



Reading
Borough Council



gleeds^G

Reading Borough Council Wensley Road : New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 1

Design & Access Statement

January 2020



Report presented by **HTA**
In association with **Gleeds**
Status **Draft**
Issue -
Issue Date **22.01.20**
File name **RBC-WLR_HTA_A**
Author **RH/PP/NH/SE/**
EDN/MD/EH
Checked by **CD**
Approved by **CD**

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Reading Borough Council New Build Phase 3: Wensley Road

Design & Access Statement

1.1 Introduction

The Borough of Reading is faced with significant challenges with regard to its council housing. Demand for genuinely affordable homes is increasing at a time when sale prices and rent levels are beyond the means of the average resident.

The Council is committed to delivering over 5,000 new homes in the period of 2016-2026. Approximately 500 dwellings per annum from 2016 to 2026, in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy Document.

To help deliver on this commitment, the borough has taken the initiative to assess its own land assets to identify the opportunities to provide more housing with minimal disruption to existing residents

This report explores the potential for the Council to work with residents in using its own assets to transform neighbourhoods, improve the quality of housing for existing residents and provide opportunities for new genuinely affordable housing.

Development Priorities

- Building the homes we need – over 5,000 new homes
- Putting local people at the front of the housing queue
- Help with the rising cost of living
- Enable local people to take advantage of economic opportunity in Reading
- To support the cultural heritage of the borough and to build on the distinct sense of place
- Place residents at the heart of the programme, working together to meet the challenge.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

This report has been prepared by HTA Design LLP in partnership with Gleeds, on behalf of Reading Borough Council. The aim of the document is to illustrate the site analysis, consultation and design development process that has been undertaken to explore the regeneration opportunities of the Council-owned Wensley Road site which has concluded in the design proposal submitted for planning approval.

The proposal is for 46 new homes, 100% of which will be affordable and designed to achieve zero carbon, based upon the new part L carbon factors, creating a sustainable place for local people to live, integrated into the surrounding neighbourhood.

The proposals have been presented at a number of pre-application meetings with the relevant planning officers, at the Reading Design Review Panel and local residents, as well as Council members have been involved in the design process from the outset. Feedback has been gathered from all meetings and events has been recorded and responded to throughout the design development.

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 CABE (2006) guidance.



Existing Aerial Photo



Proposed Site Plan

1.3 Project Description

Through the process of gaining a better understanding of the needs of the existing residents and the local community, two complementary and simultaneous regeneration projects have been defined for the site;

Phase One Works - New Homes & Landscaping

Reading Borough Council (RBC) have been granted Homes England funding, to deliver new homes, which are proposed to the north of the site and along with associated improvements works. This phase will include:

- 46 New affordable family homes
- Re-configured parking layout
- Improved central amenity space
- Preserved and enhanced landscape features

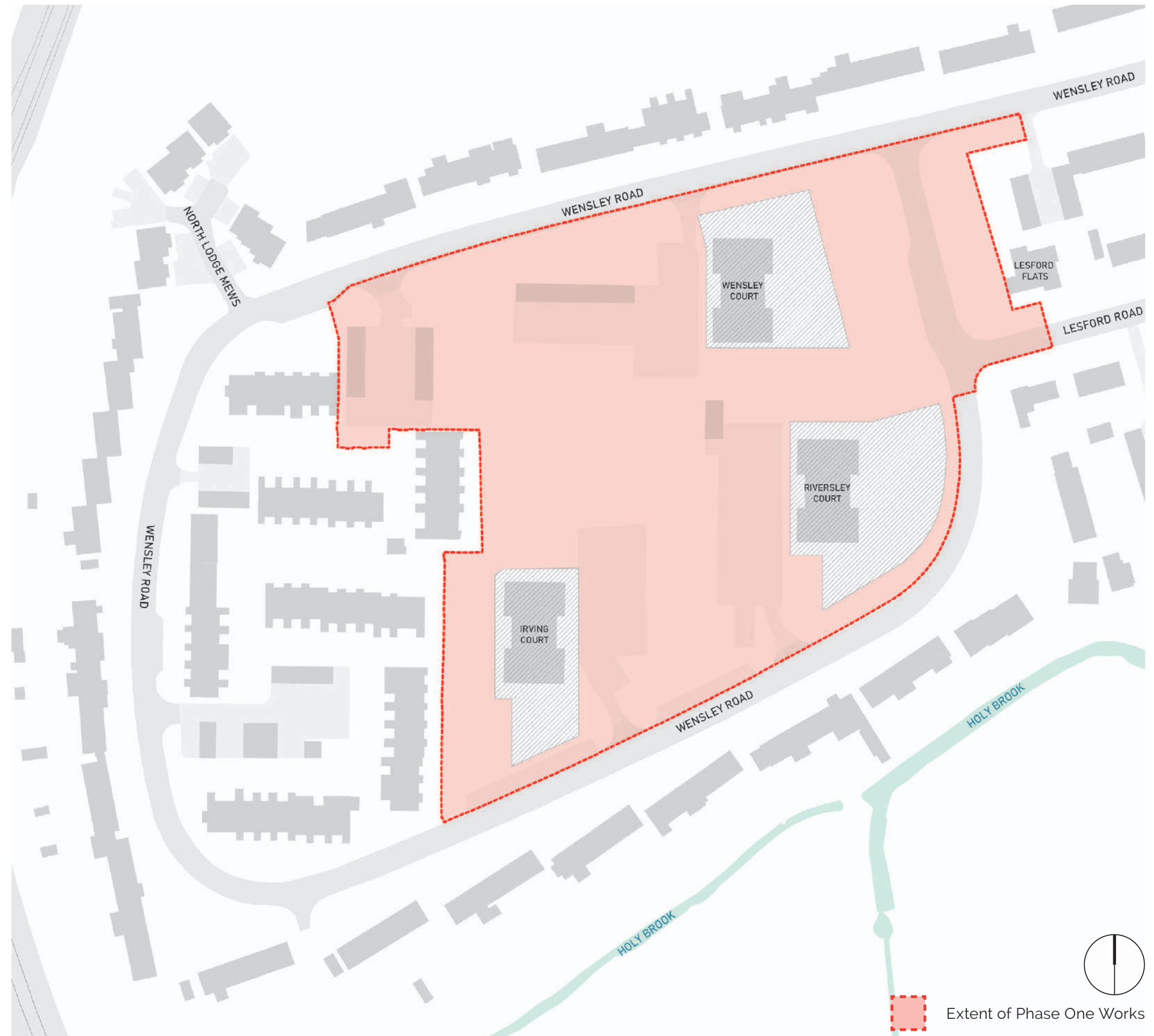
Phase Two Works - Tower Improvements

Running in parallel to the design development of the proposed new homes and site wide landscaping, The improvements to the towers is an ongoing programme of works, proposed to include:

- Installation of sprinklers to existing flats (Work commenced on-site September 2019)
- Replacement of windows and building fabric improvements
- Improved refuse and recycling facilities
- Increased cycle and general storage
- Improved landscape amenity space

The site plan and visual appearance of Phase One has been designed to allow for the Phase Two works, but they will form two separate planning applications.

