
Application offering Unforeseen Benefits – Gaywood Drive Shops, Newbury and Kingsland Centre, Thatcham

Report being considered by:	Health and Wellbeing Board – Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Sub-Committee
On:	17 April 2024
Report Author:	Charlotte Pavitt (Interim Consultant in Public Health) Gordon Oliver (Principal Policy Officer)
Report Sponsor:	John Ashton
Item for:	Decision



1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides details of applications offering unforeseen benefits for two new pharmacies at Gaywood Drive Shops, Newbury, RG14 2PR by Bolcer Ltd and at Kingsland Centre, The Broadway, Thatcham, RG19 3HN by LP SD One Hundred Seven Limited.

2. Recommendation(s)

The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Sub-Committee is asked to agree the written representation to be submitted to Primary Care Support England (PCSE) in response to the above applications on behalf of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board and to delegate final approval of the wording of the response to the Interim Director of Public Health in consultation with the Chairman in accordance with the decision of the Sub-Committee.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board has a duty to keep its Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) under review in the light of any notifications of changes in provision of pharmaceutical services within the district.
- 3.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board is also a statutory consultee on any application for a new pharmacy within West Berkshire that offers benefits that were unforeseen when the PNA was prepared.
- 3.3 A notification was received on 13 March 2024 advising of an application for a new pharmacy at Gaywood Drive Shops in Newbury by Bolcer Ltd, which offered unforeseen benefits. PCSE indicated that it intends to consider this application together and in relation to the unforeseen benefits application for a new pharmacy at Kingsland Centre, Thatcham, RG19 3HN by LP SD One Hundred Seven Ltd, which the PNA Sub-Committee previously considered at its meeting on 23 January 2024. The 45 day consultation period has been reopened for this application to allow the two applications to be considered together.
- 3.4 The implications of these applications have been assessed in accordance with national guidance and legislative requirements.

4. Supporting Information

Background

- 4.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 established health and wellbeing boards and made them responsible for developing and updating PNAs from 1 April 2013. The NHS Act 2006, amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, sets out the requirement for health and wellbeing boards to develop and update PNAs. The NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, as amended, set out the minimum information that must be contained within a PNA and outline the process that must be followed in its development.
- 4.2 PNAs are used and referred to by those wishing to open a new pharmacy or dispensing appliance contractor premises. They are used by Integrated Care Boards to determine applications, and NHS Resolution refers to them when applications go to appeal.
- 4.3 Following publication of a PNA, health and wellbeing boards must assess the impacts of any changes in provision of pharmaceutical services in their area.

Unforeseen Benefits Application for New Pharmacy at Gaywood Drive

- 4.4 A notification was received on 13 March 2024 from Primary Care Support England (which administers applications on behalf of NHS England), advising of an unforeseen benefits application for a new pharmacy at Gaywood Drive Shops in Newbury by Bolcer Ltd. A copy of the notification and the associated application is provided in Appendix A.
- 4.5 Proposed opening hours are set out below:

	Core Opening Hours	Total Opening Hours
Monday	09:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:30	09:00 – 18:30
Tuesday	09:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:30	09:00 – 18:30
Wednesday	09:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:30	09:00 – 18:30
Thursday	09:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:30	09:00 – 18:30
Friday	09:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:30	09:00 – 18:30
Saturday	10:00 – 13:00	10:00 – 13:00
Sunday	-	-
Total	45.5 hours	50.5 hours

- 4.6 In addition to the Essential Services provided by all pharmaceutical contractors, the application indicates that the new pharmacy would provide the following Advanced and Enhanced Services:
- Substance misuse
 - Needle exchange
 - Antiviral provision
 - Palliative care
 - Smoking cessation

- Community pharmacy consultation service*
- Flu vaccination
- Pharmacy contraception service
- Hypertension
- New Medicine service
- Minor ailments

* *The Community Pharmacy Consultation Service ended on 30 January 2024. From 31 January 2024, this was incorporated into the Pharmacy First service.*

Unforeseen Benefits Application for a New Pharmacy at Kingsland Centre

4.7 A notification was also received on 13 March 2024 from PCSE, advising of an unforeseen benefits application for a new pharmacy in Thatcham town centre by LP SD One Hundred Seven Limited. The proposed location for the pharmacy is Unit 7, Kingsland Centre, The Broadway, Thatcham, RG19 3HN. A copy of the notification and the associated application is provided in Appendix B. This was previously considered by the PNA Sub-Committee on 23 January 2024, but the 45 day consultation period has been reopened for this application to allow the two applications to be considered together.

