

DISTINCTLY FOCUSED  
ON REAL ESTATE

**DAVITT  
JONES  
BOULD**  
REAL ESTATE LAW SPECIALISTS

**Procurement  
Services**

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LEGAL SERVICES  
PROSPECTUS**



# INTRODUCTION



Faced with dwindling resources, increasing public demand and political pressure, we understand that our public sector clients are looking for new ways to maintain existing property services and infrastructure and to regenerate key areas of their towns and cities.

When we founded our firm over 25 years ago, our business model was created to meet the unique requirements of the public sector estate. This is built around the need for the highest standard of legal support to meet the sector's high fiduciary duty combined with the need for affordable rates to protect the public purse. Our success is evidenced by the fact that, since our foundation, over 300 public sector clients have entrusted us to deliver their property and planning requirements. Our enthusiasm for this work is undiminished, and I hope that we will have the opportunity of working with you in the future.

Madeleine Davitt, Senior Partner



Our focus is on providing value which we achieve by:

- Only using experienced lawyers: Our team of over 70 lawyers has an average post qualification experience exceeding 26 years per lawyer. Most of our lawyers joined us from leading City or National law firms, or senior in-house roles.
- Being public sector real estate specialists: Our team has acted for over 300 public sector clients on 20,000+ cases, covering Central Government, Local Government, Higher Education and the wider public sector.
- Partnering with in-house teams: We see ourselves as part of your team, working with you to understand and deliver desired outcomes.
- Equipping public sector teams: We know that knowledge transfer is key to cultivating high-performing teams. We provide all our clients with training resources in multiple formats including free webinars, podcasts, bulletins, emails, and articles. We also keep our clients up to date with the most important trends and topics in the real estate world. For example, our specialist ESG group has a growing expertise in net carbon zero transitioning and the use and opportunities created by new technologies such as drones, which we feed back to our clients.

This framework provides an excellent, straightforward procurement approved route to our services. If you would like to know more about this or about any aspect of our services please contact me (details below).

Sue McCormick, Client Director

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# DEVELOPMENT, REGENERATION & CPO PROJECTS

Our development, regeneration and CPO lawyers are energetic and experienced lawyers with many years' experience in working with the public sector. Our lawyers understand the political, resource and funding pressures that you face and will work with your in-house and external teams (both commercial and legal) to navigate these pressures. Our focus is on delivering your required outcomes and objectives.

We recommend that lawyer involvement starts at an early stage so that we can work with you to identify risks and put in place risk mitigation strategies. We will alert you to potential problems at an early stage and we will provide you with clear options and suggested solutions to keep your development project on track. We will also work with you to advise on the most appropriate legal structures, whether that is a contractual development agreement or a more complex collaboration or joint venture agreement.

At all stages, we will work with you to ensure that your project is properly co-ordinated and managed, so as to minimise the risk of 'unnecessary slippage' in a project's progress. Working with your in-house team, we will also advise you on statutory, regulatory and political constraints and, where matters change, we will ensure you have the right information to deal with updating Committee and Cabinet reports. Last, but by no means least, we will work with you to address new and developing issues including environmental considerations such as transitioning to net-zero carbon.

Site Assembly is often the crucial first step in any regeneration project and the use (or threat) of Compulsory Purchase powers is a powerful tool in a local authority's toolbox. Our planning team includes expert CPO lawyers who have previously held senior local authority positions who can advise you on all the technical aspects of CPO, including drafting Committee Reports, preparing the Statement of Reasons, and dealing with objections.



## Examples of projects undertaken

- Advised on the proposed regeneration of a deprived area into a garden suburb with 1,100 homes and the community infrastructure to support it. Our CPO lawyers successfully dealt with the CPO which was confirmed. Parallel to this our property lawyers delivered the voluntary acquisitions.
- Advised on a HIF grant funded road improvement scheme to unlock a development of over 3,000 homes in the locality, including drafting and submitting the necessary CPO to acquire the land for the Scheme, and an associated side roads order and dealt with the subsequent public inquiry.
- Advised the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) on a multimillion-pound acquisition and development of a site, which once completed, will form a new 5,000sqm teaching facility.
- Advised on the development of anti-terror infrastructure around various Westminster locations.

