

# Real Estate

## Brexit

The real estate sector is waiting to see what the post-Brexit landscape will look like. With the current uncertainty, investors, developers and occupiers are unlikely to make major long-term decisions.

### Points to consider:

- The likely result is subdued investment with the sector unwilling to commit to long-term projects or contracts
- Does uncertainty translate into opportunity for property entrepreneurs?

## Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)

The MEES regulations are now in force, which means landlords need to be mindful of standards when granting new tenancies, looking to renew existing leases in the future or making investment decisions.

### Points to consider:

- Landlords are required to bring their properties' EPC rating to E or above - or back up with evidence a legitimate reason not to do so
- The demand for energy efficient buildings is growing so 'green' capital expenditure may well be a wise investment
- For landlords, passing MEES costs to tenants is not likely to be an option unless expressly agreed.

## Agile working and shared space

The increasingly popular agile working trend has resulted in underutilised, expensive office space and growth in bespoke shared space schemes.

### Points to consider:

- Landlords need to invest in making spaces occupier-friendly. Breakout spaces, shared work areas and modern facilities are what tenants expect
- Flexibility is crucial when it comes to shared spaces: does your own lease allow you to make alterations or dispose of space?
- Occupiers are demanding more flexibility and are willing to pay for it.

## Build to rent

We are seeing a significant shift in focus towards the private rental sector with investors looking at bespoke residential schemes creating a "sense of place".

### Points to consider:

- Added amenities such as communal workspaces, roof terraces and gyms with on-site maintenance teams
- Typically attractive to young professionals but increasing demand by families
- Change in living focus from home ownership to quality and ease of living.



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Our dedicated Real Estate sector team provides a wide range of expert advice and assistance to a variety of organisations in the sector, including real estate developers, investors, occupiers and those involved in the management of real estate – whether property is their business or a critical part of it.

Naturally, this includes advising on real estate and construction matters, from multi-million pound property investments to short-term occupational arrangements. Real estate can be complex and is likely to represent a significant financial commitment, with potential liabilities that will not always be obvious.

We act for real estate investors, developers and occupiers on both transactions and dispute resolution, working alongside our dedicated construction, banking, planning, environmental and employment lawyers. Property law is complex, but we have the expertise to get to the issues quickly and efficiently, looking for solutions not obstacles. Our expert property and commercial disputes lawyers can support you whenever disagreements arise, whether concerning property specifically or wider commercial matters.

Meanwhile, we can help real estate businesses and their owners through their commercial journeys through start-up, funding, M&A and exit strategies, while also supporting with wider commercial issues alongside residential property and other personal challenges.

The advice and assistance we provide to the real estate sector also includes a number of other specialist areas including guidance on the full range of employment and business immigration issues, data protection (including GDPR) and intellectual property related matters. Whatever the needs of real estate businesses, we pride ourselves on being commercial, pragmatic and service driven.

## Expansion for Orega

Our Real Estate sector team has a long-standing relationship with rapidly expanding serviced office provider, Orega, providing them with a wide range of legal services.

We recently assisted Orega in the acquisition and fit out procurement of new business centres and exciting new co-working space in the award winning Silver Fin Building in Aberdeen, Chapel Street in Liverpool, George Street in Glasgow and South Quay in the London Docklands. We also advised Orega on expanding their existing offering in The Colmore Building in Birmingham to include an innovative business centre, co-working area and cafe.

We look forward to working closely with Orega on their brand new office space due to open in Gracechurch Street, London and other exciting acquisitions in London and the South East.

*"The serviced office market continues to be a rapidly changing but exciting environment to work in. We have worked with Royds Withy King since the company's creation in 2001 when we acquired our first office centre. The depth of their understanding of our business and breadth of expertise the firm can offer has enabled us to maintain our position as one of the market leaders in the sector."*

*Zach Douglas,  
Managing Director and co-owner of Orega*

