

New Pharmacy Application – Halls Road, Tilehurst

Report being considered by: Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Sub-Committee

On: 14 November 2025

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Report Sponsor: Dr Matt Pearce (Director of Public Health)

Item for: Decision



1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides details of a routine pharmacy application to meet an identified current need at 201-209 Halls Road, Reading, RG30 4PT, by Hetherby Ltd. The Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory consultee on all such applications.

2. Recommendation(s)

The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Sub-Committee is asked to agree:

- (a) That representation be submitted to Primary Care Support England (PCSE) on behalf of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, reiterating the view that this application be considered alongside the existing application at 72a Royal Avenue, Calcot, RG31 4UT, since both are seeking to address the same gap in provision of pharmaceutical services in the Calcot area;
- (b) That the representation should indicate that, of the two applications, Royal Avenue would be preferred, since it would better meet the needs of local residents and respond to the gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services identified in the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment; and
- (c) To delegate final approval of the wording of the response to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Chairman in accordance with the decision of the Sub-Committee.

3. Implications

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no financial implications associated with this report.
Human Resource:	There are no HR implications associated with this report.
Legal:	The Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory consultee for all pharmacy applications in West Berkshire. However, there is no obligation on it to make representations.
Risk Management:	N/A

Property:	N/A			
Policy:	The proposal supports the commitment in the Government's 10 Year Plan to increase the role of community pharmacy as part of the new Neighbourhood Health Service.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		N/A
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		N/A
Environmental Impact:		X		N/A
Health Impact:		X		N/A
ICT Impact:		X		N/A
Digital Services Impact:		X		N/A
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		N/A
Core Business:		X		N/A
Data Impact:		X		N/A
Consultation and Engagement:	The following have been consulted in preparing the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC local ward members • Community Pharmacy Thames Valley • Healthwatch West Berkshire • Public Health 			

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal• Corporate Board |
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4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 A notification was received on 13 October 2025, advising of an application for a new pharmacy at 201 – 209 Halls Road, Reading, RG30 4PT by Hetherby Ltd., which is intended to meet a current need identified in the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment. As a statutory consultee, the Health and Wellbeing Board has 45 days in which to make a response.
- 4.4 The implications of this application have been assessed in accordance with national guidance and legislative requirements.

5. Supporting Information

Background

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 PNAs are used and referred to by those wishing to open a new pharmacy or dispensing appliance contractor premises. They are also used by Integrated Care Boards to determine applications, and NHS Resolution refers to them when applications go to appeal. The current PNA for West Berkshire was adopted in September 2025 – it identifies a significant gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services in the Calcot area.

Application for New Pharmacy at Halls Road

- 5.3 A notification was received on 13 October 2025 from PCSE (which administers applications on behalf of the NHS), advising of an application to meet a current identified need for a new pharmacy at 201 – 209 Halls Road, Reading, RG30 4PT by Hetherby Ltd. Copies of the notification and the application pack is provided in Appendix A.
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5.4 The proposed opening hours for the new pharmacy are set out below:

	Core Opening Hours	Total Opening Hours
Monday	09:00 - 18:15	09:00 - 18:15
Tuesday	09:00 - 18:15	09:00 - 18:15
Wednesday	09:00 - 18:15	09:00 - 18:15
Thursday	09:00 - 18:15	09:00 - 18:15
Friday	09:00 - 18:15	09:00 - 18:15
Saturday	09:00 – 13:00	09:00 – 13:00
Sunday	Closed	Closed
Total	50.25 hours	50.25 hours

5.5 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:

- Smoking cessation
- Pharmacy First
- Flu vaccination
- Pharmacy contraception service
- Hypertension
- New medicine service (NMS)
- Sexual health service
- Palliative care
- Pharmacy needle and syringe programme
- NNS depression pilot
- Take home Naloxone
- Minor ailments service
- Supervised consumption
- Emergency hormonal contraception

5.6 Premises are required to be accredited for the provision of these services, but given that the applicant has yet to acquire premises, this is not possible at this stage.

