



Reading
Borough Council



**Reading Borough Council
Coley Park Garage Site:
72 Wensley Road**

Design and Access Statement

February 2021



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In association with **Gleeds**
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Reading Borough Council

Coley Park Garage Site:

72 Wensley Road

Design and Access Statement

February 2021

1.1 Introduction

Reading Borough Council (RBC) have committed to the continual improvement of community facilities, housing and public spaces across the Borough.

To help deliver on this commitment, RBC has taken the initiative to assess its own land assets to identify opportunities to improve existing facilities and respond to the changing needs of residents.

Within the Coley Park Estate, in west Reading, the Council are delivering a wide range of improvements including new build affordable housing, re-imagined parks and green spaces, as well as highways and parking enhancements.

As part of these works RBC are looking to upgrade informal parking areas, parking courts and existing garages, such as the 51-65 Wensley Road site, to meet current design standards and create a more pleasant, safe, and usable spaces for existing residents.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

This report has been prepared by HTA Design LLP, on behalf of RBC. The aim of the document is to illustrate the site analysis and design process that has been undertaken in order to develop a proposal for the 72 Wensley Road garage site that is being submitted for planning approval.

The proposal is for seventeen new build, single storage garages along with eleven demarcated parking spaces, new hard-landscaping, tree planting and lighting. The proposed layout, building materials and associated works have been carefully considered in order to integrate the scheme with the existing context, whilst significantly enhancing the site itself.

Throughout the development process, the design has been coordinated with RBC's housing and highways teams. A pre-application meeting with the Planning Case Officer was held, with formal written feedback including comments from the relevant planning officers. The scheme has also been presented to the Council members, including the local Minster ward councillors.

This document responds to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 for most planning applications to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. It has been structured in accordance with Communities and Local Government "Guidance on information requirements and validation" (March 2010) and CABI (2006) guidance.



Existing Aerial Photo from the South



Existing Aerial Photo from the North

1.3 Project Description

Across the Borough of Reading there is a significant demand for truly affordable housing and to address this challenge, between 2016 and 2026, RBC has committed to delivering in excess of 5000 new homes.

As part of this programme, a complete regeneration of the Wensley Road loop site within the Coley Estate is planned by RBC.

Phase 1 includes the construction of 46 new affordable homes, a reconfigured street layout as well as an expanded and redesigned central green space (planning application no. 200122).

Phase 2 of the regeneration includes the refurbishment of all three of the 15 storey Coley Park flat blocks. The planning application for the improvement works is due to be submitted in early 2021.

Existing Garages

Currently located on the Wensley Road Phase 1 development site are 29 rented garages, owned by RBC which are to be removed as part of the regeneration works. Built in the early 1960s, these existing garages are smaller than modern sized garages and a number of the garages are in need of significant repairs.

RBC intends to offer a new garage to each of the households living within Coley Park that currently rents a garage on the Wensley Road development site. This equates to a total of 24 new replacement garages being proposed.

To minimise disruption to the existing garage tenants, when undertaking the initial feasibility for the garage reprovion, only sites within the wider Coley Park estate were considered.



Wensley Road Development - Proposed Street Scene



Wensley Road Development - Existing Aerial Photo



Wensley Road Development - Proposed Aerial Illustration

1.4 Proposed Site

An initial parking study of various sites within the Coley Park estate was carried out by transport consultant White Young Green/ Tetra Tech, which was presented to local Ward Councillors and relevant members of the RBC Team. As a result, 51-65 Wensley Road and 72 Wensley Road were identified as the most suitable sites for the reprovision of the garages, owing to their location and potential capacity.

The two sites are less than 10 minutes walk from the existing garages, directly accessible from Wensley Road and are in close proximity to other local amenities. Across both sites 25 garages are proposed, combined with much needed improvements to sites themselves.

Of the 25 new build garages, eight are proposed at the 51-65 Wensley Road site and 17 are proposed at 72 Wensley Road which includes the reprovision of one existing rented garage occupied on the existing site.

72 Wensley Road

The proposed development site is situated on the north side of Wensley Road, between two low rise apartment blocks, 72 & 74 Wensley Road both of which are owned and managed by RBC.

The existing site includes two parking courts comprising of unallocated parking bays and predominantly vacant garages, connected via the access road from Wensley Road. There is large lawn area immediately adjacent to the main road, which contains a number semi-mature trees.

A full analysis of the existing site has informed the proposed scheme and further site analysis information is included in the following section.

Legend

- 72 Wensley Road - Proposed Site - 0.190 ha
- 51-65 Wensley Road - Proposed Garage Site
- Wensley Road Development Site (ref: 20012)
- Garages to be removed

