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**CHANGE OF PROFESSIONALS' WORKPLACE IN NIGERIAN ESTATE
SURVEYING PRACTICE**

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Abstract

The workplace movement, staff attrition and retention of professionals are a worldwide happening which affects both developing and developed countries differently. Focus of most literatures on workplace movement of professionals was however on brain drain (country to country movement) with less emphasis on rate of movement of professionals within the same country over a period of time. In a bid to practise the profession, the Estate-Surveying-Professionals (ESPs) may result to changes of workplace due to a given factor and on interval basis end up moving from one firm to another or to other industries and establishment at differing rates and patterns. This study therefore seeks to explore and identify factors that lead to change of workplace among ESPs in Nigeria. An in-depth survey interview was conducted on the 152 affected Estate Surveying Professionals in Nigeria based on the differences between the 7th and 8th (most current) editions of the directory of members and registered firms of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV) through telephony. The findings indicated that the type of change of workplace is mostly an internal movement among Estate-Surveying-Firms(ESFs) and that most of the geographical change of workplace are within the same urban area characterized by desire to operate self/jointly established Estate Surveying Firm. The change of workplace among ESPs is still mostly intra profession type (brain exchange) and not inter profession one (brain drain). Although, the work concluded that the change of workplace does not constitute a threat of extinction to the profession of Estate Surveying in Nigeria, it is recommended that NIESV should constantly study the rate and pattern of change of workplace amongst its members for effective monitoring towards sustainable estate surveying practice in Nigeria. Furthermore, as a complement to this work, NIESV should endeavour to ascertain the exit type of 333 members listed in its 7th edition, but missing in its 8th edition as a further monitoring of change of workplace among its members. Finally, as already did by other professionals, NIESV should make available the updated list of its registered members for capturing by the National Bureau of Statistics of Nigeria, as part of vital national statistics of the country.

Keywords: Estate-Surveying-Professionals (ESPs), Estate-Surveying-Firms (ESFs), practice, change- of-workplace, brain exchange, brain drain.

1. Background to the Study
Key to success or failure in professional practice is mostly determined by its professionals who are its principal human capital. A number of authors have noted that human capital, rather than physical capital, provides the basis for sustained competitive advantage (Youndt, Shen, Dean, and Lepak, 1996). Knowledge or experience in an organization is embedded in its individual workers/members rather than its physical capital.

Professionals otherwise called intellectual capital are very critical to organisation success (Ibidunni, Osinbajo, Adeniji, Salau and Falola, 2016). Previous researches have revealed change of workplace of professionals in the Banking organisation (Ibidunni *et al*, 2016) ; Health industry (Antwi and Phillips, 2013; Abejide, 2014), Education service (Baah, Otoo and Osei, 2009), Hospitality industry (Honyenuga and Adzoi, 2012), Public and Civil service (Sanda and Ntsiful, 2013; Mensah and Alemna, 1997), Media industry (Quartey, 2012), Higher Academic Institution (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013) etc, none of such works was however noted in Estate Surveying.

The literature has however indicated that the science of employee selection is very well developed, but the science of employee change of the workplace is not well developed (Taylor and Collins, 2000; Barber and Bretz, 2000). This phenomenon has therefore presented a compelling curiosity amongst researchers as to what actually motivated this category of employees to constantly change their employers or places of employment?

Generally, Professional Firms may be confronted with some challenges that may pose a threat to their survival. These include innovation of skills, fear of extinction from other players in the built environment, low human capital retention, and creation of development obstacles of talents for future generation. In the wake of this, most professional firms provide their talented employees with competitive remuneration and stimulating work environment, but it is still noted that organisations that could be referred to as employers of choice still experience persistent turnover of their talents. This is because workplace movement is a global issue which affects both developing and developed countries, but specifically, the problem in developing countries has not been sufficiently documented in literature (Tettey, 2006; Samuel and Chipunza, 2013).

Attracting, motivating and retaining knowledge workers (professionals) has become important in a knowledge-based and a tight labour market, where changing knowledge management practices and global convergence of technology has redefined the nature of work (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013). According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD, 2006), the changing demographics of the labour market, enduring skills shortages and employee demands for work–life balance has created a so-called 'war for talent'.

