



Acquisition of Land Act 1981

CHAPTER 67

ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981

PART I

GENERAL

- 1 Application of Act.

Compulsory purchase

- 2 Procedure for authorisation.
- 2A Tunnels etc
- 3 Minerals.
- 4 Assessment of compensation.

Supplemental

- 5 Local inquiries.
- 5A Power to require information
- 5B Offences relating to information
- 6 Service of documents.

Interpretation

- 7 Interpretation.
- 8 Statutory undertakers.
- 9 Land held inalienably.

PART II

PURCHASES BY LOCAL AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

- 10 Preliminary.

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

Notices prior to submission of order to confirming authority

- 11 Public notices
- 12 Notices to owners, lessees, occupiers and others.
- 12A Final day for making objections

Confirmation of order

- 13 Confirmation of order: no objections
- 13A Confirmation of order: remaining objections
- 13B Written representations procedure: supplementary
- 13C Confirmation in stages
- 13D Power to extend time limit for implementation
- 14 Land not originally included in order.
- 14A Confirmation by acquiring authority
- 14B Timetables for confirmation of CPOs except by Welsh Ministers
- 14C Timetables for confirmation of CPOs by Welsh Ministers
- 14D Power to appoint inspector
- 15 Notices after confirmation of order

PART III

SPECIAL KINDS OF LAND

- 16 Statutory undertakers' land excluded from compulsory purchase.

Orders subject to special parliamentary procedure

- 17 Local authority and statutory undertakers' land.
- 18 National Trust land.
- 19 Commons, open spaces etc.
- 20 Ancient monuments.
- 21 Land within more than one provision in Part III.

Supplemental

- 22 Notice of giving of certificate.

PART IV

VALIDITY AND DATE OF OPERATION OF ORDERS AND CERTIFICATES

- 23 Grounds for application to High Court.
- 24 Powers of the court.
- 25 Restriction on other court proceedings.
- 26 Date of operation.
- 27 Exclusion of orders confirmed by Act of Parliament.

PART V

PROCEDURE IN SPECIAL CASES

Compulsory acquisition of rights over land

- 28 Acquisition of rights over land by the creation of new rights.
- 29 Compulsory rights orders under Opencast Coal Act 1958.
- 30 Acquisition of rights in connection with underground storage of gas.

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

Statutory undertakers' land

- 31 Acquisition under certain Acts of statutory undertakers' land without a certificate.

PART VI

FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

- 32 Power to extinguish certain public rights of way.
33 Land acquired before commencement of this Act.

PART VII

SUPPLEMENTAL

- 34 Consequential amendments, transitionals and repeals.
35 Short title, commencement and extent.

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1 — Purchases by Ministers

- 1 (1) This Schedule has effect where a Minister is the...

Public notices

- 2 (1) The Minister shall— (a) in two successive weeks publish...

Notices to owners, lessees, occupiers and others

- 3 (1) The Minister shall serve on every qualifying person a...

Final day for making objections

- 3A (1) For the purposes of paragraphs 2 and 3, the...

Making of order

- 4 (1) The Minister may make a compulsory purchase order with...
4A (1) This paragraph applies to the making of a compulsory...
4B (1) The Minister may make an order (with or without...

Land not included in draft order

- 5 The order, as made by the Minister, shall not, unless...

Notices after making of order

- 6 (1) After the order has been made, the Minister must—...

SCHEDULE 2 — Minerals

Part I

- 1 (1) A compulsory purchase order may, as respects all or...

Part II

- 2 (1) The acquiring authority shall not be entitled to any...

Part III

- 3 (1) If the owner of any underlying mines or minerals...

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

4 (1) If before the expiration of 30 days from the...

Severed mines

5 (1) If underlying mines in which any protected minerals are...

6 (1) If underlying mines extend on both sides of the...

7 (1) Where works carried out under paragraph 5 above cause...

Powers of entry

8 (1) For the purpose of ascertaining whether underlying mines have...

Remedial works

9 (1) If it appears that mines have been worked contrary...