5.7 As a statutory consultee, the HWB is invited to submit comments on new pharmacy applications within 45 days of the notification date (i.e., by 27 November 2025), however, there is no requirement to do so.

Analysis

5.8 When a routine application to meet an identified current need, NHS England/the relevant Integrated Care Board (ICB) must determine:

- (a) whether granting it, or granting it in respect of some only of the services specified in it, would meet a current need for pharmaceutical services, or pharmaceutical services of a specified type, in the area of the relevant HWB; and
- (b) the current need has been included in the relevant pharmaceutical needs assessment.

5.9 Also, NHS England/the relevant ICB must have regard to the following matters:

- (a) whether it is satisfied that it would be desirable to consider, at the same time, applications from other persons offering to meet the current need that the applicant is offering to meet;
 - (b) whether it is satisfied that another application offering to meet the current need has been submitted to it, and it would be desirable to consider, at the same time as the applicant's application, that other application;
 - (c) whether it is satisfied that an appeal relating to another application offering to meet the current need is pending, and it would be desirable to await the outcome of that appeal before considering the applicant's application;
 - (d) whether it is satisfied that, since the publication of the relevant pharmaceutical needs assessment, there have been changes to the needs for pharmaceutical services in the area of the relevant HWB that are such that refusing the application is essential in order to prevent significant detriment to the provision of pharmaceutical services in that area;
 - (e) whether it is satisfied that—
 - (i) granting the application would only meet the current need in part, and
 - (ii) if the application were granted, it would be unlikely, in the reasonably foreseeable future, that the remainder of that need would be met;
 - (f) whether—
 - (i) it is satisfied that granting the application would only meet the current need mentioned in paragraph (in part, but
 - (ii) it considers that, if the application were granted, it would not be unlikely, in the reasonably foreseeable future, that the remainder of that need would be met;
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- (g) whether it is satisfied that—
 - (i) the current need was for services other than essential services, and
 - (ii) granting the application would result in an increase in the availability of essential services in the area of the relevant HWB;
- (h) whether it is satisfied that, since the publication of the relevant pharmaceutical needs assessment, the current need has been met by another person who is providing, or is due to be met by another person who has undertaken to provide, either in the area of the relevant HWB or in the area of another HWB, NHS services;
- (i) whether the application needs to be deferred or refused by virtue of any provision of Parts 5 to 7.

5.10 The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028 identifies a significant gap in provision of essential pharmacy services affecting the Calcot area. This application has been submitted under Regulation 13 as a routine application to meet this identified need.

5.11 This identifies a residential area that includes Calcot, Calcot Row, parts of Little Heath, and parts of Fords Farm, which although considered urban, are not currently within a mile (or a 20 minute walk) of a pharmacy.

