

If you've driven down the M62 in recent weeks you will have seen the huge Omega West site taking shape. There are three units totalling more than 1 million square feet of office, warehousing and logistics space, with the largest to be occupied by Home Bargains, and through the construction phase of the work I'm pleased to say that local people are already finding employment on the site.

I visited with Cllr Kate Groucutt, Cabinet Member for Economy, Business and Skills, and we had the pleasure of meeting Rebekah Morris from St Helens who is just one of the people who benefitted from a local job fair advertising opportunities on the project. She is now a Document Controller at contractor McLaren.

Our Council's Ways to Work Team and developers have worked together, helping people find training and full time employment, and they've even included school placements for young people interested in finding out more.

And the development isn't just helping St Helens by creating jobs directly. The construction phase has seen £14m worth of orders placed with local businesses, supporting supply chains and putting money back into local pockets.

I also recently visited Parkside with Cllr Seve Gomez-Aspron, Cabinet Member for Transport, and Cllr Andy Bowden, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Climate Change, to see work progressing extremely well on the brand new link road.

Like Omega, local apprentices and workers have been taken on, and there will be plenty more in the months and years ahead thanks to the social value work we've contracted St Helens Chamber to carry out.

The road is a key part of the whole Parkside project, which is a regionally significant development thanks to its Freeport status.

Along with our partners at Langtree, we've just submitted detailed plans for the first phase of major development.

It isn't easy to always see everything the council and partners are delivering – as residents, we tend to only notice the things right in front of us like bins and roads. But there's a huge amount going on to grow the borough and make it better for everyone.

If you're interested in finding out more about the opportunities at Omega West contact our Ways to Work Team at omegajobs@sthelens.gov.uk, or drop into either Ways to Work hub in St Helens and Earlestown.

Best wishes to all Star readers.