

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

8th July 2026

Dear Mr Burnham

CC: Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, The Rt Hon Louise Haigh MP, Anneliese Midgley MP

Re: The case for a dedicated Department for Infrastructure

I am writing on behalf of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE), the business association for the UK's professional consultancy and engineering companies operating across social and economic infrastructure. We represent around 300 member firms, large and small, in a sector employing over 470,000 people, contributing more than £39 billion to the UK economy, and exporting over £11 billion of world-class expertise annually. The sector employs over 25,000 people in high-value technical jobs in Greater Manchester alone – the largest engineering hub outside of London.

As you know, our members have been critical partners in delivering infrastructure across Greater Manchester over many years. Buro Happold played a key role in the Co-op Live, the UK's largest indoor music venue, while Arup, a UK cooperative and global export success story, has worked with the National Trust to transform the Castlefield Viaduct into a free-to-access urban park.

You have been the country's most consistent and effective advocate for devolution and for the places-based approach to infrastructure that our members believe in. That is why we are seeking your support for a long-standing industry proposal we believe would transform how the UK plans, funds and delivers infrastructure: the creation of a dedicated Department for Infrastructure within central government.

Today, responsibility for infrastructure is fragmented across Whitehall: transport, energy, water, housing, digital and flood resilience sit in different departments with different priorities, budgets and timescales. The consequences will be familiar to you: duplicated effort, stop-start funding, and combined authorities forced to navigate multiple departments to deliver a single integrated programme.

A single Department for Infrastructure would deliver:

- **Streamlined delivery:** one accountable home for infrastructure policy, planning and funding, and one ministerial champion for infrastructure; ending the delays and duplication created by fragmented departmental ownership.
- **Genuine cross-government coordination:** integrated decision-making across transport, energy, water and housing, so interdependent projects are planned together rather than in silos.
- **A stronger partner for devolution:** a single front door for combined authorities, with the mandate and capability to support mayoral infrastructure pipelines, simplify funding routes, and align national and local priorities.
- **Pipeline certainty:** long-term visibility that gives industry the confidence to invest in the skills, capacity and innovation needed to deliver.

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- **Better value for the taxpayer:** earlier design input, fewer reworked schemes, and a delivery model that learns across sectors rather than reinventing it project by project.

We believe your support would be decisive in making this case, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss with your team, how ACE and the next government, might work together to advance it. I would be delighted to meet with you or your team at their convenience.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Milda Manomaitytė'. The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Milda Manomaitytė
Chief Executive, Association for Consultancy and Engineering