This planning application is for the phase one works only.



1.4 Project Objectives

The following are the key redevelopment objectives that we believe are important for the success for the proposal on the site.

These objectives form the guiding evaluation criteria for the development of designs for the site.

Urban Design

Layout and massing which has a strong and well-tested urban framework, based upon streets and spaces, with high quality architecture and landscape design.

Planning

Redevelopment options which will be acceptable in Reading planning policy terms, and where there may be variance to policy, a strong justification is made.

Housing

Any new development will re-provide the same number of council homes and where possible use the land assets to maximise the delivery of new genuinely affordable housing.

Finance

Proposals which are financially viable and deliverable - this means a redevelopment which maximises the value of the land and opportunities for high quality mixed tenure housing.

Community

A preferred regeneration framework which has the future support of the existing residents, results in minimum disruption to them, and builds a strong and sustainable community.



Existing Aerial Photo from the South



Existing Aerial Photo from the North

1.5 The Proposed Site

The proposed development site is located on Wensley Road, within the Coley Park estate in west Reading. Within the proposed development site are three existing tower blocks. Each of the blocks contains 89 flats and the majority of these are affordable housing, owned and maintained by Reading Borough Council.

Detailed analysis of the proposed site, the immediate context and wider context of Reading has been essential to progressing the design proposals. A greater understanding of the site has also been informed by regular public consultation events, meetings with Council members', relevant Reading Borough Council planning officers and through presenting to the Reading Design Review Panel.

Site Areas

Proposed Site Boundary - 2.36ha
Coley Park Estate Boundary - 10.678 ha

Number of Existing Homes

Within the Proposed Site Boundary
- 267 Dwellings

Number of Homes within Coley Park Estate -
512 Dwellings

Existing Housing Density

Within the Proposed Site Boundary -
113 Dwellings per hectare

Within the Coley Park Estate Boundary -
48 Dwellings per hectare

Site Location



2.1 Reading Context Analysis

The site is located to the south west of Reading Town centre, adjacent to the train line from Reading to Basingstoke and Newbury and within the Minster ward of Reading.

The town of Reading is bounded on the north by the Thames and to the south by the M4 Motorway. Reading town includes the Caversham area to the north and the separate settlements of Earley and Woodley on the eastern fringes of the town.

To the north east of the centre is the Marina of the Thames Valley Park Nature Reserve formed from the River Thames running further north west towards Oxford.

To the south west of the centre are the lakes, lagoons and nature reserves which have been formed from the River Kennet. The River Kennet is a tributary of the River Thames and runs through the town centre of Reading.

Reading central train station is a major interchange hub, due to be one of the terminal stations of the new Elizabeth Line Crossrail service.



