

The Scottish Government's Programme for Reviewing and Extending Permitted Development Rights (PDR) in Scotland – Consultation on Phase 1 Proposals

Cycling Scotland submission November 2020

Active Travel

Question 60 – Do you agree with the proposal to allow the erection of a cycle store in the front or side garden of a house up to a maximum size of 1.2 m height, 2 m width and 1.5 m depth?

We welcome the proposal to permit cycle storage facilities of the designated size in front and side gardens of properties. We know that lack of secure storage can be a barrier to more people cycling. Making it easier to install or erect cycle storage will increase opportunities for safe and secure bike storage and provide a significant incentive to encourage cycling.

Enabling people to have such storage facilities at their property will help to encourage modal shift to cycling and deliver on the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy.

Question 61 – Do you agree with the proposal to permit cycle stores up to 1.2 metres in height, 2 metres in width and 1 metre in depth in the front or side garden of a house in a conservation area?

In response to the previous consultation on this issue, we highlighted that size of shed/storage facilities required for front gardens/front of properties for bike storage would be much smaller than what is currently permitted for rear gardens, significantly reducing any suggested negative impacts they would have on the environment and property/surrounding area aesthetics¹. We welcome that this has been recognised in the Phase 1 proposals.

We support the proposal to extend PDR to sheds and other storage facilities that meet the outlined dimensions. A planning application fee (typically around £200) would act as a further barrier to modal shift to cycling, and it is welcome that this has been recognised.

Evidence from Spokes in Edinburgh has highlighted that storage facilities/sheds for bikes with dimensions no greater than 2.5m long x 1.2m deep x 1.5m high are likely to be granted planning permission and in all cases where a planning application was made to City of Edinburgh Council, it was accepted². Extending PDR to such storage facilities can help to streamline the planning process and can help to facilitate an increase in modal shift to cycling, by making it easier for people to securely store their bike at their property.

However, we note that the size of sheds or storage facilities to be covered by PDR proposed in the consultation document is smaller than those presented in the evidence from Spokes. We suggest the proposals should be revised to take account of these dimensions.

¹ <https://www.cycling.scot/mediaLibrary/other/english/7375.pdf>

² <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2001-PDR-Spokes-reply-to-AJ.pdf>

Question 62 – Should such an extension of PDR be subject to a restriction on materials?

No comment.

Question 63 – Do you agree with the proposal to increase the floorspace of storage sheds allowed in the rear garden of houses in conservation areas to eight square metres?

Yes.

The proposal to increase available floorspace is welcome as this will enable non-standard bikes, such as trikes and cargo bikes, to be stored securely. This is significant for reducing inequality and improving accessibility to cycling.

The cost of cargo bikes/trikes and other non-standard bikes is typically higher than standard bikes, and so it is important to ensure there is adequate safe and secure storage space for adapted bikes. Further, while it may be possible for standard bikes to be carried up stairs or stored in properties, for adapted bikes, this is unlikely to be possible and so not having proper storage space for them is a significant barrier. Having sufficient storage space for all bikes is essential in making it easier for people, especially those with disabilities, to cycle.

Question 64 - Do you agree with the introduction of PDR for the erection of a cycle store in the private garden area of a flat, including in a conservation area?

Yes.

The proposal is welcome, as this could help encourage modal shift to cycling and improve accessibility to cycling. Where private outdoor space is available, it should be able to be effectively utilised by the resident for the purpose of storing their bike safely and securely.

In a conservation area, the storage facility installed should be in-keeping with the aesthetics and characteristics of the place, and not cause any damage. Storage facilities for bikes can support conservation areas such as incorporating 'green' roofs, in-built educational or information boards and planters, for example.

Question 65 – Do you agree with the proposal to allow cycle stores sufficient to accommodate up to two bikes per flat at the rear of larger blocks of flats, including in conservation areas?

Yes.

As per our answer to question 64, this proposal is welcome. In larger blocks of flats in particular, residents are often forced to store their bike in their flat or in communal areas such as a close or stairwell, which is not secure, causes clutter and can create a hazard for and conflict with other residents, as there is no where else to store them. Permitting the installation of secure bike storage within PDR would help to address this. We note and welcome the reference of storage sufficient for two bikes, as this recognises that households may have more than one bike and, where they do not, provides the opportunity to do so in the future. This is important for promoting modal shift and encouraging cycling for everyday journeys.

Question 66 – Do you agree with the introduction of PDR to allow the erection of cycle stores for buildings of class 4, 5 and 6 uses?

Yes.

Being able to access safe, secure cycle parking at workplaces is an important factor influencing the likelihood of cycling to work. If such facilities are not available, people are less likely to cycle to work, and could as a result be less likely to own a bike. The introduction of PDR to workplaces is welcome, as it will make it easier for businesses to provide and install such facilities. Having secure cycle storage in place for staff also sends out an important message about the organisational culture towards cycling, and if staff feel their employer is supportive of and is actively encouraging them to cycle, they could be much more likely to do so. Staff will also benefit from the physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits of cycling, which their employers will in turn benefit from through increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.

These are important steps for achieving increased modal shift to cycling for everyday journeys and making cycling more accessible for everyone.

Question 67 – Do you agree with the introduction of PDR to allow the erection of cycle stores on-streets?

Yes.

We welcome the proposals to allow the installation of cycle storage on-streets. Providing secure on-street cycle parking is an important step in encouraging modal shift to cycling, and by being included in PDR, it will be easier and more cost effective for providers to install, as there will be no associated planning permission costs.

We note in the consultation document that the bike hangers (as proposed) would be located most likely in a space currently used for parking but not an accessible parking place. They would also not be located on the pavement, to maintain space needed for people walking and wheeling. This is welcome, particularly as we continue to support physical distancing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as ensuring there is no adverse impact on accessibility which could create conflict between people cycling and users of other active modes, including pedestrians, those using wheelchairs and people with visual impairments.

Question 68 – If such PDR is introduced, do you agree with the proposed maximum size for cycle stores, and the proposed restriction on the number allowed in a particular street or block?

No.

With regard to the proposed restriction on the number of cycle stores permitted in a particular street or block, it is important that the number of residents and other details such as current and predicted/future levels of bike ownership, and other available storage, is taken into account when deciding how much space to provide. Every resident should be able to securely store their bike. Therefore, setting out a maximum permitted number of cycle stores is not the correct approach, as the required number will vary in different areas. There should be flexibility to enable different areas to respond to their specific needs and population requirements.

Question 69 – If such PDR is introduced, do you think it should be allowed in conservation areas and, if so, should it be subject to any other limitations on size, materials etc.?

No comment.

Question 70 – Is there any other amendment to the General Permitted Development Order that you think we should consider in order to encourage active travel further?

No comment.