



Pauline Latham OBE MP

Working hard for Mid Derbyshire

September 2014

Dear Constituent,

I hope you are all well rested after the summer holidays. Whilst Parliament has not been sitting over the summer months, it has certainly been a busy period for me.

One of the most contentious issues I have been dealing with this summer are the proposed changes to Amber Valley Borough Council’s Core Strategy, which would open up 4 sites for residential development in Belper. Like me, many residents feel that if the changes were to go ahead, it would mean an erosion of the Green Belt and the historical significance of the area.

Planning permission is also being sought for a development of up to 400 houses on land fronting onto Kedleston Road, Allestree. Given the site’s close proximity to the Grade I listed Kedleston Hall and the impact that the development would have on local infrastructure and the environment, I have been vocal in my opposition to it, alongside local councillors. I have co-ordinated constituents’ objections along with the community action group Kedleston Voice and have presented them to the Council for their planning board’s reference.

Over the past few months, I have been on a number of interesting visits, and have had the opportunity to meet a range of local people. The highlight of the month was undoubtedly being invited to the opening of the ‘Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red’ exhibition at the Tower of London. This fantastic work created by Derby artist, Paul Cummins will, when completed, consist of 888,246 handmade ceramic poppies; one to represent each of the British lives lost in World War One.

I also met with the Centre Manager, and traders at Park Farm Shopping Centre in Allestree to discuss the difficulties they were having with both the City Council and their business rates. I will be taking the matter up with both the Council and the VOA on the Centre’s behalf, and hope I can help make positive change for the local small businesses operating out of it.

In August, there was good news in relation to unemployment figures in Mid Derbyshire, with the number of people claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance falling for another month. These figures would imply that there are more people in work in the constituency.

Finally, for all my constituents aged over 55, I would strongly urge you to come to the ‘Over 55’s’ Fair’ I am hosting at St Peter’s Church, on St Peter’s Street in Derby. There will be free advice on a range of subjects affecting older people, and there will be great products to try on the day! Please see overleaf for details of how you can register your interest in attending.

Yours sincerely,

Pauline Latham

Update on Planning Applications

As I am sure many of you are aware, over the last few months, I have been involved with a range of planning issues.

The largest and most contentious of these is undoubtedly the change to Amber Valley Borough Council’s Core Strategy. The changes will mean that four new sites are open for development in the area, on land around Cherry House, Pottery and Bullsmoor farms, and an additional site in Belper.

When I heard this, I was naturally concerned about the impact it would have on the area, and how it would cope with extra traffic volume, and the need for increased access to public amenities like schools and doctors surgeries. It is with this in mind that on 18th August I attended a meeting arranged by Belper Town Council at Strutts to discuss the plans, and I was delighted to see that clearly many local people were passionate in their objection to the changes.

At the meeting, I offered to co-ordinate residents’ objections to the changes to the Core Strategy, and by the consultation deadline on 8th September, I had collected many responses. I have now submitted these to Amber Valley Borough Council, so that these will be taken into account by the Planning Committee when the proposals are being decided on.

Another area that will see huge changes in line with changes to the Core Strategy is the land surrounding Kedleston Hall. The proposed developer, Catesby will be seeking to build up to 400 residential properties next to the Grade I listed building. I feel that this development is particularly ill-conceived, as it could seriously compromise the historical significance of the Hall, and once again, raises questions about the ability of local infrastructure to cope with an increased population.

In addition to representations I made to the Borough Council, I also wrote to English Heritage and the National Trust to urge them to get behind residents’ objections. I am pleased to say that both of these organisations wrote back to the Council, raising their concerns about the devastating effect that the development would have on the provenance of Kedleston Hall.

You may remember that back in July, I held my own public meeting about the development proposed for land on Derby Road, Borrowash. 130 local residents attended the meeting, and it was clear that there were strong feelings against the development. The planning application was submitted by the developer, KPG Design Associates on 10th September, which means that residents now have until 3rd October to lodge their objections.

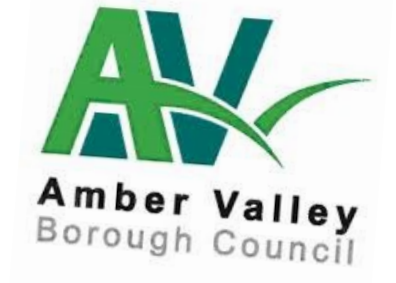
I have already submitted my objections against the Borrowash application. I believe that building on the site could have serious environmental and ecological implications. I am particularly concerned that the land designated for the development could be vulnerable to flooding, as I am informed by local people that owing to an underground spring, it could be making an existing problem even worse.