2.1 Reading Context Analysis

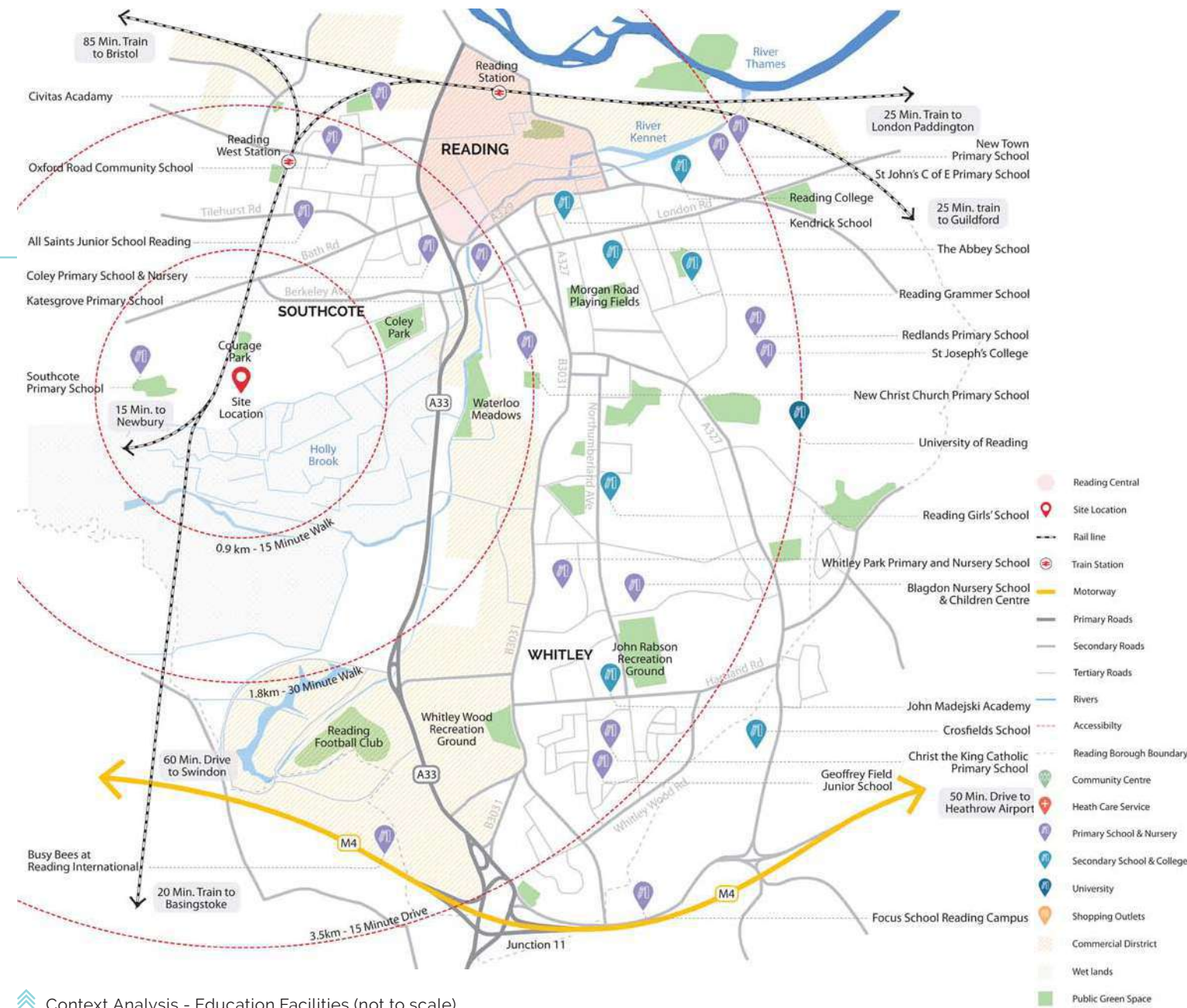
Reading Town Centre

Reading train station is situated in northern area of the town centre and to the south of this, are the main commercial, retail and civic areas which include the Oracle Shopping centre and Broad Street Mall.

Both the A33 and the Basingstoke Road (B3031) run south, connecting the town centre to the M4. The to the east of the Basingstoke Road is predominantly residential with some retail,

commercial and community amenities. Between the A33 and Basingstoke Road is a mixture of light industrial and commercial areas with the Madejski Stadium and Tesco Warehouse to the south west opposite the M4 Motorway.

The River Kennet runs through the heart of the town centre and enters into the town from the Pingewood area to the east which contain lakes, wetlands and nature reserves.



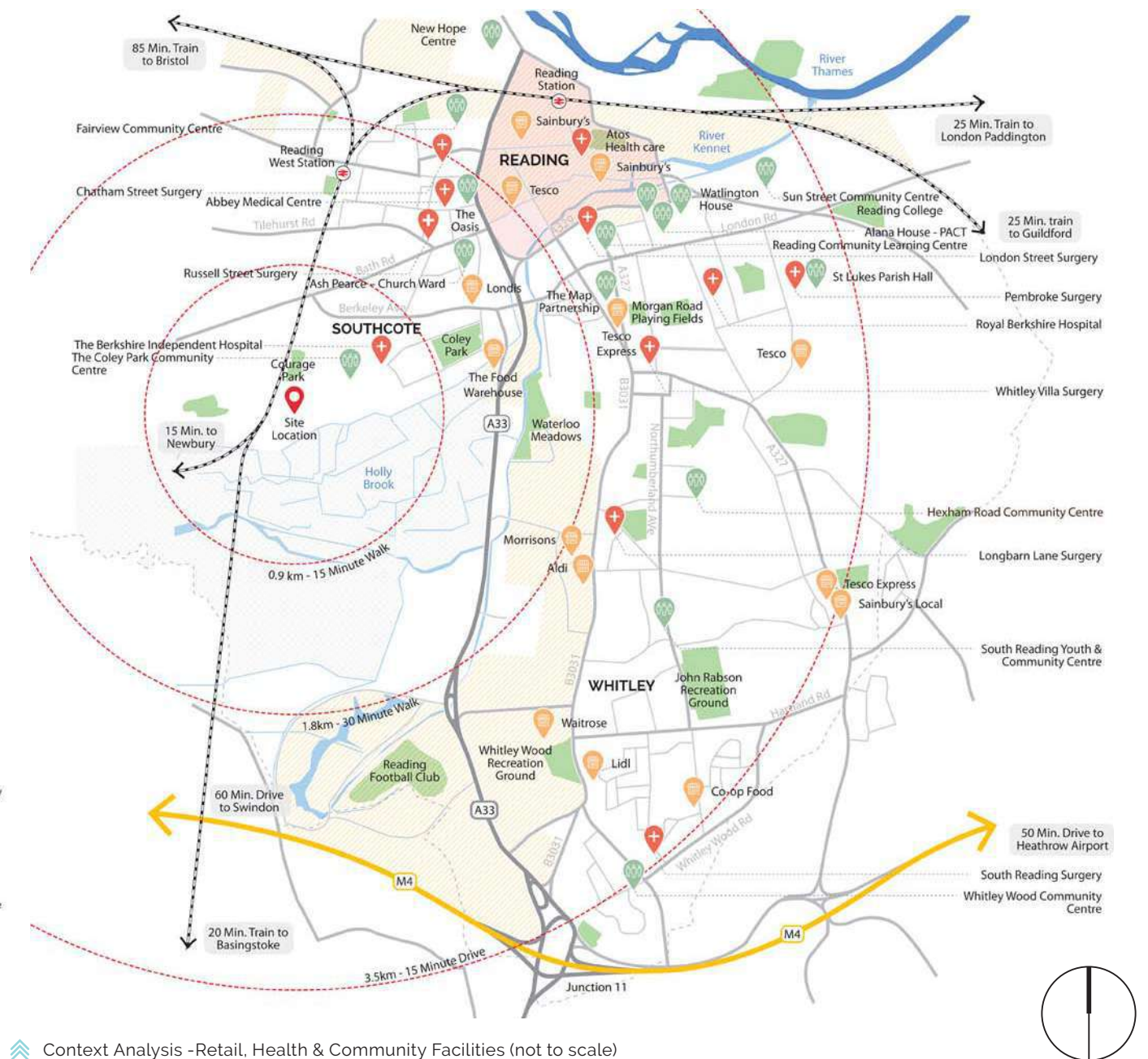
Minster Ward

The site is located 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 min 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 min 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 mins 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 Neighbourhood Context Analysis

Local Amenities

About 600m East of the site along Wensley Road are local amenities such as shops, and a post office Wensley Road also has the local Coley Park Community Centre, and The Berkshire Independent Hospital.

St Mary and All Saints Primary School is about 400m East of the site with Birch Copse Southcote Primary School accessible to the west via a footbridge over the train line. The closest secondary schools are Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School and the Wren School, located to the North-West off Bath Road approximately 25-30min walking distance

The open space of Courage Park is to the North of the site only a few minutes away and Coley Recreation Ground with children's play and sports facilities is to the East. There is also children's Play within the Site Boundary itself.