SCHEDULE 3 — Acquisition of Rights over Land by the Creation of New Rights

Part I

1 In this Schedule “right” means a right to which section...

General modifications

2 (1) This Act shall have effect with the modifications necessary...

Part II — ACQUISITION OF NEW RIGHTS OVER SPECIAL KINDS OF LAND

Statutory undertakers land

3 (1) This paragraph applies where the land over which a...

Orders subject to special parliamentary procedure

Local authority and statutory undertakers’ land

4 (1) This paragraph applies to land which—

National Trust land

5 (1) This paragraph applies to land belonging to the National...

Commons, open spaces etc.

6 (1) In so far as a compulsory purchase order authorises...

Ancient monuments

7

Land within more than one provision in this Schedule

8 In the case of land falling within more than one...

Notice of giving of certificate

9 As soon as may be after the giving of a...

SCHEDULE 4 — CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

Translation of references to the Act of 1946

1 In the enactment specified in the Table below for “Acquisition...

Land Settlement Facilities Act 1919 (c. 59)

2 (1) In section 2(1) of the Land Settlement Facilities Act...

Agriculture Act 1947 (c. 48)

3 (1) The Agriculture Act 1947 shall be amended as follows....

4

5

6

Coast Protection Act 1949 (c. 74)

7 (1) In section 14(2) of the Coast Protection Act 1949...

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (c. 97)

8 In section 103 of the National Parks and Access to...

Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954 (c. 53)

9 For section 50 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act...

10

Opencast Coal Act 1958 (c. 69)

11 (1) The Opencast Coal Act 1958 shall be amended as...

12

Police Act 1964 (c. 48)

13 In section 9(2) of the Police Act 1964 for the...

Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 (c. 56)

14 (1) The Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 shall be amended as...

Agriculture Act 1967 (c. 22)

15 (1) The Agriculture Act of 1967 shall be amended as...

Leasehold Reform Act 1967 (c. 88)

16 (1) Schedule 4 to the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 shall...

Countryside Act 1968 (c. 41)

17 (1) In the Countryside Act 1968 paragraph 3 of Schedule...

Transport Act 1968 (c. 73)

18 (1) Section 10 of the Transport Act 1968 shall be...

Courts Act 1971 (c. 23)

19 In paragraph 3 of Schedule 3 to the Courts Act...

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

20
 21
 22

Gas Act 1972 (c. 60)

23 In Schedule 2 to the Gas Act 1972 for paragraph...
 24
 25

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (c. 57)

26 For subsection (5) of section 13 of the Local Government...

Development of Rural Wales Act 1976 (c. 75)

27 (1) The Development of Rural Wales Act 1976 shall be...

National Health Service Act 1977 (c. 49)

28 For section 87(4) of the National Health Service Act 1977...

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (c. 46)

29 In Schedule 5 to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas...

Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 (c. 65)

30 (1) The Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 shall...

Highways Act 1980 (c. 66)

31 (1) The Highways Act 1980 shall be amended as follows....

Animal Health Act 1981 (c. 22)

32 At the end of section 55(2) of the Animal Health...

New Towns Act 1981 (c. 64)

33 In section 72(2) of the New Towns Act 1981 for...

SCHEDULE 5 — Transitional

References to old law to include new law

1 (1) This paragraph is without prejudice to section 17(2)(a) of...

References to new law to include old law

2 Any reference, whether express or implied, in any enactment, instrument...

Periods of time

3 Where a period of time specified in any enactment repealed...

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

Successor authorities

4 (1) Any reference in this Act (whether express or implied)...

Construction of enactments applying the 1946 Act

5 Section 1(1)(a) of this Act includes in particular a compulsory...

Local authority and statutory undertakers land excluded from compulsory purchase

6 Section 17(3) and paragraph 4(3) of Schedule 3 above—

Extinguishment of certain public rights of way

7 The repeal by this Act of section 3 of the...

SCHEDULE 6 — REPEALS

PART I

PART II — SPENT PROVISIONS

PART III — STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

Changes to legislation:

There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- s. 13B heading word omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 7(3) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 190\(1\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 7(3) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 18 para. 3\(2\)\(a\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 7(3) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 18 para. 3\(2\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 11(3) excluded by [S.I. 2021/51 Sch. 9 para. 32\(1\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. S.I. 2021/51 removed from the website by request from the Department of Transport dated 12th July 2021 which followed the decision of the High Court of Justice to quash these Regulations in the judgement dated 8th July 2021 (High Court of Justice — Planning Court — The Queen (on the application of Mair Bain) v. Secretary of State for Transport — Case No. CO/642/2021).)
- s. 13B(1) word omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 13B(2) word omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 13B(4) word omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(b\)\(iii\)](#)
- s. 13B(6) word omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(b\)\(iv\)](#)
- s. 13B(7) word omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(b\)\(v\)](#)
- s. 13B(7) word substituted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(3\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 13C(3) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(4\)](#)
- s. 14D(3)(c) word substituted by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(5\)](#)
- s. 15(2)(b) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 15(3) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 15(5) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(e\)](#)
- s. 15(6) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(f\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 15(6) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(f\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 16(3)(b) words omitted by [2012 c. 7 Sch. 14 para. 48](#)
- s. 17(4) words omitted by [2012 c. 7 Sch. 14 para. 49](#)
- s. 31(1)(a) words inserted by [2023 asc 3 Sch. 13 para. 57](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(3) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(5) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(e\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(6) words inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(f\)\(i\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 4B(3) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 2\(3\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(b) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(6) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(f\)\(ii\)](#)
- Sch. 2 Pt. 3 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2015/680 art. 19](#)
- Sch. 2 Pt. 23 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2020/1297 art. 20](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. S.I. 2020/1297 was withdrawn following a request from the Department of Transport dated 9th August 2021 which followed the decision of the High Court of Justice to quash this Order in the judgement dated 2nd August 2021 (High Court of Justice — Planning Court — The Queen (on the application of Save Stonehenge World Heritage Site) v. Secretary of State for Transport — Case No. CO/4844/2020))
- Sch. 2 Pt. 2 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2021/51 art. 24](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. S.I. 2021/51 removed from the website by request from the Department of Transport dated 12th July 2021 which followed the decision of the High Court of Justice to quash these Regulations in the judgement dated 8th July 2021 (High Court of Justice — Planning Court — The Queen (on the application of Mair Bain) v. Secretary of State for Transport — Case No. CO/642/2021).)
- Sch. 2 Pt. 3 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2021/51 art. 24](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. S.I. 2021/51 removed from the website by request from the Department of Transport dated 12th July 2021 which followed

the decision of the High Court of Justice to quash these Regulations in the judgement dated 8th July 2021 (High Court of Justice — Planning Court — The Queen (on the application of Mair Bain) v. Secretary of State for Transport — Case No. CO/642/2021.)

- Sch. 2 Pt. 23 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2024/230 art. 47](#)
- Sch. 2 Pt. 23 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2024/360 art. 20](#)
- Sch. 2 Pt. 23 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2024/393 art. 23](#)
- Sch. 2 Pt. 23 incorporated (with modifications) by [S.I. 2024/436 art. 28](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

- Act applied by [2023 asc 3 s. 43\(2\)](#)
- Act applied by [2023 asc 3 s. 50\(13\)](#)
- Act applied by [2023 asc 3 s. 137\(6\)](#)

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 7(4) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 18 para. 3\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 13A(1A)-(1I) substituted for s. 13A(2)-(6) by [2023 c. 55 s. 182\(2\)](#)
- s. 13BA inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(2\)](#)
- s. 14A(2A) inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 190\(1\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 15(4)(ba) inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 15(4B)-(4F) inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 183\(3\)\(d\)](#)
- s. 15A and cross-heading inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 190\(1\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 26(1A)-(3) substituted for s. 26(1)(2) by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 18 para. 3\(3\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 4AA inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(2\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(4)(ba) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(c\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 6(4B)-(4D) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 3\(3\)\(d\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 4A(1A)-(1J) substituted for Sch. 1 para. 4A(2)-(8) by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 19 para. 2\(2\)](#)
- Sch. 2A inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 190\(1\)\(d\)](#)