'Stephanie Hall is meticulous in her work. We would have no hesitation in recommending Davitt Jones Bould to others.'

**Legal 500 2025**

## OUR DEVELOPMENT, REGENERATION & CPO TEAM INCLUDES:



**STEPHEN CHALCRAFT, Partner**

Stephen has over 30 years' general experience in the commercial property sector and specialises in structuring and delivering large and complex public/private real estate projects including property joint ventures and collaboration agreements. Stephen has particular expertise in the complex range of issues that affect large scale commercial regeneration and development projects involving local authorities, housing companies and Universities, and has worked on a number of town centre regeneration projects and the establishment of major new enterprise zones, often involving the provision of significant new transport infrastructure.



**YOHANNA WEBER, Partner**

Yohanna is a specialist in Planning and Environmental law. She has a thorough understanding of the Local Government sector having previously worked in-house for the London Borough of Haringey and Swindon Borough Council. Yohanna has extensive experience of acting on strategic planning projects, regeneration schemes, Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), public inquiries and judicial review cases. Her previous work includes CPO work on the Sheerwater Regeneration Project. She has also acted for National Grid on numerous projects including the DCO needed to deliver the replacement of a 6km tunnelled section of high-pressure gas transmission pipeline under the River Humber.



**STEPHANIE HALL, Partner**

Stephanie has advised various Local Authorities at Davitt Jones Bould including Adur Council, St Helen's Council and Surrey County Council. She has also advised National Highways on a £26m CPO compensation claim arising from the acquisition of land to facilitate the 23 mile, £1.5 bn A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme. This is National Highway's largest road improvement scheme and their largest compensation claim. Prior to joining the firm, Stephanie worked in house at Manchester City Council, where she was twice recognised as one of the top 10 local authority planning lawyers in Planning Magazine's annual survey.

'We work with Nigel Hewitson and Stephanie Hall, their collaborative working is valued as is sound advice and innovative thinking.'

**LEGAL 500 2025**

# PLANNING, HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

We work closely with our clients on routine and complex developments that demand a creative, strategic and commercial approach to planning and environmental law. At all times, we work to anticipate any potential issues and proactively manage them to avoid regulatory risk, including judicial reviews and other vires issues. We are also experienced in advising on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Our team of planning specialists are able to advise on all planning, highways, compulsory purchase and planning litigation matters, including but not limited to: s106 agreements, strategic planning advice, listed buildings, appeals, enforcement, judicial review and statutory challenges, highway agreements, rights of way, stopping up, traffic regulation orders, promoting and objecting to compulsory purchase orders and development consent orders, and compensation claims in the Upper Tribunal.

The climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis continues to be a central issue for regulators and policy makers, both in the UK and globally. The result is that all parties dealing with real estate, from investors to developers to occupiers, are increasingly coming under scrutiny to ensure they meet their environmental obligations. This isn't going away. In fact, the pace of change is increasing especially in relation to net-zero and the protection and restoration of ecology.

Our specialist environment team has advised both central and local government clients on environment issues. Our lawyers work seamlessly with specialists in the built environment to provide expert advice on the latest technical developments and how to build these into your wider real estate and planning projects, working with you to mitigate the risks and costs associated with your environment and climate change strategies and ensure that our legal structures deliver realistic but aspirational outcomes. The team forms part of our wider ESG group, which is committed to delivering pioneering environmental initiatives.



## Examples of projects undertaken

- Bristol City Airport Expansion on behalf of North Somerset Council: The planning application by Bristol City Airport to expand the airport from 10 to 12 million passengers per annum was refused by North Somerset Council on various grounds including environmental impacts, noise, traffic management and air quality. We were instructed by the Council to negotiate the s106 agreement in the appeal process. The planning application was highly contentious and the inquiry process was complex – we needed to work to very short timescales (often turning around drafts for the Inspector Panel overnight) and take instructions from a large group of internal officer clients and their external consultants. The agreements were completed within the inquiry timetable.
- Supporting numerous local authorities across the country regarding the implementation of the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain regime which gives us a unique insight into the challenges it brings and equally the opportunities it presents for the public sector. Our work includes providing bespoke in-person training; preparing template agreements; and advice on delivering BNG units on Council-owned land.
- Negotiating a suite of highway agreements on behalf of Surrey County Council to facilitate the £500m expansion of Shepperton Studios, whilst ensuring that the multiple and complex road improvements required were appropriately managed and phased to ensure minimal disruption to the users of the highway.