Diagram legend

Site Location

Primary Roads

Secondary Roads

Tertiary Roads

Rivers / Brooks

Accessibility

Community Centre

Heath Care Service

Primary School & Nursery

School Property

Commercial Outlet

Commercial District

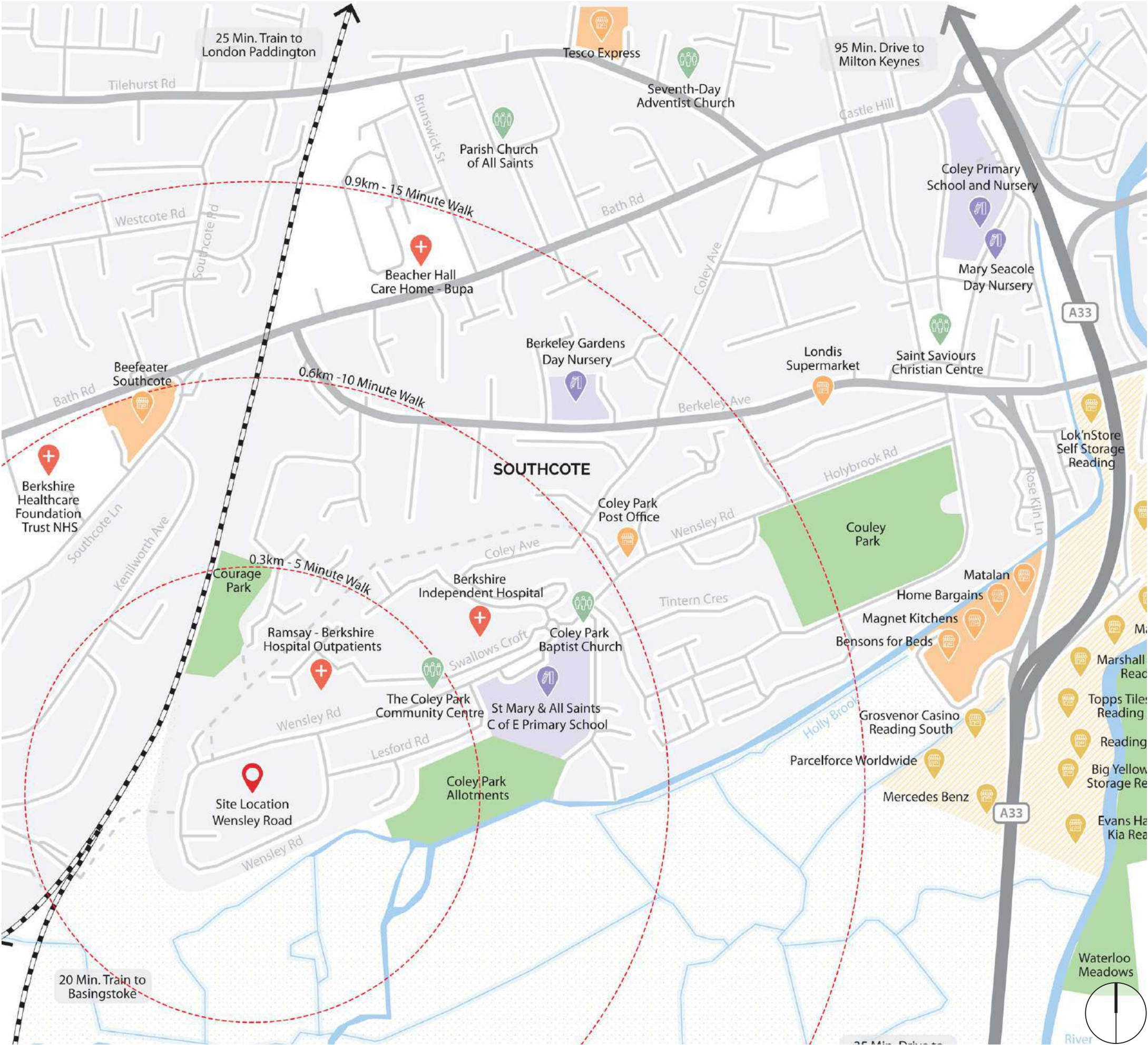
Shopping Outlet

Shopping District

Public Green Space

Residential

Wetlands



Location Context of Southcote (not to scale)

2.3 Existing Site Plan

The site is located within the loop at the end Wensley Road, within the Coley Park Estate. Currently three 15 storey towers blocks are located within the site itself, however on the neighbouring site within the loop and around the perimeter of the loop are primarily two storey terraces and semi-detached houses.

There are three parking courts serving the three towers, all of which are accessed directly from the Wensley Road loop and currently there are no vehicular routes across the loop.

There are the existing open grass amenity spaces adjacent to each of the towers, but are fenced off from the loop road, only accessible from within the site boundary. Within the site between the three tower blocks is a play space for 5-11yr old's, which is publicly accessible via pedestrian footpaths.

A further larger play space for the local neighbourhood is within Courage Park, which can be accessed via a pedestrian footpath leading from the north-west corner of the Wensley Road loop. Coley Park allotments are situated only 200-300m East of the site, off Lesford Road.