4.8 Proposed opening hours are set out below:

	Core Opening Hours	Total Opening Hours
Monday	09:00 – 17:00	08:30 – 18:00
Tuesday	09:00 – 17:00	08:30 – 18:00
Wednesday	09:00 – 17:00	08:30 – 18:00
Thursday	09:00 – 17:00	08:30 – 18:00
Friday	09:00 – 17:00	08:30 – 18:00
Saturday	-	09:00 – 17:00
Sunday	-	10:00 – 16:00
Total	40 hours	61.5 hours

4.9 In addition to the Essential Services provided by all pharmaceutical contractors, the application indicates that the new pharmacy would provide the following Advanced and Enhanced Services:

- New medicine service
- Community pharmacy seasonal influenza vaccination
- Community pharmacy consultation service*
- Hypertension case-finding service
- Smoking cessation service
- Home delivery service

- Medication review service
- Needle and syringe exchange service
- Out of hours service
- Patient group direction service
- Supervised administration service
- Emergency supply service

** The Community Pharmacy Consultation Service ended on 30 January 2024. From 31 January 2024, this was incorporated into the Pharmacy First service.*

Analysis

4.10 As a statutory consultee, the Health and Wellbeing Board is invited to submit comments on the above applications within 45 days of the notification date (i.e., 26 April 2024), however, there is no requirement to do so.

4.11 In order to be given permission, the applicant needs to prove that a new pharmacy would provide “significant benefits”. Factors that are considered when deciding whether to grant the application include:

- whether or not there is already a reasonable choice of pharmacy
- how easy it is for people who live or work near the applicant’s proposed pharmacy to travel to existing pharmacies
- walking routes, bus services and access by car (including parking)
- whether people who are disabled, elderly, have young children, or have other particular needs currently have problems using local pharmacies, and would benefit from the proposed pharmacy
- whether opening another pharmacy would have any significant negative effects.

4.12 Four pharmacies have closed in Newbury and Thatcham since the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment was originally carried out in 2022, including:

- The Lloyds Pharmacy in the Kingsland Centre, Thatcham, which closed in August 2022
- The Lloyds Pharmacy in Sainsbury’s, Hector Way, Newbury, which closed in April 2023
- The Superdrug Pharmacy in Northbrook Street, Newbury, which closed in September 2023
- Boots Pharmacy at Thatcham Medical Centre, which closed in February 2024.

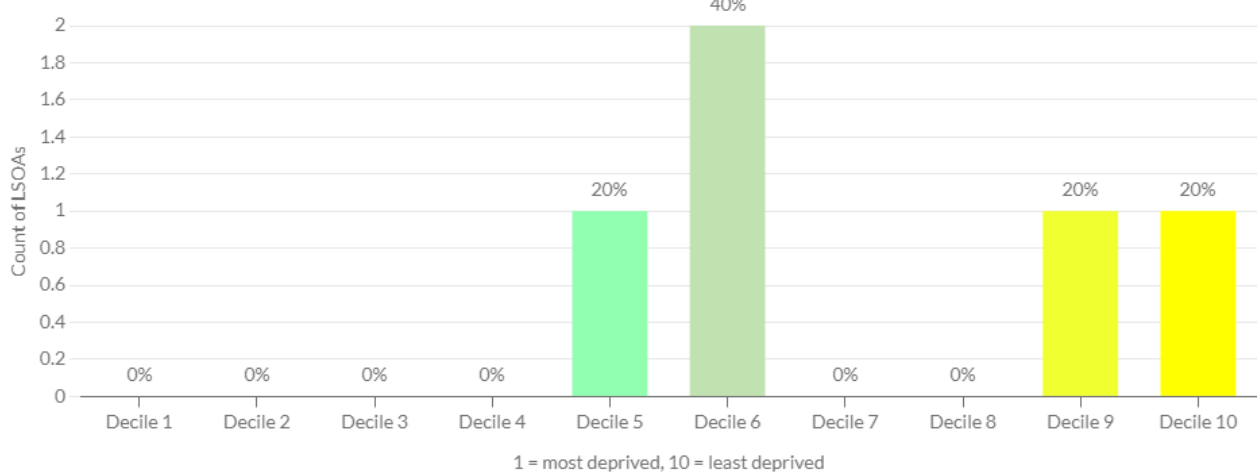
- 4.13 There are currently two pharmacies in Thatcham and five pharmacies in Newbury. However, notification was received on 28 April that a recent application for a new pharmacy in Newbury Town Centre has been approved, subject to any appeal.
- 4.14 When the PNA was undertaken the ratio of pharmacies per 10,000 population was 1.3 in West Berkshire, compared to 2.2 for England as a whole. As a result of pharmacy closures across the district in the period since the PNA was completed, the ratio has fallen to 1.0 per 10,000 population. Assuming the new pharmacy in Newbury town centre opens, the ratio would increase slightly to 1.1 per 10,000 population. If the pharmacies at Gaywood Drive and Kingsland Centre were to be approved, then ratio would be 1.2 per 10,000 population, which is still below the baseline and significantly below the figure for England as a whole, even taking into account pharmacy closures elsewhere.
- 4.15 However, the above information needs to be considered with the following caveat: the ratio doesn't take account of location, catchment or the number of items dispensed. Previous experience has shown that two efficient pharmacies can provide better access than four inefficient ones and so the overall decision should be guided by the LPC as to the number of scripts they can process.

