

James Hume

Year of Call: 2023
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Overview

James Hume is a barrister with a focus on commercial litigation and arbitration as well as construction and property law. He began his 12-month pupillage at 3PB's London office in October 2024, having previously worked as an Aviation officer in The Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy.

As part of the Fleet Air Arm, James gained five years of front-line experience concisely conveying information to NATO command structures of varying language ability. Additionally, he has over a decade of experience in working in naval squadrons and ships, demonstrating advanced teamwork and interpersonal skills in pressured environments. As a Maritime Warfare Centre doctrine lead and subject matter expert, James was regularly required to communicate and advise Senior Officers on key deliverable commercial contracts.

James received a degree from the University of York in Physics with Astrophysics, after which he received a merit in a foundation degree in Military Aviation Studies studying base principles, aircraft technical components and their uses. James later attended The Open University, receiving a Second Class Honours in LLB (Hons), followed by earning a Merit from the National Paralegal College a level 7 Diploma in Paralegal Practice. James then attended the City Law School where he studied the bar course LLM, focusing on commercial law.

Throughout his pupillage, James has gained experience in complex commercial, property and construction cases involving:

- Interim injunctions
- Breach of contract claims
- Insolvency petitions
- Defective Premises Act work
- Possession Claims
- Easement disputes
- Adverse possession
- Adjudication enforcement

He is also a keen Triathlete and has previously competed in Ironman Triathlon distances. He also enjoys reading, board games and painting.

Academic qualifications

- BSc (Hons) Physics with Astrophysics, University of York

- Military Aviation Studies, Foundation Degree, The Open University
- LLB (Hons), Second Class Honours, The Open University
- Level 7 Diploma, Merit, Paralegal Practice, National Paralegal College
- The Bar Course LLM, City Law School

Professional qualifications & appointments

- CMI Level 5 Certificate in Management and leadership (CQF) from the Chartered Management Institute (2011).
- CMI Level 3 Diploma in First Line Management (CQF) from the Chartered Management Institute (2011) ;
- Divisional Officer Qualification (CMI Level 6 Equivalent) from the Royal Naval Leadership Academy (2015) ;
- Human Factors Facilitator & Instructor Qualification from the Military Aviation Authority (2015) ; Human Factors Supervisor Qualification from the Military Aviation Authority (2020).

Expertise

Commercial

James Hume's commercial practice focuses on contractual disputes, insolvency, property and construction matters, and procedural applications in commercial contexts. He regularly advises and represents corporates, charities, private individuals, and trustees.

James' practice encompasses a broad range of commercial disputes, including matters involving contract interpretation, breach of warranty, subcontractor liability, professional obligations, and procedural and jurisdictional challenges. He has developed significant experience in navigating multi-party disputes, including Part 20 claims, contribution claims, and insolvency-related proceedings, and is adept at balancing legal strategy with commercial outcomes.

Before joining 3PB, James worked as an Aviation officer in The Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy and more recently as the Doctrine Lead and Expert to Maritime Warfare Centre. During this time, James gained front-line experience concisely conveying information to NATO command structures of varying language ability and was regularly required to communicate and advise Senior Officers on key deliverable commercial contracts.

Recent and Ongoing Work

- Acting in proceedings involving enforceability of personal guarantees, default judgment, and bankruptcy-related considerations, with a focus on procedural strategy and recovery of debts.
- Acting for Trustees in bankruptcy in sale and possession applications, including managing TOLATA claims by family members and protecting the estate's assets.
- Representing claimants in matters involving enforceability of conditions in agreements, such as rights in transfers of property or chattels.
- Advising on and making applications under CPR Part 11 (jurisdiction disputes), Part 24 (summary judgment), and restoration of claims, including forum non conveniens arguments, default judgment challenges, and reinstatement applications.
- Acting for clients in disputes arising from residential building works and services, including advising on contractual entitlement, assessing defective work, and counterclaims.
- Representing clients in matters requiring compliance with Companies Act provisions, including registration of legal charges and associated procedural safeguards.
- Representing subcontractors and their insurers in claims alleging negligent works and consequential damage, including allocation of liability between parties in multi-tier contracts.

Construction and engineering

James Hume's construction practice focuses on Defective Premises Act 1972 claims, Building Safety Act claims, Building Act 1984 claims, NHBC Guarantees as well as covering the full range of engineering and technical disputes.

James has multiple degrees and qualifications requiring highly technical knowledge and in his previous career in the armed forces was one of the UK's Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) and Counter UAS experts. As a specialist technician, James was required to regularly assist national level contract writing, including infrastructure contracts, to ensure that the critical technical elements of said contracts actually met the requirements.

Recent and Ongoing Work

- Acting for home purchasers pursuing a National Builder in a failure to honour a Buildmark Guarantee.
- Instructed as sole counsel at trial in a claim for defective works against a construction contractor.
- Drafting pleadings in cases involving payment disputes under construction contracts, claims for damages arising out of defective building works and actions to recover unpaid debt.
- Advised on the prospects of success for various clients considering bringing or defending claims in the TCC and Commercial Courts.

Property and Estates

James has established a strong and successful practice across property law. He is regularly instructed to advise and represent a wide range of clients, including private individuals, landlords and tenants, companies, and local authorities. His work spans both advisory and contentious matters, and he is frequently engaged at an early stage in disputes to provide strategic guidance aimed at achieving effective and commercially sensible outcomes.

He is recognised for his clear, pragmatic approach and his ability to handle complex factual and legal issues with precision. James combines robust advocacy with a calm and measured style and is equally comfortable acting in high-value litigation or in sensitive disputes involving family or cohabitation breakdowns.

His practice encompasses a broad range of property law matters, including:

- Real property disputes
- Possession proceedings, acting for both landlords and tenants
- Boundary disputes
- Leasehold disputes
- Service charge and ground rent disputes, acting for both freeholders and leaseholders
- Auction-related disputes - including claims arising from misdescription, contractual issues, and post-sale disputes
- Charging orders and orders for sale
- Committal proceedings
- Trespass claims, including urgent applications for injunctive relief and claims for damages
- Disrepair claims
- Easements and rights of way
- Restrictive covenants and incumbrances
- Private nuisance
- TOLATA
- Cohabitation dispute

James is experienced in conducting both trials and interim applications in the County Court, and is regularly instructed in urgent hearings involving possession, injunctive relief, and enforcement. He is adept at handling voluminous documentary evidence and expert material, particularly in boundary, leasehold, and development-related disputes.

He places particular emphasis on early case assessment and dispute resolution strategy, frequently advising clients on the merits of settlement versus litigation. His practice reflects a strong understanding of the commercial and personal drivers behind property disputes, enabling him to tailor advice to the specific objectives of each client.