

Mr Will Russell -Regional Network  
Manager  
C/O Communication and  
Consultation Team  
Post Office  
FREEPOST Your Comments

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Date: 20 January 2016

Dear Mr Russell

**Re: Riverhead Post Office - Proposed move to new premises**

Thank you for your letter outlining the proposed move of the Riverhead branch from Day Lewis Chemists to the Londis store. We are broadly in support of any move which retains the valuable Post Office services within the local area but wanted to take this opportunity to outline our views as part of this consultation process.

The proposed new premises is close to the existing one and easily accessible with parking close by and therefore the actual location does not cause us any concerns, however it would be useful to have your reassurance that you have considered all equality issues relating to the proposed new location. The addition of longer opening hours is a positive move for the local residents and businesses using the services.

You indicate that the proposal is for this to become one of your new local style branches, you have indicated that there will be a retention of most of the existing services, however the passport check and send service and the on demand travel insurance will no longer be available. Obviously any reduction in services for the local community is a concern therefore, please could you identify if these services have previously been used by a significant number of people from the current branch, so we can identify the potential impact of your proposed changes.

Currently it is our understanding that the Post Office services in Riverhead are delivered by a dedicated Post master, however the proposed new services are to be delivered by staff in the convenience store. Please can you provide reassurance that the levels of training for these staff members will be sufficient to match the dedicated services currently provided, ensuring our residents are still able to access the expertise they require.

In Sevenoaks District there are a large number of small businesses, many of whom are likely to use the Post Offices services for their financial management. Concerns have been raised that the proposed new site may not be able to accept the larger cheques and transactions associated with small business activity. Please can you provide reassurance that a sufficient level of service will be in place to cover the same transactional level as the current Postmaster provides. This is particularly important in this area which has recently lost its high street bank and therefore relies on the Post Office to provide banking services to the residents and businesses.

In addition we would like reassurance that the capacity of the new location, at times when the convenience store itself becomes busy, will be sufficient to meet the demands of post office customers. This is particularly important for our small businesses using the services alongside our residents.

In conclusion the proposed new location is a good alternative to the current provision, which we broadly support, as long as we can be confident that this does not decrease the level of services provided in the area and that the needs of our residents and businesses are fully served by the proposed new location.

Yours sincerely

Emily Haswell  
Economic Development Officer