Competition has therefore put skilled employees (professionals) who are already in short supply under pressure as they are being attracted by more than one organisation at a time with various kinds of incentives. Estate Surveying firms are competing with one another in the recruitment of talented and knowledgeable Estate

Surveying Practitioners. Withdrawal of professional services for other establishments, private jobs, return-to-school, self-employment or taking up non-estate surveying employment, retirement and death without full replacements are now becoming increasingly noticeable in the Estate Surveying practice in Nigeria which therefore, called for analysis for proper monitoring.

While brain drain suggests movement of skills across borders, this study is concerned with intra and inter skills movement within the Nigerian Estate Surveying Firms and other related and non-related establishments in Nigeria. Against this background, this work is therefore set to establish the rate, type and factors that account for change of workplace among ESPs in Nigeria. This is with the view to have improvement in estate surveying firms' strategies, policies and practices towards reducing the negative professional turnover for a sustainable estate surveying practice in Nigeria.

The expected findings will be a guide and mean of assisting the Estate Surveying Firms in their recruitment and retention practices and a need for proper monitoring by the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV). To achieve these objectives, this work has been structured into 6 sections. Next to this introductory section is models and theories of change of workplace in section 2; section 3 reviewed the existing literatures on the study while section 4 was on research methodology. Section 5 was on the findings of the study before conclusion and recommendations were made at the sixth section.

2. Employees Change of Workplace; Models and Theories

The theoretical models of gravity, push-pull and behavioural theory were considered as the matches for the objectives of this study. The gravity model otherwise termed 'Newtonian theories of gravitational attraction between any two celestial masses' is one of the models used in explaining human interaction from one place to another based on physical distance. It also considered the product of two masses, the population sizes of both the origin and destination of the movements in the explanation of level of interaction of two places. In other words, there is a force of attraction of people (migration) from a low-populated small city to a high-populated big city.

Lee (1966) hypothesized the extension of the gravity model by the introduction of push-pull model which indicated that distance and population alone is not sufficient enough to explain migration behaviour. Also, that a potential migrant moving from poor origin and to better destination does not think of the distance separating the two locations but the opportunities; both the destination and the origin have characteristics that attract or repel migrants; represented by positive and negative symbols.

Individuals perceive these characteristics differently; hence, subjectivity played an important role in their reaction to the stimuli they receive from the external environment. But, basically, the push-pull model gives an idea of the movement of people away from an area emitting 'push' factors/ stimuli to an area with positive

stimuli or to an area that 'pull' them towards itself. Without a consideration of people's differences in perceiving the stimuli and reacting accordingly, the criticism levied against the mechanistic nature of the model holds, as it does not allow for individuals' perception and evaluation of the stimuli/ factors.

Sequel to this observation Shaw (1975) modified the push-pull theory and presented the behavioural theory that introduced perception and evaluation of humans to push-pull factors. The behavioural theory considered potential migrants' subjective thought, their weighing of the situation of the prospective destination in the light of their limited level of knowledge and information available to them and their personal needs (Afolayan, 2004). Also, the theory depicts human responses to external stimuli or forces that emanated from the environment, as intervening (endogenous) factors or variables that predispose an individual's reaction to external stimuli (exogenous) factors, both at the source and destination.

Therefore, the combination of gravity model, push-pull model and behavioural theories could to some extent explain the change of workplace behaviour of Estate Surveying Professionals in Nigeria; hence they are going to be useful for this study.

The phenomenon of migration of high quality professional manpower can justify the use of the term "drain", an aspect of migration which includes; over flow; expert; and exchange (Iravani, 2011). Some of the professionals may remain wholly unabsorbed or surplus because of effective demand or excess supply at the initial place of work, such professional spill over got absorbed in another workplace facing such scarcity of professionals. In quantitative term, there may be over production of professionals, and qualitatively the jobs may be too good for them or they may be too good for the jobs, leading to non-utilization of professional power in a given economy.

Studies show that workplace movement can be as a result of retirement and pursuant for a better job and each affects human and social capital on both the firm and the economy differently (Baah, *et al.*, 2009). It can also be internal (other better sectors or jobs in the same country) and external (migration). The issue of internal and external change of the workplace is a major concern to all stakeholders in national development (Adu, 2010).

