# Labour’s clandestine talks with China raise alarms over national security and sovereignty



The recent controversy surrounding Sir Keir Starmer’s handling of the Chinese embassy application highlights the alarming extent of political capitulation and compromised integrity within the current Labour government. Instead of standing firm on national security and sovereignty, the administration appears to have engaged in questionable dealings, raising serious doubts about the government’s commitment to Britain’s interests.

Reports suggest that Sir Keir Starmer may have been in clandestine talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping weeks before the government’s decision to delay. Such apparent back-channel negotiations give the impression that Labour is more interested in appeasing Beijing than protecting Britain’s security. The decision by Housing Secretary Steve Reed to postpone the final ruling—delayed again until December—appears less a matter of lawful planning and more a reflection of Labour’s hesitance to confront Chinese influence head-on.

The Chinese government’s reaction has been predictably provocative, warning of “consequences” if Britain continues to resist their ambitions. Their accusations of the UK lacking “credibility” and politicising the matter are typical of Beijing’s tactic of using diplomatic pressure to sway British policy. Yet, the real problem lies with Labour’s willingness to entertain or even entertain secret talks with such a major strategic adversary. This raises profound concerns about whether the government is prioritising short-term diplomacy over national security.

The proposed embassy, reportedly the largest of its kind in Europe at 700,000 square feet, is feared by security experts who warn that it could become a hub for Chinese espionage and influence operations. From protests exceeding the Metropolitan Police's capacity to the proximity to critical data networks, the risks are clear. Instead of taking decisive action, Labour appears to be soft on these emerging threats, risking Britain’s sovereignty in exchange for diplomatic optics.

Kemi Badenoch’s criticisms of Labour’s approach resonate widely among those of us who believe national security must come before political capitulation. Labour’s apparent indifference to the security concerns—from the risks of intelligence gathering to the potential for disruption—betrays a government too eager to curry favour with China at the expense of Britain’s safety.

As the application nears a local inquiry and ultimately lands in the hands of the Secretary of State, this case exposes the perilous path Labour is treading—one where appeasement replaces vigilance. Britain needs leadership that refuses to be bought or bullied by Beijing, not a government that cowers in the face of authoritarian pressure. The question remains: will Labour’s weak-kneed diplomacy serve the nation’s interests, or will it erode Britain’s security and sovereignty further? The answer should be clear to all defenders of true national independence.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/tories-call-for-ethics-investigation-over-china-embassy-application/a2056553099.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-10-17/tories-call-for-ethics-investigation-over-china-embassy-application> - The Conservative Party has called for an ethics investigation into Sir Keir Starmer's handling of China's proposed new embassy in London, following a postponed decision on the matter. Party chairman Kevin Hollinrake has written to standards adviser Sir Laurie Magnus, expressing concerns that ministers, including Starmer, may have breached the ministerial code. Housing Secretary Steve Reed has delayed the decision on planning permission for the new Chinese embassy until December 10. Beijing has claimed that the UK is failing to 'honour its commitments' by delaying the decision, but Downing Street has rejected any assurances over the embassy. Plans for the embassy were initially rejected by Tower Hamlets Council in 2022, with China opting not to appeal. However, Beijing resubmitted the application after the Labour Party's election victory last year, leading to ministers making the final decision. Hollinrake's letter lists occasions where he has questioned the extent of the government's discussions with Chinese counterparts, particularly noting that Starmer reportedly discussed the application with Chinese President Xi Jinping weeks before it was called in. A spokesman for Beijing's Ministry of Foreign Affairs threatened 'consequences' over the delayed decision, accusing the UK of lacking 'the spirit of contract, credibility and ethics' and 'complicating and politicising the matter'. Downing Street has pushed back, stating that the UK does not 'recognise any claims of commitments or assurances' over the embassy. Earlier in the week, Parliament's Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy urged Reed to reject Beijing's application for a new embassy at the former Royal Mint, near the Tower of London, citing concerns over national security and the site's proximity to communications networks and data centres. Housing Secretary Steve Reed has postponed the decision to December 10.
3. <https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2024/December/Tower-Hamlets-refuses-Chinese-Embassy-planning-applications.aspx> - Tower Hamlets Council has refused planning applications for the redevelopment of the Royal Mint Court complex to provide a new home for the Chinese Embassy. The Strategic Development Committee considered the applications on December 9, 2024, and resolved to reject them due to concerns over the impact on resident and tourist safety, heritage, police resources, and the congested nature of the area. The Secretary of State has called in the applications, and a Local Inquiry will take place to determine planning and listed building applications, expected to commence in the last week of January. The council's decision will be considered as part of the Local Inquiry.
4. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/chinas-new-london-super-embassy-risk-national-security> - The proposed Chinese 'super embassy' in London has raised significant national security concerns. Local authorities have expressed worries that the site is too small to safely accommodate large-scale protests. In 2022, Tower Hamlets Council rejected China's planning application, citing the risk that large protests could endanger local residents. Later in 2024, London's Metropolitan Police's counterterrorism unit echoed these concerns, warning that the site's layout would funnel protesters and could disrupt surrounding roads. However, in January 2025, Scotland Yard withdrew its objections after reviewing a China-funded study claiming that up to 4,500 people could safely protest at the site. Despite this, the proposed site has since attracted two large-scale protests in February and March 2025, with the latter drawing over 6,000 participants—well beyond the report's safety capacity.
5. <https://www.localgov.co.uk/Council-rejects-Chinas-super-embassy-plans-/55248> - Tower Hamlets Council's strategic planning committee has voted to reject the Chinese government's plans for a 'super embassy'. The proposed embassy would be 700,000 sq ft and located on the former Royal Mint site near Tower Bridge. A council spokesperson stated that the plans were rejected due to concerns about 'resident and tourist safety'. The committee resolved to reject the application due to concerns over the impact on resident and tourist safety, heritage, police resources, and the congested nature of the area.
6. <https://www.towerhamletsslice.co.uk/borough/chinese-embassy-opposite-tower-of-london-plans-rejected/> - Councillors in Tower Hamlets have unanimously rejected the plan for a new Chinese embassy opposite the Tower of London. The council's decision was influenced by security concerns raised by the Metropolitan Police, who argued that the embassy could present a security risk due to the size of the protests it could attract. The final decision has been passed over to Communities Secretary Angela Rayner, as the power to formally approve or reject the proposal has been taken out of the council's hands by the government.
7. <https://www.visiontimes.com/2022/12/22/tower-hamlets-rejection-of-chinese-super-embassy-creates-watershed-moment.html> - On December 1, 2022, Tower Hamlets Council's Strategic Development Committee met to discuss the Chinese government's planning application to build a new embassy on the site of the former Royal Mint Court, London, by Tower Bridge and the Tower of London. The Chinese government acquired the site through its UK Embassy in 2018 for £255 million, intending to develop the area into a 'super embassy' which would have been the largest in Britain at 700,000 sq ft. The plans were eventually rejected, much to the relief of many, due to concerns over resident and tourist safety, heritage, police resources, and the congested nature of the area.