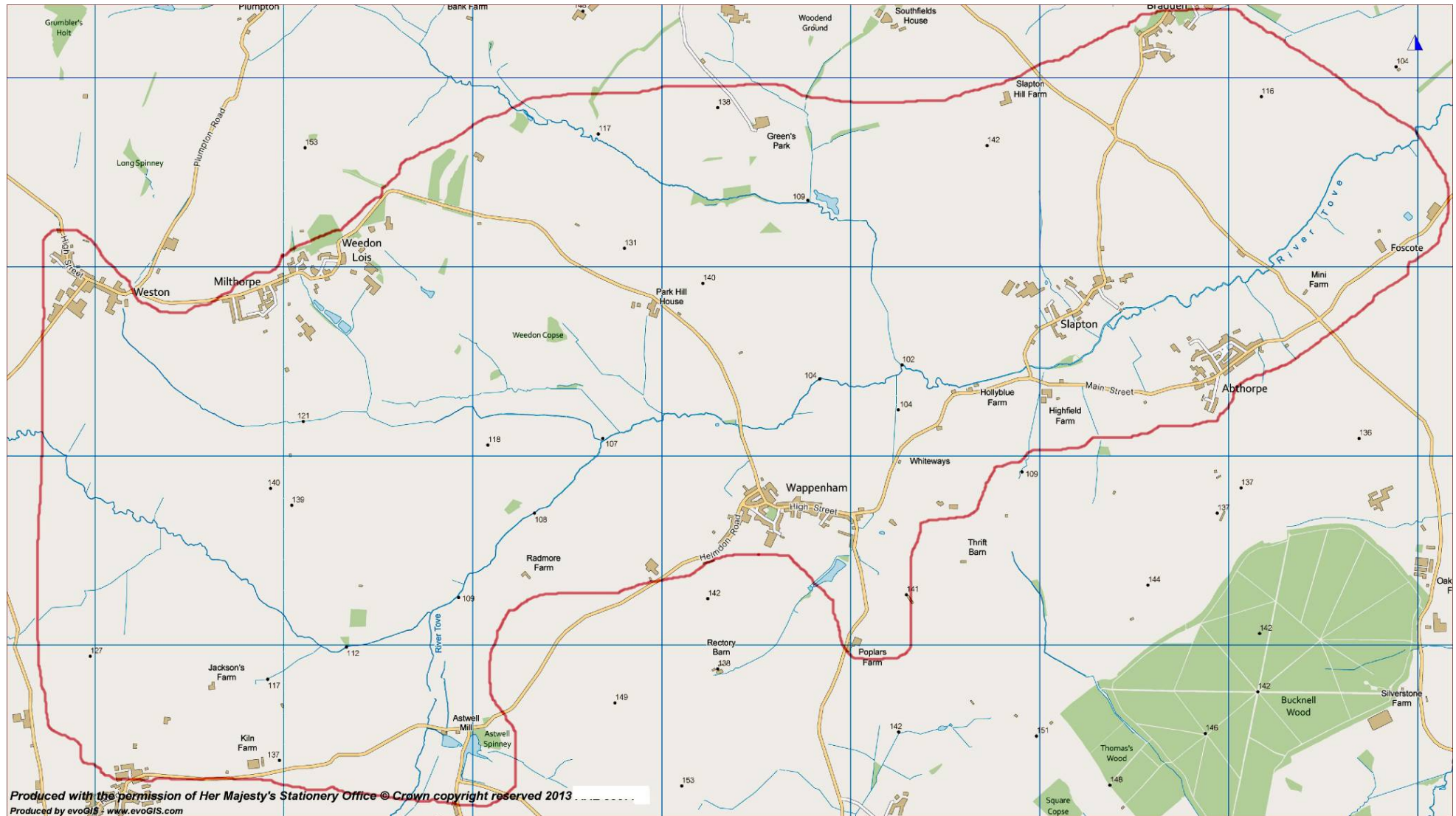
Table 1 - NGA White, area properties by postcode

Postcode	Approx. number of properties	NGA white properties
NN12 8Px	135	135
NN12 8Qx	113	113
NN12 8Rx	29	29
NN12 8Sx	125	125
NN13 5QU,QX,UQ	48	48
Grand Total	450	450

2.1 Programme Partners

Abthorpe Broadband Association Limited for the TVCSB project is leading the programme which is also supported by Astwell Parish, Abthorpe Parish, Weston and Weedon Parish, the Peterborough Diocese in respect of Wappenham Church, Weedon Lois Church and St Loys CofE school, St Loys CofE school governors and village and community organisations.