Sanda and Ntsiful (2013) and Ho, Downe and Loke (2010) opined that the two kinds of this category are voluntary and involuntary. Gomez-Mejia (2012) cited in Sanda and Ntsiful (2013) described voluntary movement from workplace as a situation where an employee decides to leave the employer either for personal or professional reasons while involuntary change of workplace occurs when the employer decides to terminate his relationship with an employee, due to business demands such as a poor fit between the employee and the organisation or economic necessity.

Ho *et al.* (2010) further attributed the employee change of workplace to either push or pull factors. The push factors occurred when the professionals were forced from a place of employment while the pull factors occurred when the employee found some better or lucrative jobs elsewhere. Push factors involve employee intentions to

switch jobs as a result of situational elements, and are usually related to job dissatisfaction e.g. poor motivation causes low morale because poor salary and wages are provided for them, lack of promotion, inadequate staff development and poor conditions of service and inter-personal relationship.

Pull factors, on the other hand, act as driving forces that attract an individual toward alternative work placements, such include: provision of attractive working conditions, availability of good work resources, good staff development policy, mutual understanding between superior and subordinates, fair appraisal process and job security. In general, lack of equity in rewards of professionals noted from one place of employment to another is one of the principal factors of change of workplace, as the professionals will prefer the place of work with highest rewards and opportunities to the ones with lower rewards and opportunities.

The change of workplace of Estate Surveying Professionals may therefore be attributed to either push or pull factors. Movement of professional employees in an uncontrolled rate can generate a problem of under staffing of firms in developing economies (Antwi and Phillips, 2013). This also has a major cost to rapidly growing firms as they will lose the knowledge that the employees have built up over a period of employment as well be an additional cost of replacing and training new professional employees (Sanda and Kuada, 2013).

High rate of workplace movement, regionally or nationally can also give rise to wage inflation, as salary levels spiral upward in an attempt to retain existing staff and attract new ones (Ho *et al.*, 2010), coupled with financial loss associated with recruitment costs. Although it has been established that individuals that are unemployed are known to be more likely to create new firms than those that have a job (Evans and Leighton, 1990), but as a way of caution, firms created by such unemployed also face a higher probability of failure (Pfeiffer and Reize, 2000). This suggests that it may be relevant to account for the stability of practice before a reasonable set of firms can be achieved.

3. Literature Review

The general review of literature indicated that science of employee selection is very well developed, but the science of employee change of workplace is not well developed. However, among the few change of the workplace literature is that of Samuel, Abeka-Donkor and Gyamfi (2013) that contributed to the body of knowledge in the area of employee motivation and job satisfaction through students' perception and employee attitude towards conditions of work in Ghana. The findings indicated that there was no job satisfaction on the part of employees because of insufficient motivation. However, the work was restricted to the push aspect of workers change of workplace at potential workers perspective but not the employees' perspective. It is also on general employees' point of view, but not streamlined to the professional employees specifically.

Sharma and Kamra (2009) is another work, conducted on change of workplace of nurses leaving their countries and the expected destinations in selected public and

private hospitals in Ludhiana, Punjab. The finding of this work is that a change of workplace was higher in private hospitals than the public hospital. The study further revealed that factors for the change of workplace include; search for a lucrative job, better opportunities, high salary, better quality of life and professional recognition.

In a similar direction, Abejide (2014) examined the directions and destinations of health professionals from and into selected institutions in the south western Nigeria between 1986 and 2010 to find out that emigration was increasing while returning of health professionals declined over time. Also, the direction was majorly towards developed North and the most preferred destination was the United Kingdom followed by the United States of America and Canada. Immigrants were majorly from Europe, while returnees were from the United Kingdom and United States. The study concluded that the rate of emigration of health professionals is alarming, particularly of the doctors, which if not checked, could affect the health system of the country.

A comprehensive study of the brain drain and brain gain in Africa, in particular Nigeria is yet to emerge, examining the volumes and direction of migration of highly-skilled health professionals into and out of Nigeria and into and out of the selected tertiary and secondary health institutions in South-western Nigeria over a defined period.

