



18 August 2020

Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Strategic Review of the Houses of Parliament Restoration and Renewal Programme

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 15 July regarding our strategic review of the Houses of Parliament Restoration and Renewal Programme.

We agree that the current 'patch and mend' maintenance approach is unsustainable given the current condition of the Palace of Westminster and the significant risks this poses for the continued functioning of Parliament. The critical need for the restoration of the Palace therefore continues to be unchanged and the review will seek to confirm the optimum approach for achieving this.

We take our statutory obligations to ensure that the works represent value for money very seriously. We are also taking account of lessons learned from other major programmes, in line with the advice of the National Audit Office and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, including the merit of conducting strategic reviews at key points in the programme. We were grateful for the opportunity to discuss these matters with the Public Accounts Committee when we provided evidence on 21 July.

We can also confirm that the Programme is currently considering a wide range of possible interventions for restoring the Palace as part of the preparation of the business case for the works, which both Houses will be invited to endorse in due course.

We are conscious that a broad range of potential delivery options have already been considered at great length, including by a joint committee of both Houses in 2016, which recommended full decant as the quickest, cheapest and least risky delivery option, which was subsequently endorsed by a resolution of both Houses in 2018. We are nevertheless considering, as part of our strategic review, whether circumstances have changed so significantly as to warrant reconsidering these options.

As you have already noted, the option of locating Parliament outside London has constitutional implications, which makes this a matter for both Houses to determine rather than for our review. While the Sponsor Body and Delivery Authority are now independent bodies, we are mindful of the importance of conducting our work within the parameters set down by both Houses of Parliament including the legislation passed in 2019, and the preferred locations for the temporary chambers which have been determined by the House Commissions. Accordingly, we wrote to the Speakers of both Houses to seek

their views on your suggestion that an alternative location for Parliament outside London should be considered as part of our strategic review. We received a response from both Speakers on 27 July in which they confirmed, in similar terms, that as the location of the Houses is a matter for Parliament, it does not form part of the Programme's scope, and consequently would be inappropriate for us to explore further. This option will not, therefore, be considered as part of the scope of the strategic review.

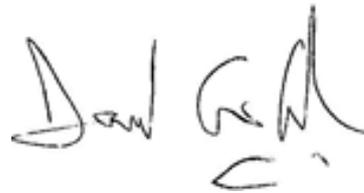
We agree that it is imperative for us to engage with members of both Houses - both as part of this review and on the Programme more generally - in line with our statutory obligations. The Sponsor Body's spokespeople in each House have already invited all Parliamentarians to make submissions to the review, and engagement with members is also taking place through party group discussions and on the floor of each House through questions and debates.

We are copying this letter to the Speakers, Leaders and Clerks of both Houses and have also arranged for a copy to be placed in the Library of both Houses.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Johnson
Chief Executive Officer
Houses of Parliament
Restoration and Renewal
Sponsor Body



David Goldstone CBE
Chief Executive Officer
Houses of Parliament
Restoration and Renewal
Delivery Authority