

# Thea Osmund-Smith

Call: 2010

"Thea is diligent, thorough and at the top of her game. She does it all whilst being personable and honest in her opinion. She is lethal in her cross-examination of witnesses."

Legal 500 2024



Thea Osmund-Smith is a specialist planning and environmental law practitioner and regularly advises a wide range of clients including land promoters, developers, local planning authorities and other interested parties. Thea is consistently rated by Planning Magazine as one of the top planning juniors and has appeared on 'The Planner's' Women of Influence annual list twice.

Chambers & Partners comment that Thea is:

"Really good with clients, really good on her feet and exceptional with detail. Her work ethic is brilliant." "Incredibly thorough, incredibly focused and also a very engaging person. A great advocate." "Thea's advocacy is frankly brilliant, she is a pleasure to watch."

Thea is ranked in Band 1 for Planning.

Thea has a strong Inquiry practice and is regularly instructed to appear in High Court matters on behalf of Claimants and Defendants. Thea has extensive experience of advising, drafting and advocacy in judicial review and section 288 and 289 claims.

## Expertise

### Planning

#### Energy

Thea has a significant renewable energy practice and has been involved in a significant number of large-scale solar schemes in the last 2 years – all of which have secured consent following appeal. Thea has advised on schemes in the Green Belt, on valued landscapes, and on best and most versatile agricultural land.

The following are some of the schemes that Thea has been involved in:

- Land at Halse Road, Northamptonshire APP/W2845/W/23/3315771 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage

#### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

#### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

#### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

- Middle Road, Warwickshire APP/J3720/W/23/3321095 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Burstall, Suffolk APP/W3520/W/23/3319970 – 30MW solar farm and battery storage
- Land south of Leeming Substation, North Yorkshire APP/G2713/W/23/3315877 – 49.9MW
- Bramley, Hampshire APP/H1705/W/22/3304561- 45MW solar farm and battery storage
- Langford, Devon APP/Y1138/W/22/3293104 (“Langford”) – Secretary of State decision 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Bishop’s Itchington, Warwickshire APP/J3720/W/22/3292579 – 49.9MW solar farm
- Halloughton, Nottinghamshire APP/B3030/W/21/3279533 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery energy storage systems
- Land South of Murton APP/X1355/W/22/3308881 – 49.9MW solar farm

Thea also regularly advises on battery energy storage schemes, including the application of the recent planning practice guidance incorporating the NFCC Guidance on grid scale schemes, and appeal strategy.

## Major Infrastructure

Thea has a significant renewable energy practice beginning with onshore wind energy schemes prior to the 2015 moratorium, and has been involved in a significant number of large-scale solar schemes in the last 2 years – all of which have secured consent following appeal. Thea has advised on schemes in the Green Belt, on valued landscapes, and on best and most versatile agricultural land.

**The following are some of the schemes that Thea has been involved in:**

- Land at Halse Road, Northamptonshire APP/W2845/W/23/3315771 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Middle Road, Warwickshire APP/J3720/W/23/3321095 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Burstall, Suffolk APP/W3520/W/23/3319970 – 30MW solar farm and battery storage
- Land south of Leeming Substation, North Yorkshire APP/G2713/W/23/3315877 – 49.9MW
- Bramley, Hampshire APP/H1705/W/22/3304561- 45MW solar farm and battery storage
- Langford, Devon APP/Y1138/W/22/3293104 (“Langford”) – Secretary of State decision 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Bishop’s Itchington, Warwickshire APP/J3720/W/22/3292579 – 49.9MW solar farm
- Halloughton, Nottinghamshire APP/B3030/W/21/3279533 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery energy storage systems
- Land South of Murton APP/X1355/W/22/3308881 – 49.9MW solar farm

Thea also regularly advises on battery energy storage schemes, including the application of the recent planning practice guidance incorporating the NFCC Guidance on grid scale schemes, and appeal strategy.

Thea acted on behalf of landowners affected by the M54 to M6 Link Road NSIP, advising extensively on the compulsory acquisition of land required for the project and ecological mitigation, and in respect of the terms of the draft Development Consent Order. Thea has also advised Coventry City Council in respect of the Spon End CPO.

## Plan-making

Thea has extensive experience in local plan examinations.

Thea regularly advises land promoters and developers on the promotion of sites through the local plan process, as well as on issues such as Green Belt Review. Thea was involved in the Coventry Core Strategy Examination and appeared at the Warwick

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

Local Plan Examination. Thea represented a land promoter at the Examination into the soundness of North Somerset's Consequential Changes to Policies following a successful Judicial Review, and at the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Examination on behalf of Larkfleet Homes.

Thea appeared at the Examination of the Kingswood Neighbourhood Development Plan and has drafted representations for the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan. Thea has advised in relation to the Cornwall Site Allocations DPD and was involved in the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2, the North Warwickshire Local Plan, and the South Staffordshire Local Plan Review.

