

10 September 2025

PCSE Enquiries
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West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

Our Ref: PNA-2025-09-10
Your Ref: ME3965- CAS-371879-X3Q4L1

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Application offering unforeseen benefits at 72A Royal Avenue, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 4UR by Calcot Row Ltd

Thank you for consulting the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board in relation to the above application. The Board wishes to make written representations on this application as set out below.

Several pharmacies have closed in West Berkshire since the last Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment was carried out in 2022, including the Lloyds Pharmacy that was previously located within the Sainsbury's superstore in Calcot.

In 2022, the ratio of pharmacies per 10,000 population was 1.3 in West Berkshire, compared to 2.2 for England as a whole, but as a result of the recent closures in the period since the PNA was completed, the ratio has fallen to around 1.0 per 10,000 population.

When the Health and Wellbeing Board originally considered the closure of the Lloyds Pharmacy in Calcot, it was agreed that a significant gap in provision had been created, affecting residents of Calcot and the surrounding areas. In response, a Supplementary Statement was published to this effect on 27 April 2023¹.

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board have been consulted on this proposal, along with Community Pharmacy Thames Valley, and the Local Ward Members for the area. Their feedback has informed the response outlined below.

The proposed pharmacy would help to improve capacity and choice for local patients and would address the identified gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services. The proposed location would be more centrally located within the residential area it serves than the previous Lloyds pharmacy was.

The nearest pharmacies to the proposed site are the Triangle Pharmacy in Tilehurst, approximately 1.4 miles to the north (located at the top of a steep hill) and Kamson's

¹ [Berkshire Observatory – West Berkshire – PNA Supplementary Statements](#)

Pharmacy in Theale, approximately 1.4 miles to the west (located on the other side of the M4 motorway),

Evidence shows that those living in the most deprived areas face the worst healthcare inequalities in relation to healthcare access, experience and outcomes. The affected wards (Tilehurst Birch Copse and Tilehurst South and Holybrook) have pockets of social deprivation, with 20% of Lower Super Output Areas in falling within Decile 4 on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Therefore, there would be clear health benefits for residents of these areas if they had improved access to a pharmacy.

In terms of its age profile, Tilehurst Birch Copse is similar to the average for West Berkshire as a whole, but with a larger proportion of older residents (age 65 and over) who would be more likely to need access to a pharmacy. Conversely, Tilehurst South and Holybrook has a slightly lower proportion of older residents than the West Berkshire average, but a slightly higher proportion of younger children (aged 0-9), which is another group that is more likely to require pharmaceutical services.

The proposed location for the new pharmacy has typical levels of accessibility for a suburban area. Access on foot is good, with footways and street lighting on all local roads and the site is located away from major roads. Recent changes to local bus services mean that Royal Avenue is no longer directly served by buses, however, the nearest bus stops are nearly 300m away on Langley Hill, which is well within the 400m distance considered reasonable for accessing a bus stop in an urban area. These stops are served by a bus route that runs between Calcot, Tilehurst and central Reading. This typically has a 20 minute frequency Monday to Saturday and a 30 minute frequency on Sundays.

The site is currently owned by Theale Medical Centre and is used as a base for the district nurses. The Practice Manager has indicated that the parking area to the rear of the site is private and probably would not be available for patient use. Therefore, patients would need to use existing kerbside parking on residential streets in the vicinity of the site.

The Local Ward Members have raised concerns about parking in the area, particular on a Sunday due to existing problems around the nearby church, which has services throughout most of the day. One of them has requested that the pharmacy should not be permitted to open on Sundays to prevent adding to the parking and congestion issues.

Concerns have also been raised by Local Ward Members and Thames Valley Police in relation to the potential impact of the pharmacy on the School Street scheme² that is in force on Curtis Road and the central section of Royal Avenue to protect children travelling to and from the nearby infant and junior schools. The scheme prohibits vehicular access around the start and end of the school day (i.e., 8.15 – 9.15 am and 2.30 – 3.30 pm, Monday to Friday), except for permit holders, with enforcement by automatic number plate recognition cameras. If possible, we would ask that the pharmacy's operating hours could be restricted so they fall outside the times when the adjacent School Street scheme is in force.

The applicant proposes that the pharmacy would be open in the evenings and on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as a home delivery service. Extended opening hours are

² [School streets: Calcot Infant and Junior School - West Berkshire Council](#)

generally welcomed by the Health and Wellbeing Board as offering benefits for residents/ patients, but please note the concerns above in relation to Sunday opening.

In summary, the Board is supportive of the application and believes that it would address the existing gap in provision, and would deliver significant additional benefits for patients. However, the Board has concerns in relation to parking and potential impacts on the adjacent School Street scheme, which it would like to see addressed by the applicant in terms of restrictions on opening hours.

Please let us know if you have any queries in relation to the above comments.

Yours faithfully,

pp

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'H. Codling', is positioned to the right of the 'pp' text.

Councillor Heather Codling

Chairman of West Berkshire Health & Wellbeing Board