



**An Bille um Fhoirgnimh Thréigthe agus um
Athbheochan Foirgneamh, 2025**
Dereliction and Building Regeneration Bill 2025

Meabhrán Miniúcháin
Explanatory Memorandum



**AN BILLE UM FHOIRGNIMH THRÉIGTHE AGUS UM
ATHBHEOCHAN FOIRGNEAMH, 2025
DERELICTION AND BUILDING REGENERATION BILL 2025**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

This explanatory memorandum does not form part of the Bill and does not purport to be a legal interpretation:

Purpose of the Bill

The Bill seeks to amend existing legislation in relation to derelict property and the processes of upgrading and regenerating existing property.

Section 1 provides the short title, commencement and construction.

Section 2 defines certain terms used within the Bill.

Part 2 amends the Derelict Sites Act 1990. The amendments relate to:

- the definition of derelict buildings for the purposes of placing buildings on the derelict sites register. The definition is expanded to include buildings that are damaged, neglected and are not habitable without remedial work, buildings that have entrances and windows boarded up and buildings that have been disconnected from electricity or water services for a period of two years
- requiring local authorities to publish the derelict sites register online
- providing local authorities with modern methods of servicing notice to owners of derelict properties, including site notices, local media and social media
- requiring local authorities to notify the Minister when a site has been on the derelict sites register for a period of two years
- extending the prescribed area for the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to include any area that is described as a village, town or city in the County or City development plan, and has a town boundary

Part 3 amends the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Building Control Act 1990 to improve and expedite the process for bringing vacant units within existing properties back into use.

The amendments propose to establish a new planning and building control approval process – namely the Town Centre First application process to enable the expedited development of certain classes of residential developments in order to bring vacant stock back into use and implement the Town Centre First policy, including those requiring change of use from commercial or industrial to residential and residential refurbishment in upper floors and in older structures.

The bill expands a limited category of exempted development and requires direct inspection by independent, qualified “authorised persons” before construction may commence.

The Town Centre First application process will:

- reduce administrative delay and expense
- simplify existing administrative systems for planning and building control
- ensure greater compliance in the conversion and refurbishment of existing structures in urban areas to residential use

This Bill requires that the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage draft and publish associated technical guidance documents for each section of the Building Regulations relevant to refurbishment, regeneration and upgrading of existing buildings.

The proposal specifically addresses challenges associated with fire safety and disabled access in old buildings, and change of use to residential property.

The Bill also provides for a national Town Centre First Partnership office to oversee this new process and to assist and provide guidance to all local authorities on the re-use, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings.

*Senators Malcolm Noonan, Nessa Cosgrave, Laura Harmon, Patricia Stephenson,
Bealtaine, 2025.*