Kedleston Hall could be severely affected by the proposed development of 400 houses.



I host a public consultation at Allestree Woodlands School about the Kedleston Road Development



Derelict land of Derwent Street that would be opened up for development by AVBC’s proposed Core Strategy



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Meeting at Park Farm Shopping Centre

On 9th September, I met with Kate Davies– Bates, the new Centre Manager of Park Farm shopping centre in Allestree and some of its tenants. They were concerned about the business rates in the area and the implications that the lack of signage and parking restrictions imposed by Derby City Council would have on the centre’s trade.



The centre’s previous manager, Darren Pickering previously raised the issue of Business Rates on the site with me, which were higher than even those charged on some retail properties in Derby city centre. I raised this issue in the chamber of the House of Commons, and wrote to the Valuation Office Agency on behalf of the tenants of the centre.

Many of the traders on the site run small businesses, and in my view such enterprises should be supported to allow them to flourish and grow. It is with this in mind that I have re-written to the Valuation Office Agency. I will have also asked the City Council to invest in road signage and to look again at the parking behind the shopping area again.

‘Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red’ at the Tower of London

In August, I was given the opportunity to attend the opening of the ‘Blood Swept Land and Seas of Red’ exhibition at the Tower of London. When it is completed on 11th November, the installation will eventually consist of 888,246 ceramic poppies, handmade by Derby artist Paul Cummins. The number of poppies is meant to represent the lives of each of those British soldiers lost in the First World War.

The event was opened by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry. Every week until 11th November, an additional 50,000 poppies will be planted in the moat at the Tower, and will eventually cover the whole area. There will also be a daily sounding of the last post at dusk, before which the names of 180 fallen soldiers will be read out. The last poppy will be planted on 11th November by someone from the armed forces.

I was delighted to be invited to the event, and it is great to see the work of a local artist displayed in such to mark such an important occasion. I can certainly attest to its beauty and poignancy. It is a very moving sight particularly at dusk.

The poppies from this art installation are now on sale through the Tower of London. It is important that members of our armed services are supported when they return from war, but the charities that provide this need help, and Paul has pledged 10% of the cost of buying each poppy which are now on sale, will go to six service charities. They are £25 each and are available on the Tower of London’s website (<http://poppies.hrp.org.uk/view-dedications>). I have bought 8 of them; one for each of my grandchildren, and three for us, because I think they make a poignant reminder of this important centenary. All orders will be dispatched after 11th November, and should arrive in time for Christmas.

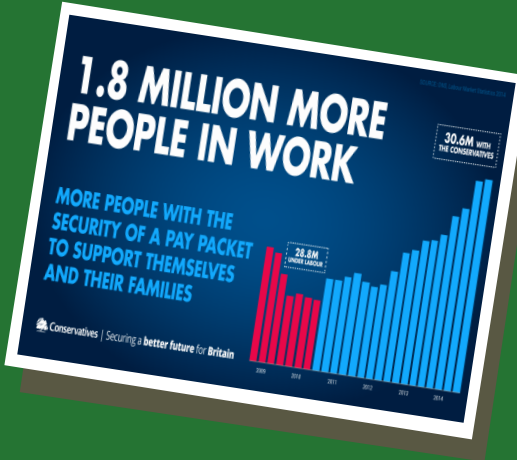
Unemployment Statistics for Mid Derbyshire

There was more positive news this month when ONS figures were released showing a further drop in the number of people claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance in Mid Derbyshire in August.

The number of people claiming the benefit has fallen by 15, leaving the current total of claimants at just 466. The figure is 282 lower than at the same time last year.

The statistics mean that only 1.1% of the economically active population is claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance.

This would imply that unemployment in the constituency has also fallen, which means that more families now have a regular pay packet. I am hopeful that the Government’s reforms will continue to encourage economic growth, and provide more jobs for hardworking people.



Save the Date: Over 55s’ Fair

On Friday , 24th October, I am planning a fair for local residents over the age of 55 . It will be taking place in St Peter’s Church in Derby City centre between 9.30 and 1pm.

There will be a range of stalls for attendees to browse, including Library Services, Age UK, Derbyshire Fire and Rescue, Futures Homescape, Beating Bowel Cancer, Swiftsure Travel, AMG Wealth Management, Shacklocks a local solicitor, and Deda Dance. Icare will also be bringing hot lunches to sample on the day.

The advice on offer will cover a variety of topics, including health and fitness, travel and leisure, finance, volunteering, personal safety and safety in the home, legal matters and housing.

It promises to be a great morning for all. Should you wish to attend, please register your interest in advance by calling 01332 676679 or emailing howitta@parliament.uk.



For further information, please visit www.paulinelatham.co.uk.

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