



John Steel KC

Year of call: 1978 | Silk: 1993

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"John's attention to detail and his ability to distil that into actions and focus is very impressive".

John is an experienced advocate in all areas of planning, environmental, property and real estate law. He acts in many types of cases including major infrastructure cases, especially those regarding airports and renewable energy and is also well versed in all aspects of leisure, transport, retail, equine, sports, education, residential, heritage and compulsory purchase cases. He also has specialist knowledge of aviation and airspace matters.

John acts for and advises developers and landowners, local planning authorities, and government authorities, groups and individuals. He presents cases in the High Court, Court of Appeal, at inquiries and hearings, local plan examinations and development consent order (DCO) examinations. He is also a qualified mediator and international arbitrator.

Areas of expertise

Planning and property

Sport

Planning and property

John has been practising in planning and property law since 1978 and has wide experience in all aspects of the subject. He is a leading member of the planning Bar and appears on a regular basis in the High Court as well as at planning inquiries and examinations.

John is particularly well known for his knowledge and experience in aviation and aerospace matters, including the development of airports, acting for clients in regulatory matters including airspace changes as well as advising airports, airlines, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Department of Transport and local authorities.

Cases of note

- **M42 Motorway Service Areas Appeals** - Represented Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council local planning authority and local highway authority. Combined public inquiry into appeals by Extra and Applegate for motorway service areas (MSAs) on the M42 motorway south of Solihull in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

- **Development Consent Order (DCO) Sunnica, Newmarket** - Represents the racehorse industry and others opposing DCO application for 1200 ha solar energy development north-east of Newmarket.
- **Cheltenham, Epsom and Sandown Racecourses** - Advises the Jockey Club concerning matters relating to racecourses, including their use expansion and development. Recently obtained injunctions in a leading case concerning touts (persons unknown).
- **Luton and Stansted Airports Airspace Change Procedure** - Advising on airspace changes to Luton and Stansted airports.
- **Manston Airport Development Consent Order (DCO)** - Advises the Minister and Secretary of State on the decision concerning the DCO for expansion of Manston Airport.
- **Harrow School Sports and Science development** - Acts for Harrow School obtaining planning permission for major new sports centre in the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) with a new science department.
- **Barnsley Local Plan** - Acts for Barnsley Council throughout the local plan process including at hearings.

Recommendations

- *"John's attention to detail and his ability to distil that into actions and focus is very impressive."* (Chambers and Partners 2022)
- *"He is incredibly hard-working and tenacious."* (Chambers and Partners 2022)
- *"His strengths include attention to detail, a commercial approach and outlook, insightful inputs, legal expertise and the fact he is readily approachable."* (The Legal 500 2022)
- *"He is very much a team player."* (The Legal 500 2022)
- *"John has a vast amount of knowledge in both aviation and planning Law. Very helpful and honest advice given on a range of different issues."* (The Legal 500 2022)
- *"An incisive decision-maker who inspires confidence within clients."*
- (Chambers and Partners 2021)
- *"He is great to get advice from, as he's very responsive and considered, but more commercial than the average silk."* (Chambers and Partners 2020)

Memberships

- Planning and Environmental Bar Association
- Administrative Law Bar Association
- United Kingdom Environmental Law Association
- LawInSport

Qualifications

Education

- Durham University, University College 1973 – 1976 (BSc Hons Chemistry)
- College of Law, London 1976-1977 (Bar Finals I and II)

Scholarships and Prizes

- Gray's Inn Moots Prize 1978

Additional information

Appointments

- Legal advisor to the All Party Parliamentary Group (General Aviation)
- Honorary Fellow Durham University Law School
- Fellow Royal Aeronautical Society
- Fellow Royal Geographical Society
- Fellow Royal Society of Arts
- Fellow Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

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