

Cherry calls for Redford Barracks to remain open

Ahead of Armed Forces Day this weekend, SNP MP Joanna Cherry QC has challenged the Prime Minister to intervene and halt the closure of Redford barracks, which threatens the defence footprint in Scotland.



Joanna Cherry QC MP

At PMQs, the SNP MP for Edinburgh South West called on Theresa May to step in and ensure the UK government urgently publishes its delayed update to the Better Defence Estate plan, which should have been brought before parliament in the Autumn of 2017.

In November 2016, the UK government announced plans to close eight defence bases in Scotland including Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks in Edinburgh, Glencorse Barracks in Penicuik, Fort George near Inverness, and MoD Caledonia in Rosyth.

No clarity has been provided over what the closures will mean in terms of personnel numbers, unit movements, or the economic impact of the UK government's proposals.

Commenting, Joanna Cherry QC MP said: "Scotland's military has a proud history of service and sacrifice. Redford barracks has stood in Edinburgh for over 100 years, yet it is to be closed by a short sighted UK government with little or no thought over the impact on service personnel, or the economic impact on the local community. The UK government's desperation to make a fast buck is utterly reckless.

"Lately, the Defence Secretary seems to be spending more time threatening to take down the Prime Minister than concentrating on the wellbeing of armed forces personnel, their families and the local communities who support them.

"Ahead of Armed Forces Day this weekend, the Prime Minister must intervene to protect Scotland's defence footprint.

"UK government defence ministers wrote to me at the beginning of March outlining that the Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, would shortly provide an update on the Better Defence Estate plan. I have written on behalf of local residents who are anxious to find out what is happening – over a hundred days have passed and yet we have shamefully heard nothing.

"The UK government has pledged to spend billions of pounds renewing weapons of mass destruction – which are immoral and obsolete – at a time when our conventional forces are being run down."