Centrica plc: Changes to Permitted Development Rights

1st July 2025

About Centrica

Centrica brings together capabilities which support the UK and Ireland's energy security and will help both countries reach net zero. We provide energy and services to almost one in three homes in the UK. British Gas customers benefit from zero carbon electricity supplied from our interest in the UK nuclear fleet, long-term power purchase agreements with renewable electricity generators, and £70bn worth of long-term gas supply contracts. We are advancing a low carbon future with a £4bn investment pipeline. We also install low carbon heating solutions in our customers' homes and work with hospital trusts, local authorities and large business customers to reduce their carbon emissions and improve their energy resilience. As one of the country's largest energy suppliers, we intend to make clean energy accessible across a wide range of UK homes and businesses. In doing this we are committed to delivering wider economic benefits in terms of new skilled jobs and supply chain innovation.

The Transition to Net Zero

Delivering a net zero energy system is one of the biggest challenges facing the UK – and the world. It is a process that will take time, determination and significant investment. We are working hand in hand with our customers to help them decarbonise their energy. Our Hive products including our smart thermostat, have saved customers over £400 million on their energy bills over the last eleven years.

The next few decades require unprecedented changes in how we all use energy – from how we heat our homes, to how we drive our cars. We are helping customers navigate this changing energy landscape by putting them at the heart of the energy transition. We want net zero to be something we do with our customers, not to them and we are also using insight and technology to help our customers change their relationship with their energy and drive decarbonisation. Net zero also requires a fundamental shift in training and skills and we are excited to be upskilling the net zero engineers of the future. We are proud to have the biggest unionised workforce across energy and services in the UK, and we'll continue to work closely with our Unions during the transition.

We don't believe there is a single answer to deal with the transition to low carbon heated domestic and non-domestic buildings – we will therefore need a mix of different technologies and solutions to decarbonise the UK's homes. These will include a transition to low carbon heating, as well as improved insulation and energy efficiency measures.

Question 1: Do you agree that condition G.3 (a), which requires an ASHP be used solely for heating purposes, should be removed to also enable the installation of an air-to-air heat pump?

- Yes. We are of the view that the Government should advocate for consumers to install air-to-air heat pumps. As cooling demand is expected to increase, air-to-air heat pumps provides customers with both heating and cooling.
- The Government should encourage pairing of the installation of heat pumps with the installation of solar panels as this can reduce the operational costs of heat pumps.

Question 2: Do you agree that the limitation requiring an ASHP to be 3 metres from the property boundary should be removed?

- Yes. To encourage heat pump installations, we need to remove these restrictions across the UK to ensure that those people who want to install heat pumps can do so.

Question 3: Do you agree that the current external volume of an ASHP should be increased from 1 cubic metre to 1.5 cubic metres?

- Yes. We agree that the current external volume of an ASHP should be increased from 1 cubic metre to 1.5 cubic metres, aligning with England.

Question 4: Do you agree that the existing limitation of one ASHP on or within the curtilage of a dwelling house should be increased to a maximum of two where the dwelling house is a detached property?

- Yes.

Question 10: Are there any other planning issues regarding ASHPs that you feel are not covered in the questions above and that you wish to raise?

- The Government should ensure that planning changes regarding air source heat pumps are aligned across England, Wales and Scotland and are also aligned with MCS standards.

Question 11: Do you agree that the limitation stating wall-mounted outlets for EV charging cannot face onto and be within 2 metres of a highway should be removed?

- Yes. This would support wider deployment of EV chargers.

Question 12: Do you agree that the permitted height of an upstand for EV charging located within the curtilage of a dwelling house, or a block of flats should remain 1.6 metres?

- Yes.

Question 14: Do you consider that there should be a minimum buffer between a 2.7 metre EV charging upstand and a residential property (including flats)?

- Yes.

Question 15: Do you agree that the restriction preventing the installation of an electrical upstand facing onto and within two metres of a highway should be removed?

- Yes. Doing this would reduce barriers to installations.

Question 16: Do you agree that permitted development rights should allow for the installation of a unit for equipment housing or storage cabinets needed to support non-domestic upstands for EV recharging?

- Yes. This would help enable more EV infrastructure in car parks.

Question 18: Are there any other planning issues regarding EV Chargers located on an area lawfully used for off-street parking that you feel are not covered in the questions above and that you wish to raise?

- We would recommend for the Government to consider standardising permissions for EV chargers to avoid liability waivers for homeowners.