



# Commons Act 1876

## 1876 CHAPTER 56

### PART I

#### LAW AS TO THE REGULATIONS AND INCLOSURE OF COMMONS

##### *Procedure*

#### **9 Issue of forms by Commissioners**

The Inclosure Commissioners shall from time to time, upon application made by the persons interested in any common, issue in such form as they may deem expedient information and directions as to the mode in which applications for the regulation or inclosure ..of commons under the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1868, as amended by this Act are to be made to the Commissioners, with such explanations as they may think fit with respect, to the law for the regulation and inclosure of commons, and the persons so interested may apply accordingly in manner directed by the Inclosure Commissioners.

#### **10 Rules as to application to Commissioners**

The following rules shall be observed with respect to an application to the Inclosure Commissioners for a provisional order for the regulation or inclosure of a common; that is to say

##### *Publication of notices of application*

- (1) The applicants previously to making their application shall publish, in such manner as the Inclosure Commissioners may from time to time, by general or special order, direct, an advertisement giving notice of their intention to apply for such provisional order, and shall also serve a like notice on any urban sanitary authority entitled under this Act to receive such notice :Provided that such advertisement as aforesaid shall always be inserted in at least one paper circulating in the neighbourhood of the common to which the application relates :

##### *Manner of application*

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- (2) The application shall be in writing, accompanied with a map of the common, or part thereof, and, if for the regulation of a common, shall express whether the applicants propose that all or certain specified provisions only of this Act for the adjustment of rights or improvement of commons should be put in force in relation to such common, and whether to apply to the whole or part of such common, but, subject as aforesaid, an application for the regulation or inclosure of a common shall be in such form and be made in such manner as the Inclosure Commissioners may from time to time direct:

*Evidence to be furnished in support of application*

- (3) On making their application in respect of any common, the applicants shall furnish the Inclosure Commissioners, in answer to questions previously submitted or otherwise in such manner as the said Commissioners may from time to time direct, with information bearing on the expediency of the application considered in relation to the benefit of the neighbourhood as well as to private interests :

*Evidence in relation to benefit of neighbourhood*

- (4) The information to be furnished as bearing on the expediency of the application, considered in relation to the benefit of the neighbourhood, shall comprise statements as to the particulars following; that is to say, as to the number and occupation of the inhabitants of the parish or place in which the common is situate ; as to the population of the neighbourhood, and the distance of the common from any neighbouring towns and villages ; as to the intention of the applicants to propose the adoption of all or any of the statutory provisions as defined by this Act for the benefit of the neighbourhood; as to the circumstance of any ground other than the common to which the application relates being available for the recreation of the neighbourhood; and in the case of a common being waste land of a manor, as to the site, extent, and suitableness of the allotments, if any, proposed to be made for recreation grounds and field gardens, or for either of such purposes; and as to any other matter which in the judgment of the Inclosure Commissioners may assist them in forming an opinion as to whether such application ought to be acceded to, having regard to the benefit of the neighbourhood, and if acceded to, as to what statutory provisions as defined by this Act ought to be inserted in the provisional order for the benefit of the neighbourhood :

The Inclosure Commissioners shall also require, in the case of an application for inclosure, special information as to the advantages the applicants anticipate to be derivable from the inclosure of a common as compared with the regulation of a common, also the reasons why an inclosure is expedient when viewed in relation to the benefit of the neighbourhood :

*Evidence in relation to private interests*

- (5) The information to be furnished as bearing on the expediency of the application considered in relation to private interests shall comprise statements as to the several particulars following ; that is to say, as to the extent and nature of the common to which the application relates ; as to the mines, minerals, or valuable strata (if any) under the same ; as to the questions of boundary (if any) concerning such common, or such mines, minerals, or strata; as to the parties interested in such common, and the numbers and proportion in value of interest who have consented to or dissented from the application ; as to the nature of the rights requiring the intervention of the Inclosure Commissioners or the interference of Parliament; as to the supposed advantages of the application being acceded to ; as to (in cases where the interest of any lord of

the manor in the soil of a common or in mineral or other rights may be affected by the provisional order applied for) the allotment (if any) or compensation agreed on or proposed to be made to such lord of the manor in respect of his interest so affected; and as to any other matter which in the judgment of the Inclosure Commissioners may assist them in forming an opinion as to whether such application ought to be acceded to, having regard to private interests, and if acceded to as to what provisions ought to be inserted in the provisional order for the protection of private interests :