'The advice Chrisa provides to any planning service is invaluable. She is able to provide clear advice on a range of complicated matters to officers with a range of experience. Her professionalism and knowledge gives officers and elected members confidence when making decisions that they have the best possible advice to hand.'

**Head Of Planning & Place Making At Cheshire  
West & Chester Council**

## OUR PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS TEAM INCLUDES:



**CHRISA TSOMPANI, Partner**

Chrisa specialises in planning and highways/traffic law. She has worked as a principal in-house lawyer in Manchester City Council and Cheshire West and Chester. She has also worked in the private sector. Chrisa has extensive experience in advising on contentious and non-contentious matters, relevant to planning development control and policy. She has extensive knowledge and understanding of traffic and highway related matters, especially in relation to Traffic Regulation Orders, public rights of way (PROW), stopping up and diversions orders. Chrisa has extensive experience of attending and advising planning committees. Chrisa is a committee member of Women In Planning and has contributed to Lexis Nexis planning updates.



**NIGEL HEWITSON, Partner**

Nigel's areas of practice cover planning, compulsory purchase and highways law. His particular specialism is in relation to listed buildings and other heritage assets, and he recently co-authored the leading authority textbook on the subject. He has worked on high-profile projects including the Stonehenge/A303 Tunnel Public Inquiry and public inquiries into tall buildings in London including The Shard. He is experienced in judicial review cases for defendant public bodies and claimant developers. Nigel has worked in-house for local authorities including New Forest District Council and the London Borough of Harrow.

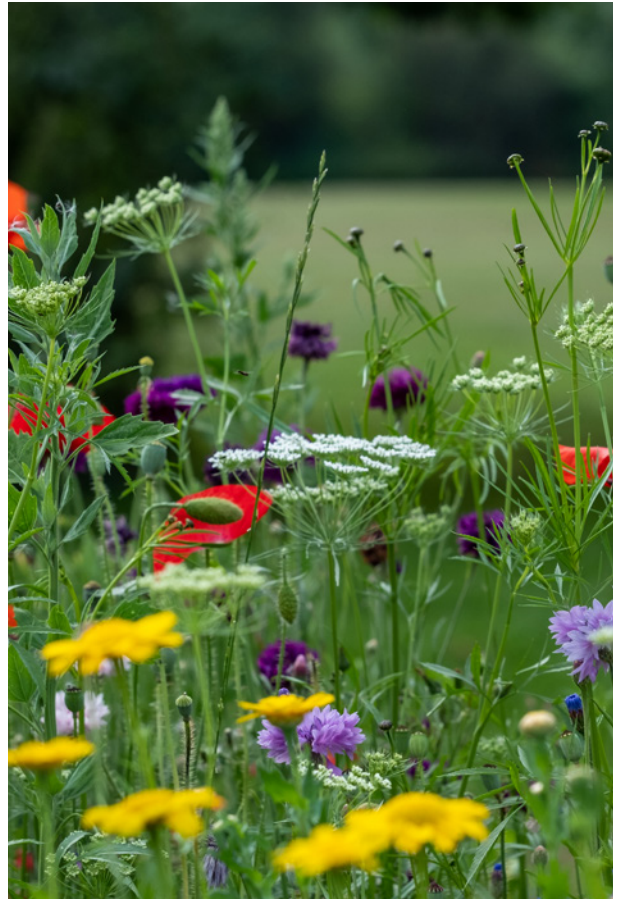


**STEPHANIE HALL, Partner**

Stephanie has direct in-house senior local government experience with Manchester City Council, advising on regeneration projects. She is an expert on Planning, CPO and highways law. She has advised both public and private sector clients, managing high profile and innovative regeneration and infrastructure projects across the UK, including the Eastern Gateway regeneration programme to deliver up to 6,000 new homes. Stephanie was recognised as one of the top 10 local authority planning lawyers in Planning Magazine's annual survey in 2020 and 2021. She has also advised Government clients, including National Highways, on major infrastructure projects.

