

Expert Witness

Robin Harper BA (Hons) MSc Cons Dip UD IHBC MRTPI

I have a Bachelor of Arts Degree with Honours in Town Planning, a Master of Science Degree in Historic Conservation and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Urban Design.

I am a Chartered Town Planner and full member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. I am also a founding member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and formerly a member of the Association of Conservation Officers.

Since 1987, I have built up substantial relevant experience working for local planning authorities and private practice. I have previously held the post of Head of Planning Services for the London Borough of Camden and Planning Director for a residential development company.

I established Harper Planning Consultants in 2009 and since then I have provided professional services and advice on numerous projects in London and the south-east of England.

I have a rare combination of qualifications and experience in planning, urban design and conservation such that I am well placed to provide an objective professional assessment on the merits of a wide range of schemes in relation to the applicable policy context and other material considerations.



The Expert Witness has a pivotal role in any appeal Public Inquiry and is also central to the conduct of an Informal Hearing. The role of the Expert Witness is to provide objective and qualified evidence to the Planning Inspector in order that they may reach an informed and clear judgement on a particular issue.

The evidence given by the Expert Witness will generally be 'tested' - it will be examined or cross-examined by opposing barristers or third parties as well as being subject to interrogation by the Inspector.

As such, it is vital that an Expert Witness has relevant professional qualifications and has considerable experience in the areas specific to the case being advocated.

Most Public Inquiries will be based on submission of Proofs of Evidence prepared by expert witnesses so preparation to act as an Expert Witness is often critical to success.

Robin Harper has substantial experience in the preparation and presentation of evidence at numerous appeal Hearings and Public Inquiries, and has represented both public and private sector clients on a wide range of cases.

As a Chartered Town Planner, Robin Harper is a member of a licensed professional body and as such, eligible to instruct barristers directly without the involvement of a solicitor, ensuring he provides a cost effective and time efficient service. He has developed strong links with a number of planning barristers with whom he works closely to ensure the client's case is presented with clarity.

Most recently, Robin Harper providing expert evidence at a three day Public Inquiry into development proposals in Feltham town centre.

"Mr Harper was cross-examined at some length about the approach to be followed with an attempt to justify a different decision being reached. Mr Harper answered directly, freely and with a resolve that I commend to the Inquiry."

The obvious correctness of the position he adopted I also commend to the Inquiry."

Simon Randle LLB, 4-5 Gray's Inn Square Chambers

"Robin's thorough and detailed approach resulted in successfully securing consent and award of costs. His considerable knowledge of planning law and how best to apply it was undoubtedly of considerable help."

David Gooch, Director GCW Property Consultants