

Why aren't more MPs worried about UK reliance on imports and lack of capacity?

The UK imports too much of our food, our energy, our industrial goods. So many of the policies urged by the opposition parties and adopted by the government entail higher taxation and stricter regulations at home, losing us jobs, factories and capacity.

The UK imposes the higher carbon taxes of the advanced world, accelerating the loss of our steel works, ceramics factories and the rest. The UK is planning the earliest ban on new petrol and diesel cars making it likely we will lose more of our car industry than the main rivals who do not do threaten that. The UK offers plenty of grant money to owners of farmland not to grow crops and rear animals, instead of spending more of the money on promoting great home grown food. The UK imposes a corporation tax twice as high as the neighbouring Republic of Ireland, only to see many large companies set up over the Irish Sea to take advantage of the lower rates. Ireland raises almost four times as much in business tax per head than the UK thanks to the lower rate.

The water regulators keep us short of water instead of allowing and encouraging more reservoirs. This country gets plenty of rain but it does need collecting when it is around and storing. Inviting in 600,000 extra people every year to settle here requires more water, more road space, more health capacity, more school places.

The NHS keeps us short of beds and the key medical staff to service them despite getting large increases in money in recent years. Too many new homes are built without the school places, by passes and other facilities we need.

High corporation tax and windfall taxes are deterring investment in producing our own oil and gas, making us ever more dependent on imports which deliver more CO2 as well as big bills for the UK to settle abroad. Investment in wind farms has proceeded well leaving the UK short of grid capacity to transmit the power, and short of ways of storing it on windy days to sue on days when there is no wind. The UK used to be self sufficient in electricity and for a period in oil. We now depend far too much on imports for no good reason.

A growth policy would set tax rates at suitable levels, offer the necessary permits and let the private sector get on with resolving most of these capacity shortages. The extra tax revenue the growth would generate could be used for the extra NHS beds and school places we also need.