'Yohanna Weber has stood out in every way. Never letting go of a thread, working through all elements of a contentious matter and bringing a calm (if terrier like) approach to negotiations. A fighter in argument but fair and supportive through a separate mediation process. She has been truly exceptional.'

## Legal 500 2025



### **YOHANNA WEBER, Partner**

Yohanna is a specialist in planning and environmental law. She has a thorough understanding of the Local Government sector having previously worked in-house for the London Borough of Haringey and Swindon Borough Council. Yohanna has extensive experience of acting on strategic planning projects, regeneration schemes, Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), Development Consent Orders (DCOs), public inquiries and judicial review cases. Her previous work includes CPO work on the Sheerwater Regeneration Project. She has also advised extensively on nationally significant infrastructure projects and major energy infrastructure.

## OUR ENVIRONMENT TEAM INCLUDES:



### **ANDREW WAITE, Partner**

Andrew is an environmental law specialist, bringing several decades of City environmental law, energy, oil and gas, telecommunications, infrastructure and real estate experience. Andrew has expertise in environmental permitting, environmental liabilities, radioactive substances/nuclear law, contaminated land, waste management, air pollution, pollution control law, statutory nuisances and community protection notices, climate change, product stewardship, environmental information, nuisance claims, nature conservation issues and health and safety matters. Andrew is recognised as a leading expert in legal directories.



# CONSTRUCTION & ENGINEERING LAW

Providing strategic advice, innovative solutions and high-quality drafting, our specialist construction law team can advise you on all aspects of your project from procurement to completion. We work with our clients at every level of their development and delivery of infrastructure, including all forms of construction dispute resolution.

We understand that most clients would prefer to resolve their construction dispute without resorting to formal dispute resolution. So, our team is experienced in alternative dispute resolution (ADR)

techniques from negotiation to mediation. We can also act for clients in relation to adjudication and full-scale construction litigation should the need arise, striving at all times to find the best commercial solution for the client.

'The firm's roots in a public sector team, whilst a long time ago, are clear in their understanding of the area. The feel is very much a positive blend of in house awareness but external specialist energy and focus. They show great respect for the instructing lawyers and local government professionals behind their awareness and understanding.'

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## OUR CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING TEAM INCLUDES:



### **MATTHEW NEEDHAM-LAING, Partner**

Matthew has extensive experience in advising the construction industry, from both a contentious and non-contentious position, and engineering law. His non-contentious practice covers drafting and negotiating all forms of construction documents. He is currently actively involved in the implementation of The Building Safety Act 2022, and he has led major construction practice teams to ensure successful delivery of projects, including most recently on a major university campus development project.



## Examples of projects undertaken

- Advised a University on their development and construction needs. This has included the construction contracts for the new veterinary school, which will be the twelfth one in the UK; advice on the acquisition of their new campus, advice on the building defects in the student centre and advice on the construction of a new school for dentistry.
- Advising landlords on the impact of the Building Safety Act 2022 and the actions they are required to take to comply with their obligations under this legislation.
- Acted for a UK NHS Trust on the negotiation of the Project Agreement for the design, build, operation, and maintenance of an energy centre for a term of 15 years.

# COMMERCIAL PROPERTY & ESTATES MANAGEMENT

Our real estate lawyers can help you throughout the complete lifecycle of your property and land assets, from initial due diligence through to the acquisition and subsequent management of the building or land as well as the disposal of any assets surplus to requirements.



## Examples of projects undertaken

- Advised a local authority investment company on their £75million purchase of a retail park, which comprises just over 140,000 sq ft of accommodation with over 500 car parking spaces, and has 18 commercial units with tenants that include national retailers such as Argos, Boots, Caffè Nero and M&S. Our firm continues to deal with the subsequent estates management work.
- Acted for the Ministry of Defence on the sale of their former Army Medical College in Millbank to the Chelsea College of Arts for a multi-million-pound sum.
- Advised the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the transfer of the Wave Hub, in order to cement the UK as a leading renewable energy provider.
- Advised Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on the renewal of over 300 leases as part of their Project PRIME. The project went so well that DWP won an award for it.

