



Claire Nevin

Call: 2021, 2025 (Ireland)

Practice areas:

Planning, Environment, Compulsory Purchase and Compensation, Major Infrastructure Projects, Highways, Commons and Open Spaces, Public Law, Ecclesiastical Law and Religious Liberty



Practice Profile

Claire is a sought-after barrister who is equally at home as sole or junior counsel in the High Court, Crown Court and Magistrates' Courts. Claire is also quickly gaining a reputation as an experienced and proficient inquiry advocate, having already acted as sole counsel in several lengthy, high profile and complex planning inquiries. She is ranked as a Tier 1 Rising Star in planning by the Legal 500, 2026.

A local authority officer for whom Claire provided an opinion on a developer's s.73 and s.96A applications described her work as "one of the best opinions I have read in a long time. Clear, precise and to the point". Clients have also praised her for having a "[fine legal mind](#)" and being "streets ahead of her years of call" (in the context of a planning judicial review). In addition to her practice at the Bars of England and Wales, Claire is called to and practises at the Bar of Ireland. She has particular interest and expertise in planning issues with an environmental dimension, especially those involving UK and EU environmental assessment regimes, water law, pollution, contaminated land, and chemicals law.

Before her call to the Bar, Claire had an international human rights career working for the United Nations in Geneva, the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and international NGOs. The breadth of this experience meant that by the time Claire came to the Bar, she already had significant experience in undertaking roles demanding high professional responsibility and in approaching complex and sensitive issues from a range of perspectives.

Planning

Claire is ranked as a Tier 1 Rising Star in planning by the Legal 500, 2026. Her recent planning work includes:

- Representing a Rule 6 Party in a four-week planning inquiry into a £750 million film studio proposal in Marlow. The inquiry followed former deputy prime minister Angela Rayner's decision to call in the

rejected planning application and attracted a wide range of [national](#) and [international](#) media coverage.

- Junior counsel to Morag Ellis KC representing the interested party, Marks and Spencer, in successfully resisting another retailer's application for permission to apply for judicial review against a grant of planning permission.
- Advised Irish NGOs on potential breaches of environmental assessment regimes and duties under domestic and EU water and pollution legislation in the context of two major infrastructure proposals.
- Advising on a developer's duties under the EU environmental assessment regimes and the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in the context of a controversial development proposal near a UNESCO World Heritage Site in an EU Member State.
- Advised Bevis Marks Synagogue on the equalities impacts of a proposal for a 43-Storey Office Tower next to the Synagogue. Permission was subsequently refused by the City of London Corporation's Planning Committee.
- Teaching on the University of Oxford's Public Inquiry Workshop for heritage professionals.
- Junior counsel to Douglas Edwards KC in a planning judicial review concerning a retail development.
- Acting as sole counsel for a local authority defending a claim in judicial review involving agricultural permitted development rights.
- Advised a local authority on a developer's s.73 and s.96A applications regarding a planning permission for mixed use residential and employment land.
- Acting for the successful Rule 6 Party, Park Road Allotment Association in a high-profile five-day planning inquiry challenging the Duke of Northumberland's proposal for a housing development on designated Local Open Space to cross-subsidise renovations to Grade I listed, Syon House. The inquiry compassed issues such as designated Local Open Space, a Grade I listed heritage asset, ecology and the provision of affordable and market housing.
- Representing South Gloucestershire Council as junior counsel to Suzanne Ornsby KC in a two-week planning inquiry concerning a proposed residential development.
- Acting as sole counsel for a Rule 6 Party in a three-day planning enforcement inquiry where Claire secured a costs award against the appellant.
- Successfully represented residents in a gypsy and traveller enforcement hearing in Canterbury.
- Advised on potential breaches of conditions attached to a planning permission for a gold mine.

Environment

Claire has a strong UK and EU-based environmental practice covering a broad range of issues including environmental assessments, chemical pollution, contaminated land, a gold mine, a proposed oil terminal, harbour revision orders and flood defence works.

Recent work includes:

- Currently instructed in a challenge concerning a renewable energy company's compliance with statutory duties on the environment and access requirements for surveys conducted in the context of a proposed CPO.
- Representing the environmental NGO, Thamesbank, in a three-week inquiry into the Port of London Authority's application for a Harbour Revision Order following the Marine Management

Organisation's decision to call in the application. On behalf of Thamesbank, Claire argued that the PLA failed to carry out environmental assessments and involve members of the public in environmental decision-making pursuant to the Aarhus Convention.