Coley Park Development Sites Diagram

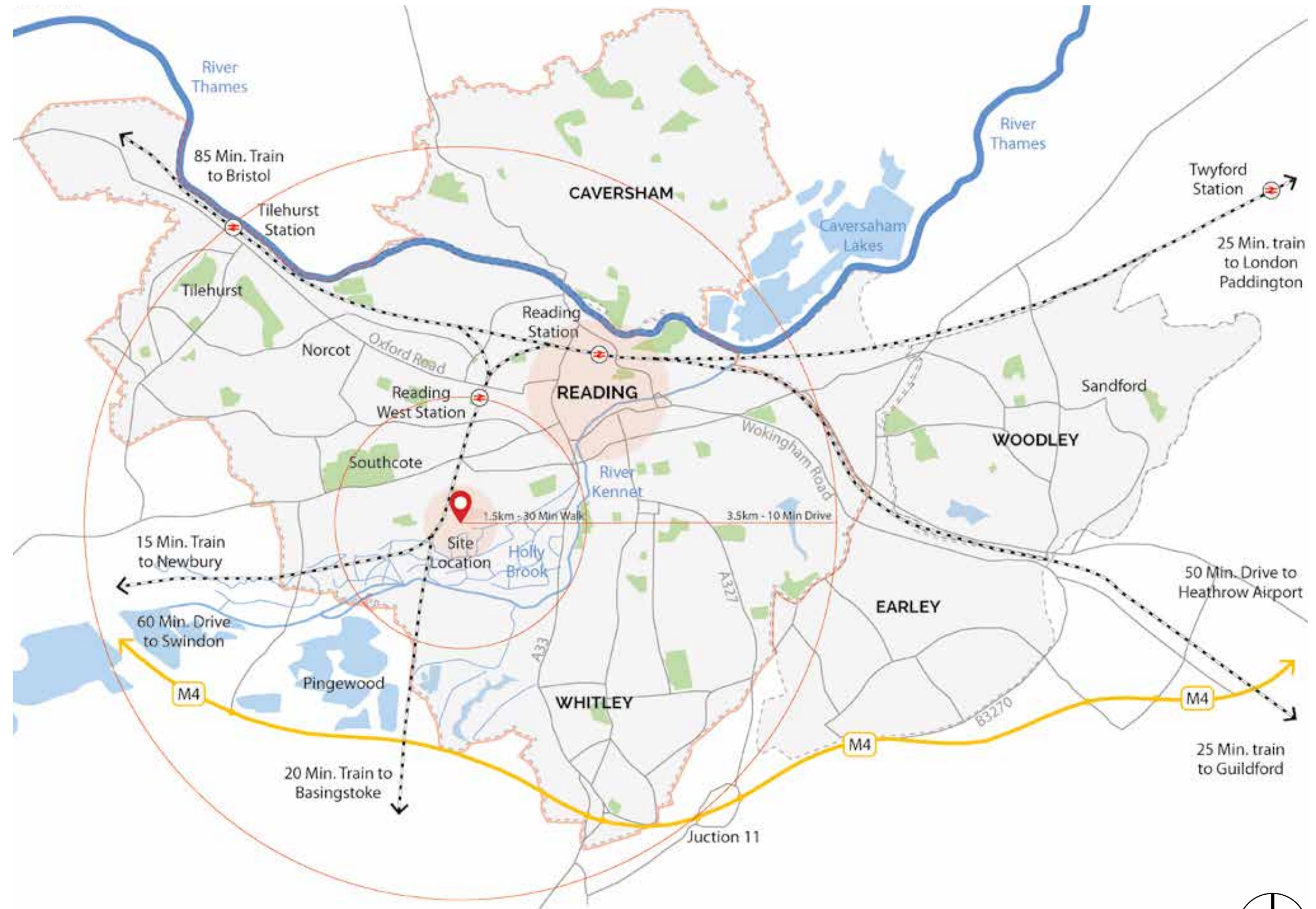


2.1 Context Analysis

The site is located to the south west of Reading, in the Minster Ward of Reading. Within the immediate vicinity of the site are a number of amenities including Coley Park Community Centre, Royal Berkshire Independent Hospital and a number of local shops.

Courage Park are directly to the north of the site and Coley park is to the east, a 10 minute walk from the site. Southcote primary School is to the west of the site a 15-minute walk past the railway lines and St Mary and All Saints C of E primary School is a 5-minute walk to the east.

The site is approximately a 30 minute walk from Reading town centre with the local bus route 11 Bronze connecting the site to the town centre and Reading train station. Bus services are every 20 minutes and the journey to the town centre is approximately 15 minutes. The town centre can also be easily accessed by car and bicycle.



2.2 Site History

The following sequence of historic maps shows how the proposed site has been developed from part of the Coley Park Estate to its current day setting, integrated into an expanse of suburban housing to the south-west of Reading town centre.

1930

Located adjacent to the Grade-II listed 19th Century East and West Lodges of the Coley Park Estate, the site in its current day form is undetectable in the 1930s landscape, with the primary access route to Coley Manor to the north and property boundaries to the East Lodge being the only geometries consistent with the current day.

1960

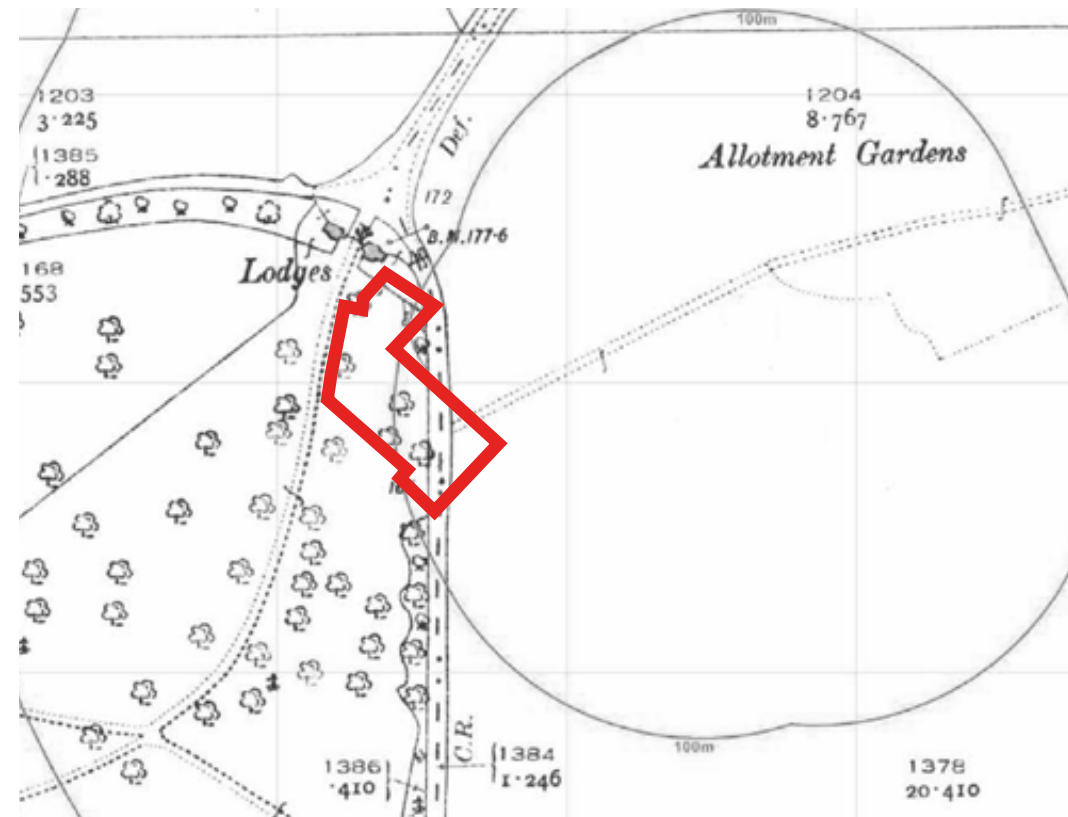
The purchasing of the Coley Park Estate by RBC in the late 1950s led to the phased development of new council housing and government offices to the north east of the site. The access route to Coley Park Farm that previously crossed the site had been rerouted in the 1960s as part of the wider residential masterplan.

1967

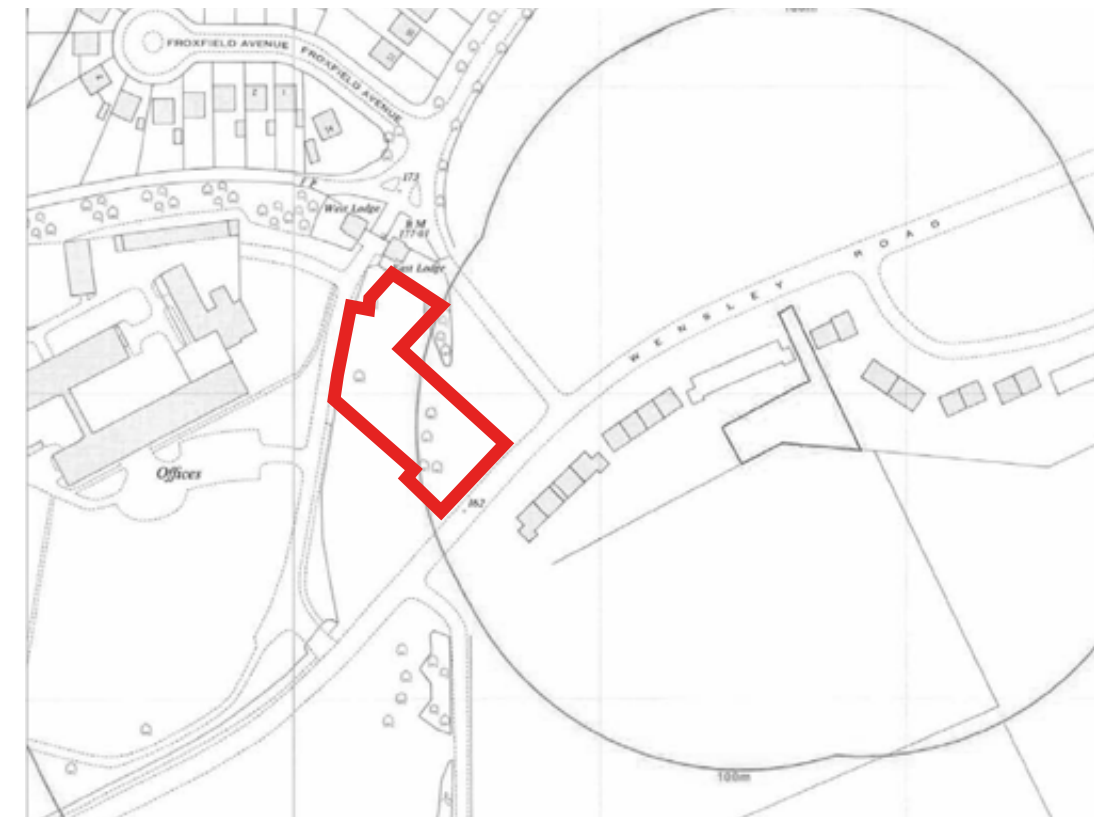
A significant proportion of the new Coley Park Housing Estate has been constructed with two apartment blocks to the south and east of the site with ancillary garage and storage facilities established on the site. The site remains in the same configuration today.