Gaywood Drive

- 4.16 The application indicates that there is no pharmacy situated in Clay Hill or Thatcham West Wards and that recent closures have created a significant gap in pharmaceutical services for Newbury and Thatcham. However, the Health and Wellbeing Board did not consider that the closures had created a gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services that was sufficient to justify a review of the PNA or publication of a Supplementary Statement, since no additional households would be outside a 1 mile / 20 minute travel time to their nearest pharmacy as a result of the closures. Also, reassurance was provided by the Local Pharmaceutical Committee that there was sufficient capacity at the remaining pharmacies to be able to accommodate the displaced activity. The lack of a declared significant gap in provision is the reason why this is an 'unforeseen benefits' application.
- 4.17 Notwithstanding the lack of a declared significant gap in provision, the proposed pharmacy would help to improve capacity and choice for local patients.
- 4.18 The proposed pharmacy would be the only one within the Newbury Clay Hill Ward to the north-east of the town centre which has a population of 7,547 residents according to the 2021 Census. The area has relatively low levels of deprivation (20% of LSOAs within this ward are within the 5th decile on the Index of Multiple Deprivation and 20% of LSOAs are within the 4th decile for the income domain).

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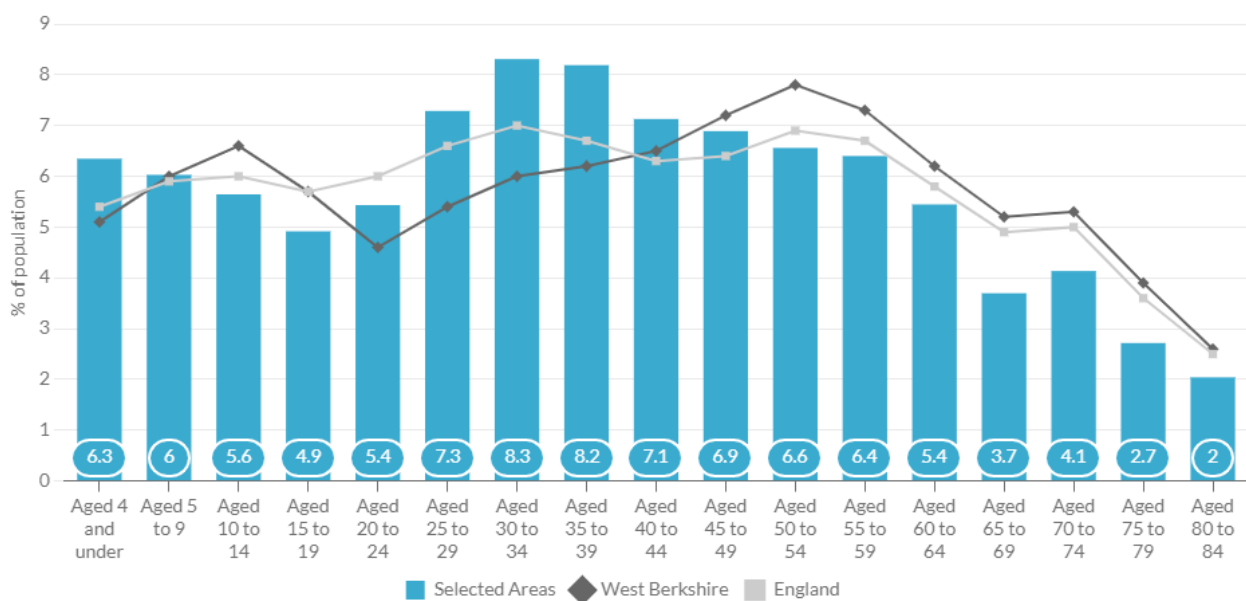
Index of Multiple Deprivation - LSOAs by decile in Newbury Clay Hill (2019)



Source: MHCLG

4.19 In terms of its age profile, Newbury Clay Hill has lower numbers of older people (aged 65 and older), but higher numbers of very young children (aged 4 and younger) compared with the West Berkshire and England averages. These groups are likely to have higher demands for pharmacy services.

