

Braehead Community Council
Mr Chris Kane, Chair
Broom Road
Stirling
FK77GU
(email: ckane@braehead.org)

27 February 2017

Paula Vennels
Chief Executive
Post Office Ltd
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London
EC2Y 9AQ

Dear Ms Vennels

Springfield Road Consultation: 152868

I write in regard to the proposed move of the sub-post office in Springfield Road, Braehead to Wishart Drive, Braehead. Braehead Community Councillors have canvassed views within our community and consequently have information we would like to share with you that we feel would be relevant to the consultation.

We note that there is no clear option in the consultation for Post Office Limited to accept input, or indeed enter into dialogue, with community groups such as Community Councils; this is the reason I write to you directly. We feel this to be disappointing for many reasons, one of which is you are not engaging with organisations that can assist you (unlike many public sector organisations who value the contributions community councils can make).

Vehicular Access

On the issue of parking, your consultation letter states the following:

Springfield Road: *“roadside parking is available nearby”*

Wishart Drive: *“There are parking facilities outside of the proposed premises”*

This is an incorrect statement. At the proposed premises there is a layby immediately outside of the new premises and roadside parking; there are no dedicated parking facilities. However, at Springfield Road there is both dedicated parking and roadside parking. There are disabled parking spaces at Springfield Road; there are no disabled parking spaces at Wishart Drive. Parking is significantly BETTER at the current location than the proposed location.

Disabled Access

From every access point, the Wishart Drive store is on a slope. There are steps up to and into the store. There are no disabled parking spaces. Disabled access will be significantly worse in the proposed location.

The Social Value of the Post Office

We note that in the November 2016 report for the UK Government's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy entitled "The Social Value of the Post Office" states that when asking individuals for their thoughts on Post Office Services that: Quality of service (73%), distance from where users begin their journey (68%) and waiting times (62%) are considered the most important aspects of a Post Office Branch, with evening opening hours (34%) and early opening hours (26%) being the least important aspects.

There are a great deal of service users in the Braehead area who are elderly and the new store will provide a great challenge for those walking to the new location, particularly given it is uphill and further away from their homes.

Being familiar with the geographic location and internal layout of both the Springfield Road and Wishart Drive stores, we feel strongly that the quality of service will decrease and the waiting times will increase. We note this is through circumstance rather than action by the Wishart Drive store operators. Our experience of accessing the Wishart Drive store is that when there are more than 2-3 customers waiting to be served, the queuing system breaks down.

Heart of the Community

In your press material, Suzanne Richardson, Post Office Regional Manager says, "We are confident that this vibrant new-style Post Office at the heart of the local community will meet customer needs." The current Post Office is located immediately next to Braehead Primary School and the North Parish Church. Our two-acre Community Garden is at the end of Springfield Road and our community play park at the other end of Springfield Road. The Post Office is currently "at the heart of our community" from both an amenity and a footfall perspective. The proposed location would be significantly less so.

Conclusion

From all the metrics we have considered, we struggle to see where the Wishart Drive store scores higher than the Springfield Road store. Many people expressing concern about the move have approached my colleagues and I. We have no examples of anybody expressing support for the move.

For these reasons, Braehead Community Council is AGAINST the proposed move.

We would be grateful for information on how this consultation can influence thinking on this matter and under what circumstances the consultation could result in a rethink of the proposed move.

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards

Chris Kane
Chair, Braehead Community Council

cc Bruce Crawford MSP