

HARRY SPURR

CALL: 2001

"VERY COMMERCIAL, THOROUGH AND APPROACHABLE"

Legal 500, 2022

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Harry is a specialist in environmental, planning and other aspects of local government and regulatory law concerning the use of land, such as highways, and town and village greens. He acts as advocate, and in an advisory role, for developers, landowners and other private parties, councils, regulators and other statutory bodies. He has appeared in a substantial number of high-profile, high-value cases.

He is also an experienced commercial mediator, with a practice encompassing a wide range of commercial and civil dispute types. He is also experienced in mediating disputes involving environmental and land use conflict.

Harry practised for 15 years as an environmental and planning specialist from leading chambers (including Landmark Chambers and Francis Taylor Building in London) where he was regarded as one of the top young barristers in his field, and leading international law firm Hogan Lovells LLP.

He subsequently became a successful entrepreneur, creating and running, among other enterprises, a successful renewable energy business.

Following the sale of his company's energy portfolio to a foreign public utility, he practiced for some years as a specialist commercial mediator at IPOS Mediation before returning to the Bar to resume his practice alongside his mediation work.

Harry is the author of a substantial number of articles on his specialist areas, and regularly speaks at seminars and webinars. Recent examples can be found under specialist practice area headings below.

PRACTICE AREAS

- Planning
- Environment
- Mediation

PLANNING

As a specialist planning lawyer, Harry acts as advocate and advisor to a wide range of private and public sector parties, including landowners, developers and other private parties, district, county, borough and unitary authorities, and other statutory bodies such as Historic England and the Environment Agency. He has appeared in the full range of forums and tribunals: planning appeals, call-in inquiries, enforcement appeals, development plan proceedings, judicial review and other Administrative Court proceedings, prosecutions and injunctions.

Having practised at leading London chambers Francis Taylor Building and Landmark Chambers, Harry's experience of the planning system ranges across the spectrum, and includes a significant number of high-profile cases.

This experience includes, among other development types: urban extensions and new communities, major infrastructure development, local plans, major residential schemes, supermarket and other retail development, office and warehouse development, industrial processes, wind energy, waste collection and disposal, section 106 obligations and CIL, residential care villages, green belt development, holiday and caravan resorts, car-parking, listed buildings and conservation areas, gypsy sites, betting shops, public houses, advertisements, trees, highways and footpaths, town and village greens, and compulsory purchase.

Harry is the author of a substantial number of articles on planning and environment law, and regularly speaks at seminars and webinars. Recent examples include the following:

[Changes of use and planning law - two common pitfalls](#)

[Current and Emerging Themes in Planning and Environmental Law \(hosted by Bristol Law Society\)](#)

[A conflict at the heart of the Planning White Paper \(and skateboarding during lockdown\)...](#)

[Planning enforcement during lockdown – is remote mediation the solution?](#)

ENVIRONMENT

Harry acts for private and public sector clients in a broad range of cases in the environment and local government fields. These include landowners, operators, councils and regulators, and he has appeared before a variety of tribunals, including inquiries, hearings, various categories of appeal, and in the civil and criminal courts.

His experience includes nuisance and statutory nuisance, wind and other renewable energy projects, town and village greens, highways, footpaths and other rights of way, environmental permitting, riparian duties, water abstraction, waste collection and disposal, and various categories of licensing cases.

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[Current and Emerging Themes in Planning and Environmental Law \(hosted by Bristol Law Society\)](#)

[A conflict at the heart of the Planning White Paper \(and skateboarding during lockdown\)...](#)

[Planning enforcement during lockdown – is remote mediation the solution?](#)

MEDIATION

Harry is an experienced commercial mediator who mediates in a wide range of commercial and civil disputes, acting for clients ranging from large corporates and SMEs, to public bodies, community groups and other organisations, professionals, shareholders and private individuals.

In addition he is experienced in environmental and other land use disputes, including nuisance, planning and other regulatory sectors, and conflict engaging public bodies and communities.

He also mediates in shareholder and boardroom-type disputes within businesses and other organisations, including family run enterprises.

Harry is also a member of leading mediation chambers IPOS Mediation, a conciliator for CEDR, and works as an experienced volunteer community mediator for two charities, helping to resolve conflict within deprived communities in social housing.

Harry's background as an entrepreneur, dealing with the commercial realities of negotiation at the coal face in business, puts him in a position that is rare for a mediator-barrister; it means that he is unusually well-placed to understand not only the legal context that frames disputes, but also the commercial and other practical influences that lie at their heart. This experience is of particular value in the deal-making environment of mediation.

Harry is known for an approach to mediation that is characterised by informality, flexibility, and responsiveness. This unstuffy approach is accompanied by a commercial awareness that reflects his career in business, and a sensitivity to the emotional aspects of conflict that he has developed from his work in the challenging community mediation sector.

Harry is the author of a substantial number of articles on mediation, and regularly speaks at seminars and webinars. Recent examples include the following:

Why the public sector should mediate more

Pre-mediation conversations - how lockdown has created an opportunity for building better foundations in mediation

Why is the jury STILL out on mediation?

When can confidentiality at mediation be overridden?

Hastily drafted heads of terms at mediation: the risks

Planning enforcement during lockdown – is remote mediation the solution?

MEMBERSHIPS:

- Planning and Environmental Bar Association (PEBA)
 - UK Environmental Law Association (UKELA)
 - Civil Mediation Council (CMC)
 - Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb)
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EDUCATION:

- Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)
 - Inns of Court School of Law
 - Exeter University
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RECENT NEWS

- Guildhall Chambers are delighted to announce that Harry Spurr has joined our planning and environmental team
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