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ANNA SOUBRY MP

Member of Parliament for Broxtowe

NEWSLETTER



July 17 2012

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"she has a record of unusually free speech" Simon Carr, The Independent
"part of the beating heart of the parliamentary Tory party" Quentin Letts, The Daily Mail

Electrification and Upgrading for Midland Mainline

I am delighted at the announcement by the Secretary of State for Transport that Midland Mainline is finally going to be modernised. The electrification and upgrading of Midland Mainline will make Beeston with its station right next to the Business Park, even more attractive to commerce and is a real boost for the Enterprise Zone at Boots. This is also great news for passengers who will enjoy faster, cleaner, greener and more comfortable journeys to London.



I had a meeting with the Transport Secretary, Justine Greening, a few weeks ago and I explained the considerable benefits a modern railway line to London and up to Sheffield will bring to Broxtowe (in particular Beeston) and Greater Nottingham. This is the third major investment in our local infrastructure. In just two years the Government has ploughed hundreds of millions of pounds into our area with the dualling of the A453, the two tram extensions (even though many of us don't like the route) and now £500 million to improve our railway line. I spoke up in favour of the electrification and upgrading of the line in a Parliamentary debate and lobbied Ministers. Particular congratulations go to Loughborough MP, Nicky Morgan who led the Parliamentary campaign and Notts County Council who made an outstanding economic case for the electrification and upgrading.



Time to withdraw the Core Strategy

Following my debate in Parliament on Friday, I am calling on Broxtowe Borough Council to withdraw the Core Strategy and determine its own housing needs.

As you may know Broxtowe has so far been in "Greater Nottingham" with Nottingham City, Erewash and Gedling Councils, Rushcliffe having withdrawn.

Together they have decided the housing need for all of Greater Nottingham and then "divvied" up the figures, giving Broxtowe a target of 6,150, which would result in thousands of houses on our Green Belt land.

Today the results of the 2011 Census were published. They reveal the population in Broxtowe rose over a ten year period by 1.9% - 2,000 people. The population of Nottingham, in contrast, grew by 13.7% - almost 37,000. These figures show Nottingham is growing considerably faster than Broxtowe and in my view, Nottingham has persuaded Broxtowe to hand over our Green Belt to meet their housing needs.

A document called "Household Projections Background Paper June 2012" has come to light. If adopted it would reduce the target of 6,150 houses, though it is important to note that it still assesses the needs of Greater Nottingham and does not assess Broxtowe's needs.

In Friday's debate the Minister Bob Neil said

"I understand that the east midland strategy was published in 2009, so the housing figures are pre-2009. It will be for the inspector in a public inquiry to look at the most up-to-date and reliable evidence put forward"

Bob Neil also said

"As I understand the history my hon. Friend has related, one local authority has chosen to leave the joint strategy (Rushcliffe) , which is its right. Just as it is the right of another authority to stay in. That is their call."

On Thursday, at Greasley, I went to a packed public meeting where everyone was opposed to the Core Strategy and target of 6,150. On Sunday afternoon over 100 people in Toton attended another public meeting, where again there was widespread opposition to the target figure.

Given the Minister's comments that Councils can set their own housing targets, his observations on the need for up to date figures and today's Census results, I believe Broxtowe should withdraw its Core Strategy immediately. I believe all political parties should now set aside their differences and work together to settle on a housing target for the Borough which avoids development on our Green Belt land.

People of all and no political persuasions throughout the Borough do not want development on their Green Belt land. We have enough brown field land for 3,000 - 3,500 homes and based on the Census figures of the last ten years, enough to meet our needs for the next fifteen.

Dates for your diary and surgery details

Tuesday July 17:

Public Meeting Kimberley - Green Belt and Development 7pm at the Parish Hall

Monday 23rd July:

Public Consultation on the Core Strategy ends Have your say by either visiting my web site www.annasoubry.org.uk and click on the "Save our Green Belt" tab on the home page or go straight to the Borough Council's web site by clicking [here](#) and follow the links. If you need help with the form please email me on anna.soubry.mp@parliament.co.uk



Debate in Parliament on Broxtowe's Green Belt. Reforming the House of Lords

On Friday I held a debate on the Green Belt in Broxtowe which you can read by clicking [here](#)

I described the detail and the danger the Core Strategy poses to our Green Belt. I was keen to pay tribute to Neil Hutchinson, Richard MacRae and Jennie Philips; none of them are politicians but they are leading the campaign in their communities to defend their Green Belt. Neil helped organise Thursday evening's packed public meeting in Greasley Parish Hall and my thanks to him and everyone else for attending. Greasley Parish Council turned out in force and proved themselves as efficient as ever. Richard and Jennie not only continue to defend Field Farm but are instrumental in bringing together various groups to share ideas and campaign together.

The Minister, Bob Neil, in replying to my speech made a number of important points. It is clear that Green Belt land remains specially protected and should only be developed in exceptional or very special circumstances. Importantly If a Council shows its housing need outstrips available non Green Belt, then that could amount to an exceptional circumstance.

Bob Neil made it very clear that Councils do not have to accept the last Governments housing targets and are free to set their own housing target.

Bob also made it plain that Inspectors are independent. I specifically raised a claim made by Broxtowe Councillor Steve Barber about advice he has received from a planning Inspector that he (the Inspector) will not accept a lower housing figure for the Greater Nottingham area unless there is "striking new evidence".

I have yet to be provided with the source of Cllr Barbers claim so I have written to the Inspector; throughout the process we have been told Councillors are acting on advice

and it is important we know precisely what that advice is.

House of Lords reform

I voted for reform of the House of Lords even though the Bill has a number of flaws, notably the party list system coupled with PR. But at its heart it is right to have an elected second chamber. I made a number of contributions to the debate and please click [here](#) for my exchange with Labour's Angela Eagle. Labour voted for reform but refused to back the timetable to get the Bill through Parliament in time for elections in 2015 which the Lib Dems are set on.

This is a very important constitutional matter and it's vital we get it right. Of course House of Lords reform does not occupy much of the thoughts of most normal people but the implications will touch all our lives. My fear is that instead of reaching consensus amongst all political parties, partisan posturing will lose us this golden opportunity.

And finally

Thank you to everyone who wrote to me or sent me emails about the Government's plans to allow civil same sex marriage. Some of the emails I received were very moving notably from young gay people who simply want to be able to marry in the same way as their straight siblings or friends

I completed the on line consultation making it clear that I had also received a large number of emails from people who were strongly opposed to same sex marriage, mainly on religious grounds.

It is now thought there will not be a move to change the civil law, which I appreciate will please everyone opposed to same sex marriage but will dissappoint many others. I have written to the Equalities Minister Lynn Featherstone asking her for an update and when we can anticipate legislation.

Contact Anna Soubry MP

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