



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sharon White  
Chairman  
John Lewis Partnership

*Sent via email*

7 July 2020

*Dear Sharon*

I have been disturbed to read reports that you might not reopen your flagship Peterborough store. Although I understand why John Lewis & Partners is seeking to reduce floorspace nationally to accommodate post-virus trading conditions, this closure would make no sense.

The John Lewis store is the anchor of Queensgate shopping centre, at the heart of Peterborough's city centre; a role that you acknowledged through your £21 million upgrade, which was only recently completed. Your branch manager was quoted in December, predicting that: "What we have done here will be the model for the rest of the company to follow. It does put this store at the forefront of efforts to combat the overall decline we are seeing in retail."

I agree with your excellent manager, Gary Rowntree. Your Peterborough store is ready to demonstrate a successful future for retail, setting the tone for the innovation that will follow, as we upgrade the mainline rail station and regenerate the Station Quarter and North Westgate. Your local customers are ready to provide the revenue you need to retain your 390 partners and staff. We are a city with exciting prospects and I would love John Lewis to be part of that.

Given the uncertainty the media reports have created, I hope you will publicly put your confidence in Peterborough. We are proud of our city and will make John Lewis proud of staying.

If there is anything I can do to help or assist, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Bristow MP

Member of Parliament for Peterborough