- Advising a NGO on the taxation of aviation fuel under the EU Energy Taxation Directive.
- Advising a local authority on the interaction between the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the planning regime in relation to contaminated land.
- Advising Irish and other EU clients on duties under the environmental assessment regimes in cases ranging from major infrastructure proposals presenting risks of chemical pollution to development proposals in the vicinity of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Advising on potential breaches of environmental law in relation to industrial discharges containing PFAS ("forever chemicals") from a major UK chemicals manufacturer.
- Acting as junior counsel to Ned Westaway for the successful Secretary of State in a judicial review concerning the lawfulness of UK fishing opportunities
- Instructed on international maritime law disputes involving fishing opportunities and environmental measures.
- Representing a residents' association in a dispute with the Environment Agency concerning legal obligations for flood defence works.
- Advising a water company on their obligations under the EIA regime.
- Appearing unled in court and advising on claims in statutory nuisance.
- Advising a campaign group who successfully challenged the proposed development of an oil terminal in Northern Ireland.
- Advising a major retail developer on a proposal involving the translocation of protected species.
- Advising on matters of planning, environmental and human rights law relating to a gold mine in Northern Ireland.

Claire is a regular contributor to policy and educational initiatives in the field of environmental law. She co-authored the Environmental Justice Network Ireland, Queen's University Belfast School of Law and Lawyers for Nature's [submission](#) to the Irish Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss and supervised LLM students at the University of Essex on a project focusing on the right to a healthy environment in the UK. She is a regular contributor to Chambers' Environmental Law Blog and an expert contributor to Lexis Nexis' environmental module on the law of sewers and drains.

Compulsory Purchase and Compensation

Claire frequently advises and acts led and unled in compulsory purchase and compensation matters. She is currently instructed on a challenge concerning a renewable energy company's compliance with statutory duties on the environment and access requirements for surveys in the context of a proposed CPO. She has acted for HS2 on a major compensation dispute and appeared unled in the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) on behalf of a claimant. She regularly advises claimants and acquiring authorities on compulsory purchase matters and compensation claims.

Major Infrastructure Projects

Claire's recent work on major infrastructure projects includes:

- Currently instructed in a challenge concerning a renewable energy company's compliance with statutory duties on the environment and access requirements for surveys conducted in the context of a proposed CPO for renewable energy infrastructure.
 - Advised on the Lower Thames Crossing.
 - Advising a water company on their EIA obligations in the context of a major water infrastructure proposal.
 - Advising Irish NGOs challenging two major infrastructure projects on environmental grounds.
 - Advised a campaign group who successfully challenged the proposed development of an oil terminal in Northern Ireland
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Highways, Commons and Open Spaces

Claire is advising a residents' association challenging the making of a Traffic Regulation Order. She acted for the successful Rule 6 Party, Park Road Allotment Association in a [high-profile](#) five-day planning inquiry challenging the Duke of Northumberland's proposal for a housing development on designated Local Open Space to cross-subsidise renovations to Grade I listed, Syon House. The inquiry compassed issues such as designated Local Open Space, a Grade I listed heritage asset, ecology and the provision of affordable and market housing.

Public Law

Successfully resisted permission to apply for judicial review and secured a costs award for a local authority defending a claim involving allegations of procedural unfairness, bias and breaches of the human rights act.

Advised on the merits of judicially reviewing a court's refusal to quash an abatement notice.

Claire is currently instructed on behalf of a local housing authority in a Crown Court appeal against the local authority's compliance with its statutory housing duties for those in priority need.

Ecclesiastical Law and Religious Liberty

Claire provided research and drafting assistance on an application for a faculty for exhumation involving a cross-jurisdictional analysis of the law of exhumation in the Church of Ireland and the Church of England. In February 2026, she will co-deliver a public law webinar on freedom of thought, belief and religion alongside other members of Chambers practising in this area.