Thea represented Persimmon Homes at the West of England Joint Spatial Plan Examination to make submissions on the Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan's preferred strategy. Thea has also promoted housing developments through examination of the Wrexham Local Plan, the Shropshire Local Plan, the Stroud Local Plan, and the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan.

## Planning Appeals

Thea is a very experienced Inquiry practitioner, often appearing at multi-week Inquiries on behalf of land promoters, and developers with specialisms in major housing development and renewable / low carbon energy schemes.

Thea has appeared at well over 100 planning Inquiries and hearings in England and Wales. Thea deals with a wide range of issues including heritage, landscape and character, transport, drainage, ecology, locational sustainability and environmental impact. Thea regularly advises on the promotion of Green Belt sites for development including, renewable and low carbon energy, housing including specialist accommodation through local plans and the planning application / appeal processes.

Among her successes, Thea has secured permission for sites including 76 dwellings in Arun District in a green gap, 50 dwellings in Melksham despite an up-to-date neighbourhood plan, 380 dwellings in Pocklington and 150 in Swanland following a joint Inquiry in the East Riding of Yorkshire, 830 dwellings in Maghull, Sefton, 110 dwellings in Holt, North Norfolk, over 300 dwellings in Wrexham, and hundreds of dwellings in Hinckley & Bosworth Borough.

### Recent successes include:

- Land at Ashfield Farm, Desford APP/K2420/W/23/3320601, 120 homes allowed following a planning inquiry
- Land at Grange Road, West Kirby APP/W4325/W/23/3318758. 39 homes allowed on an emerging local green space allocation following a planning inquiry.
- Land at Lychgate Lane, Burbage APP/K2420/W/23/3321670 – 85 dwellings allowed on land outside of the settlement boundary.
- Land West of Hillworth Road APP/Y3940/W/23/3317362 – 59 dwellings allowed on land partly allocated and partly outside of the settlement boundary.

Thea has also been heavily involved in the promotion of large solar schemes for the past two years, achieving consent for a number of 30MW+ solar and battery storage developments.

### The following are recent appeal decisions in which Thea has been successful:

- Land at Halse Road, Northamptonshire APP/W2845/W/23/3315771 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Middle Road, Warwickshire APP/J3720/W/23/3321095 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage
- Burstall, Suffolk APP/W3520/W/23/3319970 – 30MW solar farm and battery storage
- Land south of Leeming Substation, North Yorkshire APP/G2713/W/23/3315877 – 49.9MW
- Bramley, Hampshire APP/H1705/W/22/3304561- 45MW solar farm and battery storage
- Langford, Devon APP/Y1138/W/22/3293104 ("Langford") – Secretary of State decision 49.9MW solar farm and battery storage

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

- Bishop's Itchington, Warwickshire APP/J3720/W/22/3292579 – 49.9MW solar farm
- Halloughton, Nottinghamshire APP/B3030/W/21/3279533 – 49.9MW solar farm and battery energy storage systems
- Land South of Murton APP/X1355/W/22/3308881 – 49.9MW solar farm

Thea has a particular interest in heritage and landscape issues and believes that early advice is crucial to ensure that impacts are properly considered within the statutory and policy framework.

## Residential

Thea is an experienced practitioner at advising on and promoting major housing developments. Thea has promoted thousands of homes through local plans, planning applications and section 78 appeals.

Thea has secured permission for sites including 76 dwellings in Arun District in a green gap, 50 dwellings in Melksham despite an up-to-date neighbourhood plan, 380 dwellings in Pocklington and 150 in Swanland following a joint Inquiry in the East Riding of Yorkshire, 830 dwellings in Maghull, Sefton, 110 dwellings in Holt, North Norfolk, over 300 dwellings in Wrexham, and hundreds of dwellings in Hinckley & Bosworth Borough.

Recent successes include:

- Land at Ashfield Farm, Desford APP/K2420/W/23/3320601, 120 homes allowed following a planning inquiry
- Land at Grange Road, West Kirby APP/W4325/W/23/3318758. 39 homes allowed on an emerging local green space allocation following a planning inquiry.
- Land at Lychgate Lane, Burbage APP/K2420/W/23/3321670 – 85 dwellings allowed on land outside of the settlement boundary.
- Land West of Hillworth Road APP/Y3940/W/23/3317362 – 59 dwellings allowed on land partly allocated and partly outside of the settlement boundary.

## Awards



### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

## Accreditations

- The Lord Slynn of Hadley UK Environmental Law Moot 2011, Winner
- Major Scholarship, Inner Temple (2009)
- Duke of Edinburgh Entrance Award, Inner Temple (2009)
- University of Warwick Law School Prize for Best Overall Performance (2008, 2009)

## Qualifications

- LLB, First Class, University of Warwick
- BVC College of Law

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501