

Does the UK want to become a greater Hong Kong?

Published: January 12, 2026, 11:48 pm

I [have just noted](#) what appears to be the systemic capacity of the banking system to be corrupt. Despite this Mark Carney, the new governor of the Bank of England last week predicted a bright future for UK banking - suggesting it would grow quickly so that its assets - now four times the size of UK GDP might be nine times the size of UK GDP by 2050.

My immediate reaction to this suggestion was that he was naive: this appears to embrace the normal fallacy of growth prediction by extrapolating what has happened without thinking about the constraints on it continuing. I dismissed the thinking as absurd as a result: I did not even blog on it.

Martin Wolf has not reacted in the way I did. He questions, quite rightly, the thinking at the core of this vision. As [he has said in the FT this morning](#):

Is the future Mr Carney outlines good for the UK? Here, Mr Carney is right: the financial sector has become a crucial source of incomes and jobs. But this industry also generates instability and rising income inequality. At least, the UK needs to understand the implications of becoming a greater Hong Kong.

His answer is, of course, a very clear 'no'. It's worth reading his article in full.