*Duty of Commissioners on application*

- (6) The Inclosure Commissioners shall take into consideration any application made to them as in this Act provided, and if satisfied by the information furnished to them as aforesaid, or by any further inquiries made by themselves or an Assistant Commissioner, that a prima facie case has been made out, and that, regard being had to the benefit of the neighbourhood as well as to private interests, it is expedient to proceed further in the matter, they shall order a local inquiry to be held by an Assistant Commissioner.

## **11 Rules as to local inquiry**

The following rules shall be observed with respect to a local inquiry held by order of the Inclosure Commissioners :

*Inspection and public meeting*

- (1) The Assistant Commissioner appointed to hold such inquiry shall inspect the common to which the application relates, and shall convene one or more public meetings at a suitable time and place for securing the attendance of the neighbouring inhabitants, and of all persons claiming interest in the common: Provided always, that one at least of such public meetings shall be held in the evening between the hours of seven and ten of the clock.

*Notice of meeting*

- (2) The Assistant Commissioner shall give not less than twenty-one days' notice of his intention to hold the first of such meetings.

*Contents of notice*

- (3) The notice shall, in such form as the Inclosure Commissioners from time to time direct, state the nature of the application made, the objects of the meeting, that the meeting is a public one and held for the purpose of enabling the Assistant Commissioner to hear all persons desirous of being heard on the subject matter of the application, whether considered in relation to the benefit of the neighbourhood or to private interests, and the desirability of the attendance of all persons interested in the subject matter of the inquiry.

*Publication of notice*

- (4) The notice shall be given—
  - (a) By affixing a copy thereof on the principal door of the church of the parish in which the common to which the application relates, or the greater part thereof is situate; and

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- (b) By posting copies of the same on or near the common to which it relates at the post office or post offices of the parish or district in which the common to which the application relates is situate, at any town hall, or vestry hall, or other building or room the expense of maintaining which is payable out of any local rate, situate in the parish or district, and at all places therein where notices are usually posted ; and
- (c) By advertising in such manner as the Inclosure Commissioners may direct, or otherwise giving notice of the meetings in such manner as they think best calculated to ensure publicity in the locality.

*Conduct of meeting*

- (5) The Assistant Commissioner shall preside and regulate the proceedings at such meetings, and shall hear all persons desirous of being heard in relation to the subject matter of the inquiry. He may adjourn any such meeting from time to time, or from place to place, on giving such notice of adjournment as he thinks best calculated to ensure publicity.

*Personal inquiries by Assistant commissioner*

- (6) The Assistant Commissioner shall also make any inquiries and do any other acts which he may be instructed by the Inclosure Commissioners or may think it advisable to do, for the purpose of enabling the Commissioners to judge as to the expediency of making the provisional order applied for, also as to the nature of the provisions to be inserted in any such provisional order if made.

*Report of Assistant Commissioner to Inclosure Commissioners*

- (7) The Assistant Commissioner shall report .in writing to the Inclosure Commissioners the result of the local inquiry, and of the public meeting or meetings held by him (in such form and with such details as the Inclosure Commissioners may from time to time direct), and specially shall report to the Inclosure Commissioners the information obtained by him as to the several particulars in respect, of. which the applicants for a provisional order are by this Act required to furnish information to the Inclosure Commissioners.

He shall also report the number of persons who attended the meetings held by him, the objections (if any) made to the application, and the suggestions (if any) made in relation to the provisions to be inserted in the provisional order for the benefit of the neighbourhood or for the protection of private, interests, and any other circumstances which he may think expedient, with, a view to enable the Inclosure Commissioners to judge of the expediency of making the provisional order, having regard as aforesaid, and also, if the order be made, of the provisions to be inserted therein.

*Map to accompany report*

- (8) The report shall be accompanied by an outline or other map on such scale and of such a description as may be/directed by the Inclosure Commissioners, with a sketch in the case of an inclosure of a common being waste of land of a manor, of the allotments (if any) proposed to be made for recreation grounds and field gardens, Or for either of such purposes.