Wensley Road Site & Garage Site

Site Area (Red Line Boundary)
2.36 hectares / 5.669 Acres

Existing Dwellings (Red Line Boundary)
267 Existing Homes + 29 Garages

Site Density
113 Homes per hectare

Existing Site Plan (not to scale) ➤



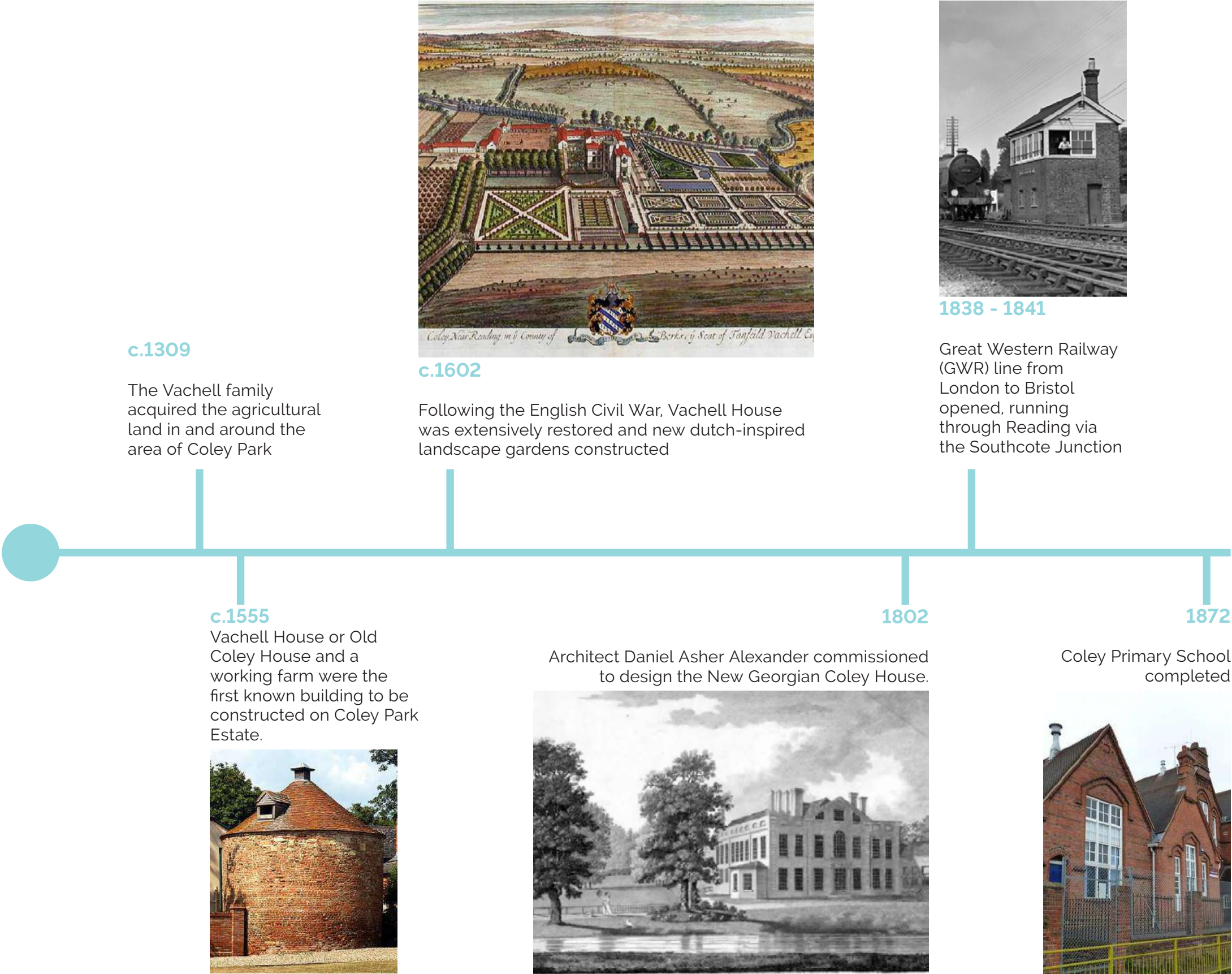
2.4 Site History

Site Timeline

The site is located within the former Coley Park Estate, now a suburb of Reading. The land previously used for predominantly agriculture was acquired by the Vachell Family in the late 13th Century and remained in the family for over 400 years. During this period the original Tudor Coley House was constructed and reconstructed on the banks of the Holy Brook, along with a working farm which served the estate.

Both were subsequently demolished when the estate was purchased by John McConnell, who commissioned the construction of the Georgian Coley Manor House on higher ground in the early 1800s. From the late 1960s the Ministry of Agriculture occupied Coley Manor and during this period two additional office blocks were constructed on the grounds. The building is now used by the Berkshire Independent Hospital.

In addition to the manor, during the 19th century there were other significant developments on and around the Coley Park Estate, most notably a section the GWR line from London to Reading as well as the now disused Coley Branch line, built in the early 20th century. However, the proposed site itself and its immediate surrounding remained undeveloped until the southern area of Coley Park Estate was purchased by Reading Borough Council (RBC) in 1956. In the subsequent decade RBC constructed a large residential estate, which included pubs, shops, chapel and other local amenities.





1908

Coley Branch railway opened, a single track dedicated goods line.



1958 - 60

Construction of the three High Rise Tower blocks



1968

Following the WWII Coley House was occupied by the Ministry of Agriculture and in 1968 two new office blocks were constructed

1983

Coley Branch line closes

1993

Coley Park Towers renovated by ECD Architects



1956

Reading Borough Council (RBC) purchased the southern area of the Coley Estate, shortly followed by the construction of two-storey family homes

WWI

Coley Park Estate used as an airfield

1882 - 1889

Coley Recreation ground was the training ground for Reading football club

2.4 Site History

Historical Plans

Whilst development did not occur on this site itself until the late 1950s, the sequence of historic maps shows the proposed site located within the former grounds of Coley Park estate, as well as the proximity to significant developments within the area.

1883

By this time the London to Reading and the Reading to Basingstoke GWR railway lines were well established by this time having been operation for just over 40 years, Despite the key intersection at Southcote Junction located at the south-west corner of Coley Park Estate, other than the reconstruction of Coley Park Mansion earlier in the 19th century there had been little development in the area.

1900

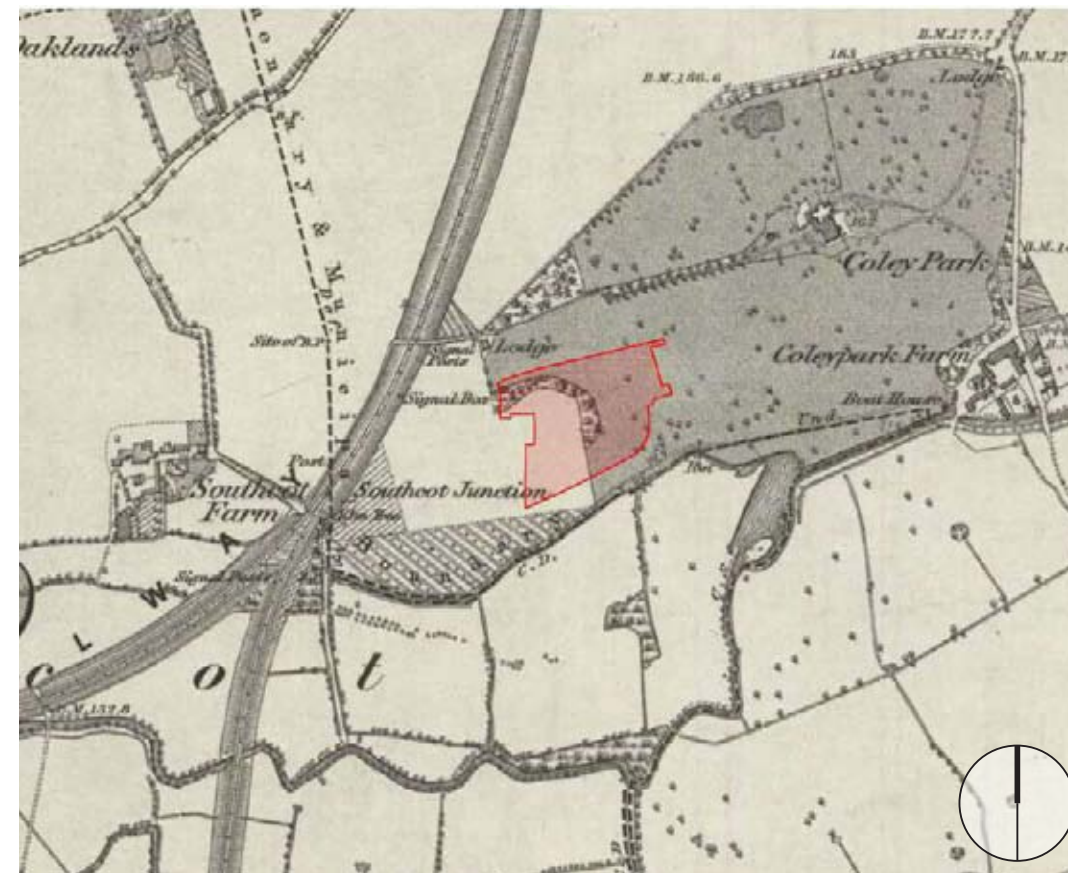
Much of the land surrounding the site remains agricultural, or completely undeveloped such as the Fobney meadow and wetlands to the south of the site. However, to the north-west of the site there was some development around Oaklands farms.

