

Kentmere Parish Meeting

Broadband Report

There is very little action to report but there have been some meetings and statements from CCC. The following notes are a summary of relevant points from a Connecting Cumbria Partnership Board) (CCPB) meeting in early February.

EU Major Projects approval - though the general EU state aid approval has been given to the UK, Cumbria still requires EU major project approval before any money can be spent on implementing the Connecting Cumbria project. There is a project size threshold over which projects require individual EU approval. The Cumbria project has been borderline but the latest project amount and the latest £/Euro exchange rate required to be used in the process have pushed the Cumbria project over the threshold.

Strategic Priorities - these were agreed by CCC Cabinet at end of January. Cabinet agreed a two tier approach to strategic priorities - the first priority is to maximise the drawdown of available funding, once this has been satisfied the second priority consideration will be access to services.

Roll - Out Planning - Overview plans in parish-by-parish detail covering the whole of Cumbria will be prepared and should be made available in May 2013, showing what portion of a parish will be included in the 93% and which in the 7% - this will be indicative, not on a household by household basis but should allow communities to focus on the 7% and self-help options for improvement.

2G network - the BDUK "Mobile Infrastructure Project", part of which is to achieve 100% 2G coverage across Cumbria through additional masts, is still being pursued. They are looking at procurement in mid 2013.

What does this mean for Kentmere?

Almost certainly, the whole of Kentmere will be in the 7% of properties which are not commercially viable but we will have to wait and see what comes out of the planning stages.

I have checked the status of the Staveley exchange and that has not changed since I started looking in January 2011. The magic '21CN WBC' is not available. That is 21st Century Network Wholesale Broadband Connect and that is what is needed for faster services. As far as I am aware, BT have no plans to upgrade the Staveley exchange.

I can find little about the BDUK Mobile Infrastructure Project mentioned above except the Government have allocated £150M to improve mobile coverage. The A591 is one of the roads actually mentioned, but whether that will benefit Kentmere, I cannot tell..

Jackie Bettess
3rd April 2013