2.2 TVCSB area map



3 Existing Broadband Provision

Our community is served by Openreach infrastructure from 4 BT exchanges. None of these exchanges is currently 21CN provisioned and all are BT Wholesale only.

Ofcom classifies BT exchange areas according to the level of competition available to consumers. Market 1 exchanges offer BT Wholesale only whilst Market 2 and 3 exchanges offer at least one alternative broadband network or LLU service provider.

Abthorpe Broadband Association Limited – a not-for-profit community company – currently supplies broadband by WiFi in the villages of Abthorpe and Slapton using ADSL backhauls and has approximately 45% of properties as clients. These clients are expected to transfer to the new service.

Current speeds available in the area average across all properties is less than 2Mbps

3.1 Superfast Broadband Availability

The nearest 21CN enable BT exchange is more than 6km in a direct line from the area covered by TVCSB and considerably more in terms of available BT duct distance.

There are no published plans for introducing any kind of NGA services into the area.

The BDUK / Northamptonshire County Council contract with BT will not provision the area.

4 State Aid

TVCSB believes our programme complies with EU State Aid guidance. The key areas which meet EU State Aid requirements include:

- Wholesale access will be a contract requirement
- A BDUK Community Enterprise DIY model is being used to make a grant award to the project
- A claw-back clause will be included in the funding contract to ensure excess profits are reclaimed
- The project area has been analysed with independent data and cross referenced with known supplier plans to draw conclusions about likely investment areas
- An open tender process (adequate advertising, fair and transparent treatment of suppliers, competition based on an output based specification) will be followed.
- A BDUK Community Enterprise DIY model is technology neutral.
- Selection of suppliers will be made on the most economically advantageous Offer
- The programme promotes use of existing infrastructure
- The selection process includes a benchmarking pricing mechanism.

4.1 NGA White, Grey, Black state aid classification

BDUK requires the following thresholds for NGA classification at postcode level:

White	Less than 90% of premises can access NGA. Only premises without NGA can be supported
Grey	One supplier serves at least 90% of premises with NGA broadband - No intervention is permitted
Black	Two suppliers serve at least 90% of premises with NGA broadband - No intervention is permitted

The TVCSB area comprises total of 450 premises that are classified as NGA White and will require intervention to receive Next Generation Access broadband. The following table of postcodes and map highlights the NGA broadband intervention area under consideration for the public funding element of this project.

NN12 8EJ	NN12 8PN	NN12 8PZ	NN12 8QT
NN12 8FG	NN12 8PP	NN12 8QA	NN12 8QU
NN12 8PB	NN12 8PQ	NN12 8QB	NN12 8QW
NN12 8PD	NN12 8PR	NN12 8QD	NN12 8RP
NN12 8PE	NN12 8PS	NN12 8QJ	NN12 8RR
NN12 8PF	NN12 8PT	NN12 8QL	NN12 8SD
NN12 8PG	NN12 8PU	NN12 8QN	NN12 8SG
NN12 8PH	NN12 8PW	NN12 8QP	NN12 8SH
NN12 8PJ	NN12 8PX	NN12 8QR	NN12 8SJ
NN12 8PL	NN12 8PY	NN12 8QS	NN12 8SL