Ibidunni *et al* (2016) investigated how best banking organization can retain and manage professional employees of their organization to ensure survival and growth in the Nigerian banking industry. The result of their findings indicated that remuneration has positive significant implication on employee's commitment and involvement in banking activities and suggested the incorporation of incentives like salary, bonus, reward and profit sharing into employment relation strategies and policies by decision makers towards increase level of commitment among the professional banking employees.

Samuel and Chipunza (2013) identified and evaluated factors that facilitate the change of workplace of senior academic employees in South African universities. The study adopted survey research design to examine the influence of certain work attributes on the retention of 255 senior academic staffs in 10 universities across South Africa. Results of the study indicated that most of the respondents place greater importance on challenging work, inter-personal relationship, access to research resources and job security. Results are discussed in terms of the implications for retention practices in the universities.

In Nigeria, educational change of workplace was investigated by Cyril *et al* (2015) to discover the causes of science and technical teachers' change of workplace and strategies for retention in Adamawa State Secondary Schools in Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted for the study to reveal that poor conditions of service, poor salaries and wages contributed to the teachers' rates of change in workplace which resulted in shortage of the teachers, overloading of existing teachers, and poor performance of students in examinations among others. The strategies for retention include provision of attractive conditions of service, provision of facilities for

teaching and learning. It was recommended that Adamawa state government should provide good incentives, enough teaching and learning materials to schools as a mechanism for accretion.

Recruitment and retention are seemed to be affected by the whole employment package the advantages and disadvantages of the job relative to other employment, the more attractive the overall package, the more likely it will attract applicants and retain employees. The comparative importance of these factors differs for recruitment and retention, due to informational differences between those in a job and potential recruits. If professional firms reward performance with only money, they will be losing the substance of retention because there are other more powerful ways of motivating quality employees and these include freedom and flexibility in the organisation (Hays, 1999).

According to Kuye (2012), organizations that understand the need to manage the development of their high performers are a step ahead of their competitors. Applicants (particularly those entering the sector) have less knowledge and the factors influencing recruitment tend to be those in which information is more easily available. This means that pay tends to loom larger for recruitment than retention.

A number of studies have demonstrated that in most countries and industries, pay does not have a strong effect on employee change of workplace. According to Challenger, Gray and Christmas (1999) 'low' pay is low on managers' lists when deciding to join or leave an organisation. The two things that managers cited most often when discussing loyalty were corporate pride and trust in their chief executive's ability to take decisions. Pay, as a way of keeping talent, came third. Furthermore, using pay as a key method to attract and keep talent may be costly.

According to Pfeffer (1994), 'pay is the most fungible of all the resources at an employer's disposal; if it is an employer's sole source of loyalty, then he always runs the risk of being out bid'. Considering the risks and problems associated with pay as a device to attract and keep talent, some experts argue that many firms will have to find other ways of attracting and keeping good people, including realistic job previews, good employer orientation, opportunities for career development, and challenging work assignments.

This suggestion is however consistent with the view that the ability to attract and retain talented people depends largely on non-monetary factors such as the quality of supervision and the extent organisations utilised the skills and knowledge of their employees (Hiltrop, 1999).

Consequently, Hiltrop considered the following as crucial for change of workplace in organisations - employment security, opportunities for training and skill development, recruitment and promotion from within, career development and guidance, opportunities for skill development and specialisation, autonomy and decentralisation of decision-making, opportunities for teamwork and participation, equal benefits and access to perquisites for all, the employees extra rewards and recognition for high performance, openness of information about corporate goals, outcomes and intentions, pro-active personnel planning and strategic human

resources management.

As the retention of talent with critical skill sets is acknowledged by organisations as vital for achievement of business growth and the building of organisational competencies, some organisations strive to be the 'employer of choice' by creating a positive environment and offering challenging assignments that, foster continued personal growth. High talent individuals want work that is interesting, challenging and that has an impact. They also expect work to be appropriately designed, with adequate resource availability and with effective management, work flows and teams to create more exciting and challenging work (Guest 1999; Messmer2000; Stein 2000; Beck 2001).

The growing priority given by individuals to work-life balance (Kersley, Carmen and Forth, 2004; Bonney, 2005) also has implications for the design and implementation of talent management strategies. A shift in employers thinking and policy development from considering hours spent at work on the quality of the contribution made while at work will do much to ensure as wide and diverse a talent pool as possible is accessed within their organisations.

