



Thomas Hill KC

Year of call: 1988 | Silk: 2009

Email: thomas.hill@39essex.com

Phone: +44 (0)20 7832 1111

"He puts all his energy into a case, absorbing vast amounts of detail quickly and providing succinct advice."

"His advice is always of excellent quality, and he is a seasoned advocate."

Thomas Hill KC has 35 years' experience in the fields of planning, environmental, compulsory purchase and related administrative law. He is regularly instructed at public inquiries, hearings and examinations and in the High Court, acting for a wide variety of developers, local authorities and third party clients.

He has had a long term interest in the development and application of planning and environmental law, since studying both at Cambridge University. His extra-legal interests also encompass many of those directly relevant to practice in this field, including architecture and design, stewardship of the natural and built environments, the practice of agriculture and the development renewable energy and he has an extensive working library at his disposal.

His practice at the Bar has for many years encompassed advocacy and advisory work in relation to major infrastructure - with particular emphasis on the airport (runway and terminal expansion), port (container port proposals, HROs and harbour dues litigation) and energy sectors (biofuels, EfW, wind and solar energy). He is also very familiar with the full range of issues relating to residential development (including both bringing forward strategic greenfield sites and complex brownfield redevelopment opportunities).

Work of note includes appeal and advisory work for several UK airports and ports, for Birmingham City Council on its Development Plan over many years, the promotion of strategic land allocations for estate and developer clients, numerous section 78 appeals for residential developers and housing associations, as well as appeal and advisory work for many private individuals, with particular emphasis on projects with complex design issues in London. Many of his clients have been instructing him regularly for over 25 years. He enjoys the cut and thrust of inquiry work, but is equally at home advising on long term strategy or conducting cases in the more nuanced environment of the public examination.

Tom has, for many years, been recognised as a Leading Silk for Planning work by Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500.

Areas of expertise

Planning and Environment

Infrastructure

Airports

*"renowned expert in airport-related work"*Chambers and Partners

He successfully promoted the Second Runway at Manchester Airport and he continues to advise MA Group on a variety of matters at Manchester, Stanstead and East Midlands Airports. He has also represented Newcastle Airport and the owners of Birmingham Airport at major inquiries and is fully conversant with development and airspace issues at London and regional airports.

He led the successful High Court challenge to the proposals for Stansted and Luton Airports in the Government's Air Transport White Paper in 2005. He subsequently appeared for Manchester Airports Group in R (on the application of Ross & Saunders v. Secretary of State for Transport [2020] EWHC 226 (Admin), which explored the correct interpretation of "nationally significant infrastructure project" in relation to airport development, in which the Court upheld the construction contended for by MAG. He has appeared at all the major inquiries in the past 20 years relating to the capacity of Stansted Airport, including the 2021 appeal which led to the consent for an additional 8 million passengers per annum capacity at that Airport.

Ports

Historically, Tom Hill appeared at all three of the major container port inquiries in the UK: Dibden Terminal (for objectors), London Gateway/Shellhaven and Bathside Bay (both for the Environment Agency) and is familiar with all matter relating to and supporting container port development. He has also appeared for and advised numerous port and harbour authorities across the country on a variety of development and regulatory issues. He has acted for Langstone Harbour Board and successfully defended its review of harbour dues at the first public inquiry to be held into an appeal pursuant to section 31 of the Harbours Act 1964. He went on to for Dover Harbour Board in relation to its dispute with its operators, the result of which was that the Harbour Board's dues were upheld after a month-long inquiry.

Aviation and Aerospace

Thomas Hill KC has been advising on all aspects of airport related development for 35 years. He is the only practising Member of the Bar of England and Wales to have acted in relation to the promotion of a new full length runway in the UK from inception to completion (Manchester Airport's Second Runway). He has promoted and objected to airspace change proposals on behalf of various clients and understands the three dimensional world of airspace regulation.

Recommendations

- *"very astute and incisive advocate who argues clients' cases effectively"*Chambers and Partners
- *"charming, tough and highly effective opponent, [He has} a winning style which chimes well with inspectors"*Chambers and Partners
- *"is good on the strategy side, wins the client's confidence from the off" and "operates well under difficult circumstances."*Chambers and Partners
- *"Urbane, authoritative and a strong cross-examiner"*Chambers and Partners
- *"a solid awareness of clients' needs, an ability to set out advice cogently, persuasively and authoritatively and a refreshingly relaxed working style"*Chambers and Partners
- "Accessible and friendly, he is extremely personable and has a good eye for detail." "I was impressed by his detailed approach and analysis – he was well prepared." Chambers and Partners

- *"He is thorough, reassuring, careful and measured"*Chambers and Partners
- *"He has a special expertise in the area of renewable energy development as well as aviation matters."* Chambers and Partners
- *"His advice is always of excellent quality, and he is a seasoned advocate."*The Legal 500
- *"can hold his own in any forum against any counterpart and has an astonishing ability to get to the rub of matters very quickly"*The Legal 500

Memberships

- PEBA
- ALBA

Qualifications

Education

- MA (Hons) Law, Jesus College, Cambridge
- Inns of Court School of Law

Scholarships

- Open Exhibitioner, Cambridge University
- Tancred Scholar, Hardwicke Entrance Scholar
- Sir Louis Gluckstein Prizewinner, Lincoln's Inn

London

81 Chancery Lane,
London
WC2A 1DD
Tel: +44 (0)20 7832 1111
DX: London/Chancery Lane 298
Fax: +44 (0)20 7353 3978

MANCHESTER

82 King Street,
Manchester
M2 4WQ
Tel: +44 (0)16 1870 0333
Fax: +44 (0)20 7353 3978

SINGAPORE

Maxwell Chambers,
28 Maxwell Road,
WC2A 1DD
04-03 & 04-04, Maxwell Chamber
Suites
Singapore 069120
Tel: +65 6320 9272

KUALA LUMPUR

#02-9, Bangunan Sulaiman
Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin,
50000 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia
Tel: +60 32 271 1085

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clerks@39essex.com • DX: 298 London/Chancery Lane • 39essex.com