Population by five-year age groups (2021)

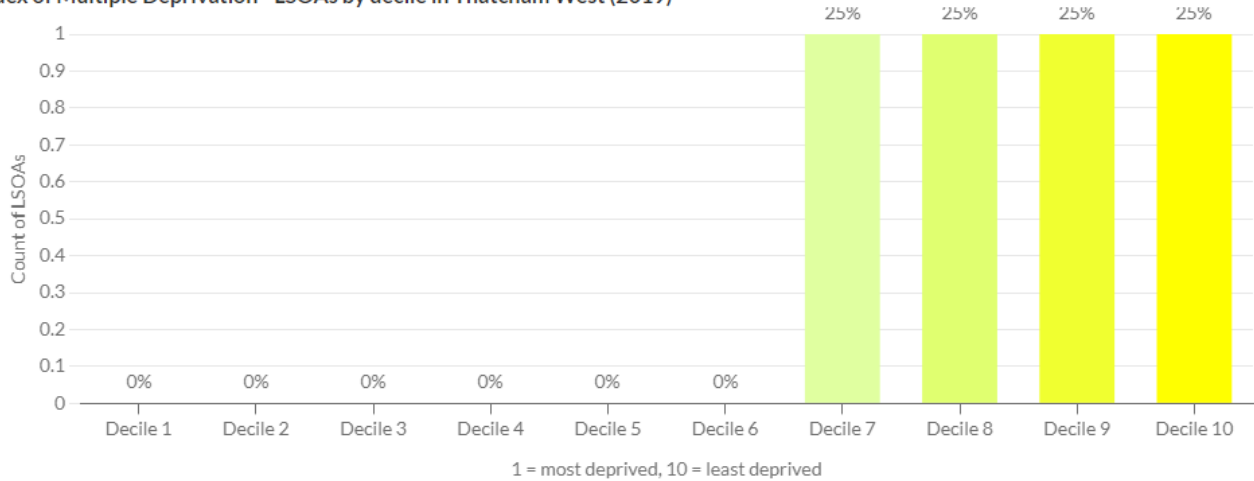


Source: ONS, Census 2021

4.20 Gaywood Drive would also be the closest pharmacy for some residents of Thatcham West Ward, which has a population of 7,322 according to the 2021 Census. However, only those living in a small portion to the west of Pound Lane would benefit. For those living further east, Halo Pharmacy at Crown Mead would be the closest pharmacy. The application has assumed that the catchment would include the entirety of both wards (circa 15,000 residents), which is misleading. This area has low levels of deprivation with no residents within deciles one to six.

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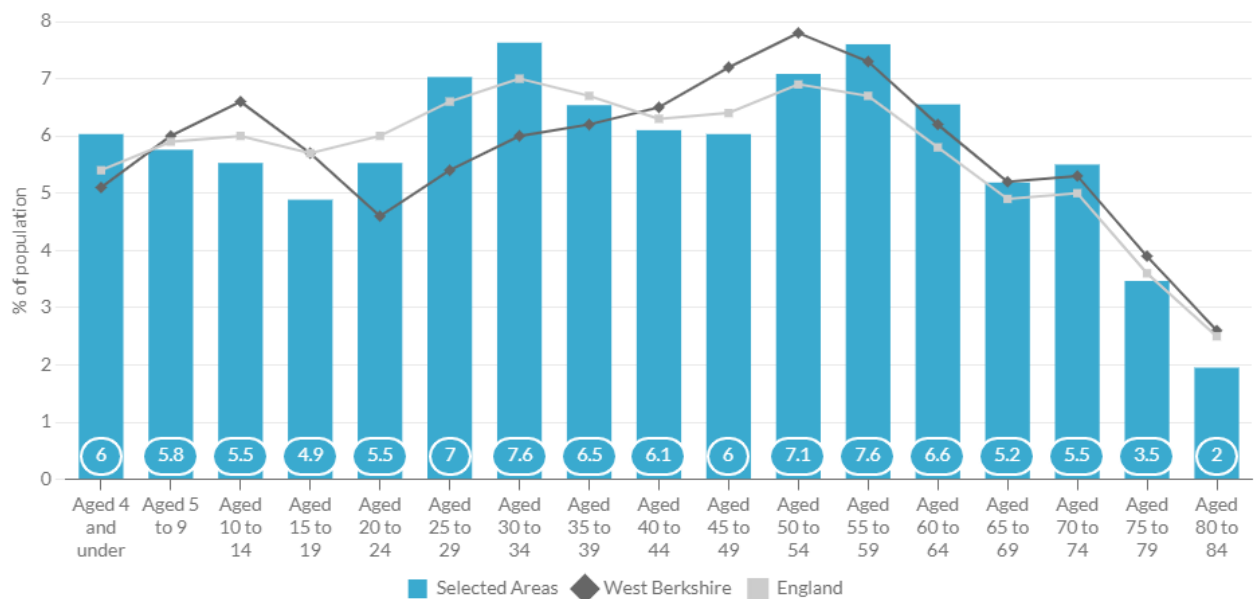
Index of Multiple Deprivation - LSOAs by decile in Thatcham West (2019)



