Business and Trade Committee

Wednesday, 11 February 2026

Chris McDonald MP
Minister for Industry
Department for Business and Trade

Subject: UK steel industry

Dear Chris,

On 10 February, Russell Codling, Director of Markets Business Development at Tata Steel UK, told the Committee that there are "eight weeks" left to save the UK steel industry. He warned that, without "sweeping action", the UK will become "the dumping ground of the world for the excess amount of steel".[1]

The Government launched a call for evidence on future steel trade measures in June 2025.[2] Current UK steel safeguards will expire in four months. No response has been published. The UK Steel Strategy was expected last year,[3] but it has not yet been released.

In recent months, there has been significant speculation about the future of the industry. During this period, key information has appeared in the press rather than being provided to Parliament. Given the steel industry's importance to the UK economy, I am writing to request clarity on several points.

Steel safeguards

1. Are ongoing negotiations with the EU over steel trade arrangements affecting the introduction of the UK's own protective measures?
2. Will you commit to announcing UK protective measures before June 2026?
3. Are you considering matching the tariff rates and import quotas now imposed by the EU and the US?
4. Can you provide an overview of the safeguards you are currently exploring?

Funding

5. Reports suggest that grant funding will no longer be available under the Steel Strategy.[4] Is this accurate, and what is the reason for this approach?

[1] Business and Trade Committee, Oral evidence: UK trade with the US, India and EU, 10 February 2026
[2] Department for Business and Trade, Steel trade measures, 26 June 2025
[3] Department for Business and Trade, The steel strategy: the plan for steel, 16 February 2025
[4] "Planned steel investment grants will no longer go ahead", BBC News, 6 November 2025

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6. The National Wealth Fund (NWF) five-year plan, published last month, has allocated £5.8 billion to five sectors, including green steel.[5] How much of this will be allocated to steel, and will the steel industry still receive the full £2.5 billion of financial support promised in the Steel Strategy consultation?
7. Will NWF funding be available only for projects with private backing?
8. If funding is delivered solely through the NWF, how will you ensure capital reaches all parts of the UK supply chain, including new recycling projects and existing steelmakers?
9. Given the current levels of financial distress in the industry, will you release any funding before the strategy is published?

Steel strategy

10. What has caused the delay to the Steel Strategy, and when will it be published?
11. What is the status of negotiations with Jingye on compensation for British Steel?
12. Has the Department assessed how long it can continue funding operations at the Scunthorpe plant?
13. Which specific budgets has this support been drawn from, and what impact has this had on future plans?
14. The Government has consulted on using the national security exemption in the Procurement Act 2023 to encourage the use of UK steel.[6] When will the response be published, and are any other measures under consideration?

Given the urgency of this matter, I would appreciate a response to this letter with the requested information by Wednesday 18 February.

Yours sincerely,

Liam Byrne

Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair of the Business and Trade Committee

[5] National Wealth Fund, Unlocking the UK's Future: Our Five-Year Strategic Plan to 30/31 (PDF), January 2026, p18
[6] Cabinet Office, Public Procurement: Growing British industry, jobs and skills, 11 December 2025

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