2018

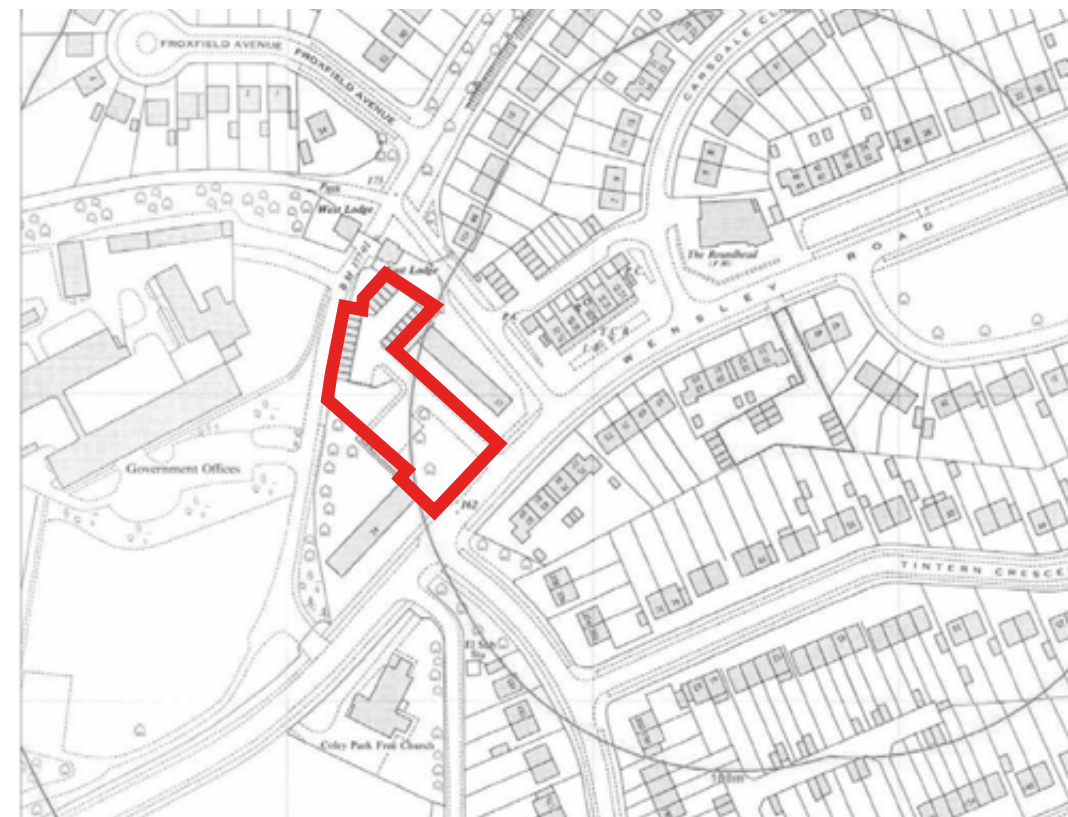
The demolition of the office block to the north and the subsequent development of new housing on its former site has completely changed around the gates houses as well as resulted in two storey units and single storey ancillary accommodation abutting the northern boundary of the development site. The original Coley Manor access route has now been fully eroded, however one tree from the Coley Park Estate remains on site.



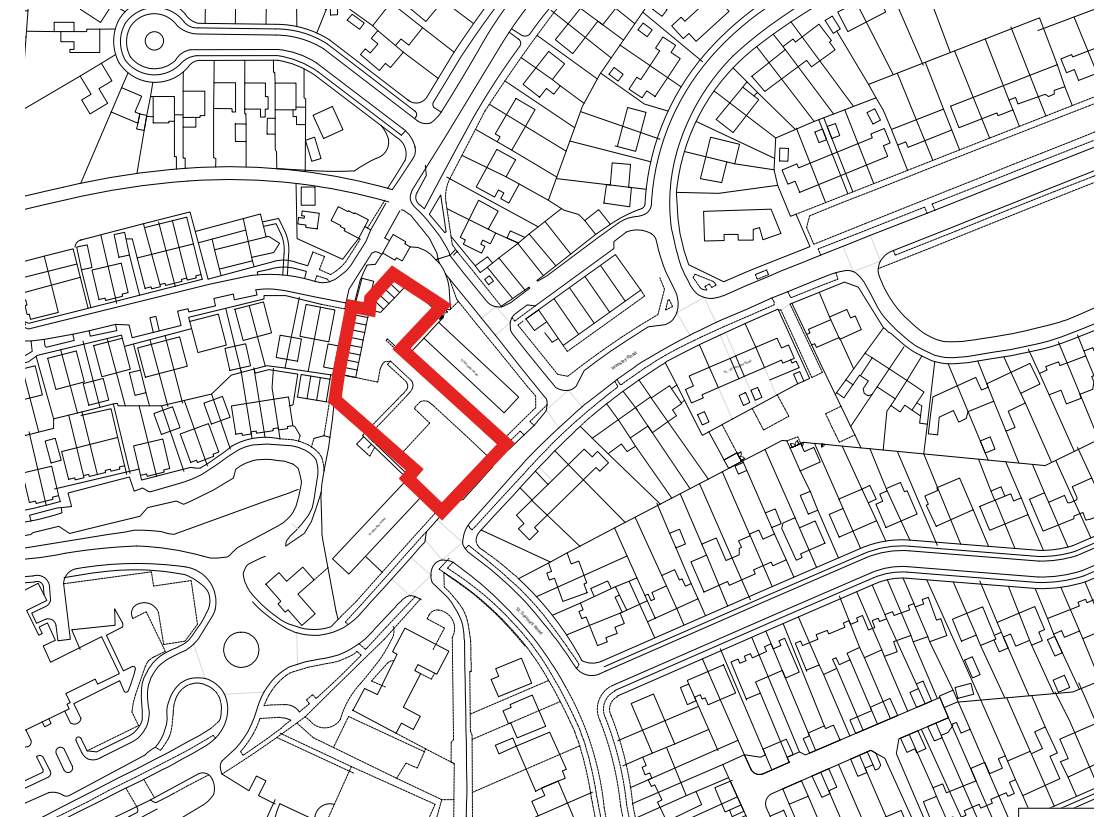
1930 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207



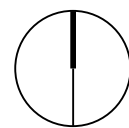
1960 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207



1967 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207



2018 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207



2.3 Existing Site

The proposed development site is situated centrally within a residential neighbourhood, in close proximity to the Wensley Road Post Office and shops. The site faces directly onto Wensley Road, spanning between two apartment blocks, number 72 and 74 Wensley Road, which are four and three storeys high respectively.

