



JAMES PARKER

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BIOGRAPHY

James' practice focuses on planning/zoning and development consenting, environmental impact assessment, compulsory purchase and land compensation issues. James has considerable experience of advising in respect of nationally significant infrastructure projects and associated development consent orders, as well as government and Parliamentary processes, Transport and Works Act Orders and highways matters. James has advised on some of the largest major projects, dealing also with court processes such as judicial reviews and other litigation, including in the UK Court of Appeal, High Court and Lands Chamber. He has advised utility companies in various sectors, developers, local authorities and other public bodies. James has particular experience of the energy, water & sewage, airports, and ports sectors, as well as having experience in the rail and housing sectors.

ADMISSIONS

- England and Wales

RELATED CAPABILITIES

- Real Estate
- Electric Vehicles & Charging Infrastructure
- Oil, Gas & Sustainable Fuels
- Power
- ESG & Energy Transition
- Sustainable Real Estate
- Infrastructure
- Planning & Zoning

EXPERIENCE

Energy

National Grid: North Wales connection project, Bramford-Twinstead connection project, South & East Anglia Link offshore project, Mid-Wales connection project – lead external legal adviser on the promotion of various new major high voltage powerlines connecting the existing Grid to new generation. Advising on the associated promotion through the Planning Act 2008 Development Consent Order ('DCO') regime, as well as associated consents. This includes advice on all aspects of the project including environmental impact assessment (EIA), Habitats Regulations, compulsory purchase, and associated advice on conventional Town and Country Planning Act consents.

National Grid: Snowdonia undergrounding project & Dinorwig asset replacement project - on the necessary consents for new underground high voltage power lines, including CPOs in each case.

National Grid: electricity lines, various sites - on the retention of existing powerlines and associated infrastructure. Advice included consideration of compensation, associated negotiations and preparation for a statutory wayleave hearing, and dealing with the subsequent compensation claim in the Lands Chamber and then the Court of Appeal.

National Grid: interface with generation and other schemes, various sites - on the interface with other DCO promoters and generator interfaces in the DCO process.

C.GEN: gas fired power station – advising on proposals for a gas fired power station, following the DCO process, including associated conventional planning matters, and advice on the interface with other DCO projects.

Water and waste water

Thames Water and Affinity water: new reservoir proposals and water transfer scheme – advising on major new water resource strategic resource option proposals, and the progression through policy & DCO process.

Thames Water & Bazelgette Tunnel: Thames Tideway Tunnel - on the promotion of the DCO for the £4.2 billion Thames Tideway Tunnel Project in London.

Thames Water: various operational sites - (Beckton, Riverside, and Mogden Sewage Treatment Works) on the evolution and submission of conventional planning applications and environmental statements, providing continued advice in relation to the progression of the applications and associated negotiations regarding conditions and Section 106 obligations.

Southern Water: new wastewater treatment works - on the development of the £350 million Brighton & Hove Wastewater Treatment Project, for a new wastewater treatment works and associated linear transfer infrastructure.

Ports

C.R0 Ports – advising on port expansion proposals to accommodate greater capacity.

Major port operator – advising on port (river Thames) rationalisation and expansion.

Major port operator – advising on major port expansion proposals in southern England, to accommodate greater capacity. Associated DCO promotion advice.

Transport

Heathrow Airport Limited: expansion proposals – on the promotion of the expansion proposals, including a new third runway. Advising on all aspects of the consenting process and strategic approach, in respect of surface access to and from the airport.

Thames Water: Crossrail – advising Thames Water on the interface with the Crossrail (Elizabeth Line) proposals, including concluding a global framework agreement to regulate the interfaces

across the Thames Water catchment.

National Express Group: west coast mainline - on the transfer of Transport and Works Act Order powers for a linear rail project, and associated transfer of third party agreements.

Docklands Light Railway: various - on several Transport and Works Act Orders for the Docklands Light Railway (for the London City Airport extension, Woolwich Arsenal extension, and Stratford International extension) at various stages.

Other

Olympic Delivery Authority: London 2012 Olympics - dealing with the evolution and submission of extensive and detailed planning applications and accompanying environmental impact assessments made by the ODA in respect of the London 2012 proposals in East London.