Source: MHCLG

4.21 The age profile for Thatcham West Ward is shown below. This shows that the number of people aged 65 to 74 are similar to the West Berkshire average, but the numbers of people aged 80 to 84 are lower than the average for West Berkshire and England as a whole. As with Newbury Clay Hill, the ward has higher numbers of very young children (aged 4 and younger) compared with the West Berkshire and England averages.

Population by five-year age groups (2021)



Source: ONS, Census 2021

4.22 Currently, Clay Hill residents have journeys of up to 2 miles to access pharmacies in Newbury or Thatcham, taking up to 44 minutes on foot, or at least 26 minutes by bus. It should be noted that very northernmost parts of the ward fall within a controlled locality where dispensing doctors provide services to patients due to the lack of community pharmacies.

4.23 The proposed location would have average levels of accessibility typical of a suburban location, being served by a limited number of local walking routes and one local bus route (Jet Black 1). There is no public car park in the vicinity of the proposed site, so patients would have to park at the kerbside on surrounding roads, which may have a negative impact in terms of road safety.

- 4.24 Pharmacies that remain open after 6pm are considered to have late-evening opening. The Gaywood Drive application indicated that it would remain open until 6.30pm Monday to Friday.
- 4.25 The PNA did not report any gaps in out of hours provision and three of the five pharmacies in Newbury have late-evening opening, but these are all located on the southern fringe of the town. Prior to closing in 2023, the Lloyds Pharmacy in Sainsbury's would have been the closest one to offer late evening opening for many residents of Newbury Clay Hill. The proposed pharmacy would improve access to pharmacy services in the evenings.
- 4.26 The pharmacy would also be open for limited hours on Saturdays. Four out of the five existing pharmacies in Newbury currently open on Saturdays and the new pharmacy approved for Newbury town centre would also open on Saturdays.
- 4.27 The applicant is not proposing to introduce any innovative measures to enhance the offer, such as home delivery.
- 4.28 It is not clear whether opening another pharmacy would have any significant negative effects on other pharmacies in the area. While no gap in provision has been declared as part of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, there is anecdotal evidence by way of comments to the Health Scrutiny Committee, Healthwatch and social media to suggest that patients have experienced significant waiting times at other pharmacies in Newbury, particularly at Boots in Northbrook Street. However, the application by CA Health Ltd for an additional pharmacy within Newbury Town Centre has just been approved and will provide additional capacity within Newbury.
- 4.29 In summary, although the PNA does not identify a gap in provision, the proposed pharmacy would provide additional coverage in an area of Newbury that is currently under-served. As noted in 4.14 above, the ratio of pharmacies per 10,000 population is currently 1.0, which is below the value of 1.3 for West Berkshire and 2.2 for England at the time the PNA was carried out. It would also enhance the late-evening offer in the town, increasing accessibility to pharmacy services as highlighted within the PNA.