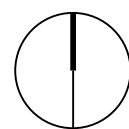
The majority of the site is clearly visible from the main road and is completely accessible to the public, via an access road and adjacent footpath leading from the Wensley Road. The footway is also the principle access route to the western entrances of 72 Wensley Road. From the site there is direct access to communal garden and refuse store to the rear of 74 Wensley Road.

The existing site contains a lawned area adjacent to the road and two tarmac parking courts, separated by another sloping lawned area. The central parking court contains five parking bays and the larger northern court contains a further five parking, 13 garages and a bank of 17 external storage sheds, each of which is allocated of the flats within 72 Wensley Road.

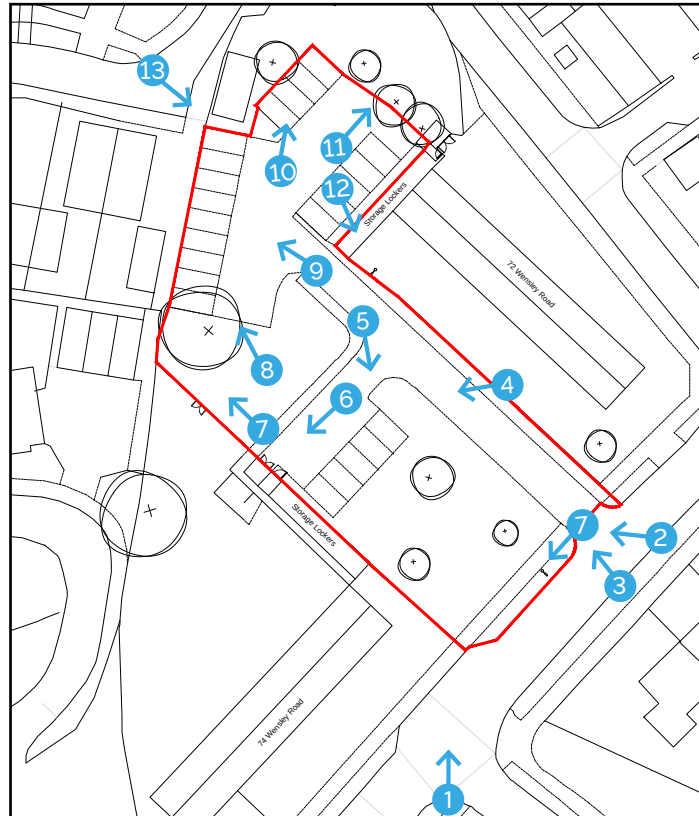
The existing garages were constructed in the 1960s and are significantly smaller than modern sized garages. Twelve of the existing garages are owned by RBC, however they have been unoccupied for some time and require a large amount of maintenance. The remaining garage was privately owned, although it does not appear to be in regular use. RBC are in the process of purchasing this garage prior to the commencement of any on-site works.

Site Area 0.190 ha

Existing Site Diagram (not to scale)



2.4 Site Photos



Key Plan



2 - View from Wensley Road (looking north-west)



3 - View along Wensley Road (looking north)



4 - View to existing parking court (looking north-west)



1 - View from Wensley Road (looking north-east)



5 - View to parking court (looking south)



6 - View along western boundary (looking west)

2.4 Site Photos



7 - View along western boundary (looking north)



8 - View to garage court (looking north-east)



9 - View to existing garages (looking north)



10 - View of existing garages (Looking north-east)



11 - View to eastern boundary



12 - View of existing storage lockers (Looking south-east)

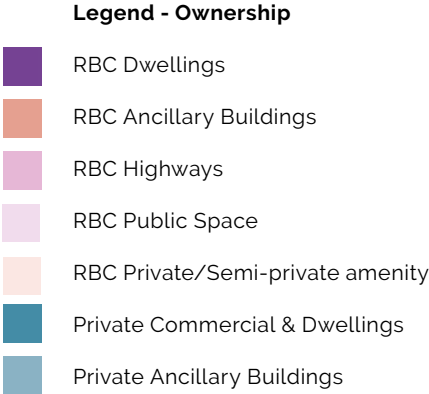


13 - View from new development to the north with the East Lodge to the left of the image (Looking south-east)

2.5 Existing Ownership

The existing site is within the ownership of RBC and currently contains thirteen single storey garages in two banks of four and nine. RBC are in the process of purchasing the only privately owned garage on the site.

The site is surrounded by a variety of dwelling types and tenures. RBC own and manage the majority of the flats within 72 and 74 Wensley Road, with the remaining as private-leaseholds. The private housing development to the north contains predominantly 2.5 storey semi-detached houses with single storey garages and also the Grade II Listed 1.5 storey gatehouses.



Ownership Diagram

2.6 Existing Movement & Parking

The access route into the site is directly off Wensley Road and is clearly visible owing to the open lawned area adjacent to the road. The site is used primarily for car parking, with ten parking bays and thirteen garages across two parking courts. There is also occasional informal parking along the approach road opposite the western entrances to 72 Wensley Road.

A pedestrian footpath runs along the north-east site of the access route, leading to the western entrances of 72 Wensley road and the residents storage lockers. A footway from the central parking court leads to the access gate to the rear of 74 Wensley road.



Movement and Parking Diagram

2.7 Existing Landscape

The carriageway, parking bays and footways are tarmac. The condition varies across site. The area directly in front of the bank of four garages in particular has deteriorated and in need of replacement.

There are two well maintained lawn areas within the site, which slope downwards toward the main road. Lawned areas adjacent to Wensley Road contain four young trees and a mature tree is located in the north-west corner of the site.

The north and north-east perimeter fences are overgrown and in a poor state of repair.