Major housing developer: various sites - on a variety of schemes across England, including planning strategy and associated issues.

Tesco Stores: various retail schemes - on a variety of schemes across Tesco's portfolio at varying stages in the planning process.

RELATED INSIGHTS

Insights

Jul 08, 2025

Planning measures in the new 10-Year Infrastructure Strategy

Publication of the new 10-year Infrastructure Strategy and 10-Year Industrial Strategy in June meant two more manifesto commitments could be ticked off before the end of the government's first year in office. This blog concentrates on the Infrastructure Strategy and discusses the 'new approach' to improve infrastructure delivery and the role of planning.

Insights

Apr 29, 2025

How will the newly created NISTA accelerate infrastructure delivery?

Between 2015-2025 the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) carried out an important function in assessing the UK's long-term infrastructure needs, setting the infrastructure agenda and providing independent advice to the Government. However, from 1 April 2025, the NIC ceased operating and was combined with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) to form a new unit within HM Treasury called the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA). In this Insight we explore how this change might accelerate infrastructure delivery.

Insights

Apr 14, 2025

Tall Building Trends in London

Tall buildings have hugely contributed to London's sense of place and rightful place as a world-leading financial centre. They have made a defined impact on the London skyline particularly in the period between 2000-2019 when the number of new tall buildings built increased significantly, largely due to a change in planning policy. For the last 10 years the NLA (New London Architecture) has been surveying trends in tall building development (which it defines as those of 20 storeys or above) across London. In this Insight we examine the NLA's recently published annual survey 2025 and what it means for tall building development in the capital.

Insights

Mar 26, 2025

Planning and Infrastructure Bill – NSIP changes

The infrastructure measures in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill introduce amendments, principally to the Planning Act 2008, that aim to make the NSIP regime faster and more flexible to support the Government's major infrastructure ambitions. In the second Insight in our series on the Bill, we discuss what changes to the NSIP regime have and have not been included and the implications for those navigating the system.

Insights

Jan 24, 2025

Government's bold move to reduce legal challenges to NSIPs

The Government has confirmed it will introduce legislation to reduce the number of attempts claimants have to secure permission to legally challenge a DCO.

Insights

Dec 18, 2024

NSIP planning: What's changed in 2024 and on the horizon for 2025?

2024 has been a year with a continued focus on the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Planning ('NSIP') planning regime by both the predecessor and current government. Reforms to make the regime faster and more effective remain a high political priority given its critical role in delivering infrastructure to support a number of key government objectives. Operational changes identified in the previous government's various reform programmes and action plans continued to be delivered, with the new Labour government introducing some changes and proposals of its own. This blog highlights some key changes made to the NSIP planning regime delivered in 2024 with thoughts on what to expect in 2025.

Insights

Jun 04, 2024

NSIP Reforms: New pre-application procedure and document requirements

As part of the ongoing Government reforms to the consenting process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ("NSIPs"), PINS has launched its 2024 Pre-Application Prospectus. The Prospectus sits alongside a suite of other newly-published Guidance, which we have discussed in previous Insights, providing updated guidance on the DCO pre-application stage and new guidance on the new Fast-track process. The Prospectus implements expected reforms to the NSIP application process and provides important detail which all promoters should familiarise themselves with. In this Insight we summarise the key changes, which includes a: new tiered Pre-application service and associated costs; new and increased documentation and procedural requirements; Fast-track procedure; and transitional arrangements for projects already in the system.

Insights

May 14, 2024

Operational NSIP reforms take effect

Details of how the recently confirmed operational reforms to improve the NSIP planning process will work in practice are beginning to emerge. We have previously reported on which of the proposed operational reforms are confirmed, but following publication in April 2024 of various amendment regulations, new National Infrastructure Planning Guidance and PINS' launch of a new online platform, we now have a clearer understanding of the changes and how they will work in practice.

Insights

Mar 14, 2024

Reforms to NSIP application process coming forward this spring

Changes to the DCO consenting process to be introduced this spring have the potential to help applicants navigate this system with more certainty and confidence. They introduce more flexibility into the process allowing the opportunity for applications to be processed in a way that is more appropriate and proportionate to its particular nature.