1914

The Coley Branch line, a single railway track for transporting goods to the thriving industrial area south of Reading has been completed, running through the south-west corner of Coley park and into Fobney Meadow.

1935

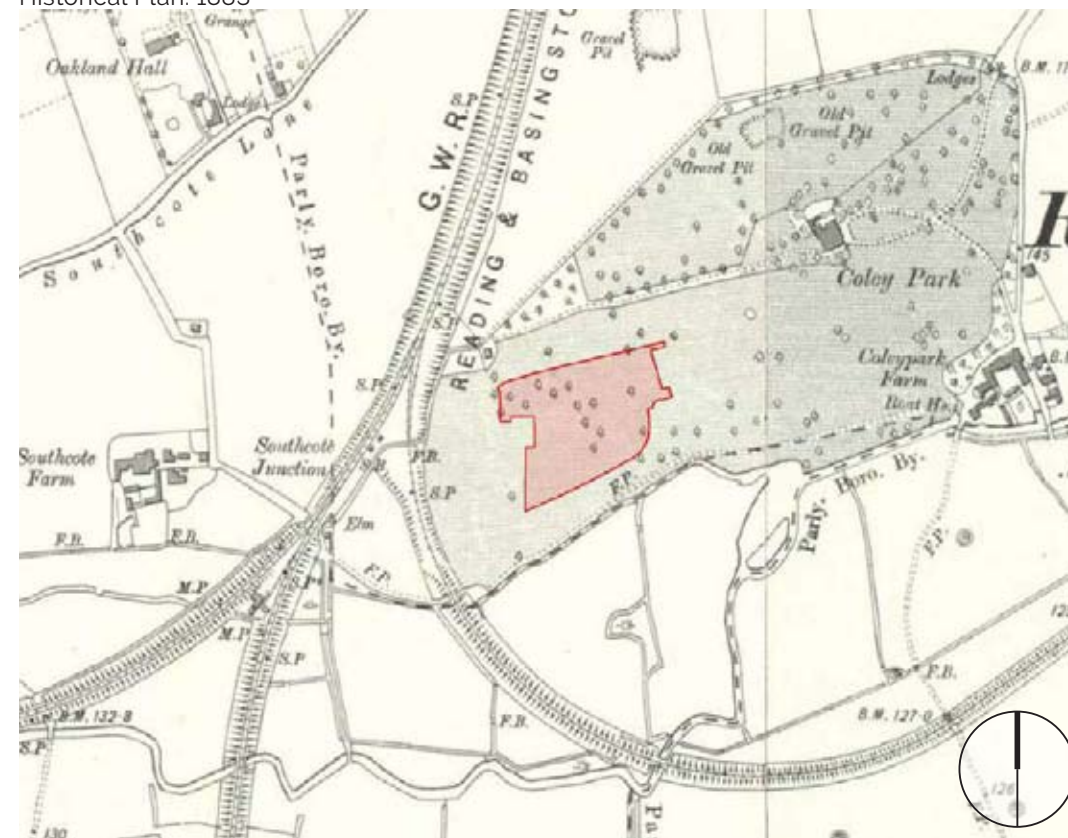
To the west of the railway line a planned private residential development, consisting of semi-detached family homes has been constructed around new residential streets including Kenilworth Avenue.



Historical Plan: 1883



Historical Plan: 1900



Historical Plan: 1914



Historical Plan: 1935

2.4 Site History

1944

Further residential developments are completed to the west of the site in Southcote. Also, the private residential cul-de-sac Hungerford drive, comprising of large semi-detached houses is constructed just to the north of Coley Park.