- Legend - Landscape

 - Tarmac and Hardstanding
 - Forecourt/ Parking Bays
 - Existing Trees



Existing Landscape Diagram

2.8 Existing Boundary Treatments

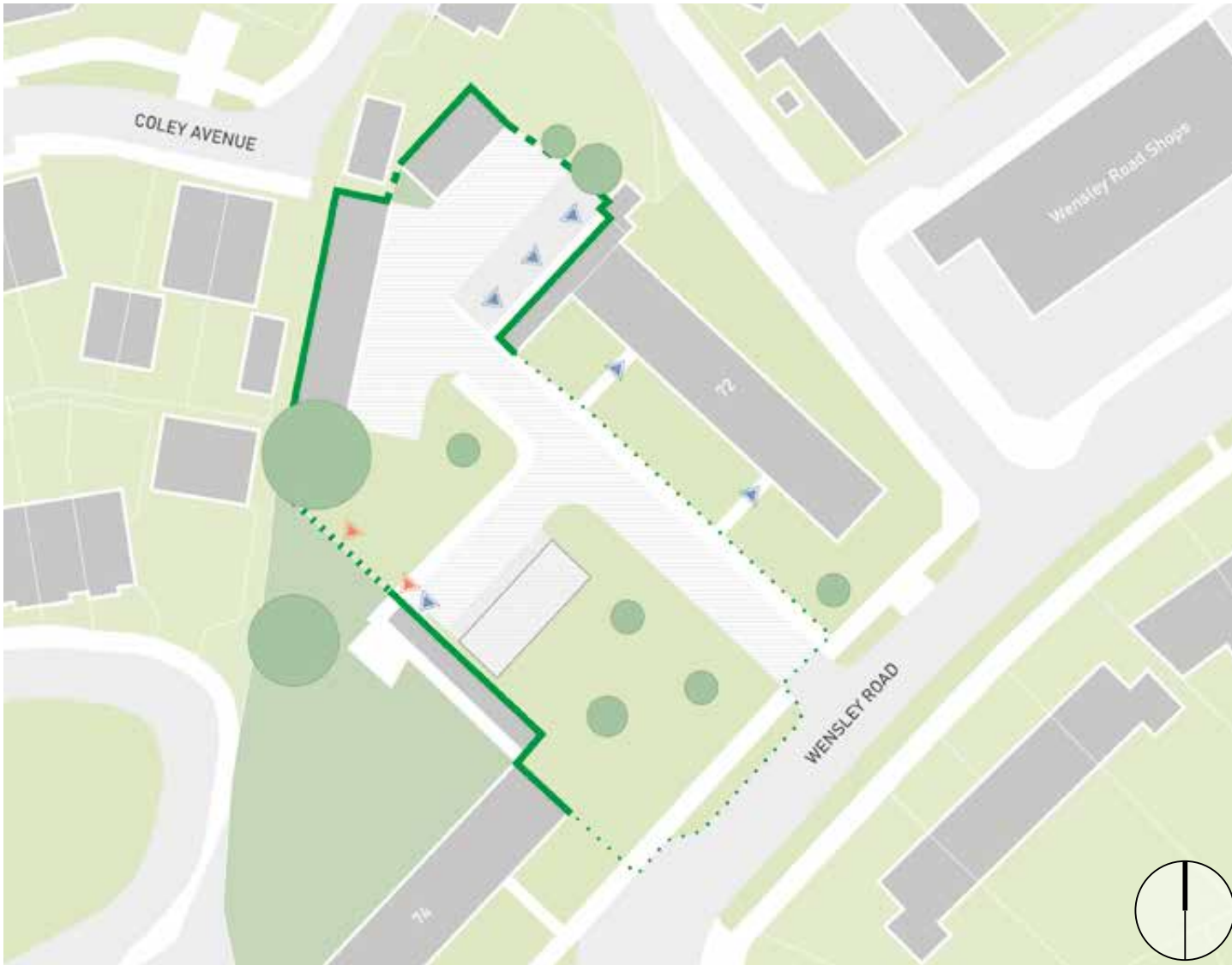
The site is surrounded by residential gardens to the east, west and north with an open border to Wensley Road to the south-east.

The site has a variety of border conditions with brick wall enclosure storage lockers, partial wall and fencing to the north-east, palisade fencing separating the garden of 74 Wensley Road from the site and hit-and-miss timber fencing to the new development to the north.

The timber fencing to the north-east edge of the site is in poor condition, however the palisade fencing to the south-west boundary is relatively new.

- Legend - Boundary

 - Garden Wall Boundary
 - Timber Fencing
 - Palisade Fence
 - Open Boundary
 - Existing Trees
 - Existing Resident Access
 - Existing Service Access



Existing Boundaries Diagram

3.1 Design Development

White Young Green Feasibility Studies

An initial parking study of various sites within the Coley Park Estate was carried out by the Transport consultant White Young Green/ Tetra Tech. This established which RBC owned sites were viable for garages and associated capacity studies illustrated the number that could be achieved across all sites and was reviewed by RBC and Council members.

HTA Sketch Proposals

Following further site analysis carried out by HTA Design, as described in the previous section, sketch design proposals were prepared for discussion with the RBC Client Team.

This sketch design process highlighted further opportunities for site improvements such as demarcated parking bays, improved footways and additional greenery and tree planting.



WYG Proposed Site Plan



HTA Sketch Proposals



Pre-app Working Site Plan

3.2 Pre-application Consultation

The following list summarises the feedback received following a pre-application meeting held on 17th December 2020 (201591/PREAPP). This includes comments from Transport Development, Conservation and Urban Design and Natural Environment Officers alongside those from Ecology and Crime Prevention Consultants.

The proposals should demonstrate:

- Compliance with the terms of planning permission 200122 (Wensley Road Phase 1).
- A clear strategy of how garages and parking bays will be allocated
- Maintained access to adjacent properties.
- An assimilation into their surroundings as closely as possible
- A consideration of the impact of proposals on the adjacent listed building
- A considerate response to the existing on-site trees and perimeter vegetation.

- Defined protection areas around retained trees.
- A consideration of green/brown roofs on the garages.
- Hedgehog friendly perimeter fencing.
- An exploration and mitigation of potential contaminated land issues.
- How the proposals have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change.
- How rear court parking areas will be protected using a combination of the following:
 - Boundary fence with electronic access controlled vehicle and pedestrian pass gates
 - Lighting to ensure adequate lighting of footpaths, parking areas and vehicle access doors.
 - Robust vehicle doors to garages
 - Formal CCTV surveillance.

3.3 Site Constraints

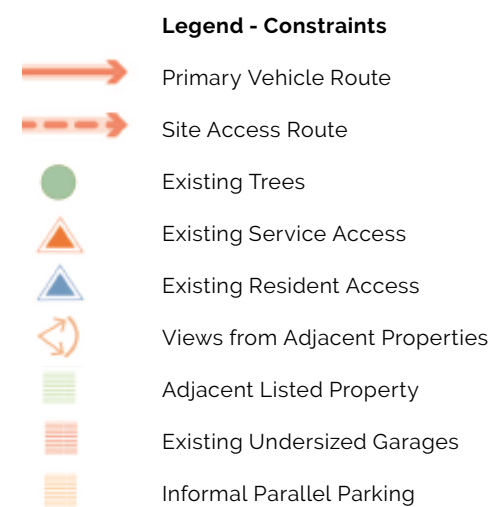
The adjacent plan consolidates the findings from site analysis, design development and consultation process regarding the existing constraints within the proposed site.

This includes information relating to the physical constraints as well as constraints identified by members of the RBC Client team and the relevant Planning Officers.

This information has been based on OS plan information, topographical survey, tree survey and visual onsite inspection by HTA Design.

Key Constraints & Design Implications

- Existing garages on-site are undersized by current-day standards.
- Restricted-width approach road due to informal parallel parking.
- Numerous existing residents and service access points from the site to neighbouring properties.
- Sparse green spaces with minimal planting.
- Limited natural surveillance of north-eastern corner leading to potential for anti-social activities.
- Shared boundary with the grounds of a Listed property (Grade II).



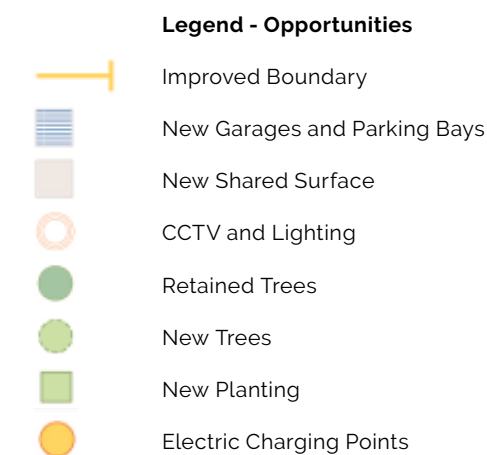
Site Constraints Diagram

3.4 Site Opportunities

The adjacent plan reflects the opportunities for the site, which have been identified and refined through the site analysis and the design development process.

