



## Robin Purchas QC

Year of call: 1968 (QC 1987)



### Practice Profile

Robin Purchas QC's main areas of work are in the fields of administrative, environmental, local government and planning law, the High Court and tribunals and inquiries, including questions of human rights and European law. He deals with cases in Hong Kong and elsewhere in the world. He is a leading specialist in compulsory purchase, valuation and compensation matters.

He has wide experience in connection with the promotion of and opposition to major government and public schemes, including the 2012 Olympics (advising the ODA), the Thames Tunnel, the Channel Tunnel, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and Crossrail Bills and the Victoria Station Upgrade, West Coast Main Line, East Midlands Parkway, Thameslink 2000 and Cambridge Guided Bus Orders.

He is regularly involved in infrastructure schemes in the water, aviation, energy and other related fields as well as major retail, residential, institutional, waste, minerals, highway, leisure and commercial schemes.

He is regularly consulted on and appears in cases concerning heritage and listed building matters. He has an extensive environmental law practice.

"Acclaimed as an "incredibly bright advocate who gets to the point." His "great persona and congenial manner" endear him to clients."

"'Very incisive' Robin Purchas QC is well regarded for his planning work and has particular expertise in compulsory purchase, valuation and compensation matters."

"Instructing solicitors lavish praise on Robin Purchas QC for his 'excellent strategic judgement and talent at cross-examining'. He presents arguments in a 'formidable and thought-provoking way.'"

Chambers and Partners

### Cases of Note

#### In the House of Lords

- *Burkett v LB Hammersmith and Fulham* (environmental assessment and judicial review,
- *Fletcher v SSE, Bolton MBC v SSE* (compensation and alternative development)
- *Bolton MBC v SSE* (statutory challenge and reasons)
- *Forbes* (Human rights; identity parades)

#### In the Court of Appeal

- *M A Holdings v Tewkesbury BC* (locus standi on appeal for third party challenge to local plan)
- *R (Brookhouse Group) v Preston BC and Countryside Properties* (planning permission)
- *Hardy v Pembrokeshire CC and others* (hazardous waste; challenge to the LNG terminals at Milford Haven)
- *Persimmon v Stevenage BC* (relationship of strategic and local plans)
- *Bedford v Islington BC* (environmental assessment and human rights; Arsenal AFC),
- *Railtrack v Guinness* (statutory utility; compensation)
- *Staffordshire CC v Pepper Street Developments* (scope of minerals consent),
- *Motor Crown Petroleum Ltd* (principles for professional negligence in planning context)
- *R v Newbury DC ex p. Chieveley PC* (scope and validity of planning permission; delay)

- *English Property Corp v Kingston upon Thames LBC* (injurious affection and compensation)
- *Pye v Kingswood BC* (compensation; scheme)
- *Wards v Barclays Bank* (compensation; ransom payment)
- *Prudential v Waterloo Real Estate* (adverse possession; estoppel)
- *Pickering v Kettering DC* (reasons); and
- *Batchelor v Kent CC* (compensation; ransom payment).

#### As well as numerous High Court appearances including

- *Hague v Warwick DC* (green belt designation unlawful)
- *Camden Markets v Camden LBC* (UDP challenge)
- *David Wilson Homes v South Bedfordshire DC* (GB policy challenge)
- *Ensign v FSS* (challenge to E Midlands RSS)
- *RWE NPower v S Derbyshire DC* (challenge to powers)
- *Laing v SSE* (rival development schemes); and
- *Bedfordia v Huntingdonshire DC* (alternative sites; local plan challenge).

## Experience

Initially Robin Purchas had a wide ranging general practice but from the mid 1970s increasingly specialised in public, local government, environment and planning law, including human rights, European and related areas. He has considerable experience in all these fields. This includes for example (in addition to those referred to above) major infrastructure projects such as regional water resource schemes, major reclamation and water treatment, minerals, waste and energy proposals, airport proposals, marine works including long sea outfalls and docks, transportation schemes including new highways, railways and LRT proposals (such as the Cambridge guided bus and Fastrack proposals), town centre schemes, major new settlements, large scale commercial and leisure schemes, healthcare projects, listed building and heritage matters and environmental control and regulation. He is currently leading the team advising the ODA on the applications for the Olympics 2012 and subsequent Legacy development. He is regularly involved in advising on and appearing in compulsory purchase and compensation matters. He advises on and appears in cases involving administrative and local government matters. This includes competition and access to information and other related aspects. He has promoted and/or is advising on a number of town centre and related schemes. He is an expert in parliamentary and statutory regulation matters of all kinds. He was on the Attorney-General's Panel from 1980-1987, when he took silk. He conducts and is involved in mediations and arbitrations and is a CEDR accredited mediator.

