

## **Foresight invests £16.8 million in specialist property lender Signature to facilitate MBO from Cabot Square**

**London 27 January 2020:** Foresight Group LLP (“Foresight”), a leading infrastructure and private equity investment manager, is pleased to support the MBO of Signature Private Finance Holdings Limited (“Signature” or the “Company”) from private equity firm, Cabot Square Capital, with an investment of £16.8 million to secure a majority stake in the Company. Foresight will also provide an initial £5 million revolving credit facility for the specialist property lender. Signature is also pleased to announce an updated brand, Signature Property Finance, to better reflect its market offering.

Signature’s experienced management team is led by co-founder and CEO, Tony Gilbertson, who has 30 years’ experience in banking and property development alongside Finance Director, David Hughes, formerly of MEM Commercial Finance and Sales Director, Jon Preston. The Company will be supported following investment by Foresight Partner, James Livingston and Investment Manager, David Miles.

Based in Solihull, with additional offices in Cardiff, Edinburgh and London, Signature has made some 400 loans since it was established in 2013, with a property backed loan book of c.£40 million at the end of 2019. The Company specialises in short-term bridging finance loans to property developers, landlords, companies and investors, priding itself on its high-quality customer service and a reputation for deliverability.

The alternative finance sector and specifically the property bridging market, which covers residential, commercial development and second charge segments has grown significantly over the last ten years.

The business is well-positioned to accelerate its growth with the additional investment, support and guidance that Foresight will bring. The Company is also expected to announce the addition of a high calibre Chairman shortly as well as widen its footprint across the UK and expedite the development of new products to reflect the needs of its clients.

Signature is the third specialist lender that Foresight has backed, taking its total committed capital in the sector to c.£100 million.

**James Livingston, Partner at Foresight, commented:** *“We are excited to be able to back Tony, David and Jon and their professional team, who have grown a strong loan book and equally importantly strong client relationships, whilst maintaining exceptional credit discipline. Signature supports the dynamic UK property market and we look forward to supporting its further growth ambitions, as well as backing other specialist lenders in future.”*

**Tony Gilbertson, CEO of Signature, added:** *“The Foresight team has demonstrated a good understanding of our sector and is fully aligned with our business objectives. Having grown rapidly but carefully over the last six years, Foresight’s support will enable us to take a step up to the next level and we look forward to embarking on our next stage of growth. We’d also like to thank Cabot Square for the guidance and support they have provided the business over its first six years.”*

**ENDS**

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Management Due Diligence: Catalysis Advisory

Insurance Due Diligence: Vista Insurance

**Signature's Advisers:**

Legal adviser: VWV

Corporate Finance: Heligan Partners

**About Foresight Group LLP (Foresight):**

Foresight has been managing investment funds on behalf of institutions and retail clients for more than 35 years. It has in excess of £4 billion AUM across a number of funds, including Listed Vehicles, Limited Partnerships, Enterprise Investment Schemes (EISs), Venture Capital Trusts (VCTs) and Inheritance Tax Solutions using Business Relief (BR) and OEICs.

In private equity, Foresight has more than £700 million of funds under management and a UK SME portfolio comprising more than 90 companies, making growth capital and equity release investments from five regional institutional funds alongside a family of Venture Capital Trusts and Enterprise Investment Schemes.

Foresight is also a leading renewables infrastructure investor with over £3 billion of clean energy infrastructure assets under management including wind, solar, bioenergy, hydro, battery storage and flexible generation. Foresight currently manages more than 190 renewable generation assets globally, with a total generating capacity of 2GW.

Foresight is headquartered in London with regional UK offices in Manchester, Nottingham, Milton Keynes, Leicester, Edinburgh, Cambridge and Guernsey and international offices in Sydney, Rome, Madrid and Seoul.

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