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to: chief.planner@gov.scot,
hops@improvementservice.org.uk
cc: spokes <spokes@spokes.org.uk>
date: 13 August 2016 at 18:04
subject: **Review of Planning, 2016 - permitted development rights & bicycle storage**

To:

1. **Heads of Planning, Scotland;** email hops@improvementservice.org.uk
2. **Scottish Government, Planning and Architecture;** email chief.planner@gov.scot

I am emailing on behalf of Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign.

You will be aware that Spokes made [a submission](#) to the [Independent Planning Review](#), making the case that sheds in front gardens, and which meet specified criteria, should be allowed as permitted development.

We were pleased to note that, in the government's online "ideas" survey for the review, our proposal received a large number of votes and positive comments, and overall was the 5th most popular idea, with an average 'support' score of 4.7 out of 5. At the time of writing, the government's [ideas website](#) seems to be out of action, but in case this is a permanent fault we do have a [tweet of the final top results](#).

We were further pleased to see that the report of the Independent Review, [Empowering Planning to Deliver Great Places](#), in para 6.12, stated, "*Many believe that the scope of permitted development rights could be broadened to free up resources and allow planning officers to focus on where they can add most value. Suggestions for increased permitted development rights include provision of bike sheds, ...*"

Recommendation 31 of the Review was "*Planning authorities should work together to identify the scope for significantly extending permitted development rights ... We believe there is significant scope to remove uncontroversial minor developments from the system and use this to **incentivise** developments which support policy aspirations such as **low carbon living**...*" [our emphases]

Finally, the Scottish Government, in its [response to the review](#), identified as one of ten priority Key Actions for its Planning and Architecture Division, "*work with Heads of Planning Scotland to identify how permitted development rights could be extended (Recommendation 31).*"

Our reason for emailing now is to express our pleasure at the above developments and our hope that action can be taken on this issue. We will not repeat the points made in [our submission](#), but would draw them to your attention - in particular the level of distress experienced under the current rules by families who are doing no more than try to live the sort of low-carbon and active-travel lifestyle which government rightly wishes and urges us to do. Further quotes from cases we have encountered can be found [here](#).

Obviously there are important visual/conservation considerations, but these should be balanced against the need to support and encourage low carbon living, as recognised in the Review's Recommendation 31 above. They should also be balanced objectively against the huge and largely unregulated visual, noise and emissions intrusion into conservation areas by motor vehicles, an intrusion which is avoided when people are able to travel instead by bicycle, a most conservation-area-friendly mode of transport.

I hope this email is helpful, and please contact us if we can help further. Meantime we look forward to an early outcome to your deliberations, and would appreciate some indication of the likely timescale.

Yours Sincerely
Dave du Feu
for Spokes