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JAMES ALDRIDGE KC

CALL: 1994 **KC:** 2014
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OVERVIEW

James has practised at the Bar since 1995. His practice encompasses all major areas of Chancery and commercial litigation. He has a particular interest and experience in civil fraud (including injunctive relief and asset tracing), contractual disputes (including particularly share warranty claims, bespoke commercial contracts, security arrangements, and media/entertainment contracts), professional negligence, real property, insolvency and the law relating to works of art (including disputes as to authenticity and as to ownership/restitution). He takes particular pleasure in conducting hostile cross-examination.

EXPERTISE

COMMERCIAL LITIGATION & ARBITRATION

As well as dealing with commercial disputes involving fraud, James specialises in non-fraudulent commercial disputes, usually relating to contracts, but often with a complicating factor such as insolvency or a property angle. He has a particular expertise in claims under share sale and purchase agreements, especially (but not exclusively) for breach of warranty. All such claims are very often the subject of arbitration or expert determination clauses, in both of which James has extensive experience.

Cases include Zayo (dealing with service and notification clauses in SPAs), an arbitration over the effect of a multi-billion dollar contract made in Russia which one party was seeking to say was, effectively, of no effect, an arbitration over the sale of a retail chain in Russia involving multiple issues from share price adjustments to breaches of warranty, an adjudication and subsequent challenge over facilities management at a major UK hospital, a cross border dispute over the enforceability (for duress) of documents signed in Saudi Arabia, a dispute under an SPA over the sale of an aircraft part manufacturing business, a dispute under an SPA for the

sale of a waste recycling business, a purely written arbitration over the alleged sale of a share in a multi-million dollar business in Dubai and a claim that interest did not run on a debt because payment had been tendered (Spring Capital).

CIVIL FRAUD

James has considerable experience in litigation arising out of fraudulent or dishonest activity, whether that is asserting/refuting the fraud in an original trial, or seeking/resisting enforcement over its proceeds, or ancillary litigation such as claims against advisers or culpable directors, and actions against connected 3rd parties (for disclosure or for disgorgement of profits). Many of these have an international/offshore dimension to them and he is well-used to working with foreign lawyers.

Cases include Barings, Zahoor v Masood (documents forged to support a false claim to shares), Weavering (claims against directors over the collapse of the Weavering Hedge Fund because of fraudulent disguising of losses), Al Sanea (multiple litigation and asset tracing/freezing arising out of the well-known collapse of Saad Investments), recovery by an investment fund against a firm of solicitors which had been the conduit (through a dishonest partner) into a Ponzi fund, Muduroglu (a case in fraudulent conspiracy over share transfers), acting on a dispute between two brothers over rights in an international jewellery partnership with allegations of misconduct and fraud (Campbell v Campbell), counterclaims of fraud against persons claiming to have the benefit of an exclusive agency with a well-known international media conglomerate, involvement in private proceedings seeking to identify assets of one of the most highly publicised frauds of recent years, claims to secure the former assets of the bankrupt footballer Bruce Grobelaar, acting for interested affected 3rd parties in the Dadaleh litigation, acting for a millionaire defrauded of millions by a lover, advising on a claim against a well-known business personality for a very significantly valued transaction defrauding creditors, acting in a claim in the UK to support enforcement action (on which he is also providing support) in the Bahamas, assisting on a claim in an offshore jurisdiction to set aside a transaction on various grounds including fraud, as well as others which are too numerous (or too sensitive) to mention. He also has experience of enforcement action for the proceeds of crime

INSOLVENCY & ASSET RECOVERY

James is often involved in insolvencies, usually in the context of an insolvency regime being in place or in the offing. His role is not only to assist in recovering (or defending) assets which have gone missing, but also in other related aspects such as claims against directors for breach of duty or impeachable transactions, challenges to the decisions of IPs, and challenges to CVAs. He has also acted (and acts) regularly in unfair prejudice claims

PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE

James has extensive experience of professional negligence disputes, since his early involvement in the Barings litigation. He has acted for/against solicitors, accountants (e.g. Slattery v Moore Stephens), auctioneers (e.g. Avrora v Christies), valuers and others