These include the following:

- New garage blocks to replace the undersized existing units, providing a new boundary along the northern edge of the site
- Two new garage blocks to the west and centre of the site
- Improved boundary conditions to the rear garden of the adjacent Grade II Listed property.
- Clearly demarcated parking bays with four electric charging points for the use of existing residents and the wider community
- New carriageways and footways providing valuable improvements for existing residents
- Retaining and protecting existing tree planting, as well as proposing additional trees to enhance the existing and new green spaces within the site
- New lighting and CCTV to improve the security of the full site



Site Opportunities Diagram



4.1 Proposed Layout

The proposed site layout been designed with careful consideration of the following:

Layout & Access

- New garages are designed to in line with contemporary parking standards.
- The site has been tracked to ensure that vehicles can comfortably manoeuvre within the site. (see appendix for full tracking)
- The site has been maintained as publicly accessible to ensure existing residents usage is not compromised by the development.
- All existing access points within the site have been retained, with an improved approach owing new resurfacing and designated pathways.

Safety & Security

- New street lights and CCTV are proposed, to deter anti-social behaviour.
- Replacement of dilapidated boundary treatments with new fencing and integrated hegehog gravel boards.

Key Features

- ① Proposed Garages X 17
- ② Demarcated Parking Bays x 11
(with permeable paving)
- ③ Electric Vehicle Charging Bays
- ④ New Street Lighting & CCTV
- ⑤ Retained Existing Trees
- ⑥ Proposed Trees & Planting beds
- ⑦ Improved Boundary Wall
(to RBC Properties)
- ⑧ Zone for future PV Installation



4.2 Sustainability

In 2019 Reading Borough Council declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving zero carbon across their housing stock by 2030. Irrespective of the size and scale of the project, sustainability and environmental protection is a central focus of any future RBC works.

Four electric vehicle charging points (two rapid charging column with double outlet) are proposed on the site, and a visible location for the charging points has been selected to increase residents awareness of the availability EV infrastructure within the area.

Solar power will be used to power the proposed street lighting. Lighting with the garages will be installed with a motion sensor, to prevent lights being left on accidentally.

The proposed surfacing to the parking bays will be robust, permeable paving made from natural and recycled materials which will act as passive surface water drainage, mitigate against the risk of flooding and provide natural filtration.

The layout of the site has been designed to minimise to loss of green space, and where possible, provide opportunities for new planting. Nine semi-mature trees are being proposed for the site and immediate vicinity.

To accompany the works within the red line boundary, it also proposed that an array of PV panels will be installed to the south-east facing roof of the RBC owned 72 Wensley Road flat block, maximising the potential of the roof space and orientation.

These panels will provide renewable energy to the existing residents, helping to reduce energy bills. A portion of the panels will also contribute to power and lighting within the communal areas.

4.3 Proposed Site Sections



Site Section A-A



Site Section B-B

4.4 Proposed Elevations

The elevation design of the garages has been kept intentionally simple, to minimise the visual impact on the surrounding properties.

A light red multi brick stock that is in keeping with original 1960s dwellings within the Coley Park Estate will be used for the exterior of the garages, accompanied by a dark grey aluminium roof, doors (compliant with LPS1175 SR1) and rainwater goods.

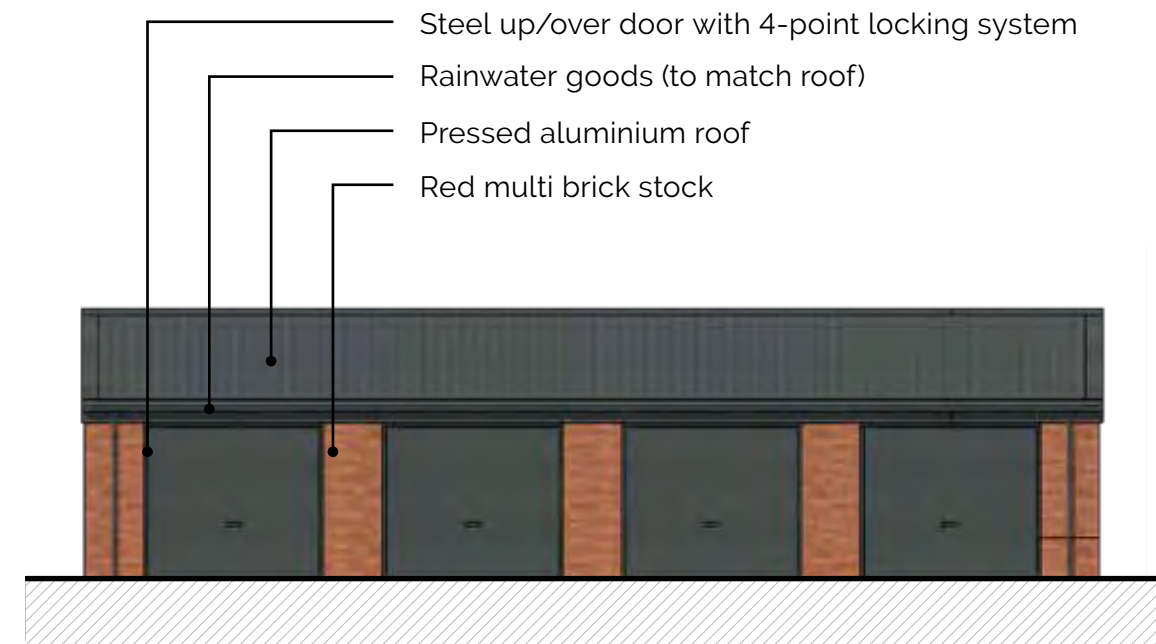
A low, dual pitch roof has been selected, in order to keep the height of the garages to a minimum. A pitched roof has been deemed preferable to a flat roof in terms of drainage and is more likely to deter anti-social behaviour, such as littering and climbing on the roofs, which can be an issue with single height structures.

Green or brown roofs were initially considered as an option, but owing to these potential ASB issues and maintenance concerns, both green and brown roofs were deemed as unsuitable for this site.

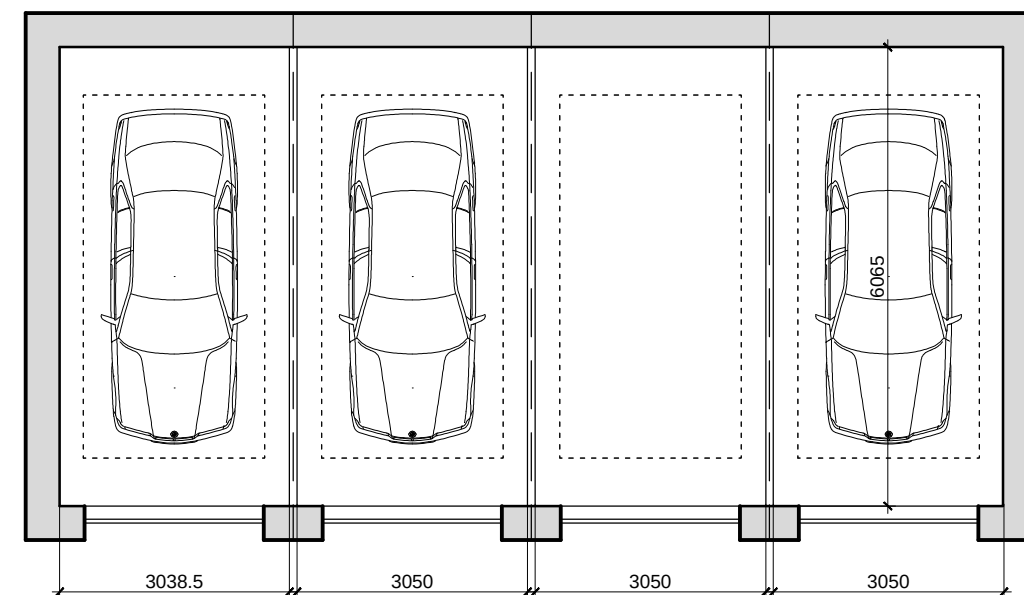
The integration of PV panels on to the roofs of the garages was considered however it was deemed that providing PV panels on the roof of the adjacent apartment block (72 Wensley Road) would provide greater benefit to the existing residents and also eliminate the risk of vandalism and theft that could occur with installing panels at the lower garage roof level.