Chemicals Law

Claire is frequently instructed on chemicals matters. Her expertise in this area extends to broader issues of pollution, statutory nuisance and contaminated land. Her recent chemicals work includes:

- Instructed on what would be the UK's first PFAS ("forever chemicals") case concerning allegations of PFAS pollution from a large manufacturer of firefighting products in Bentham.
 - Advised an Irish NGO on the adequacy of environmental assessments in the context of two major infrastructure proposals presenting risks of chemical pollution.
 - Advising a multinational conglomerate on its compliance with EU legislation governing the importation of products containing persistent organic pollutants into the EU.
 - Advising on the lawfulness of industrial discharges containing PFAS from a major manufacturing site in the UK.
 - Providing legal commentary for an [investigation](#) into PFAS contamination by the ENDS Report.
 - Delivering a presentation to the Royal Society of Chemistry's Toxic Tort meeting in November 2025.
 - Claire is a [frequent contributor](#) to Chambers's Environment Law Blog on chemicals law and regulation.
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EU Matters

Claire's recent EU-law work includes the following:

- Advising a multinational conglomerate active in various industries such as renewable energy, transport infrastructure and healthcare products on its compliance with the European Union Regulation on Persistent Organic Pollutants when importing equipment containing certain chemicals into the EU;
 - Advising an Irish NGO seeking to challenge two major infrastructure proposals on the basis that environmental assessments did not identify, quantify and assess PFAS, microplastics and other persistent chemical pollutants;
 - Advising a NGO on the taxation of aviation fuel under the EU Energy Taxation Directive;
 - Advising on the interaction between the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and the EU environmental assessments regimes in the context of a controversial development proposal in an EU Member State.
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Human Rights Law

Given Claire's previous career working for the United Nations, the Council of Europe and international human rights NGOs, Claire has vast experience and expertise in human rights law. She is regularly instructed to advise in cases where there is an overlap between environmental and human rights law.

Qualifications

- The King's Inns, Dublin, Advanced Diploma in Irish Planning and Environmental Law (2022)
 - The Inns of Court College of Advocacy, London, Bar Course (2021)
 - City, University of London, GDL (2020) (Distinction)
 - European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation, Venice, MA in Human Rights and Democratisation (2015)
 - Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, B.A. European Studies (2014) (First)
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Scholarships and Awards

- Recipient of the 2023 Bar European Group's Peter Duffy Scholarship
 - The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple GDL Exhibition Award (2019)
 - City, University of London, Law School GDL Scholarship Award (2019)
 - Awarded funding by European Inter-University Centre in Venice to undertake a six-month traineeship at the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg for graduating amongst the top fifteen students with a Masters in Human Rights and Democratisation (2015)
 - Winners' Category of International Undergraduate Awards Competition in Social Sciences category for paper, "To what extent do Michel Foucault's views on power and panopticism inform our understanding of modern-day control and surveillance?" (Finishing in the top 10% of 5,500 entries) (2015).
 - Dean of Students' Roll of Honour for Contribution to Student Life as President of the Trinity College Dublin French Society (2011)
 - Entrance Exhibition Award from Trinity College Dublin for outstanding Leaving Certificate (Irish equivalent of A-Levels) results (2011)
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Memberships

- UK Environmental Law Association
 - The Constitutional and Administrative Law Bar Association (ALBA)
 - Planning and Environmental Bar Association (PEBA)
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Publications

- Co-drafter of the Environmental Justice Network Ireland, Queen's University Belfast School of Law and Lawyers for Nature's submission to the Irish Citizens' Assembly entitled, "Rights of Nature in Ireland: Towards a Living Island of Rights-Bearing Communities", September 2022.
- "Nature Rights are Human Rights: The UN Human Rights Council Resolution on the Right to a Safe,

Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment”, Lawyers for Nature Blog, 25 March 2022.

- “Bridging the Gap between Law and Reality: The Endurance of Oppressive Cultural Norms and the Silencing of Survivors of Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina” in the 2016 edition of the International Journal on Rule of Law, Transitional Justice and Human Rights Vol. 6.
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Languages

- French (fluent)
 - Irish (very good)
 - Italian (very good)
 - Spanish (very good)
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Interests

Outside of work, Claire is a marathon and half marathon runner, Lindy Hop and solo jazz dancer. She also enjoys open-mic storytelling. In 2018, she was a National Finalist in the Dublin Story Slam in The Abbey Theatre, Dublin.

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Quotes

‘Claire constructs robust arguments, and stays calm in the face of difficulties.’
Legal 500, 2026