From all the above, it seemed not much of the work on human resources study has been conducted on Estate Surveying Profession specifically. Kuye (2012) was one of the few most related works on human resources in Estate Surveying in Nigeria. However, this was focused on human resources approach for leadership continuity otherwise termed 'succession planning' of Estate Surveying Firms in Nigeria towards having a positive outcome. Asides, this is an intra estate firm analysis, not an inter estate firm analysis. In addition, it was not extended to the analysis of change of workplace of Estate Surveying professionals.

4. Methodology

The research adopted qualitative techniques in its data collection. A self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data from the respondents through telephony. The directory of Estate Surveyors and Valuers and registered firms 7th and 8th editions of year 2009 and 2014 were used as reliable sources of required data for this study. These editions of the NIESV directories are the most current and the ones with noted high cases of change of workplace among the eight editions in the series of NIESV's directories. One hundred and fifty eight (158) cases of members who changed their place of work were identified during the two periods. In the 7th edition directory, 1102 members were listed, while 1794 members were listed in the 8th edition. However, only 786 members from the 7th edition were re-presented in the 8th edition, indicating missing case of 333 members in the 8th edition. While there was a case of 333 members in the 7th edition missing in the 8th edition, there was addition of 1008 members in the 8th edition.

The work therefore adopted total enumeration survey for all the 158 identified cases, but 152 responses (96.20% response rate) were eventually achieved and the analysis was based on these responses. Prototype response to the questions asked for change of workplace includes; I left my former place of employment because my

appointment was terminated by my employer; I left my former place of employment because of frustration and lack of job satisfaction; I left my former place of employment because of job insecurity; I left my former place of employment because of my spouse job relocation; I left my former place of employment because of high work demand; I left my former place of employment because of poor organisation culture/structure; I left my former place of employment for me to have further study; I left my former place of employment to fulfil my ambition; I left my former place of employment to have a better job opportunity; I left my former place of employment to have a better working environment; I left my former place of employment to set up my personal firm; I left my former place of employment to set up my personal/partnership firm; I left my former place of employment to diversify from the common real estate practice; I cannot disclose the factor for the change of my workplace. The data collected were analysed descriptively using frequency Tables.

5. The Research Findings and Discussion

Table 1 indicated that 54 respondents representing 35.53% changed their place of work from an existing Estate Surveying firms to establish their personal or collective Estate Surveying firms. Thirty four respondents (22.37%) changed their place of employment from public service to Estate Surveying firms, while 20.39% of the respondents changed from one Estate Surveying firm to another Estate Surveying firm. Seventeen respondents representing 11.18% changed their workplace from Estate Surveying firm to public/civil service while 9 respondents (5.92%) changed their workplace from one public/civil services institution to another public/civil services institution.

Five of the respondents i.e. 3.29% changed their workplace from Estate Surveying firms to a higher educational institution. It was further revealed that there was no any response as regards changed of workplace from educational institution to public service, but one respondent (0.66%) changed his/her place of work from educational institution to private practice and from personally established Estate Surveying firm to another estate firm.

The summary in Table 1 is that 78.95% (35.53%, 22.37%, 20.39% and 0.66%) of the type of change of workplace is directed to Estate Surveying firms while 21.05% was movement away from Estate Surveying firms.

Table 1: Type of change of workplace

Type of Change of Workplace among Estate Surveyors in Nigeria	Responses	%
Response		

From one ESV firm to personally/collectively established ESV firm	54	35.53
From public service to ESV firm	34	22.37
From one ESV firm to another	31	20.39
From ESV firm to public/civil service	17	11.18
From one public/civil services to another public/civil service	9	5.92
From ESV firm to higher educational institution	5	3.29
From higher educational institution to public service	-	-
From higher educational institution to private practice	1	0.66
From personally established ESV firm to another ESV firm	1	0.66
Total	152	100.00

Source: Field work 2016

Table 2 indicated that 1 respondent (0.66%) changed his workplace from rural area to city, 122 respondents representing 80.26% changed their workplace within the same city. Three respondents (1.97%) indicated their change of workplace from one city to another city within the same state, while 26 respondents of 17.11% changed their workplace from one city in a state to another city in another state.

