



**Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP**  
Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial  
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**Councillor Richard Cook**  
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Dear Secretary of State,

I have followed with interest your recent comments on the importance of working towards a U.K energy system underpinned by clean, safe, job-creating renewable energy generation. As you will no doubt agree, and particularly considering the instability wrought by the invasion of Ukraine, energy self-sufficiency also reduces the U.K's exposure to geopolitical instability and allows the U.K Governments to mount the strongest possible defence of our democratic values on the international stage.

I was therefore particularly encouraged by your comments at the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue Conference 2022 on the importance of "generating cheaper, cleaner energy, by expanding renewables, and by looking at nuclear" in the Government's forthcoming Energy Security Strategy.

Further to this, and ahead of the publication of the Energy Security Strategy, I am writing to express my support for changes to the planning system that allow for the expansion of onshore wind energy, which offers the most cost-effective choice for new electricity in the U.K – being cheaper than gas, nuclear, coal, and other renewables, in addition to reducing the carbon intensity of U.K grid electricity.

As you will be aware, onshore wind already generates enough clean power to meet the annual needs of more than 7.25 million homes a year and produced 9% of the UK's power needs in 2017. Overall, the UK has installed over 12 gigawatts of onshore wind capacity, which supports jobs and local economic growth in areas such as Gloucestershire, which has significant potential for investment in renewable energy generation. The cumulative investment impact of the UK's existing 1,500 operational onshore wind farms is over £35 billion, demonstrating the significant contribution that onshore wind can make to delivering low-cost, low-carbon energy .

Due to its low-density nature, renewable energy infrastructure necessitates a wide geographical distribution, presenting significant opportunities for capital investment and long-term employment prospects in manufacturing, engineering, installation, maintenance, and the wider industry supply chain across all of the U.K's regions.

I would further note that the generation of 'green hydrogen' from surplus renewable energy also has the potential to assist with broader energy system decarbonisation. This strongly aligns with the recommendations of the Climate Change Committee, which has predicated its 6th Carbon Budget on an enormous increase in hydrogen production, scaling up to 90 TWh by 2035, to provide energy for heat, industry, and hard-to-electrify activities, such as shipping.

Although it has been widely reported that onshore wind does not enjoy universal support in Government, the public remain overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Polling by YouGov has demonstrated that two-thirds of people in the U.K think the Government should change its current policy of placing significant restrictions on new onshore wind farms from our energy mix. A significant majority of voters for every mainstream political party and in every region of Britain support new onshore wind infrastructure. Two-thirds of those polled support a change in Government policy so that onshore wind farms can be built in places where they have local backing, to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and tackle climate change. Just 15% of people oppose the change .

The expansion of onshore wind power generation has the potential to significantly decarbonise the U.K energy system, improve its resilience through greater decentralisation, generate skilled employment, reduce the U.K's exposure to external energy shocks, and assist cities like Gloucester in supporting the Government to reach Net Zero emissions. I therefore hope to see this potential and ambition reflected in the forthcoming Energy Security Strategy and look forward to welcoming you to the City of Gloucester to discuss our shared ambitions around clean energy at a date convenient to you.