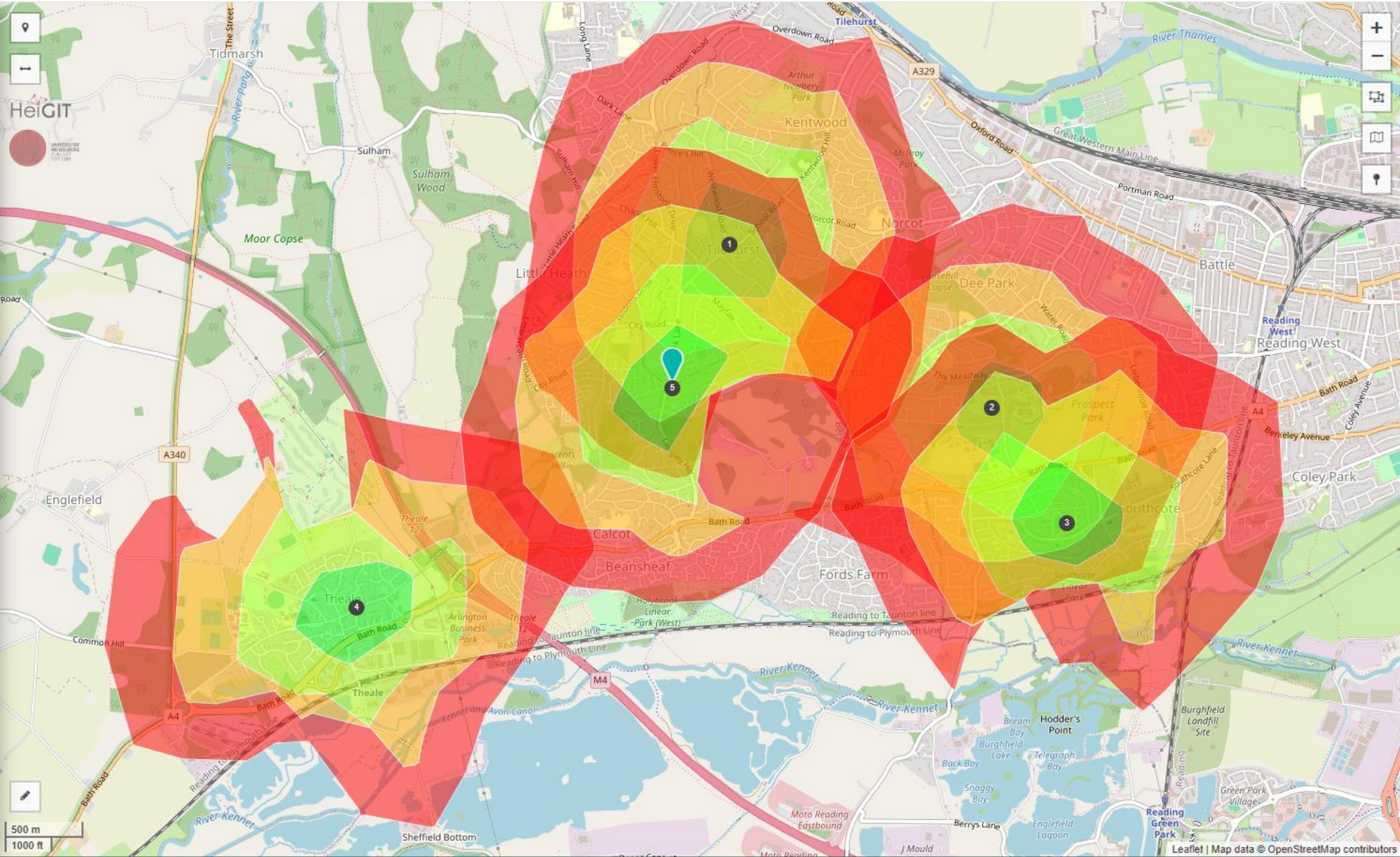
5.12 The application has identified the parade of retail premises at the western end of Halls Road (nos. 201-209) as the preferred site for the new pharmacy, but the applicant is yet to secure premises. This site is adjacent to the West Berkshire/Reading boundary. The nearest pharmacies are:

- Triangle Pharmacy in Reading
- Medway and Asda Pharmacies in Reading
- Southcote Pharmacy in Reading
- Kamson's Pharmacy in Theale

5.13 Figure 5.1 shows 5, 10, 15 and 20 minutes walking isochrones (20 minutes is equivalent to 1 mile) from each of the above pharmacies and from the proposed pharmacy. It can be seen that the identified gap would be partly addressed by the new pharmacy, but a small gap would remain in the Fords Farm estate and small parts of the Beansheaf estate (see Figure 5.1).

