



2011 CHAPTER 25

Part 5

Enforcement

Certificate of lawful use or development

Certificate of lawfulness of existing use or development

- 169.**—(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,
- that person may make an application for the purpose to the appropriate council 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
 - (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—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, Section 169. (See end of Document for details)

- (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 council is provided with information satisfying it 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 council or a description substituted by it, the council must issue a certificate to that effect; and in any other case it must refuse the application.
- (5) A certificate under this section must—
- (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 23(3)(e), 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 statutory provisions, as if it were a grant of planning permission—
- (a) section 3(3) of the Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 (c. 17);
 - (b) Article 8(3) of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (NI 19).

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** Pt. 5 applied with modification(s) (1.4.2015) by [The Planning \(Conservation Areas\) \(Demolition\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2015 \(S.R. 2015/107\)](#), regs. 1, **11**
 - C2** Pt. 5 (except ss. 157-163) applied with modification(s) (1.4.2015) by [The Planning General Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2015 \(S.R. 2015/39\)](#), regs. 1(1), **2** (with regs. 3-10)
 - C3** Ss. 162-175: transfer of functions (8.5.2016) by [The Departments \(Transfer of Functions\) Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/76\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 5 Pt. 2** (with art. 9(2))
-

Commencement Information

- I1** S. 169 in operation at 13.2.2015 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2015/49](#), art. 2, **Sch. 1**
- I2** S. 169 in operation at 1.4.2015 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2015/49](#), art. 3, **Sch. 1** (with **Sch. 2**) (as amended (16.3.2016) by [S.R. 2016/159](#), art. 2)

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, Section 169.