



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KC MP
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Friday 23rd May 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Cross-party letter on Chinese Embassy proposal

In light of mounting security concerns—including those relating to recent events surrounding government intervention at British Steel, recent cyberattacks, and sensitive trade negotiations with the United States—we urge you to pause the decision on the proposed Chinese ‘super-embassy’ at Royal Mint Court until a full, independent reappraisal of its implications can be undertaken.

The proposed embassy raises significant and unresolved questions relating to national security, civil liberties, and the democratic principles that underpin both the UK and our allies.

Recent evidence brought to our attention has highlighted more troubling features of the proposed site, including an unusually large basement equipped with a security airlock, unlabelled rooms, and a tunnel. These characteristics resemble design elements previously rejected by other governments on national security grounds. We are gravely concerned that such features could be used to intimidate dissidents, conduct surveillance, or engage in espionage.

Its strategic proximity to London’s financial district further amplifies these concerns. The potential for intelligence-gathering activities targeting the UK’s financial services sector—and those of close allies like the United States—should not be underestimated. A U.S. congressional committee has already expressed concerns about the risk this site could pose to financial sector integrity and broader transatlantic security.

Concerns have been raised directly by Rob Hargis, an International Security and Critical Infrastructure Protection expert who offered: *“Whether the intentions are to surveil, deny, degrade, disrupt, or destroy UK critical financial and telecom traffic, granting access to Beijing or ANY country for a facility let alone a super-embassy at this location is akin to throwing them the literal keys to the country.”* He added, *“If I were asked to survey the most advantageous locations for close access to critical UK financial, data center and telecommunications infrastructure, the Royal Mint site near the Tower Subway telecom crossing would be on my short-list.”*

These dire warnings reinforce the urgent need for a critical reassessment of the government's current position.

Additionally, the situation at Scunthorpe Steelworks has illustrated how Chinese state-linked entities can wield destabilising influence over vital UK infrastructure. We cannot ignore the risk that this embassy could become a tool for coercion, surveillance, or influence operations. Scunthorpe stands as a cautionary tale: we must remain vigilant in defending our sovereignty.

Given the scale and seriousness of these concerns, we believe the proposal warrants an independent and transparent national security review. The UK's planning framework must not be a backdoor for foreign state influence that risks long-term harm to our democratic institutions.

We strongly urge you to ensure this decision is paused and reconsidered in the national interest.

Kind regards,



Member of Parliament for Thirsk and Malton

Shadow Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Signatories:

David Simmonds MP

Paul Holmes MP

Lewis Cocking MP

Baroness Scott

Lord Jamieson

Iain Duncan Smith MP

Ben Maguire MP

Julia Lopez MP

Greg Smith MP

Lord Davies of Gower

Lord Frost

Lord Robathan

Lord Kilclooney

Bradley Thomas MP

Baroness D'Souza

Baroness Noakes

Lord Gilbert
Baroness O'Loan
Lord Lisvane
Lord Sandhurst
Baroness Deech
Suella Braverman MP
Alicia Kearns MP
Lord Randall
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist
Andrew Rosindell MP
Gavin Williamson MP
Lord Moynihan of Chelsea
Gareth Bacon MP
Saqib Bhatti MP
Nigel Huddleston MP
Kit Malthouse MP
Richard Holden MP
Baroness Hodgson of Abinger
Lord Storey
Lord Bethell
Baroness Stedman-Scott
Harriet Cross MP
Lord Alton of Liverpool
Charlie Dewhurst MP
Jack Rankin MP
Andrew Snowden MP
Nick Timothy MP
Jim McAlister MP
Neil Shastri-Hurst MP
Sammy Wilson MP
David Reed MP

Sir Geoffrey Clifton Brown MP

Danny Kruger MP

Jerome Mayhew MP

Robbie Moore MP

James Cartlidge MP

Peter Bedford MP

Gregory Stafford MP

Mike Wood MP

Desmond Swayne MP

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