

24 July 2023

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
Fry Building,  
2 Marsham Street,  
London, SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State,

## **INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT LAND**

On behalf of the London business community, we welcome your commitment in your speech of 24 July to work with the Mayor of London to ensure there is more affordable housing in the capital. We note that you are also considering reshaping the London Plan. In that context, may I seek your assistance on the issue of land for industrial and employment use in London.

LCCI is the capital's largest independent business advocacy organisation. We represent the interests of firms of all sizes, from micro-businesses and sole traders through to large, multi-national corporates, across all 33 London local authority areas – genuinely reflecting the broad spectrum of London business opinion.

It is in that context that our members have informed us that the availability of land for employment and industrial use in the boundaries of Greater London has fallen, particularly sites within the North Circular. This is forcing firms – predominantly those in freight and logistics – to locate sites further away from inner London.

As a result, freight and logistics firms are driving further to make deliveries into the centre as industrial land is repurposed for other uses, such as for housing. This additional mileage is leading not only to additional costs for these businesses but adds to the already unacceptable levels of pollution and congestion on London's roads. The impact for the Government's ambitions to reach net zero cannot be overstated.

Indeed, firms are investing heavily in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to transition their vehicle fleets. This infrastructure is often located on industrial sites and are required to be in locations that can support short journeys in and out of inner London.

In 2019, the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry worked with the Mayor to include a policy of no net loss of industrial land in his update to the London Plan, a measure which was then removed by the then Secretary of State. This issue has become no less important since then, and we would urge you and the Mayor to ensure there are protections on industrial land in the London Plan.

Securing sites for industrial use is vital to powering London's economy. Sectors that utilise these sites – such as those in freight and logistics – have grown in importance as consumers and businesses alike shift their transactions online.

We at LCCI absolutely recognise the need for residential development, but economically important sites should be protected too. I and London Chamber members would be happy to explore this matter further with you.

May I thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Burge', written in a cursive style.

**Richard Burge**  
Chief Executive