Kingsland Centre

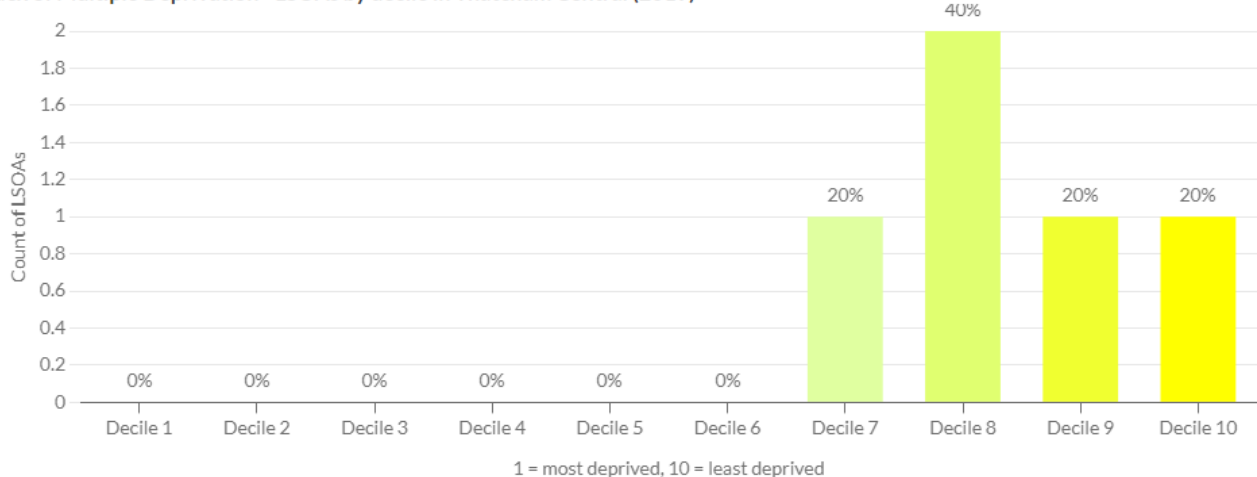
- 4.30 This application was previously considered by the PNA Sub-Committee on 23 January 2024, when it was agreed that representations be made in support of the application.
- 4.31 The closure of Lloyds Pharmacy previously in the Kingsland Centre the Boots Pharmacy at Thatcham Medical Centre leaves just two pharmacies in Thatcham – Halo Pharmacy at Crown Mead and Thatcham Pharmacy at the Burdwood Centre.
- 4.32 As mentioned previously, the Health and Wellbeing Board did not consider that these closures created a gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services that was sufficient to justify a review of the PNA or publication of a Supplementary Statement, since no additional households would be outside a 1 mile / 20 minute travel time to their nearest pharmacy as a result of the closures. (A Supplementary Statement was published on the Berkshire Observatory website in error, but this has since been removed.) Also, reassurance was provided by the Local Pharmaceutical Committee that there was sufficient capacity at the two remaining pharmacies in Thatcham to be

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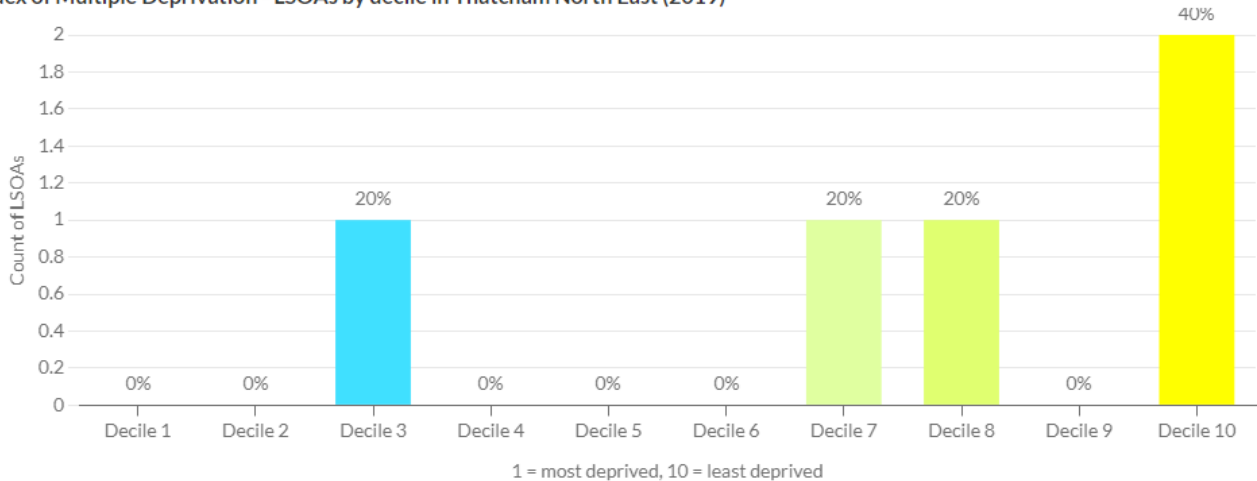
able to accommodate displaced activity. The lack of a declared significant gap in provision is the reason why this is an ‘unforeseen benefits’ application.

- 4.33 Notwithstanding the lack of a declared significant gap in provision of pharmaceutical services in Thatcham, the proposed pharmacy would help to improve capacity and choice for local patients. As noted in in 4.14 above, the ratio of pharmacies per 10,000 population is currently 1.0, which is below the value of 1.3 for West Berkshire and 2.2 for England at the time the PNA was carried out.
- 4.34 Although the pharmacy would be in Thatcham Central ward, which has low levels of deprivation, realistically it would be expected to be used by all Thatcham residents, including those living in Thatcham North East, which has pockets of deprivation (20% of LSOAs within this ward are in the third decile on the Index of Multiple Deprivation).
- 4.35 We see a correlation between poorer health (and health behaviours such as smoking and substance misuse) and increased deprivation. We would therefore expect to see a greater demand on pharmacy services (including Advanced and Enhanced Services such as smoking cessation and needle and syringe exchange services) serving more deprived areas.