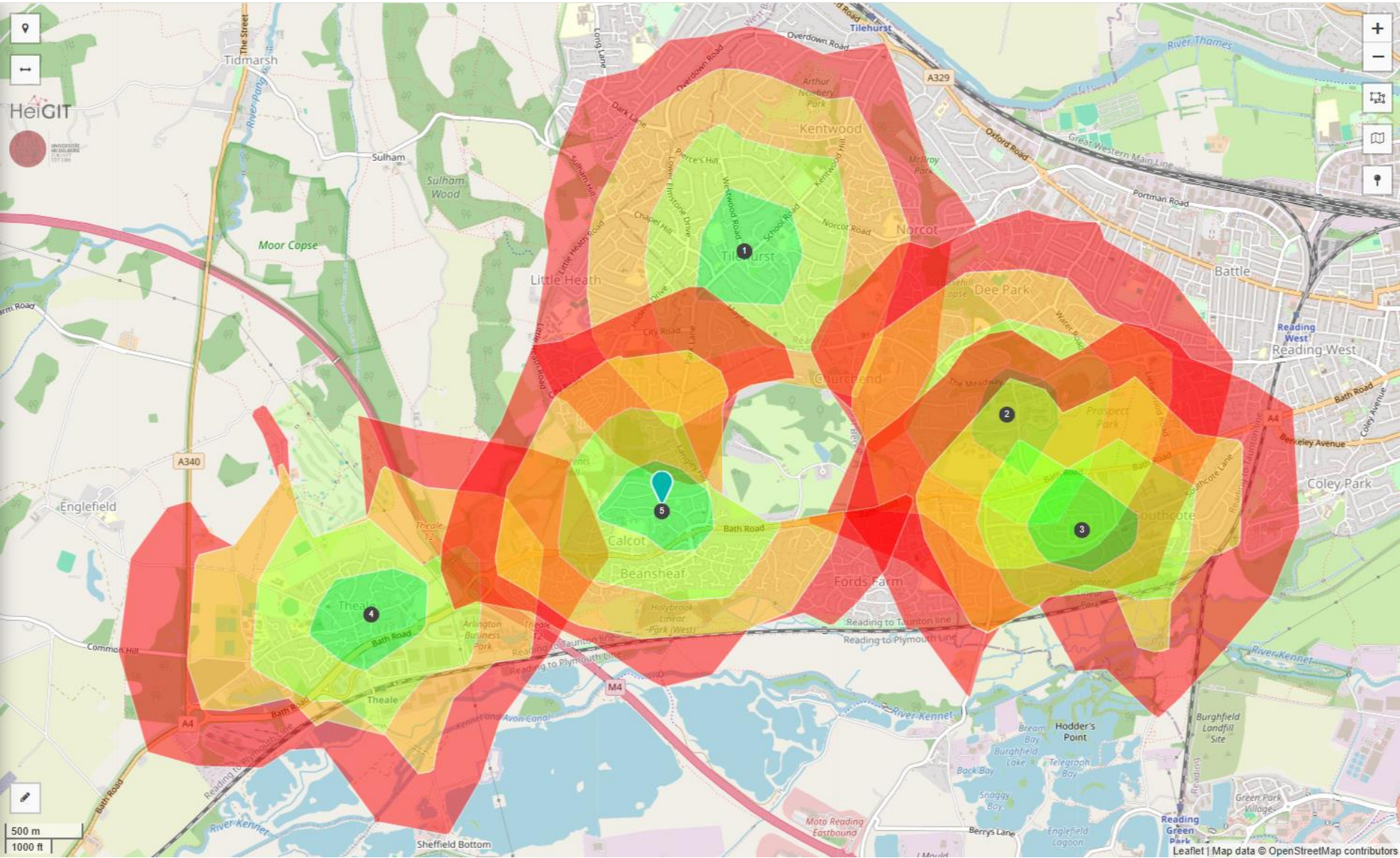
5.14 The proposed site is at the top of Langley Hill, which has a steep gradient and represents a significant barrier to walking journeys. However, the site is on a bus route, with the nearest bus stops less than 100m to the north of the site. These are served by the 15 Sky Blue route, which has a 20 minute frequency on weekdays. The site also has a limited amount of off-street parking, which is shared with the other commercial units.

