

## **RESPONSES TO THE FARMER REVIEW FROM GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY BODIES, CLIENTS AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

### **Industry Minister Jesse Norman said:**

“This Government is determined to support more housebuilding, more quickly and in the places people want to live. Given the launch of the £3 billion Home Building Fund, Mark Farmer’s important review in this vital sector is very timely. It makes a strong case for change in the industry, identifies areas where it needs to improve, and sets out areas for action. We will now carefully consider his recommendations.”

### **Ian Fletcher, director of real estate policy at the British Property Federation, said:**

“The Farmer Review succinctly sets out many of the construction sector’s structural failings. Much like the challenges of sustainability, we risk crossing a line of no return if we do not update our approach to development and to up-skilling the workforce.

“Build to rent clearly provides a great opportunity to build more homes, quickly, but without a construction sector capable of responding quickly to increased capital flows - and having enough people to build homes - that money will go elsewhere.

“A carrot and stick approach, putting the onus on developers to work with contractors doing the right thing could be a “plastic bag tax moment” the property sector needs. Many BPF members already invest heavily in apprenticeships and CSR. But we recognise that more needs to be done and only radical change will get the outcomes we need.”

### **Suzannah Nichol MBE, CEO of Build UK, said:**

“The drivers for the industry to change have never been stronger – with Mark’s review framed around low margins, pressures on skills and a traditional sector competing in a digital age for talent. However I do think that the clear path outlined offers the opportunity for the whole supply chain to come together and face the challenges head on. We all need to up our game if we are to deliver the infrastructure and built assets Britain needs and Build UK is prepared to play an active role in leading change across the industry.”

### **James Wates CBE, Chairman of CITB, said:**

“The problems facing the construction industry have been well known for quite some time, but Mark Farmer’s review makes very clear the scale of the challenge we face. Driving improved collaboration across the entire built environment value chain – including clients – and investing in the up-skilling of the workforce are crucial to ensure construction is fit for purpose. A reformed, empowered, equally fit for purpose CITB will be central to delivering that.”

**Richard Meier, partner at Argent, said:**

“This report makes quite clear the scale of the challenge, and the opportunity, that the construction industry faces today. There is significant appetite to invest in both existing asset classes and emerging asset classes such as Build to Rent. But the industry must make some bold changes to ensure there is sufficient capacity to actually deliver all this, thereby helping to unlock this investment. Partnering will play a key role going forward, not just on major regeneration schemes such as King’s Cross, but on a smaller scale too.”

**Paul Stanworth, Managing Director of Legal & General Capital, said:**

“This review sets out a clear way for the construction sector to reinvent itself in order to meet the ever-growing demand for homes and infrastructure. With such a chronic shortage of homes in the UK, we see rapid evolution as a “must have” for the industry, not just a “nice to have”. Having identified such a requirement, Legal & General is helping to address this problem by investing in a modern factory to produce homes using manufacturing processes seen in the production of cars and other consumer goods. This construction method is safe, clean, and fast, providing a high level of consistency and durability. We sincerely hope that Farmer’s review galvanises the entire sector to invest in innovation and secure its future.”

**David Sleath, chief executive of SEGRO, said:**

"A coherent and sustainable industrial strategy is crucial to securing Britain's future. Housing and employment across many areas of the country depend on a construction industry that is productive and capable of attracting talent. What we have now is an opportunity to support the sector's own regeneration. Future-proofing the construction sector from many of the risks identified in the Farmer Review has to be a ministerial priority. We support the review's findings and hope ministers will take these on board in the run up to the Autumn Statement."

**Ray Theakston, construction director at Essential Living, said:**

“Build to rent could drive more than £90 billion into building new homes more quickly and we welcome the report’s findings around supporting innovation to make construction less risky and more efficient. We work both with conventional contractors and with new modular solutions and believe the future should involve both.”

**Christy Hayes, managing director at Tide Construction, Donban Contracting and Vision Modular Systems, said:**

“This review is right to highlight the many benefits of embracing modular technology in the construction sector. Offsite manufacture offers a faster, greener and more cost effective way to deliver high quality buildings, and can play a crucial role make the industry more attractive to tech-savvy younger generations.”

**Ray O’Rourke, chairman and chief executive at Laing O’Rourke, said:**

“Laing O’Rourke has invested heavily in innovation and continuous improvement, and therefore I welcome many of the findings and

recommendations of the Farmer review. The report shines a light on the serious and systemic issues in UK house building and the wider construction industry, and we cannot afford to ignore them any longer.”

“There is significant scope for radical transformation through the adoption of new technologies and advanced manufacturing approaches. This will deliver the quality housing stock the UK urgently requires and directly address the acute skills gap that threatens our very future. Government, developers and deliverers need to invest collectively to achieve these shared goals and future-proof the industry.”

**Mark Reynolds, chief executive officer at Mace, said:**

“Farmer’s review makes it clear that the construction industry needs to invest in training and R&D to boost productivity and ensure we have adequate capacity to deliver the UK’s economic and social infrastructure. It underlines the importance of introducing new skills and technology to the sector. We all need to embrace this catalyst for change to attract a new breed of talent to revolutionise our industry”.

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