

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COURTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES
BUSINESS LIST**

B E T W E E N: -

Claimant

LOUISE PORT

- and -

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

1. In this action for misuse of private information, I appear for the Claimant, Louise Port. My learned friend, Mr Silverstone appears for the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited.
2. The Claimant is a former journalist and television reporter who has worked for the *BBC* and *GMTV*. In around 2000, the Claimant started a relationship with the former Scottish football manager, James Craig Brown. This relationship became the subject of media attention.
3. The Defendant was the publisher of the *News of the World* newspaper, which had a considerable readership in this jurisdiction, until its closure in July 2011. The Defendant is currently the publisher of *The Sun* newspaper, which also publishes its content on its website.
4. On 9 November 2018, the Claimant wrote to the Defendant notifying them of her claim. The Claimant claimed that she experienced suspicious activity including information about her private life appearing in print, for which there was no explanation as to how this information had been obtained. The Claimant

believed that the publication of articles in the Defendant's newspapers put a strain not only on her relationships but also on her family.

5. The Claimant stated that her use of voicemail was extensive and she would regularly leave long detailed messages, particularly to Mr Brown. The Claimant alleged that the obtaining and publication of her private information was consistent with the interception of her voicemail messages. The Claimant alleged this caused her distress and impacted substantially on her personal relationships. The Claimant further alleges this was particularly upsetting as she herself was a former journalist.
6. The Claimant issued proceedings on 4 March 2019.
7. The Claimant then served a formal Initial Disclosure Request on 24 April 2019.
8. On 4 July 2019, the Defendant provided Initial Disclosure, which the Claimant believed indicated she had been targeted by individuals working for or acting on behalf of the Defendant and this caused her upset.
9. On 25 July 2019, the Claimant accepted the Defendant's offer to resolve her claim on terms confidential between the parties, but which involved the Defendant agreeing to pay damages to the Claimant as well as her reasonable legal costs of bringing the claim. The Defendant has provided appropriate undertakings to the Court and the Claimant and agreed to join in this statement to apologise to the Claimant for the distress caused to her by the invasion of her privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the News of the World.
10. The parties have agreed and noted that the Defendant makes no admission of liability in relation to the Claimant's allegations of voicemail interception and/or other unlawful information gathering at The Sun.

Counsel for the Defendant

12. My Lord on behalf of the Defendant I confirm everything that my learned friend has said.
13. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to Ms Port for the distress caused to her by the invasion of her privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant accepts that such activity should never have taken place.

Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

14. In light of the order which has been made and this statement, the Claimant considers that the matter is now concluded.



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**Mark Thomson, Solicitor Advocate
Thomson Heath & Associates
Solicitors for the Claimant**



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Solicitors for the Defendant

