

Landmark Chambers

Barrister CV

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Russell Harris KC

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Russell specialises in planning and environmental work.

Expertise

Planning, Environment



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Practice Summary

Russell specialises in planning and environmental work. He is now involved in most of the UK's highest-profile development schemes.

Russell is particularly experienced in preparing for and acting at large public inquiries. He is noted for his ability to understand large volumes of technical evidence, to formulate effective cross-examination of expert witnesses and to present a client's case clearly and effectively.

Russell has been selected as Planning Silk of the year a number of times: most recently at the October 2022 Legal 500 UK Bar Awards.

Russell sits on the Wales Assembly Government Planning Forum. He has been appointed a Special Advocate by the Attorney General and is a Bencher and trustee of Gray's Inn.

When not at work, he spends most of his time on the Atlantic Ocean. He is also a WRU rugby coach.

Russell will be participating in a charity bike ride to Cannes for MIPIM 2024 which will take place on Wednesday 6 March. Further details, including how to donate, may be found on his JustGiving page [here](#).

Planning

Russell advised on the redevelopment of Battersea Power Station and is advising on Bishopsgate Goods Yard, the largest remaining City redevelopment site. He continues to advise on football stadia for Spurs, Fulham, Luton, and Brentford. He is promoting with Pinsent Mason, the large-scale housing redevelopment of the Elephant and Castle and has acted on the plans to remodel Shepherd's Bush and Earls Court, two of London's largest Opportunity Areas. He worked on the development of the Westfield Centre in West London and the new shopping centre also at Elephant and Castle.

In Wales, he has successfully gained permission for the Circuit of Wales and is acting for National Grid on several critically important NSIPs.

Russell has appeared in almost all of the recent Tall Building inquiries and has developed a special expertise in presenting cases involving world-class architects and architecture. Thus, Russell has successfully acted for the developers of "The Shards of Glass" by Renzo Piano, the Heron Tower, by Lee Polisano, The Minerva Tower by Nicolas Grimshaw, 20 Fenchurch Street by Rafael Vinoly, The Beetham Tower Blackfriars by Ian Simpson, Founder's Place by Sir Terry Farrell and Vauxhall Towers site by Michael Squires. He also acted on the development of the Gherkin which did not need an Inquiry.

Russell continues to advise Herbert Smith Freehills on Rem Koolhaas' plans for the Commonwealth Institute in Kensington and on Foster and Partners proposals at Bishop's Place on the fringes of the City of London. He is promoting for Ashurst, a 42-storey mixed-use development for Foster and Partners in Islington and the Chris Wilkinson and Richard Horden proposals presently on site on the Embankment.

On the South Bank, he is promoting the large David Chipperfield design at Elizabeth House and in Kensington he is promoting the redevelopment of South Kensington Station with Rogers Stirk Harbour. In Westminster, he is promoting the new Marks & Spencers at Marble Arch with Fred Pilbrow.

Russell is leading counsel advising the All England Tennis Club on its application to extend Wimbledon to become a world-class sporting location with a new show court and enhanced public facilities.

Russell gained planning permission for the new Ryder Cup course in Bolton in 2020 alongside 1000 houses in the Green Belt. He also promoted the enhanced golf course and Ryder Cup Village in 2022.

In March 2009, Russell was re-appointed as Counsel to the London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for London) by Mayor Johnson, he has since advised Mayor Khan on parts of the new London Plan 2019 meaning that he has promoted or been involved in every single plan, alteration and review since the creation of the London Mayor and Greater London Authority.

He is also continuing to advise on the redevelopment of Chelsea Barracks and Brent Cross.

Russell has been selected as Planning Silk of the year a number of times: most recently at the October 2022 Legal 500 UK Bar Awards.

The latest *Planning Magazine* law survey ranks Russell as one of the top planning silks in the country, and as a leading silk for residential, and commercial & retail. He is described as "*the king of complex and contentious tall building schemes in central London.*" Previous surveys describe him as having "*carved out 'a second-to-none reputation' when dealing with major*

controversial schemes in London", and as a *"phenomenal advocate"* who is *"good on his feet on the day"*.

Environment

Russell piloted several renewable energy and high voltage electric line projects through the NSIP process. He is also, with Robin Purchas KC and Michael Humphries KC, advising National Grid on the general approach to be taken to major national infrastructure projects.

Russell was named as *Silk of the Year* for Environment/Planning at the 2008 Chambers Bar Awards and again short listed as *Silk of the Year* in 2013. He was described in Legal 500 for Environment as A *"very highly respected, and a strong performer."*

Qualifications

Russell is a graduate of St John's College Cambridge where he read economics and social and political science and was a McMahon scholar.

Recommendations

"He is a very tenacious and committed KC."

Planning, Chambers and Partners, 2024

"He is currently the best operator in the planning sector, in my opinion." "Russell is excellent. He delivers great results and is a pleasure to work with." "Russell is very client-friendly and responsive. He is a fabulous lawyer and advocate. The number-one choice for the most high-profile, complex Central London work."

Planning, Chambers and Partners, 2023

"He is exceptional on planning matters." "He is very commercial and really great with clients." "Russell is a very strong advocate, and his knowledge of the London market is without parallel."

Planning, Chambers and Partners, 2022

"Very well-respected for commercial, residential and retail development. He cuts through the detail in clear and concise manner. Well-liked by clients."

Planning, Legal 500, 2022

"Russell is the go-to barrister for central London schemes. He is a great team player and won the confidence of the client straight away. He is very user friendly which is great for an instructing solicitor! His closing submissions at the inquiry were very impressive. He commands presence and respect across the inquiry floor."

Planning, Legal 500, 2022

"His style of cross-examination and advocacy is pitched very nicely, and he puts clients and inspectors at ease." "He gives very firm advice and he knows the market well so he has insight on how people will react."

Planning, Chambers and Partners, 2021

"He is absolutely formidable, has an incredible eye for forensic detail and has a robust, attractive and effective way of communicating." "He knows planning inside and out. He's got the ability to see things very clearly and to give very practical, commercial advice."

Planning, Chambers and Partners, 2020

"He is one of the best advocates there is. He is tenacious, has great attention to detail and is great on his feet." "Always one of my go-to people. He is very experienced, strategic and client-friendly."

Chambers and Partners, 2019

"In a class of his own, he has a very good reputation for substantial London development schemes, design and heritage issues."

Planning, Legal 500, 2018

Cases and inquiries

01 03 24 Marks and Spencer plc v SSLUHC [2024] EWHC 452 (Admin)

01 12 23 Permission granted for "last piece in the jigsaw" of Elephant Park

15 12 22 William Road, Euston

30 06 22 Proposal to convert the Grade I listed Custom House to a hotel refused on appeal

06 07 18 Chiswick Curve tall building inquiry closes

26 06 18 Mayor's spatial development strategy

26 06 18 Earl's Court Casino inquiry

26 06 18 Sir Terry Farrell's Founder's Place

26 06 18 Peruvian Wharf inquiry

26 06 18 Inquiry into Sir Terry Farrell's twin towers at Chelsea's Lots Road

26 06 18 The Welsh Highland Railway

22 06 17 Parkhurst Road Appeal Decision on Benchmark Land Value

10 10 13 Earl's Court SPD challenge rejected

10 10 13 Shepherd's Bush Market judicial review dismissed
