52. In 1993, H acquired a 5% shareholding in the Russian company which had been granted an exploration licence from the MNC to search for natural gas. The other shareholders were a subsidiary of the MNC and an American company. Geological reports were prepared but, before production infrastructure could be built, in 1998 the Russian economy collapsed. The MNC had no money and the American company withdrew. H, however, continued with the project, took up a rights issue and worked hard to make his Russian company a success. Production began in 2001 and his Russian company developed into a valuable producer of energy. H encountered litigation problems with the MNC. In June 2005, H transferred 51% of the shares in his Russian company to the MNC. However, disputes with the MNC continued. In late 2012, the MNC permitted H to sell his shares in his Russian company to another company. The price realised was US$1.375 billion.

53. In my judgment, whilst H clearly worked very hard to create wealth out of the Russian company and was resourceful, H's evidence falls far short of the exceptionality (or 'genius') test elucidated in authorities such as *Sorrell*, *Cooper Hohn* and *Gray v Work* (see above).

54. The following further points are pertinent. First, H's contribution was not 'unmatched' (to use Holman J's words in *Gray v. Work*): at the same time as H was away travelling and building up the his Russian company in Russia, W was 'keeping the home fires burning' in Surrey, running the home and caring for the boys, as well as H's daughter in earlier years, on her own in what was then a foreign country to her. Second, this was a case of the realisation of the Russian company's value built up during the previous 20 years when the marriage subsisted, not merely of fresh accrual. H at one stage sought to argue that the Russian company's share were 'worthless' in 2004 because he could not sell them. This was clearly not the case because he sold 51% to the MNC in 2005. In any event, the point is academic because it is a fact that H sold his remaining shares in the Russian company in 2012 for US$1.375 when the marriage was subsisting. Third, W is now only seeking 41% of the assets instead of a 50:50 split, which gives some margin of appreciation (see further below).

55. In my judgment, the present case is a paradigm example of what Lord Nicholls was talking about in *White* when he said at [989]:

> "*If, in their different spheres, each contributed equally to the family, then in principle it matters not which of them earned the money and built up the assets*"

56. For these reasons, I reject any case made by H that he made a special or 'stellar' contribution to the marital assets such as to justify a departure from the equality principle.

Summary of findings on 'departure points'

57. For the above reasons, I find that H has failed to prove any valid reasons or 'departure points' which would justify the matrimonial property being divided other than equally 50:50. In particular, I find the following. First, that the marriage endured from 1993 until 2013 as W contends (and was not 'over' in 1999 or in 2004 as H's contends).