Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

20 July 2026

Dear Prime Minister,

Good Growth in Every Postcode: Working together to deliver growth and prosperity across the United Kingdom

Firstly, on behalf of London's real estate sector, congratulations on becoming Prime Minister. Our members stand ready to work with you and your Government to tackle the major challenges facing the country and help secure the UK's long-term economic success.

The London Property Alliance is a not-for-profit organisation that provides a strong and unified voice for central London's real estate sector. It comprises a network of 300 organisations and more than 4,000 property professionals. It is the only industry body dedicated exclusively to the success of London's Central Activities Zone (CAZ). The Alliance has long championed devolution and produced extensive research and analysis demonstrating how greater local powers could help London and all our major UK cities to grow and thrive.

Back in 2021, you very kindly wrote the foreword to a joint London Property Alliance and Sheffield Property Association report on City Region Connectivity. In it, you argued that we should be emulating the London model of transport provision across our towns and cities, and that our urban powerhouses should become more innovative and productive. The London property industry could not agree with you more.

Your have rightly made **good growth** a central mission for Government. Delivering that ambition, however, will require tackling one of the UK's greatest long-term economic challenges: **weak productivity**. For too long, productivity growth has flatlined, holding back wages, investment and the tax revenues needed to fund high-quality public services and local infrastructure.

Cities across the UK are where productivity is created. They bring together businesses, talent and investment, allowing firms to innovate, collaborate and grow. And yet the UK's largest economic centre, London, has experienced stagnant productivity since the Global Financial Crisis of 2008[1].

If London is to reverse this trend, making a greater contribution to national prosperity while delivering good growth for local citizens, two things are essential: it must be able to **deliver the modern workspaces needed for businesses to grow** and **retain a greater share of the proceeds of growth** to reinvest in public transport, affordable housing and public services.

We ask that you remain ambitious in your aim to give London and other cities the powers they need to succeed and highlight three policy priorities that would support your mission to deliver good growth:

1. Recognise offices as critical economic infrastructure

As has been demonstrated so clearly in Manchester, planning is fundamental to economic growth. National planning policy should better support sustainable commercial development in our major cities, helping them remain internationally competitive while generating jobs and tax revenues across the UK.

Central London's office pipeline is under increasing pressure. Despite the opening of the Elizabeth line, major commercial planning applications across the CAZ fell by 54% between 2013 and 2023, while the

[1] https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/capital-losses-the-role-of-london-in-the-uks-productivity-puzzle/

area experienced a net loss of 14 million sq ft of office floorspace between 2018 and 2023 - equivalent to almost 12 Canary Wharf towers.

This matters because offices are not simply buildings, they are critical economic infrastructure. Commercial workspaces are where businesses invest, innovate and create the high-value jobs that drive productivity. The UK's leading sectors - including financial and professional services, tech, life sciences and the creative industries - depend on access to modern, high-quality workspace if they are to compete internationally. Office-based sectors support around 2.8 million jobs across Greater London and generate almost £290 billion of annual economic output.

The impact of offices extends beyond direct employment. For every 100 office jobs, an additional 40 jobs are supported in supply chains and 18 in local services, demonstrating that office space functions as a multiplier of economic activity across the wider economy.

Incoming changes to the National Planning Policy Framework rightly strengthen the role of economic growth in planning considerations. The next step is to explicitly recognise in national planning policy that major office schemes in city and urban centres are critical economic infrastructure and should be given extra weight in planning decisions.

2. Invest in the foundations of growth

London remains the UK's only truly global city. Maintaining that position requires long-term strategic planning and close partnership between boroughs, the GLA and national government. A globally competitive London benefits every part of the country by attracting international investment, businesses, talent and visitors into Great Britain.

However, London's housing affordability crisis and constraints in transport connectivity remain significant barriers to growth. Enabling transformational transport projects such as the Bakerloo line extension, the West London Orbital and Crossrail 2 would strengthen the capital’s productivity, improve opportunities for Londoners, unlock new housing and deliver benefits across the national economy.

3. Create stronger local incentives for growth

In your *Standard* article, 'Pitch to London', you set out your vision for a new direction for the country. Your commitment to delivering "growth from the bottom up" and a less centralised approach from Whitehall has resonated strongly with our members. We share your belief that devolution can unlock economic growth. Too often London is conflated with Westminster and Whitehall, yet, like every other great city, London should have the powers and resources to respond to its own opportunities and challenges.

As part of your devolution revolution, local authorities should be rewarded for supporting good growth. Recent reforms to business rates retention have significantly weakened the financial incentive for councils to enable more economic activity. This is because any growth in their tax base is effectively offset when Whitehall conducts funding reviews of local government. Allowing councils to retain a significant share of business rates growth over the medium to long term would create a powerful incentive to support development, while providing funding for the infrastructure and services that growing communities need.

Prime Minister, we look forward to working with you and your Government to help deliver the growth and prosperity that communities across the United Kingdom deserve. **By creating the right planning and policy environment for commercial investment, and by giving cities greater powers to drive their own success, your Government can unlock higher productivity, stronger growth and greater opportunity across the country**. We stand ready to support that mission and would welcome the opportunity to meet with your team to discuss how these ideas can be translated into practical policy.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Begley
Chief Executive, London Property Alliance