NN12 8SN

NN12 8SR

NN12 8SU

NN13 5QU

NN12 8SP

NN12 8SS

NN12 8SW

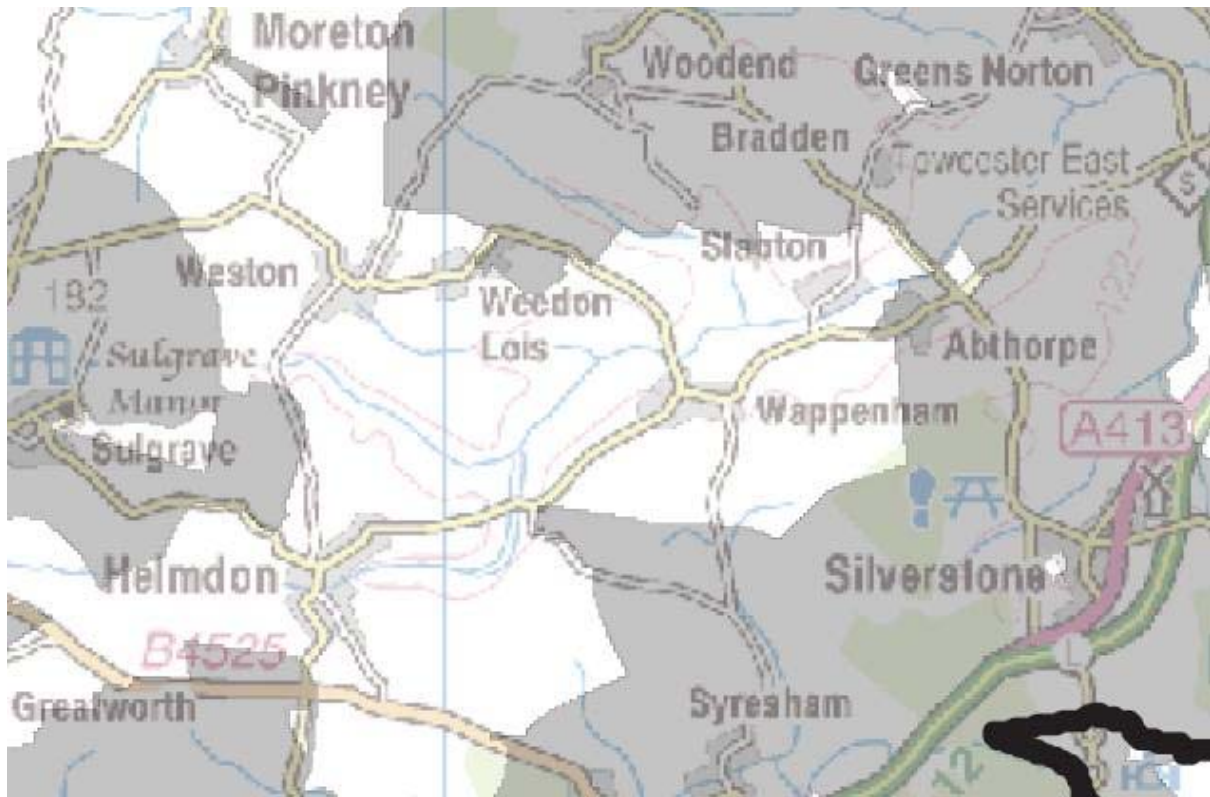
NN13 5QX

NN12 8SQ

NN12 8ST

NN12 8SX

NN13 5UQ



5 Feedback and Procurement Process

This document lays out TVCSB best understanding of broadband provision in our project footprint.

If your company delivers broadband services within our area and would like to comment on this document then please do so using the contact details below.

Residents and businesses based within our community are also invited to comment on this document and the proposed intervention area and should do so by the deadline below.

5.1 Evidence

Demand registration, community and business engagement are important elements in delivering a successful programme. TVCSB project has, by community group activities, website surveys and word-of-mouth, established that a minimum of 200 of the 450 premises passed will register for service within two years.

5.2 Procurement

TVCSB project is a DIY project. It is our intention to use community volunteer labour as far as possible, enhanced by the use of contractors and certified companies and individuals so that the final delivery will be to industry standards. The parts that can be tendered out will follow an open tendering process following the statements in section 4 above. It is our intention to use Northamptonshire County Council's "sourcenorthamptonshire.co.uk" service to publicise our requirements as well as conventional invitations to tender.

5.3 Your views

Your views on this consultation are invited, and should be addressed to Eric Malcomson at:

Abthorpe Broadband Association Limited
2 Wappenham Road
Abthorpe
Towcester
NN12 8QU

You may email your views to eric.malcomson@abthorpe.net

Your communication will be acknowledged upon receipt.

This consultation will remain open for one month. The deadline for all comments to be received is:

Wednesday 22 May 2013 12noon.