Index of Multiple Deprivation - LSOAs by decile in Thatcham Central (2019)



Index of Multiple Deprivation - LSOAs by decile in Thatcham North East (2019)

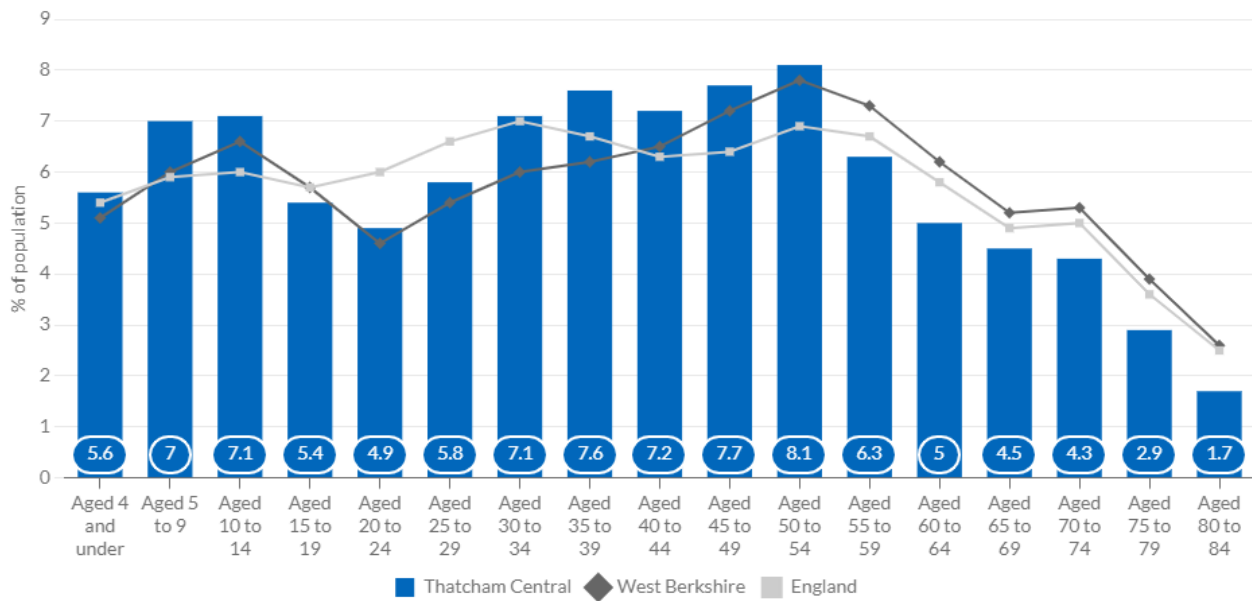


Source: MHCLG

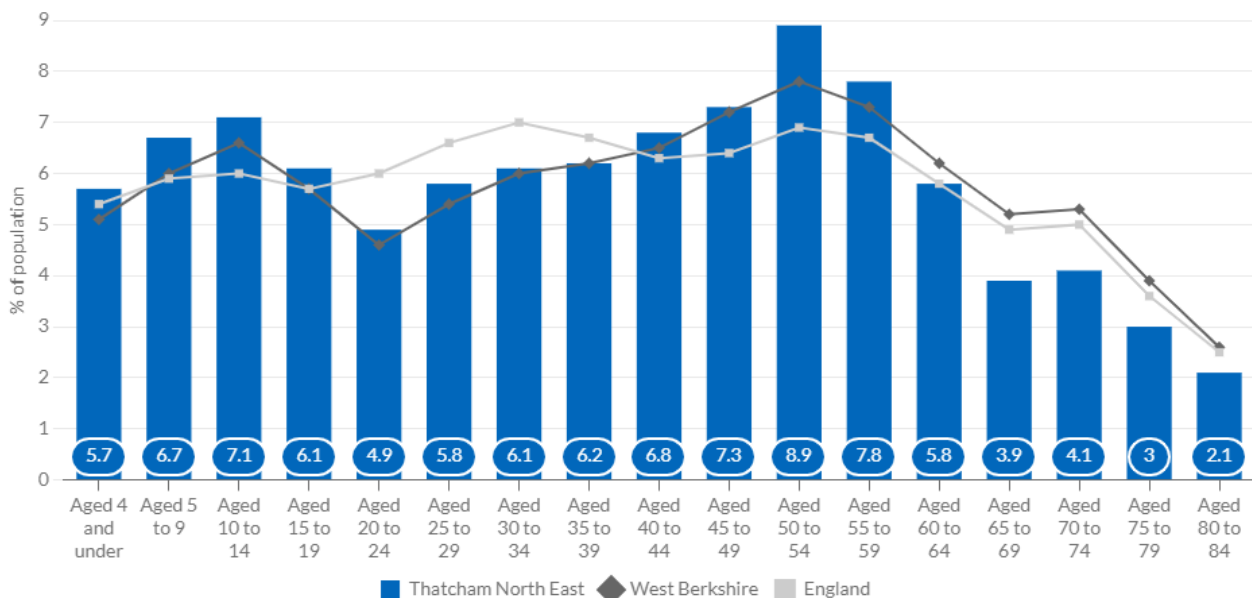
- 4.36 The age profiles for Thatcham Central and Thatcham North East are very similar, with slightly higher numbers of school aged children and slightly lower numbers of older people (aged 65 and over) than the West Berkshire or England averages.