In addition to the more complex work, our team includes real estate lawyers who regularly undertake standard estate management work including leases, lease renewals, and licences, as well as acquisitions and disposals of both commercial and residential properties for our public sector clients.

'Philippa Hipwell and Melanie Greer-Walker are both excellent and approachable. They take the time to fully understand the detail of the instruction, so they can fully advise on all the possible permutations and particular matters to look out for.'

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## OUR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AND ESTATES MANAGEMENT TEAM INCLUDES:



**PHILIPPA HIPWELL, Partner**

Philippa regularly deals with development work and high value acquisitions for local authority clients as well as the subsequent legal work relating to the estate management including agreements for lease, new leases, renewals and lease re-gears. For example, she led a team of lawyers on one Council's £72million acquisition of an office via company acquisition and has acted for numerous other local authorities on their commercial property transactions. Philippa has advised several Government clients including National Highways, Department for Education, and the Department for Work and Pensions on the full spectrum of estates management issues.



**MELANIE GREER-WALKER, Partner**

Melanie has a wealth of experience advising our public sector clients on commercial property matters. She regularly leads teams of lawyers on large development projects, including advising Chichester District Council on the drafting, negotiation and completion of a Development Agreement between the Council and its selected developer in relation to a major housing scheme development of over 1,000 properties. She has also led large estates management projects for such bodies as UK Health Security Agency, Defra, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, and the Florence Nightingale Museum Trust.



**SEAN BULMAN, Partner**

Sean advises public sector clients on development work, high value acquisitions and disposals, and major estates management work, advising defence organisations, local government and central government clients on these issues. Sean has a reputation for being an exceptional project manager. Sean advised Surrey County Council on their multistage development of the new emergency services centre in Crawley, and associated infrastructure including the Airline Academy building. He has managed many large estates projects for the likes of the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Work and Pensions.

# PROPERTY LITIGATION

Known for their pragmatic, commercial and effective approach to dispute resolution, our lawyers provide quality support in contentious property issues and risk management relating to assets.

Our services include early advice on potential disputes, as well as resolving more complex litigation issues, including judicial reviews. We have helped many local authorities by identifying and then deescalating risk, as well as dealing with dilapidations claims, Landlord & Tenant notices and lease breaks.

'Helen Close - an exceptionally good lawyer who communicates well and has a solid technical knowledge. She also has a lovely personality and is very calm in the face of a tricky situation. A pleasure to work with.'

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## Examples of projects undertaken

- Successfully defeated a judicial review challenge in the High Court against North Somerset Council's development of a special needs school for profoundly disabled children
- Advised a central government body on a complex case regarding a claim for dilapidations relating to their offices.
- Advising National Highways on the full spectrum of property litigation issues such as temporary possession notices, s8 notices as well as two Upper Land Tribunal cases relating to compensation claims. This advice has been on some of their most important developments such as: the A417 missing link, the A21 safety package, and the A303 link between Sparkford and Ilchester.

'Jonathan Warner-Reed: personal, insightful and infinitely patient with clients.'

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## OUR LITIGATION TEAM INCLUDES:



**JONATHAN WARNER-REED, Partner**

Jonathan is a Commercial and Property Litigation Partner with over 20 years' post qualification experience (PQE). A substantial part of his practice involves commercial and property disputes. Jonathan has been involved in leading cases on adverse possession, rights of light and the judicial review of planning applications. He regularly advises our local authority clients on Landlord & Tenant issues relating to their property portfolios.



**MAEVE BONNER, Partner**

Maeve has over 24 years' experience in commercial property law and property litigation. She has considerable expertise in Dispute Resolution. Maeve has an excellent manner with in-house legal departments and their Counsel and has dealt with the full range of statutory, contractual (including landlord and tenant) and other property issues. She has personally negotiated savings in the £millions for Central Government departments in dilapidations claims.



**HELEN CLOSE, Partner**

Helen has 27 years' experience in property litigation. She has a proven track record in advising local authorities and Government clients on complex landlord and tenant and real estate disputes as well as experience working with client Property Directors and their teams providing assistance with all their strategic and day-to day portfolio management. Helen also has significant telecommunications expertise.

# HOW TO INSTRUCT US

For further information on how to instruct us via the Procurement Services Framework please contact:



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