1962

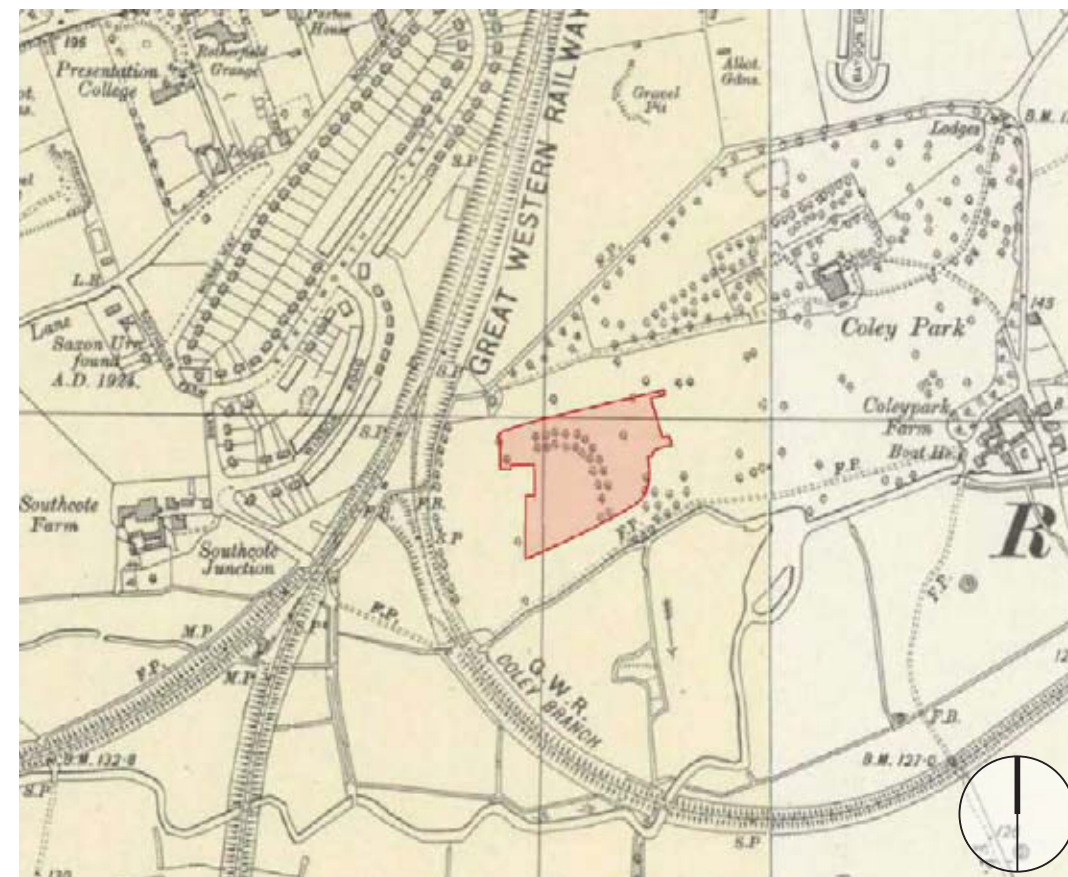
Having purchased the majority of the remaining Coley Park six years earlier, Reading Borough Council (RBC) has completed the construction of a significant proportion of the new Coley Park Estate, which includes social housing, new roads and communal facility. Further private residential developments are also completed to the west and north of the site.

1973

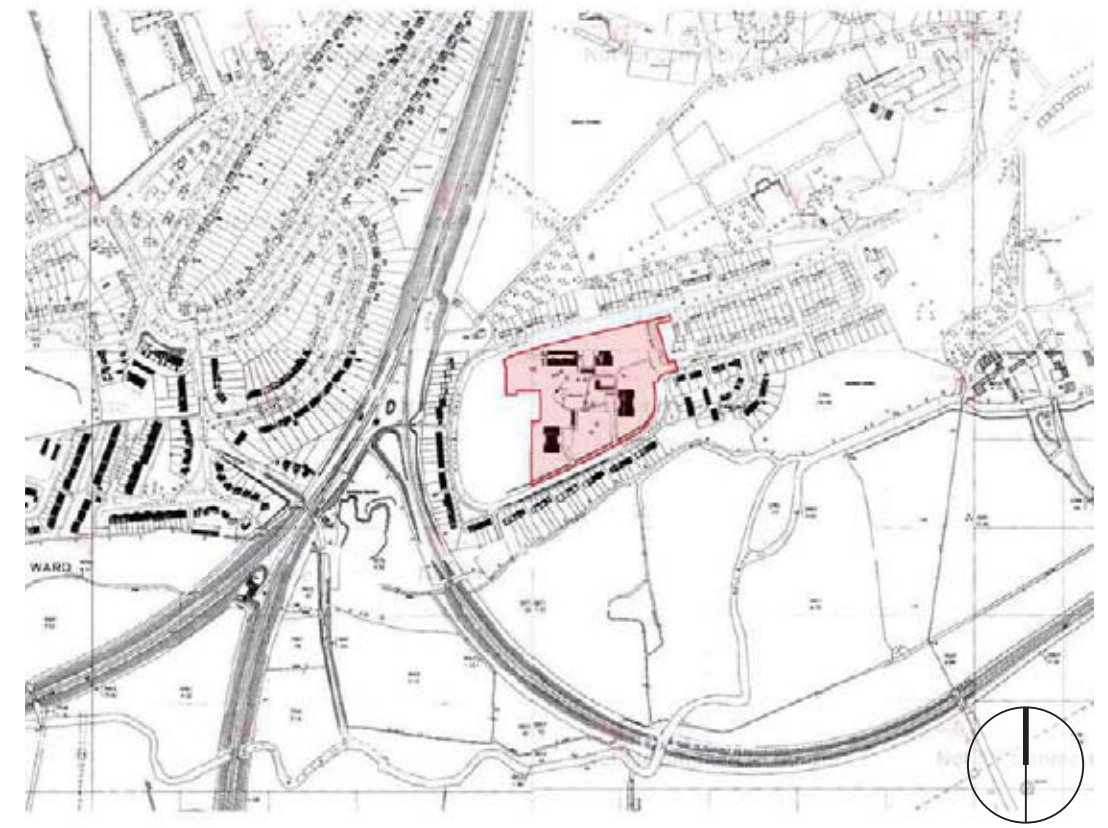
RBC have completed the construction of further social housing within the Wensley Road loop, as well as completing other aspects of the Estate. The 19th Century Coley manor has been occupied by the Ministry of Agriculture and two neighbouring offices buildings have been constructed.