This implied that most of the geographical change of workplace is within the same city while few were from one city to another, no any change of workplace from city to a rural area.

Table 2: Geographical change of workplace location

Geographical Change of Workplace among Estate Surveyors in Nigeria	Responses	%
Response		
Change of workplace from city to rural area	-	-
Change of workplace from rural area to city	1	0.66
Change of workplace within the same city	122	80.26
Change of workplace from one city to another within the same state		1.97
Change of workplace from a city in a state to a city in another state	26	17.11
Total	152	100.00

Source: Field work 2016

The determining factors for the change of workplace by Estate Surveyors in Nigeria showed that 2 respondents (1.32%) had their employment terminated, 8 respondents (5.26%) changed their workplace due to frustration/lack of job satisfaction. Lack of job security was accounted for change of workplace by 15 respondents representing 9.87%, while, 3 respondents (1.97%) changed their workplace due to the perceived high work demand from their employers.

Seven respondents (4.61%) attributed the change of their workplace to the poor organizational structure of the firm, 2 respondents attributed the change of their workplace to poor interpersonal relations among the staff. The need for further studies was the factor as indicated by 3 respondents (1.97%) while the relocation of spouse was the factor indicated by 3 respondents (1.97%). No response was received for over ambitious of the respondents, but

23 respondents representing 15.13% change their workplace to have a better offer and opportunity likewise 5 (3.29%) for a better working environment somewhere else. It was indicated by 72 respondents (47.37%) that setting up of a personal or collective Estate Surveying firm was factor for their change of workplace, no response to indicate diversification from the common real estate practice.

However, 5 respondents representing 3.29% do not disclose the factor for their change of workplace while 4 respondents i.e. 2.63% indicated other factors besides the closed ended answers supplied. Such factors are personal grudge with the principal partner, conflict of religious belief, From Table 3, it was reflected that the major determinant for the change of workplace among Estate Surveying Professionals in Nigeria is to set up personal or collective firms (47.37%), followed by intention to have a better offer or better opportunity 15.13%. Although 9.87% of the respondents changed workplace due to fear of job insecurity, but none of the response changed workplace to diversify from the common real estate practice.

This finding is an indication that the profession of Estate Surveying in Nigeria is not at threat of extinction, because the change of workplace among its members is still mostly intra profession type (brain exchange) not inter profession one (brain drain).

Table 3: Major Determining Factor for Change of Workplace

Determinant of Change in Workplace by Estate Surveyors in Nigeria	Responses	
%Responses		
Termination of appointment	2	1.32
Frustration/lack of job satisfaction	8	5.26
Lack of job security	15	9.87
High work demand	3	1.97
Poor firm organization structures	7	4.61
Poor interpersonal relations	2	1.32
Need for further studies	3	1.97
Relocation of spouse	3	1.97
Over ambitious	To have a better	
offer/opportunity	23	15.13
To have a better working environment	5	3.29
To set up personal/collective ESV firm	72	47.37
To diversify from the common real estate practice	-	-
Factor for change of workplace no disclosed	5	3.29
Other specified factors	4	2.63
Total	152	100.00

Source: Field work 2016

1. Conclusion and Recommendations

Virtually all the observed change of workplace was done within urban centres, no rural area was involved. Brain exchange is most noted amongst the Estate Surveying firms in Nigeria, but not brain drain.

Being the likely maiden work on change of workplace in Estate Surveying Practice in Nigeria, this work was undertaken at the employee's perspective and does not include employer's perspective; further work on change of workplace should be extended to be at the employer's perspective. The exit type of 333 members from the 7th edition of NIESV directory was not ascertained by this work. It is a mere guess could it be as a result of death, cross border migration, exit from practice to another profession, retirement from practice, health ground, not meeting the financial requirement etc., this need to be determined by further studies.

Also the number of time/frequency of change of work place during the period was not ascertained. The proportion of members combining academic with practice, i.e. academic professional or professional academic was not determined by this work. All these will amount to areas for further studies.

It is therefore recommended that NIESV should constantly study the rate and pattern of change of workplace amongst its members for effective monitoring. As part of national statistics of Nigeria, NIESV should also make available to the National Bureau of Statistics, the updated list of its registered members by geographical location as already done by other professionals (Architects and Land Surveyors).

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