Claire Higgins, head of research at BNP Paribas Real Estate, the leading property adviser, shares her thoughts on the US election:

“The US electorate has voted for maintaining the status quo. Same President. Same balance of power in Congress, with a Republican-led House of Representatives and a marginal Democratic lead in the Senate.

Most pundits agree that the economy was the main issue for voters, yet President Obama was re-elected during a bad economy and with unemployment at 7.9% – the first time an incumbent has held on to office in such conditions since FDR.

A second term president has more freedom to push his own and his party’s agenda but, with the Republicans divided and increasingly less centrist, it seems unlikely that the aggressive opposition President Obama has faced in Congress will recede. Both sides will be under pressure to ensure the “fiscal cliff” is resolved quickly – which is vital for the UK and global economies – but, in an era of such strong partisanship, it is questionable whether this can be achieved in either a timely or future-proofed (rather than piecemeal) fashion.

The “fiscal cliff” will likely be avoided, which will be a substantial relief for the rest of the world, but perhaps not with the conclusive long-term plan underpinning it that those outside the US would like to see.

There has been little reaction in the global markets to the election outcome, with share indices slightly up and the dollar slightly down. The outlook for the US economy, which is so vital to the majority of Asian economies, remains weak. This, combined with the ongoing turmoil in the Eurozone and the Middle East, means the UK is likely to continue to appeal as a safe haven to overseas investors, which have accounted for 50% of UK real estate investment so far this year.

Meanwhile, in the US, the next two years will see some interesting and keenly fought battles that will make The West Wing look like Mr Romney’s bête noire Sesame Street.”

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About BNP Paribas Real Estate

BNP Paribas Real Estate, leading international real estate provider, offers to its clients a comprehensive range of services that span the entire real estate lifecycle: property development, transaction, consulting, valuation, property management and investment management. BNP Paribas Real Estate has local expertise on a global scale through its presence in 36 countries through more than 150 offices and 3,400 employees (16 wholly owned subsidiaries and 20 by its Alliance network, that represents today more than 3,000 people). BNP Paribas Real Estate is a subsidiary of BNP Paribas.

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