



Charles George QC

Year of call: 1974 (QC 1992)



Practice Profile

A wide-ranging expertise in planning, environmental and other public law (particularly local government powers, standards and maladministration) with special interest in the law of Commons and Village Greens and in ecclesiastical law. In addition to work for developers and local authorities in advising (and appearing at Public Inquiries and in the Courts) in relation to planning applications and appeals, he regularly undertakes public interest challenges in the Courts, often on legal aid.

"Charles George QC received warm praise from all corners of the market for his 'wonderful attitude and approach to matters'. His skill in dealing with judicial reviews was particularly highlighted by interviewees who viewed him as an 'effective and charming' practitioner".

"Researchers were advised that 'he has enormous capacity for soaking up detail and produces useful, relevant opinions that make a real contribution to cases'."

Chambers Guide to the Legal Profession 2006

" Charles George is an established name in local government law, who is regarded highly for his 'excellent judgment and thoroughness'".

Chambers Guide to the Legal Profession 2007

"[Charles George is] enjoyable to work with because he gets to the point and is a very thoughtful advocate and opponent."

"thorough and charming."

Chambers Guide to the Legal Profession 2008

Cases of Note

- *Oxfordshire County Council v Oxford City Council and Robinson*, HL (interpretation of Village Green law)
- *S.Bucks DC v Porter (No.2)*, HL (scope of duty of Inspector to give reasons)
- *Aston-Cantlow PCC v Wallbank*, HL (meaning of public authority under Human Rights Act 1998)
- *S.Bucks DC v Porter*, HL (planning injunctions against gypsies)
- *Butler v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Wychavon DC* (test for very special circumstances in the green belt)

Experience

Advisory Work

In addition to routine advisory work in relation to local government and planning matters, he has been advising TfL and the Mayor of London since 2001 in relation to Congestion Charging, the Mayor's Transport Strategy (and revisions) and the introduction of a London-wide Low Emission Zone, and Nottingham City Council in relation to the Nottingham Workplace Parking Levy.

Other clients for whom advisory work has recently been carried out include the Crown Estates Commissioners, H.M.Procureur of Guernsey, the Olympic Delivery Authority, Manchester City Council and the London Borough of Richmond, and the Church Commissioners, as well as private and corporate clients.

Inquiry Work

Recent major planning inquiries

- Nottingham Workplace Parking Levy (for Nottingham City Council)

- Thames Gateway Bridge (for TfL)
- Kingsway Business Park, Rochdale (for NWDA)
- Milford Haven (CPO gas lines) (for National Grid)

Major Transport and Works Act inquiries

- Nottingham Express Transit System
- Merseytram Line 1
- Numerous Orders for Manchester Metrolink

Recent Major Judicial Review/Statutory Challenges

- *Wilson v First Secretary of State*, CA (Gypsies, stop notices, and Article 14 of ECHR)
- *Transport for London v Walmsley*, CA (statutory interpretation in relation to Penalty Charge Notices)
- *R (Westminster City Council) v Mayor of London*, Administrative Ct. (resisting challenge to Central London Congestion Charging scheme)

Parliamentary Bills

- Broads Bill (for Promoters)
- Crossrail Bill (for Petitioners)
- Transport for London Bill (for Promoter)

Planning Litigation

- *Millington v Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions*, CA (agricultural immunity for wine making)
- *Edward Ware Homes Ltd v Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions*, CA (quashing of Inspector's decision for incorrect reasoning)
- *R v London Borough of Tower Hamlets ex p. Barratt Homes*, Administrative Court (affordable housing)
- *Wainwright v Secretary of State for Trade and Industry*, Administrative Court (challenge to confirmed CPO)

Public Law Litigation

- *R (Condon) v National Assembly for Wales*, CA (scope of apparent bias in planning)
- *R v Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration ex p. Balchin (Nos. 1, 2 and 3)*, Administrative Court. (quashing of Parliamentary Ombudsmen's decisions)
- *R v Local Government Commissioner for Administration ex p. Turpin Administrative Ct.* (quashing of Local Government Ombudsman's decision)

Environmental Litigation

- *R (Lewis) v Redcar and Cleveland BC* (village greens)
- *R v Environment Agency ex p. Leam* (IPC; incinerator use of cemfuel)
- *R v Buckinghamshire CC ex p. Laing Homes Ltd* (village greens)

Lands Tribunal Litigation

- *Optical Express (Southern) Ltd v Birmingham City Council* (compensation for business disturbance)
- *Blandrent Investments Ltd v British Gas plc*, HL (compensation for gas easement)

Ecclesiastical Litigation

- *In re St Peter and St Paul, Chingford*, Court of the Arches (content of transmitted materials)
- *In re Emmanuel, Bentley*, Court of the Arches (mobile telephone equipment)

- *In re St Stephen, Walbrook*, Court of Ecclesiastical Causes Reserved (doctrinal implications of Henry Moore altar)

Papers Produced

- *Probity and Planning* [1997] JPL 181
- *Secular Use of Church Buildings - Is nothing sacred?* [2001] ELJ
- *Fragments from a Changing Legal Landscape* [2005] in JPL Occasional Papers
- *Commons Act 2006: New Life for New Greens* [2007] JPL 1283

Qualifications and Appointments

- Date of Call - 1995 (King's Inns, Dublin)
- Queen's Counsel - 1992
- MA (Oxon)
- Recorder of the Crown Court
- Dean of the Arches and Auditor of the Chancery Court of York and Master of the Faculties
- Chancellor of the Diocese of Southwark (1996-2009)
- Assistant Parliamentary Boundary Commissioner for England
- Chairman of bishops' disciplinary tribunals for Provinces of Canterbury and York (2006-2009)
- Bencher of the Inner Temple
- Visiting Lecturer in European Environmental Law, King's College London
- Visiting Fellow of the Centre of European Law, King's College London