

# Berkswell Parish Assembly

Dame Caroline Spelman MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Dame Caroline,

Firstly, let me say congratulations of your re-election. The current parliament has a big job of work and I am sure that you are very busy.

You will be aware that each Civil Parish has an assembly of electors each year, some well attended and others not so great. On a very, very hot evening on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017, thirty five Berkswell residents chose to come to a stuffy hall rather than partake of a cold drink in their garden. This number was lower than in recent years but 40-50 residents have turned up at every Parish Council meeting over the last few months as we have discussed the draft Solihull plan. Interestingly, it would be my observation that a good half of those who attended the Parish Assembly have not attended a PC meeting in recent months.

The issues that dominated the meeting were those surrounding the Solihull Plan. As Chairman of the meeting I was asked to write to you because the meeting felt that you did not understand the issues surrounding a possible the Balsall Common bypass. I think that this was raised because of a difference of opinion between yourself and several residents concerning the bypass at the hustings held at St Peter's Church hall prior to the general election.

I will try to lay out the concerns as I understand them.

1. Most residents do not consider that Hall Meadow Road is part of a bypass but is simply an access road for what people call the Riddings Hill estate. It has been used as that for 20 years. In reaching this view they note that the road was built 20 years ago and has never been part of a bypass. The bypass route was removed from the Solihull Local Plan in 2012.
2. Hall Meadow Road has two table tops to reduce speed and such features are not part of a bypass.
3. There in a roundabout, two estate roads plus the access to the medical centre that lead onto Hall Meadow Road within a distance of 400 metres. Again features not typical of a bypass.
4. The draft Solihull plan talks about examining the need for a bypass but does not commit to building one, nor the line of any such bypass.
5. There are residents who effectively live on Hall Meadow Road, technically on Grovesfield Crescent but their houses face directly onto Hall Meadow Road. There are other residents who live by the roundabout on Station Road.
6. There is one resident who believes that his bed and breakfast business will be destroyed if Hall Meadow Road becomes part of a bypass.

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7. Whilst there are mixed feelings within Berkswell Parish about the need for a bypass there is a general view that residents on Kenilworth Road will benefit from such a bypass to the detriment of others.
8. Hall Meadow Road is used extensively as a car park for those using the station. A survey by the Parish Council showed up to 40 cars using it per day for that purpose. These parked cars severely restrict the width of the road and whilst two cars can pass at low speed, an HGV and a car cannot. Again not a feature of a bypass.
9. The need for a bypass is being justified by Councillor Courts in magazine articles on the basis of increased traffic caused by users of the planned HS2 rail link. This is contrasted with the HS2 Environmental Statement which says that no significant impact will arise from the operation of HS2 on the local road network in Balsall Common (as opposed to the construction phase).
10. Given the development of the Land Rover site at Honiley some residents are expressing the view that a western bypass to Balsall Common should be considered in order to directly link the site to the A452 to the north of Balsall Common going the short way around rather than sending traffic to the east to go west.
11. Finally, there is significant concern that a proposed A45/A46 link will be allowed to run up Hall Meadow Road. Such a dual carriageway would provide relief for the A45 which was supposed to be the Coventry bypass. The function of the A45 as a bypass has been ruined by the development alongside it and the poor road junctions on it. Such an A45/46 link would place an arterial road right next to Balsall Common.

I believe I have summarised the views expressed both at the Parish Assembly and at our well attended Parish Council meetings. I think that residents, at both the Parish Assembly and the subsequent Parish Council meeting which was as usual well attended by residents, felt that you should be aware of these concerns in order that you can listen and actively seek views.

If I can be of further help then please do not hesitate to contact me, particularly if you wished to meet some of the residents concerned.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Burrow

Chairman of the Berkswell Parish Assembly.