

SAVE GLOUCESTER MAIL CENTRE

Royal Mail is planning to close its Gloucester Mail Centre in Eastern Avenue and move operations 34 miles away to Swindon in 2008. They state that the Gloucester Mail Centre site is not large enough to accommodate the new machinery being deployed by Royal Mail. However, there is no indication that a proper feasibility study has been carried out into extending the buildings on the current site, or to finding an alternative site in or around Gloucester. There are over 400 people working at the present mail centre so transferring operations to Swindon will obviously have a direct impact on those staff. Whilst Royal Mail has stated there will be no compulsory redundancies, staff will be left with few choices. With the mail centre running 24 hours a day, many staff in Gloucester work the hours which fit in with their family commitments and child care needs. The alternatives that Royal Mail offer will not take those needs into account and will in many cases involve a completely different job, in a different location, on a different shift. Many work part-time which makes a daily trip to Swindon even more impractical. The proposed closure may be over a year away, but staff are already having to start looking at their options.

The move will result in many more lorries on the roads, so there will be an inevitable effect on the environment too. Furthermore, Royal Mail is actively discouraging car sharing amongst staff who transfer to Swindon. Only the driver will be entitled to claim an allowance (for three years) and any passengers carried will be spending two hours a day sitting there in their own time, thus encouraging them to take their own cars. It has been estimated that the move will generate an additional 2,000,000 miles of travel per year.

People living in Gloucestershire will be aware of the regular traffic accidents on the Air Balloon roundabout, and how treacherous the Crickley Hill



Save Gloucester Mail Centre

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area can be during bad weather. This alone would cause further delays and add to the unnecessary time that the mail spends travelling to or from Swindon. There are many opportunities for mail to be delayed and arrive late, whether posted in or to the county.

This is only the start of Royal Mail's plans to rationalise its mail centres. With several others already planned, Royal Mail are yet to claim that this is anything but a money saving policy, with no regard to quality of service, the environmental impact and certainly no regard for their staff.

For further information or to sign the petition, visit www.savegloucestermailcentre.co.uk