## 12 Rules as to provisional orders

The following rules shall be observed with respect to provisional orders to be made by the Inclosure Commissioners; that is to say

### *Draft provisional order to be framed*

- (1) The Inclosure Commissioners, if satisfied by the report of the Assistant Commissioner or by further inquiries to be made by themselves or an Assistant Commissioner, that, having regard to the benefit of the neighbourhood as well as to private interests, it is expedient to proceed further in the matter, shall frame, in such form and with such provisions as they, having regard as aforesaid, may think expedient, and as are Consistent with law and the description of provisional order applied for, a draft provisional order for the consideration of the persons interested in the common, specifying, if such application is for the regulation of a common, whether all or any one or more of the provisions of this Act for the adjustment of rights and the improvement of a common are to be put in force :

### *Provisions for benefit of neighbourhood*

- (2) With respect to provisions for the benefit of the neighbourhood, there shall be inserted in such draft provisional, order all such of the statutory provisions as defined by this Act for the benefit of the neighbourhood as are applicable to the case; also, if the order is an inclosure order in the case of a common being waste land of a manor, the quantity and situation of the allotments (if any) to be made for recreation grounds and field gardens :

### *Provisions for protection of private interests*

- (3) With respect to private interests, there shall be inserted in such draft provisional order,
  - (1) where the interest of any lord of the manor in the soil of a common or in mineral or other rights may be affected by the order, a statement of the allotment (if any) or other compensation to be allotted or made to the lord of such manor in respect of his interest so affected ; and
  - (2) where there is any mineral property or other rights in relation thereto belonging to persons other than the lord of the manor which may be affected by the order, such provisions and reservations as are required to be inserted by the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1868, or as may appear to the Inclosure Commissioners proper to be inserted ; also, if there are any other rights which appear to the Commissioners proper to be specially provided for or to be excepted from the operation of the order, there shall be specified the provisions or exceptions to be made in that behalf :

### *Deposit of draft order for consideration of parties interested*

- (4) As soon as may be after making their draft provisional order, the Inclosure Commissioners shall cause a copy thereof to be deposited in the parish or parishes in which the common is situate to which such order relates, in order that the same may be considered by the parties interested therein, and they shall give notice, in such manner as they think best calculated to secure publicity, of such deposit having been made, and of their intention to certify the expediency of such order if the necessary consents are obtained thereto

### *Consents before provisional order certified to be expedient*

- (5) The Inclosure Commissioners shall not certify the expediency of a draft provisional order unless they are satisfied that persons representing at least two thirds in value

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of such interests in the common as are affected by the order consent thereto ; and when the common to which the order relates is the waste land of any manor, or land within any manor to the soil of which the lord of such manor is entitled in right of his manor, then, unless there is more than one person interested in such manor according to the definition of the Inclosure Act, 1845, the Commissioners shall not certify the expediency of the same, unless the person interested in the common in right of such manor, or his substitute under the said Inclosure Act, 1845, consent to such order ; and where there is more than one person interested in such manor the Commissioners shall not certify the expediency of the order, in case such persons or the majority of such persons in respect of interest signify their dissent within a time to be limited by the Commissioners :

*Reservation in favour of freemen interested in common*

- (6) Where the freemen, burgesses, or inhabitant householders of any city, borough, or town are entitled to rights of common or other interest in the common to which the draft provisional order relates, the Inclosure Commissioners shall not certify the expediency of such order unless it appears to the Commissioners that two thirds in number of such of the freemen and burgesses so entitled as may be resident in such city, borough, or town, or within seven miles thereof, or of such inhabitant householders, as the case may be, have consented to the order; and in case two thirds in number of such resident freemen and burgesses, or of such inhabitant householders, have so consented, such consent shall be deemed the consent of the class of freemen, burgesses, or inhabitant householders, as the case may be, so entitled :

*Means of obtaining consents*

- (7) The Inclosure Commissioners may cause a meeting or meetings to be held by an Assistant Commissioner for the purpose of obtaining the necessary consents, or of ascertaining the interests of consenting or dissenting parties, or they may cause such consents or dissents to be ascertained in such other manner as they may think fit:

*Power to modify provisional order before expediency certified*

- (8) The Inclosure Commissioners may, at any time before certifying the expediency of a draft provisional order, modify the same of their own mere motion, or on the suggestion of any parties interested, but such modifications shall not be of any validity unless they are consented to in the same manner as if they formed part of the draft provisional order originally deposited by the Commissioners:

*Certificate of expediency of provisional order*

- (9) When the necessary consents have been obtained to any draft provisional order as originally deposited, or as modified in pursuance of this Act, such order shall be deemed to be final; and the Inclosure Commissioners shall in a report or reports to be made from time to time, as respects each provisional order which has become final as aforesaid, certify that it is expedient that such provisional order should be confirmed by Parliament, together with their reasons for certifying such expediency, and specially, as respects each provisional order, they shall, in such manner as they think best adapted to enable Parliament to judge of the expediency of such order, state the information furnished to them as to the several particulars in respect of which the applicants for a provisional order are by this Act required, to furnish information to the Commissioners also the result of the local inquiry, and of the number and description of the persons who attended the meetings held during such inquiry, and the nature of the objections

(if any) made to the application, and the suggestions (if any) made in relation to the provisions to be inserted for the benefit of the neighbourhood or for the protection of private interests by the persons so attending, and any other circumstances which the Commissioners may think it expedient to state for such purposes as aforesaid:

*Confirmation of provisional order*

- (10) Every report made by the Inclosure Commissioners certifying the expediency of any provisional order under this Act shall be presented to Parliament, and if at any time thereafter it is enacted by Act of Parliament that any order for the regulation or inclosure of a common, the expediency of which has been so certified by the Commissioners, shall be confirmed, the regulation or inclosure of any common to which any such order relates shall be proceeded with and completed according to the terms of the provisional order relating to such common, and to the provisions of the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1868, as amended by this Act, and any Act of Parliament containing such enactments as aforesaid shall be deemed to be a public general Act, but a provisional order, until such Act of Parliament as aforesaid has been passed in relation thereto, shall not be of any validity whatever:

*Supplemental power to modify provisional order after expediency certified*

- (11) If, after the presentation to Parliament of a report made by the Inclosure Commissioners certifying the expediency of any provisional order for the regulation or inclosure of a common, and before a Bill has been brought in for the confirmation of such order, such report is referred to a committee of either House of Parliament for consideration, and such committee recommend that such provisional order should not be confirmed by Parliament except subject to certain modifications, the Inclosure Commissioners may modify the provisional order accordingly, but such modifications shall not be of any validity -unless they are consented to in the same manner as if they had formed part of the draft provisional order originally deposited by the Commissioners :

And it shall be the duty of the Commissioners to take the necessary steps for ascertaining whether such consent as aforesaid can be obtained or not, and if such consent be obtained, the Commissioners shall make a special report to the effect that the order has been modified as aforesaid and such consent duly obtained, and such report shall be presented to Parliament; and thereupon the order so modified shall be deemed to be in the same position in all respects as if it were an order in respect of which a report had been made by the Commissioners certifying the expediency thereof, and such report had been presented to Parliament.

### **13 Partial application of procedure under Inclosure Acts**

The Inclosure Commissioners may insert in any provisional order for the regulation of a common any provisions they may deem necessary for the purpose of carrying such order into effect; but, subject as aforesaid, when an Act of Parliament has been passed as aforesaid, enacting that the regulation of a common shall be proceeded with, the subsequent proceedings for carrying into effect the regulation of such common shall be the same, so far as is practicable, as they would be in case such common were to be inclosed instead of being regulated, and the provisions of the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1868, as amended by this Act, shall apply accordingly.

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#### **14 Power to raise money for improvement of common**

A provisional order for the regulation of a common may provide for the raising from time to time by such persons interested in the common, and for such amounts as the Commissioners : think fit, of money to be applied towards the improvement or ' protection of such common, either by means of rates to be levied on the persons and in respect of the property who and which respectively will be benefited or principally benefited by such improvement or regulation, or by means of the sale of any outlying or other small portion not exceeding in the whole one fortieth part of the total area of such common.