Typical Garage Gable Elevation



Typical Garage Front Elevation



Typical Garage Plan

4.5 Landscape Strategy

Soft Landscaping

The current site features one mature tree to the north-west corner and a mixture of young and semi-mature trees within the sloped lawn areas. In order to enhance and formalise the planting within the site, new trees and planting are proposed.

To tie the site into the wider RBC Coley Park regeneration projects, the proposed species are consistent with the planting strategy approved as part of the planning application for new RBC housing on Wensley Road (application number no. 200122)

Hard Landscaping

The scheme has been designed to an adoptable standard and the proposed specification of street lighting will also be in accordance with these requirements.

The majority of the hard surfacing will be the existing tarmac (made good) with new tarmac laid where required and permeable paving to new parking bays and footpaths. The material specification will be in accordance with the planning application for new RBC housing on Wensley Road (application number no. 200122)

Where hard surface materials are required within the RPA's of existing trees, a Cellweb no dig construction build-up will be used.



Understory planting
Luzula sylvatica



Carriageway
New and Existing
made good) tarmac



Proposed Trees
Oak
(Quercus Robur)



Proposed Trees
River Birch
(Betula nigra)



Proposed Trees
Forest Pansy
(Cercis Canadensis)



Proposed Trees
Fastigate Oak
(Quercus Robur Fastigiata)



Proposed Trees
Indian Bean Tree
(Catalpa bignoniodes)



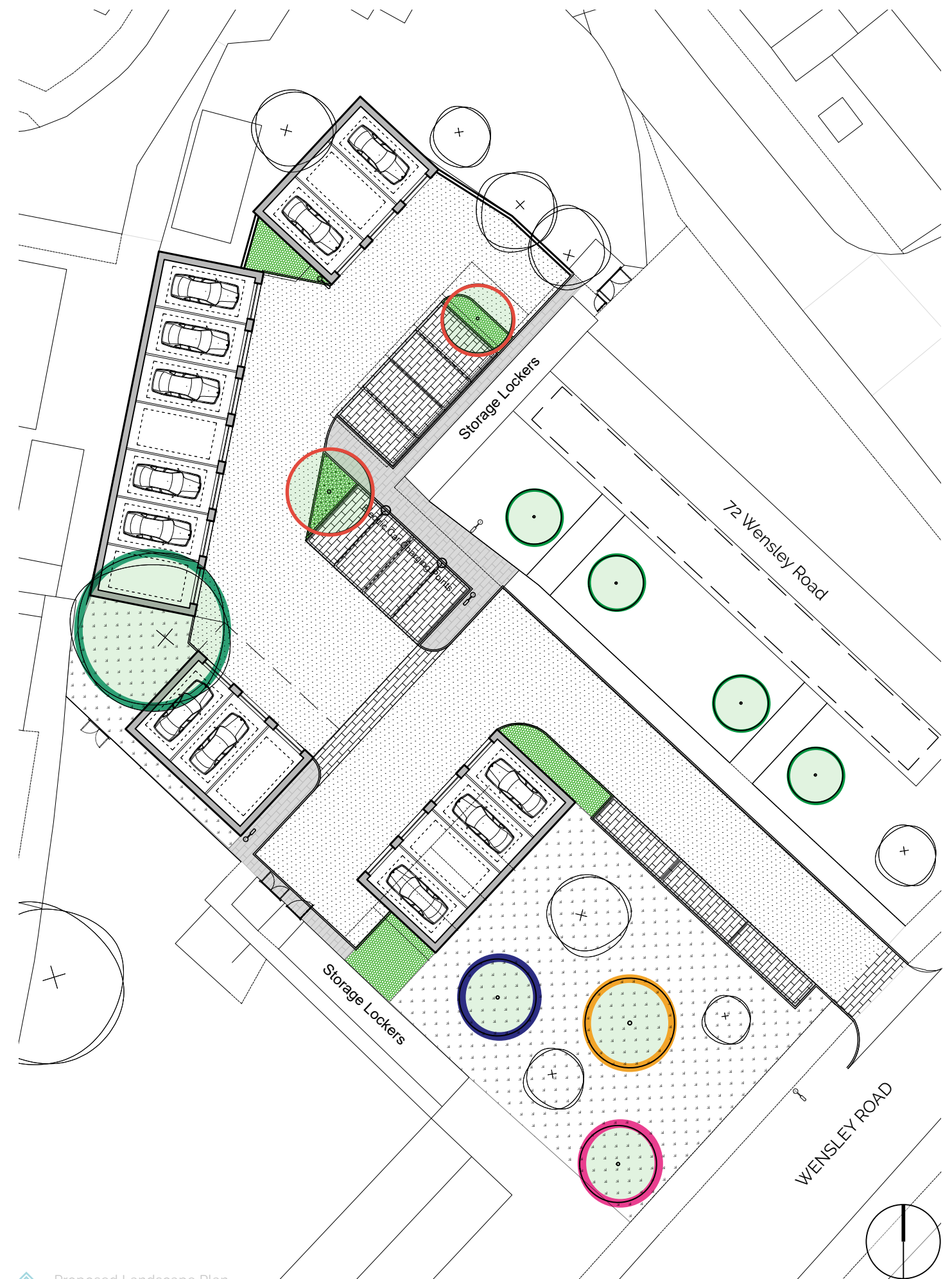
Proposed Trees
Scots Pine
(Pinus sylvestris)



Footways & Headers
Tegula concrete block
paving (Slate)



Parking Bays
Tegula permeable block
paving (Charcoal)



Proposed Landscape Plan

4.6 Consultation

All residents living within the immediate vicinity of the site, as well as the existing garage tenants on the Wensley Road development site were sent a newsletter in advance of the planning application submission.

In addition, an A3 Poster will be displayed at the site entrance throughout the planning consultation period.

Both the newsletter and poster include information regarding the proposal and the timings of the submission. Residents are invited to submit comments via the planning portal.

Wensley Road Estate Improvements

Public Consultation

72 Wensley Road

As part of a regeneration programme for the Wensley Road Estate, Reading Borough Council are planning on providing new and replacement garages and parking bays on two sites within the Coley Park Estate.

We are proposing...

At 72 Wensley Road 17 single storey garages are proposed, along with 10 dedicated parking bays, 100 and set out to meet parking standards.