REAL ESTATE

James acts in real property cases, often (but not solely) where there is cross-over with other areas, such as insolvency, fraud, unfair prejudice, or professional negligence behind the scenes. He was involved in the long-running Sargeant v Macepark litigation. He has advised and acted in cases involving proprietary estoppel (following his involvement in the seminal Gillet v Holt (CA)), forfeiture, rent review, consent to alterations/sub-letting (e.g. Redevco Properties v Mount Cook), efficacy of notices to complete, collateral oral contracts, coal subsidence, dilapidations, disclaimer, rent alterations under CVAs, challenges to continuation of Administrations by landlords and many more.

MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT

James has acted for numerous high profile media/entertainment personalities and organisations. They include sports stars, comedians, TV personalities, media conglomerates and publishing houses. Most would prefer not to be named. The underlying disputes are generally contractual, sometimes with an element of fraud, or tortious obligation. James fully understands the sensitivities surrounding those in the public eye, or with a significant media presence, and is alert to the reputation management aspect of all such cases.

DIRECTORY QUOTES

"A creative, solutions-oriented lawyer who is very bright and great to work with."

Chambers UK Chancery: Commercial (2023)

"A highly persuasive advocate." "He is very good at cutting through issues and displays good judgement when faced with strategic, complex points."

Chambers UK Chancery: Commercial (2022)

"He is a very user-friendly, immensely hard-working and an intelligent advocate. He really gets under the skin of

his cases." "He is very sensible and always on top of the detail."

Chambers UK Chancery: Commercial (2021)

"He has a very effective manner with the court."

Chambers UK Chancery: Commercial (2020)

QUALIFICATIONS

- MA (Cantab)

NOTABLE CASES

- *Zayo Group International Ltd v Michael Ainger & 6 Ors (2017)*
- *Eren Muduroglu v Reddish LLP & Derek Lucie-Smith (2015)*
- *Muduroglu v Reddish LLP*
- *Swiss Cottage (40) Properties Ltd v Primeestate Investments Ltd (2015)*
- *Iain Laurie Shearer & Ors v Spring Capital Ltd & Ors (2013)*
- *Iain Lawrie Shearer & Ors v Spring Capital Ltd & Ors (2013)*
- *Avrora Fine Arts Investment Ltd v Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd (2012)*
- *Weavering Capital (UK) Ltd (In Liquidation) v ULF Magnus Michael Peterson & 9 Ors (2012)*
- *Al Sanea v Saad Investments Co Ltd (2012)*
- *Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd v Aurora Fine Arts Investments Ltd (2012)*
- *Philip William Howard v John Philip Howard-Lawson (2012)*
- *Saad Investments Co Ltd (In Liquidation) v Maan Abdulwahed Abdulmajeed Al-Sanea (2011)*
- *Philip William Howard v John Howard-Lawson (2011)*
- *Mohammad Zahoor v Sohail Masood (2009)*
- *Sohail Masood v Mohammad Zahoor (2008)*
- *South East Asia Metal Ltd (A company incorporated in the BVI) v Mohammed Zahoor (2007)*
- *Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd v Olympia Homes Ltd & Ors (2005)*
- *Michael Slattery v Moore Stephens (A Firm) (2003)*
- *John McGowan v Michael Chadwick (2002)*
- *John Patrick McGowan v Michael Chadwick (2002)*
- *Redevco Properties v Mount Cook Land Ltd (2002)*
- *Redevco Properties v Mount Cook Land Ltd (2002)*
- *Mount Eden Land Ltd (Part 20 Defendants) v Towerstone Ltd (Part 20 Claimants) (2002)*
- *Barings PLC (in liquidation) & Anor v Coopers & Lybrand (A Firm) & Ors (2001)*
- *Lionel Goldstein v Ronald Conley (2001)*
- *Barings PLC (In Liquidation) & anor v Coopers & Lybrand (A Firm) & ors (2001)*
- *Gillett v Holt & Anor*

- *Mount Cook Land Ltd v Mark Hartley & Ors (2000)*