ALAN MAK MP
Member of Parliament for Havant

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr. Jes Staley
Group Chief Executive
Barclays PLC
1 Churchill Place
London
E14 5HP

8 December 2017

Dear Mr Staley,

Like many local residents, I was very disappointed to learn today of your plans to close the Barclays branch at 22 Elm Grove, Hayling Island, Hampshire, PO11 9EF in my constituency on Friday 23 March 2018. I am writing to ask you to review and reverse this decision.

Your Barclays Branch is located in a vibrant business community, populated with many small, independent businesses which rely on it for a range of banking services. The decision to close will have a profoundly negative impact upon their business, and therefore I ask you to reconsider.

Aside from its impact on local businesses, the Branch also provides personal banking services to many of Hayling's residents, many of whom are also elderly, infirm, or who do not have the capability to drive and would therefore be unable to travel to the next nearest branch in central Havant.

Additionally, there will be a substantial group of Barclays customers on Hayling who will not be able to access banking services online, and who instead rely on face-to-face banking services at the Branch. I have reviewed your documents outlining the reasons for your decision, and appreciate that commonplace financial transactions are increasingly taking place online. However, you acknowledged that up to 196 customers use the Branch's services exclusively, and who have no access to the alternative of online banking. These residents may be left behind, should you proceed to close your Hayling Island Branch.

Furthermore, regardless of whether commonplace banking transactions are largely being conducted online, more complex financial decisions such as taking out a mortgage will still necessitate a face to face interaction. It seems self-evident that if you are unable to continue to operate the Branch as present, yet still retain a small core of dedicated residents/customers who actively use your facilities, in addition to a wider group of residents who use your services for more complex financial matters, a downsizing as opposed to complete closure would surely be a more sensible alternative.

Similarly, you identified in the documents you provided explaining your decision that in the last twelve months, 35% of your customers have used neighbouring branches. Therefore, this

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presumably means 65% of your customers will be strongly inconvenienced by this closure, and I currently do not see any efforts to mitigate their legitimate concerns.

Your branch is at the centre of an important residential and business community at the heart of Hayling, and the Barclays branch is a popular, well-used local facility that is part of the fabric of the Island. It attracts customers into the area who will then visit other local businesses, and plays a key role in the day-to-day functioning of our local economy. The nearest alternative is around 5 miles away in Havant, a journey some residents will be unable to make.

The long-term interests of Barclays and its shareholders lie in supporting local businesses and communities such as those on Hayling Island, all of which require banking services and will remember the commitment shown to them by Barclays if you remain. At a time when the financial services sector must continue to work hard to regain public trust, I can see no better way than to continue to operate and thereby serve Hayling Island's businesses and residents as you have done for many years.

Your plans have prompted a strong sense of disappointment and anger amongst local residents and businesses, so I would be grateful if you could look again at this decision as a matter of urgency, including providing answers to the questions attached to this letter.

I am aware of Barclays' support for our local community in the past. For example, it was encouraging to meet Julia Husband, Head of Corporate Relations in the South West at my second annual Older Persons Information Fair at Hayling Community Centre this year, where Barclays' staff spoke with local residents. In the same spirit, I would be grateful for your assistance in helping to reverse this decision, and invite you or your local colleagues, to a roundtable with local community representatives to discuss this issue. I would also appreciate a response to the questions below. Given the strength of public interest in this matter, I will be putting this letter and your reply into the public domain.

Yours sincerely,

ALAN MAK MP

CC: Julia Husband, Head of Corporate Relations, South West Group, Barclays

Questions Re: Proposed closure of Barclays Branch – 22 Elm Grove, Hayling Island, PO11 9EF

1) Please can you explain the reasons behind your decision to close the Hayling Island branch of Barclays?

2) Why were Hayling branch customers, local residents and businesses not consulted *before* this decision was made, and only notified afterwards?

3) In the Reasons for Closure document made available to residents, it states that there has been a 14% rise in customers using other forms of banking since 2012, and in the past 12 months only 35% of this branch's customers have used neighbouring branches. Please can you confirm that this closure decision has been made not just on a purely statistical basis and that other factors, such as the branch's importance to local businesses and residents (many of whom are elderly), have been taken into account as well?

4) What steps can the local community take to ensure you reverse your decision? For example, if there was an increase in transaction volume at this branch, would this cause you to change your decision?

5) Will the Local CEO/area manager, Branch manager and/or senior Barclays colleagues agree to the following meetings in order to explain and justify the closure decision to local residents, businesses and the wider community:

a) A round-table meeting in the constituency chaired by Alan Mak MP with a group representing interested local stakeholders (for example, Havant Borough Council; local residents and local businesses; and community groups);

b) An open public meeting in the constituency, hosted by Alan Mak MP, where any branch user or Hayling resident can attend and ask questions; and

c) Drop-in advice sessions at the Hayling branch where local residents and customers can share their concerns on a one-to-one or small group basis.

6) In the event that you choose not to respond to community concerns and maintain the decision to close the branch, can you ensure that a mobile bank would visit Hayling on a regular basis, including for a sustained period during busy periods such as Christmas 2018 (which will be busy for both residents and local businesses)?

7) Please can you provide details of the measures you are putting into place to ensure that existing and potential customers are made aware of alternative banking facilities in the area should the branch close?

8) It has been suggested that the nearby Post Office will be providing a range of services previously provided at the branch if it closes. Please can you clarify exactly which services currently provided by the branch will be available at the Post Office, and which will not?

9) Please can you reassure me and the local community that the closure of the branch will not lead to existing staff losing their jobs? Please can you describe the steps you are taking to ensure that this is the case?

10) Please can you confirm whether the local CEO and/or branch manager are willing to receive any petition on behalf of local residents and businesses, presented by me as their local MP, and that it will be taken into consideration?

11) Please can you provide an outline (and a timeline) of the steps you will take should you move forward with the closure of the branch in March 2018?

12) Please can you confirm that if the branch closes, Barclays will ensure that

(a) a new occupier is found so that the community is not left with an empty, unused building;
(b) there will be no covenants or other prohibitions preventing another bank from moving in; and
(c) if a voluntary group were to move in, you would use your best endeavors to assist them, including with financial assistance?

13) Please can you confirm that residents who are concerned or who have questions can contact the local CEO/area manager directly– and that every such enquiry will receive a personal and timely reply?

14) Please can you confirm that Barclays will be adhering to all aspects of the Access to Banking Protocol, and provide details about how you will meet its requirements, including any impact assessments you have made? As you will know, the main high street banks including yours, consumer groups and HM Government have signed up to an industry-wide agreement to work with customers and communities to minimise the impact of branch closures.

ENDS