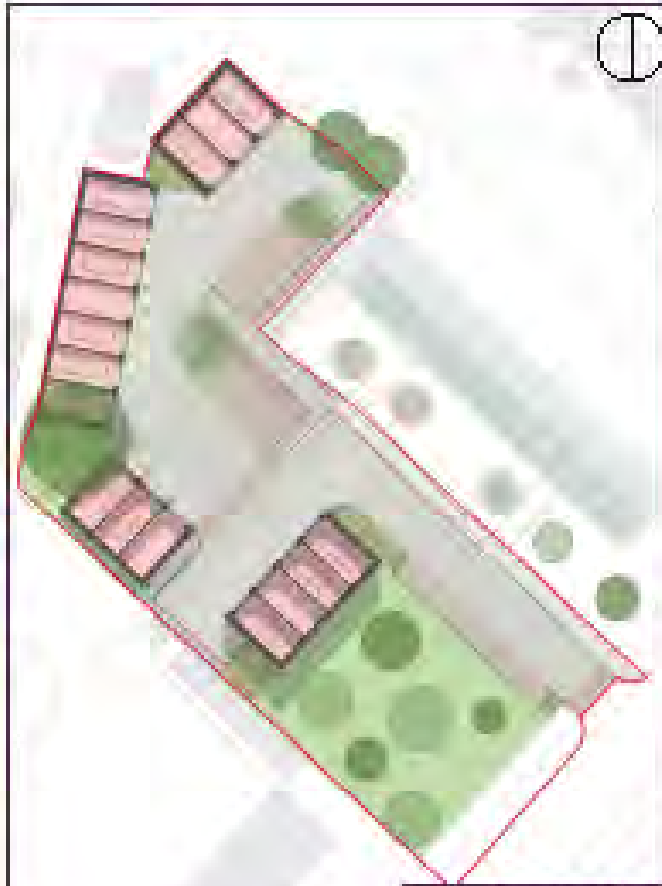
The area will be landscaped with permeable paving, new street light and electric vehicle charging points will be installed. In addition new trees will be planted to improve visual amenity and provide biodiversity.

Next Steps...

The planning application for 72 Wensley Road was submitted in early February 2021.

Subject to planning approval, construction will start on site in summer 2021.

If able to comment on the proposal, please search for 72 Wensley Road **1001 20001** at www.planning.reading.gov.uk



Proposed Plan

Estate Site Plan

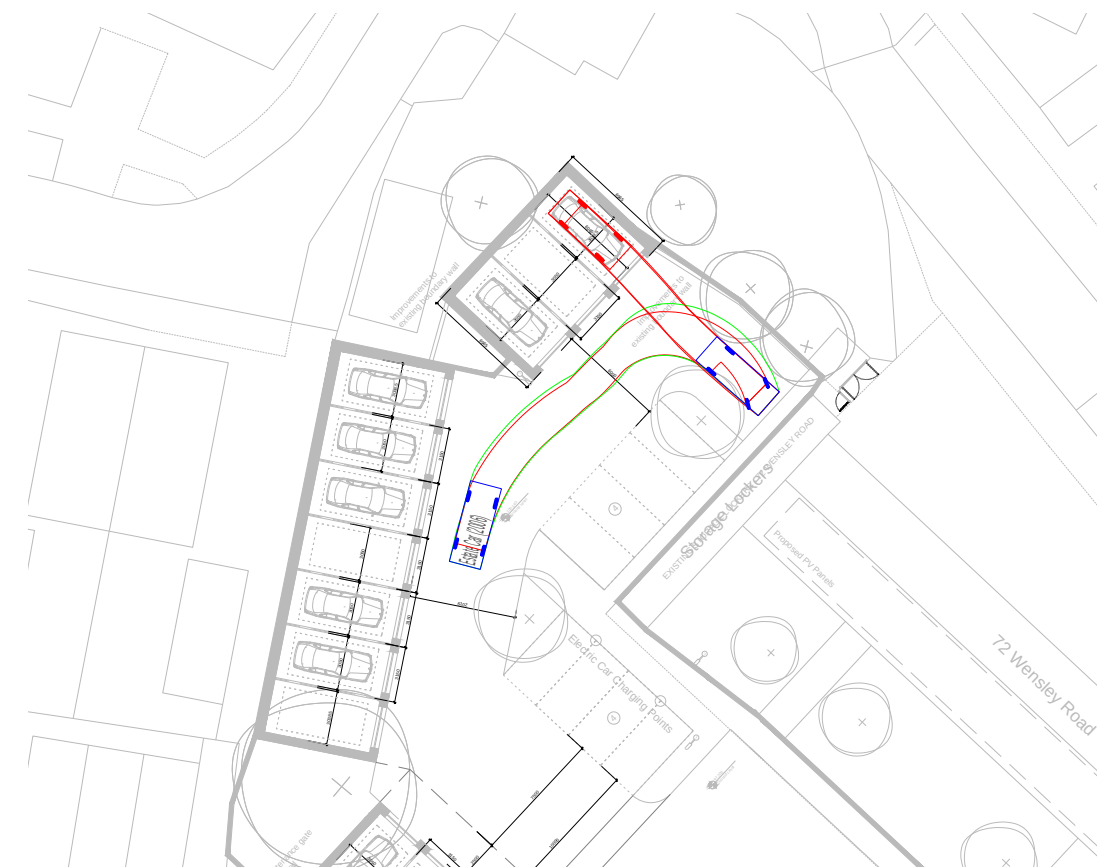
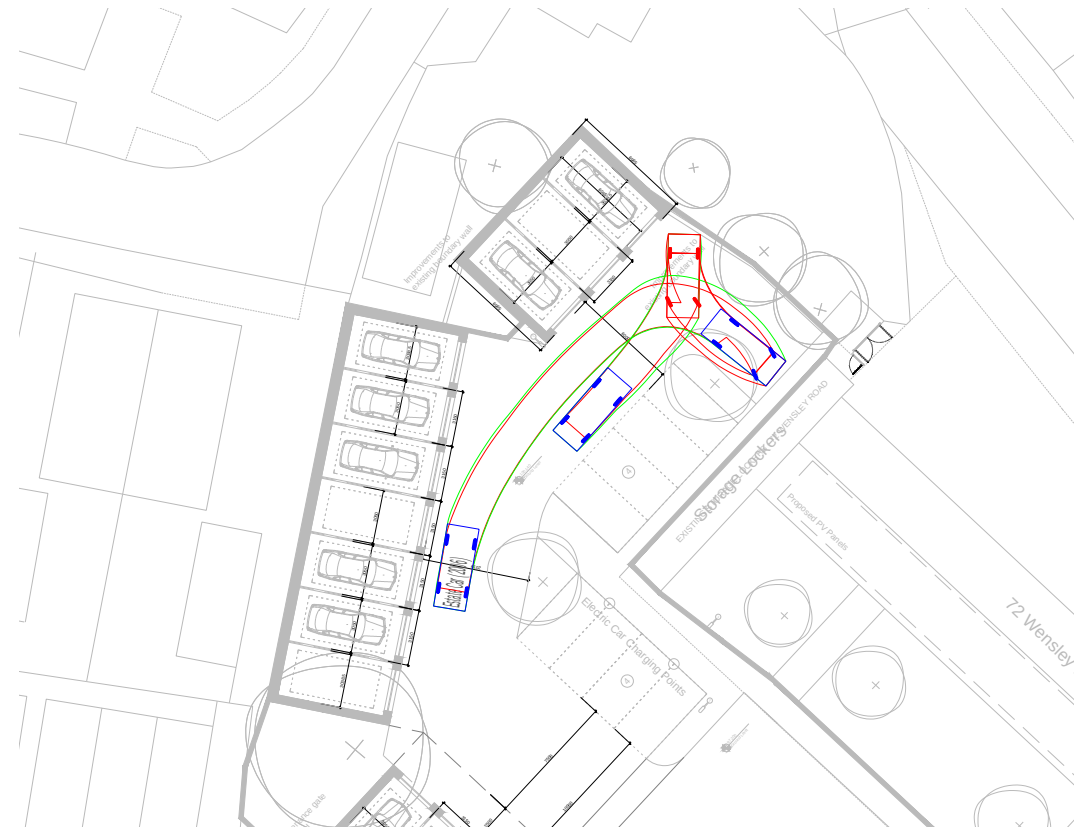


Garage Sites
Wensley Road Site

72 Wensley Road
73-75 Wensley Road

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you

5.1 Site Tracking Diagrams



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