High-value property valuation guide

Pre-application guidance for high-net-worth clients

Created by Royal London Equity Release in partnership with e.surv

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High-value equity release cases can be rewarding, but they can also be uniquely complex. With these properties, it's more common to see features that don't fit standard valuation pathways. This can introduce uncertainty early on and, if not identified upfront, can lead to delays, additional queries, or even the risk of a case not progressing as expected.

In this handy guide, created in partnership with e.surv, we'll explain the factors that can make valuations more complex for high-value properties. We'll explore what happens during a property inspection and how you can help your clients prepare, so the valuation process can run as smoothly as possible. We'll also explain how specialist support can help your case to progress efficiently.

Understanding high-value property complexity

All homes are assessed with a considered approach, but higher-value properties may have additional complexities due to their features and characteristics. They are often larger, may include annexes or additional amenities such as swimming pools, equestrian facilities, multiple outbuildings, or extensive acreage, and there may be some additional legal considerations, such as right of way. High-value properties are also more likely to feature modern renewable technologies or private water and drainage systems, and may be located within conservation areas, areas of outstanding natural beauty, or hold listed status.

All e.surv surveyors are RICS Registered Valuers. For product cases on high-value properties, such as Premier product cases, e.surv appoint a surveyor with extensive experience in complex, high-value residential homes to ensure that the valuation reflects the unique characteristics of the property. Where appropriate, this may include drawing on specialist expertise from a wider geographic area to ensure the right experience is applied.

Property inspection

The property inspection is an important part of the overall valuation process and is carried out in line with RICS standards and the requirements of a mortgage valuation.

During the inspection, the surveyor will:

- Assess the property to establish its age, construction, and condition
- Review any alterations or extensions
- Consider factors that may affect the value of the property
- Use appropriate professional judgement and inspection techniques to identify any relevant issues
- Consider the wider setting, including any external influences such as nearby infrastructure or commercial uses
- Record key details through measurement and photography

As part of the valuation process, the surveyor will identify the extent of the property's land and boundaries, although these are not physically measured or walked in full.

Additional research carried out may include:

- Flood risk assessment
- Radon levels
- Past and present mining activity
- Conservation Area or Listed Building status checks

Valuation methodology: How market value is determined

The information gathered during the property inspection forms the foundation of the valuation process. The on-site assessment allows the surveyor to fully understand the property's characteristics, including its age, construction, condition, size, layout, location, and plot.

This information will then be used to create a detailed review of comparable market evidence. In line with RICS requirements, opinions of value are supported by identifiable comparisons, with the surveyor selecting and analysing properties that most closely reflect the subject property.

Whilst the availability of comparable evidence can vary across different market and property types, no two properties are identical. The surveyor will therefore use their professional expertise to interpret the available evidence, making informed and balanced judgements to account for differences in size, condition, location and other key attributes.

The final valuation is based on a combination of on-site insight, market evidence and professional judgement, ensuring a thorough and considered result.

Preparing for the inspection

Preparing for the surveyor's visit can be a worrying time for customers. You can help to prepare your clients by providing the following guidance, which will also assist the surveyor in completing their assessment:

- Ensure full access is available to all areas, including roof spaces, garages, outbuildings, annexes, and cellars
- Provide any relevant documentation, such as warranties or guarantees, planning permissions, building regulations, and certificates for any past alterations
- Share any additional specialist reports already obtained, such as damp treatment reports or structural engineer assessments

Quality control

All high-value reports benefit from an enhanced quality assurance process, which includes:

- Oversight from a dedicated quality control team
- Comprehensive risk management measures, including high value audits
- Additional managerial review for complex or very high value cases

These checks ensure accuracy, consistency, and reliability throughout the valuation process, offering peace of mind to both applicants and lenders.

How can the Premier Concierge Service support your high-value cases?

The Premier Concierge Service is available to advisers who place a case with the Royal London Equity Release Premier product, and it provides exclusive pre-application support designed for properties that are valued above £2 million. This tailored service gives you direct access to a dedicated Broker Support Specialist, who will support you from initial referral and pre-acceptance discussion through to addressing complex queries, decisions, and escalations. The Broker Support Specialist ensures personalised guidance throughout, helping deliver a streamlined journey from application to completion and liaising directly with e.surv's equity release specialists to obtain expert property guidance at the earliest stage.

To help manage the additional complexity often associated with high-value properties, all cases are referred to the funder both before application and post-valuation to provide early insight and support smoother progression. Where a case has already been reviewed pre-application by the Broker Support Team, this early engagement can help identify potential considerations upfront. In these circumstances, the case will not need to be referred again at the processing stage.

Key takeaways for advisers

These top tips will help you to minimise the stress of high-value cases at the earliest stage, strengthening your client conversations and simplifying complexity on cases that progress. Share this advice with your clients to help your cases to progress smoothly.

Set expectations early

High-value properties often require a more detailed review. You can support your client by explaining that the valuation may involve additional research and analysis following the inspection, to ensure that the outcome is thoroughly evidenced and reflects the property's individual characteristics.

Flag complexity triggers at the very start

Encourage clients to tell you upfront about:

- Large plots and acreage
- Multiple dwellings or annexes
- Significant outbuildings
- Listed status, conservation areas or areas of outstanding natural beauty
- Non-standard construction
- Private water or drainage
- Major recent renovations.

Help clients prepare the paperwork pack.

Where relevant, ask your clients to gather:

- Planning permissions
- Building regulations approvals
- Completion certificates
- Warranties or guarantees
- Any specialist reports (e.g., structural engineer, damp, roof, timber)

Prepare clients for access requirements on the day
Remind your client that the surveyor may need access to all areas of their home, including lofts and roof spaces, cellars, garages, annexes, outbuildings and land. If areas are locked or obstructed, it can lead to delays or revisits.

Make boundaries and land easy to understand
For properties with land, advise your clients to be clear on what's included and identify boundaries on the day. If available, it may help to have a plan to hand. Even if land isn't physically walked by the surveyor, it must be understood and evidenced.

Reassure clients about quality and consistency
Position the enhanced checks as a safeguard, designed to ensure the valuation is well-evidenced for high-value lending.

If you'd like to learn more, please reach out to our Broker Support Team.
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