



# Planning and Compensation Act 1991

## 1991 CHAPTER 34

### PART I

#### TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING: ENGLAND AND WALES

##### *Other changes relating to enforcement*

#### **10 Certificate of lawful use or development**

- (1) For sections 191 to 194 of the principal Act (established use certificates) there is substituted—

##### *“Certificate of lawful use or development*

#### **191 Certificate of lawfulness of existing use or development**

- (1) If any person wishes to ascertain whether—
- (a) any existing use of buildings or other land is lawful;
  - (b) any operations which have been carried out in, on, over or under land are lawful; or
  - (c) any other matter constituting a failure to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted is lawful,
- he may make an application for the purpose to the local planning authority specifying the land and describing the use, operations or other matter.
- (2) For the purposes of this Act uses and operations are lawful at any time if—
- (a) no enforcement action may then be taken in respect of them (whether because they did not involve development or require planning permission or because the time for enforcement action has expired or for any other reason); and

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- (b) they do not constitute a contravention of any of the requirements of any enforcement notice then in force.
- (3) For the purposes of this Act any matter constituting a failure to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted is lawful at any time if—
- (a) the time for taking enforcement action in respect of the failure has then expired; and
  - (b) it does not constitute a contravention of any of the requirements of any enforcement notice or breach of condition notice then in force.
- (4) If, on an application under this section, the local planning authority are provided with information satisfying them of the lawfulness at the time of the application of the use, operations or other matter described in the application, or that description as modified by the local planning authority or a description substituted by them, they shall issue a certificate to that effect; and in any other case they shall refuse the application.
- (5) A certificate under this section shall—
- (a) specify the land to which it relates;
  - (b) describe the use, operations or other matter in question (in the case of any use falling within one of the classes specified in an order under section 55(2)(f), identifying it by reference to that class);
  - (c) give the reasons for determining the use, operations or other matter to be lawful; and
  - (d) specify the date of the application for the certificate.
- (6) The lawfulness of any use, operations or other matter for which a certificate is in force under this section shall be conclusively presumed.
- (7) A certificate under this section in respect of any use shall also have effect, for the purposes of the following enactments, as if it were a grant of planning permission—
- (a) section 3(3) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960;
  - (b) section 5(2) of the Control of Pollution Act 1974; and
  - (c) section 36(2)(a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

### **192 Certificate of lawfulness of proposed use or development**

- (1) If any person wishes to ascertain whether—
- (a) any proposed use of buildings or other land; or
  - (b) any operations proposed to be carried out in, on, over or under land,
- would be lawful, he may make an application for the purpose to the local planning authority specifying the land and describing the use or operations in question.
- (2) If, on an application under this section, the local planning authority are provided with information satisfying them that the use or operations described in the application would be lawful if instituted or begun at the time of the application, they shall issue a certificate to that effect; and in any other case they shall refuse the application.

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- (3) A certificate under this section shall—
  - (a) specify the land to which it relates;
  - (b) describe the use or operations in question (in the case of any use falling within one of the classes specified in an order under section 55(2)(f), identifying it by reference to that class);
  - (c) give the reasons for determining the use or operations to be lawful; and
  - (d) specify the date of the application for the certificate.
- (4) The lawfulness of any use or operations for which a certificate is in force under this section shall be conclusively presumed unless there is a material change, before the use is instituted or the operations are begun, in any of the matters relevant to determining such lawfulness.

### **193 Certificates under sections 191 and 192: supplementary provisions**

- (1) An application for a certificate under section 191 or 192 shall be made in such manner as may be prescribed by a development order and shall include such particulars, and be verified by such evidence, as may be required by such an order or by any directions given under such an order or by the local planning authority.
- (2) Provision may be made by a development order for regulating the manner in which applications for certificates under those sections are to be dealt with by local planning authorities.
- (3) In particular, such an order may provide for requiring the authority—
  - (a) to give to any applicant within such time as may be prescribed by the order such notice as may be so prescribed as to the manner in which his application has been dealt with; and
  - (b) to give to the Secretary of State and to such other persons as may be prescribed by or under the order, such information as may be so prescribed with respect to such applications made to the authority, including information as to the manner in which any application has been dealt with.
- (4) A certificate under either of those sections may be issued—
  - (a) for the whole or part of the land specified in the application; and
  - (b) where the application specifies two or more uses, operations or other matters, for all of them or some one or more of them;and shall be in such form as may be prescribed by a development order.
- (5) A certificate under section 191 or 192 shall not affect any matter constituting a failure to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted unless that matter is described in the certificate.
- (6) In section 69 references to applications for planning permission shall include references to applications for certificates under section 191 or 192.
- (7) A local planning authority may revoke a certificate under either of those sections if, on the application for the certificate—
  - (a) a statement was made or document used which was false in a material particular; or

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(b) any material information was withheld.

(8) Provision may be made by a development order for regulating the manner in which certificates may be revoked and the notice to be given of such revocation.

#### **194 Offences**

(1) If any person, for the purpose of procuring a particular decision on an application (whether by himself or another) for the issue of a certificate under section 191 or 192—

(a) knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false or misleading in a material particular;

(b) with intent to deceive, uses any document which is false or misleading in a material particular; or

(c) with intent to deceive, withholds any material information,

he shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) shall be liable—

(a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum; or

(b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or a fine, or both.

(3) Notwithstanding section 127 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, a magistrates' court may try an information in respect of an offence under subsection (1) whenever laid.”

(2) An order under section 84(2) of this Act may provide for established use certificates to have effect, in such circumstances and to such extent as may be specified in the order, for the purposes of section 191 of the principal Act as substituted by this section.