Figure 5.1 – 20 minute walking isochrones from local pharmacies and from the proposed Halls Road site



Key: 1 = Triangle Pharmacy, 2 = Asda /Medway Pharmacies, 3 = Southcote Pharmacy, 4 = Kamson Pharmacy, 5 = Proposed new pharmacy at Halls Road

Figure 5.1 – 20 minute walking isochrones from local pharmacies and from the proposed Royal Avenue site



Key: 1 = Triangle Pharmacy, 2 = Asda /Medway Pharmacies, 3 = Southcote Pharmacy, 4 = Kamson Pharmacy, 5 = Proposed new pharmacy at Royal Avenue

Alternative Application

- 5.15 It should be noted that an alternative application was received recently for a site at 72a Royal Avenue, Calcot, Reading, RG31 4UT. This application was previously reviewed by the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, and it was agreed that representation should be made to Primary Care Support England in support of the application, which was considered to address the gap in provision of essential pharmaceutical services identified in the PNA.
- 5.16 It can be seen from Figure 5.2 that the Royal Avenue site would better address the gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services identified in the Calcot area. The site would also address concerns about the potential barrier to local walking journeys posed by Langley Hill. However, in its response to PCSE, the Board highlighted concerns about the potential impact of the proposed pharmacy on parking in Royal Avenue and on the school street scheme that applies to the central section of Royal Avenue, Curtis Road and Gatcombe Close, which prohibits motor vehicles other than permit holders between 8:15am-9:15am and 2:30pm-3:30pm.
- 5.17 The Royal Avenue application was submitted prior to publication of the current PNA, so it was deemed to be an ‘unforeseen benefits application’. However, because the new PNA was published before the application was determined, PCSE indicated that the application would be assessed against the new version unless the Health and Wellbeing Board considered that the only way to determine the application justly was with regard to the earlier PNA. A response was sent to PCSE on 15 October confirming that the Board was content for the application to be considered with regard to the current PNA, but suggesting that it be considered in parallel with the Halls Road application.

Local Ward Councillors’ Views

- 5.18 The local ward councillors were consulted on the Halls Road application and Royal Avenue applications. Key points from their responses are summarised below:
- The Halls Road site is located in Tilehurst rather than Calcot as the application suggests.
 - There are already several other pharmacies in Tilehurst a short distance from the Halls Road site.
 - The Halls Road site is at the top of Langley Hill and therefore would not be convenient for residents of Calcot and Fords Farm.
 - There is limited parking at the Halls Road site, which is shared with three other businesses, and visibility from the car park exit is restricted by a large tree.
 - Although it was recognised that there were parking issues at the Royal Avenue site, particularly around the start and end of the school day, on balance, it was felt that this was the preferred option and would better serve the needs of local residents.
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6. Proposal(s)

Having undertaken appropriate analysis and consultation, it is proposed:

- (a) That representation be submitted to PCSE on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Board, reiterating the view that the application at 201-209 Halls Road be considered alongside the application at 72a Royal Avenue, since both are seeking to address the same gap in provision of pharmaceutical services in the Calcot area.
- (b) That the representation should indicate that, of the two applications, the Royal Avenue option would be preferred, since it would better meet the needs of local residents, and respond to the gap in the provision of pharmaceutical services identified in the PNA.
- (c) To delegate final approval of the wording of the response to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Chairman in accordance with the decision of the Sub-Committee.

7. Options Considered

The options available to the Health and Wellbeing Board are:

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

8. Conclusion(s)

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

9. Appendices

Appendix A – Application for 201 - 209 Halls Road Reading, RG30 4PT.

Background Papers:

[West Berkshire Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028](#)

[Pharmaceutical needs assessments: information pack for local authority health and wellbeing boards - GOV.UK](#)

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priorities Supported:

The proposals will support the following 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
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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.