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Population by five-year age groups (2021)



Population by five-year age groups (2021)



Source: ONS, Census 2021

4.37 The PNA did not report any gaps in out of hours provision. Both of the other pharmacies in Thatcham currently offer late evening services. While the applicant is not proposing to have early morning or late evening opening, the pharmacy would be the only one in Thatcham to open seven days per week. Currently, Thatcham residents have to travel to Newbury to get to a pharmacy that is open on a Sunday.

4.38 Also, the proposed location would have a good level of accessibility by walking, cycling and local bus routes commensurate with its town centre location. It would be adjacent to the Thatcham Kingsland Centre Car Park and on-street parking within Thatcham town centre, with level access from both. Therefore, it is considered that accessibility for patients would be enhanced. Furthermore, the pharmacy proposed to operate a home delivery service seven days a week.

4.39 It is not clear whether there would be any significant negative effects that would occur as a result of the proposed pharmacy opening. Anecdotal evidence at Health Scrutiny Committee suggests that both of the existing pharmacies in Thatcham are working

well and appear to be coping with current demand. However, the effects of the recent Boots closure are only just being felt and demand for services are likely to increase within the winter months. The applicant also owns one of the other two pharmacies in the town and it is reasonable to expect that they would have taken the commercial decision that there is sufficient demand to sustain an additional pharmacy.

- 4.40 In summary, although the PNA does not identify a gap in provision, the application would enhance coverage within Thatcham and would provide additional resilience. It would also provide much needed access to pharmacy services on Sundays for Thatcham residents.

5. Options Considered

The options available to the Health and Wellbeing Board are:

- (a) to make representations in support of one / both of the applications;
- (b) to make representations opposing one / both of the applications;
- (c) to not make any representations in relation to the applications.

6. Proposal(s)

Having undertaken appropriate analysis and consultation, it is proposed that the representations should be made on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Board in support of both applications, but with the proviso that the cumulative impacts associated with both the Thatcham Town Centre and Gaywood Drive pharmacies are considered in relation to the operation of existing and proposed pharmacies.

7. Conclusion(s)

The changes in pharmaceutical services have been assessed in accordance with national guidance and relevant legislation.

8. Consultation and Engagement

- 8.1 Local ward councillors have been informed of the application for a new pharmacy and both applications have found support.
- 8.2 Healthwatch West Berkshire has been consulted to understand what feedback has been received from residents in relation to pharmacies in both Newbury and Thatcham. They have indicated that pharmacy concerns have reduced dramatically, with only two concerns raised this year, neither of which were around waiting times. They are proposing to undertake a study in 2024/25 to seek patients' feedback on local pharmacy services following implementation of the Pharmacy First initiative. This will cover a variety of aspects, including waiting times.
- 8.3 It should be noted that the Integrated Care Board provided an update on Community Pharmacy Provision across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 22 February 2024. This documented the improvements that had been put in place to improve resilience of the sector, which had considerably reduced the number of unplanned closures.

9. Appendices

Appendix A – Application for Gaywood Drive Shops, Newbury

Appendix B – Application for Kingsland Centre, Thatcham

Background Papers:

[West Berkshire Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2022-2025](#)

[Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments: Information pack for local authority health and wellbeing boards, DHSC, October 2021](#)

Health and Wellbeing Priorities Supported:

The proposals will support the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities:

- Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
- Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives
- Help families and young children in early years
- Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
- Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

The proposals contained in this report will support the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities by ensuring that there are sufficient pharmaceutical services in the District to meet the needs of the local population.