#### PLANNING

Very wide ranging practice in all areas. Present involvement includes Stansted G2, Olympics 2012, Victoria Transport Interchange and Station Upgrade Order, new settlements/major urban extensions at Milton Keynes, Oxford, Derby, Reading, Cambridge, Stevenage, Kettering, Aylesbury and Biggleswade, town centre proposals at Malton and Godalming, major mixed urban development at Norwich, Cambridge, Gatwick, Bristol, Thames Gateway and Southampton and other infrastructure proposals including the Abberton reservoir and Ouse transfer scheme and Southern Water regional waste treatment and reclamation works; extensive high court practice is reflected in the cases set out above.

#### LAND VALUATION

Robin Purchas has an extensive and widely recognised expertise in this area, covering all aspects of compensation and valuation law. He was involved in many of the leading cases including *Fletcher* in the House of Lords and the *Wards*, *Batchelor*, *Guinness*, *English Property* and *Pye* cases in the Court of Appeal. He has very considerable experience in the Lands Tribunal including recently the *RMC* case involving the application of *Waters* and *Pointe Gourde*, Manchester ring road, Cardiff Bay, *Wagstaffe* and many others. He is extensively involved in advisory work in connection with compensation and land assembly both for promoters and claimants.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

Robin Purchas has very considerable experience acting on or advising in respect of a wide range of infrastructure projects including Channel Tunnel, Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Crossrail, Thameslink 2000, Olympics 2012, Stansted G2, the Victoria Station Upgrade, Abberton Reservoir, Southern Water waste water and reclamation works, Cambridge Guided Bus, the Thames Tunnel and Manchester Airport extension and a variety of waste, minerals and energy projects. He is very familiar with all aspects of the complex issues that arise in connection with schemes of this kind, both as promoter and in opposition.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL

Robin Purchas advised and represented the claimants in *Milford Haven LPG* litigation (*Hardy v Pembrokeshire CC* and others); represented the developer in *Burkett v Hammersmith and Fulham LBC* in the House of Lords and otherwise, and the local authority in the *RWE NPower* and *Arsenal Stadium* challenges; acted on the King's Lynn flood relief scheme (including the successful commencement of proceedings in the High Court), advised the HBF on the Thames Basin

Heaths SPA, acted for the applicant in the Dorset Heaths SSSI licence appeal and otherwise advising on and appearing in connection with a wide range of climate change, energy, emissions, water and other habitat and environmental issues including the infrastructure and other projects cited above.

## **PUBLIC LAW**

Robin Purchas has a practice that is continually engaging in aspects of public law, advising in domestic and European jurisdictions as well as in Hong Kong. He has appeared in a number of the leading public law cases including Forbes and Burkett in the House of Lords and M A H Holdings, Hardy, Chieveley and the Arsenal Stadium case in the Court of Appeal. He acts for the both public and private interests in all areas of public law including education, healthcare, local government, access to information, competition and other aspects of administrative and public law; he is presently advising on the Weymouth Pavilion Ferry Terminal proposal, the Olympics 2012, he acted for the claimant in the Hardy and the MAHolding challenges and the local authority in the RWE NPower and Arsenal Stadium judicial reviews.

## **MEDIATION, ADJUDICATION AND ARBITRATION**

Has sat as an assistant recorder since 1985 and since 1989 as a recorder and deputy county court judge, appointed as a deputy high court judge in 1994 (sits in the administrative court and other divisions), is a CEDR accredited mediator (2004), appointed a deputy chairman of the Information Tribunal dealing with national security matters and access to information issues, has acted as arbitrator on environmental and joint Bar Council/Law Society arbitrations. Direct experience of successful mediation in the planning field.

## **Publications**

- 'Field Day for Crackpots? the Human Rights Act and Development Projects and Control' 2001 JPL February

## **Qualifications and Appointments**

- Master of the Bench of the Inner Temple: (1996 - )
- Member of the Bar Council: 2000-2002 - (Chairman of the Education and Training Committee 2001 - 2002)
- MA(Cantab) Senior Exhibitioner
- Attorney-General's Panel (1979-1987)
- Recorder: (1989 - )
- Deputy High Court Judge: (1994 - )
- Deputy Chairman - Information Tribunal (national security cases) (2001- )
- Assistant Parliamentary Boundary Commissioner (1999-)
- Member of the South Eastern and the European Circuits, Administrative Law Bar Association, Bar European Group,
- Chairman of the Planning and Environment Bar Association (2004 - 2008).
- Leader of the Parliamentary Bar (2002 - )
- Accredited Mediator (CEDR 2004)
- Fellow of Society for Advanced Legal Studies