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Dear Team,

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Land Registry: new service delivery company consultation. As a professional body advancing global standards in land, property and construction and with members working throughout the land and property market, RICS advocates a fluid land transaction system that is efficient, transparent and robust.

RICS is the world's largest organisation for professionals in property, land, construction and related environmental issues. RICS members are involved in every aspect of the built and natural environment, including planning and development, valuation, managing public and private sector assets and investment advice, acting for major urban and rural property owners and occupiers, and planning and delivery infrastructure projects.

RICS regulates and maintains the professional standards of over 91,000 qualified members (FRICS, MRICS and AssocRICS) and over 50,000 trainee and student members. It regulates and promotes the work of these property professionals throughout 146 countries. RICS is governed by a Royal Charter which requires it to act in the public interest offering independent and apolitical expert advice.

The consultation outlines a new operating model potentially splitting the business operations of the Land Registry and the further release of land registry data. Reforming the operation of the Land Registry is a change to the machinery of government. RICS wishes to focus on the outcomes of this change rather than whether a public or private setup is best placed to deliver the functions of the Land Registry.

RICS would like to emphasise that all markets (not least the property market) work best when more information is freely available. RICS are very conscious of the need to keep 'personal' data secure and for 'commercial-in-confidence' negotiations and transactions to be respected. But we are also aware that definitions of either of these categories are not absolute and do change with time. The opening up of Land Registry data over the last thirty years proves this point. There is however a need to maintain the integrity and quality of the data and with it the reputation of the Land Registry.

RICS would underline the central role that Land Registry has played in the economic development of the UK due to the stable and transparent state of our legal registrar and the confidence that this brings to real estate markets and investment.

RICS would ask that this essential relationship is not undermined and that decisions should be taken favouring the protection of the Land Registry's data integrity and maintaining its accessibility and market confidence.

RICS, as the leading experts in the land and property markets, stand ready to assist you during this process.

Yours sincerely,



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