1992

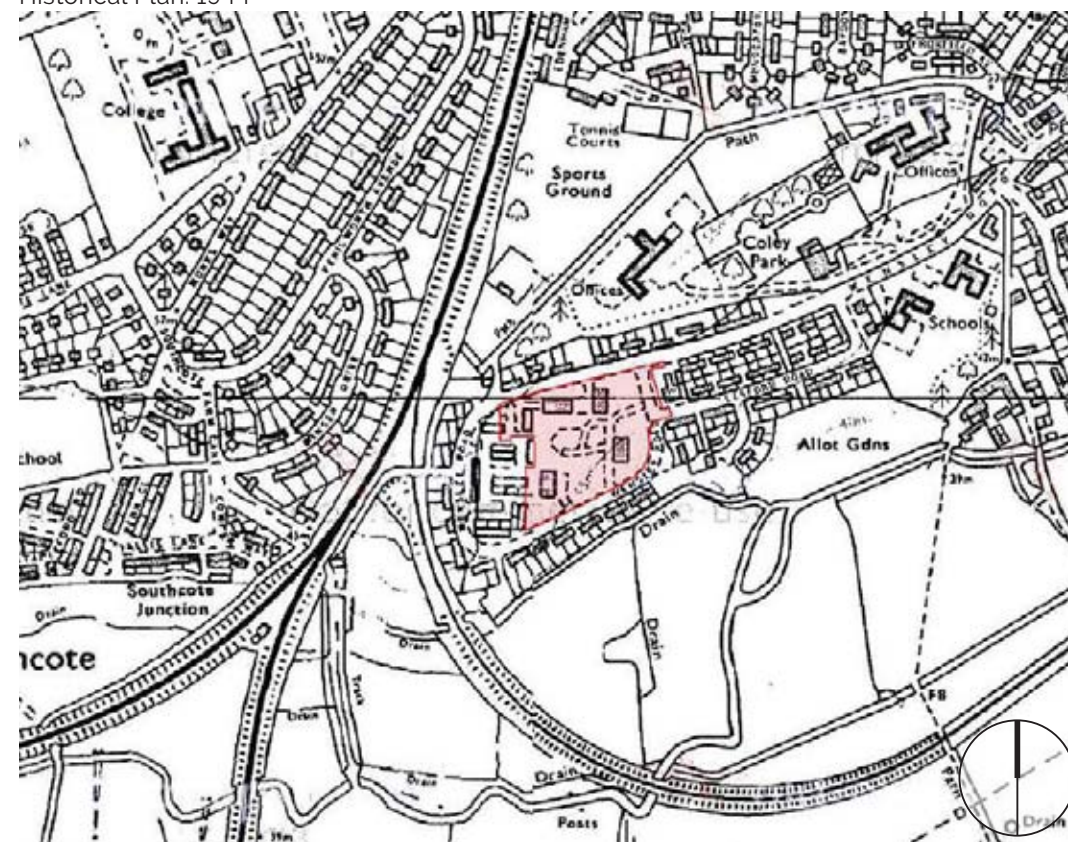
A development of mid-rise apartments buildings 'Rembrandt way' has been completed to the north of Coley Park. Coley Manor has been taken over by the Berkshire Independent Hospital.



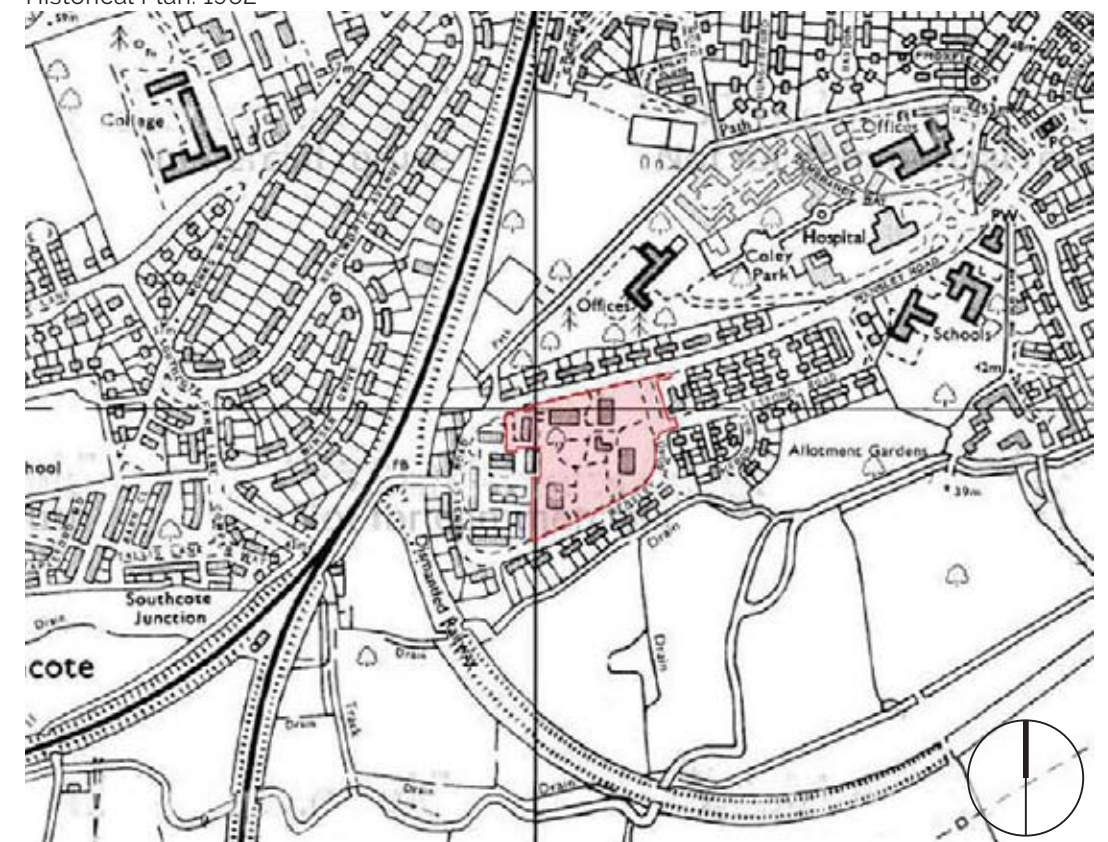
Historical Plan: 1944



Historical Plan: 1962



Historical Plan: 1973



Historical Plan: 1992

2.5 Site Photos



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



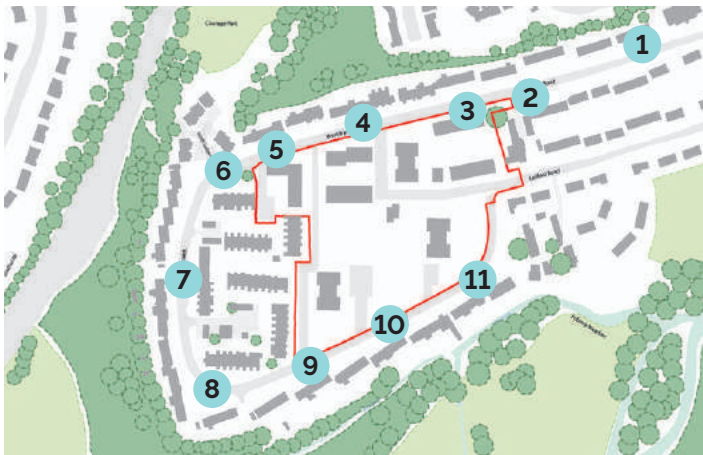
9.



10.



11.



Location of Photos

2.5 Site Photos



12.



13.



14.



15.



16.



17.



18.



19.



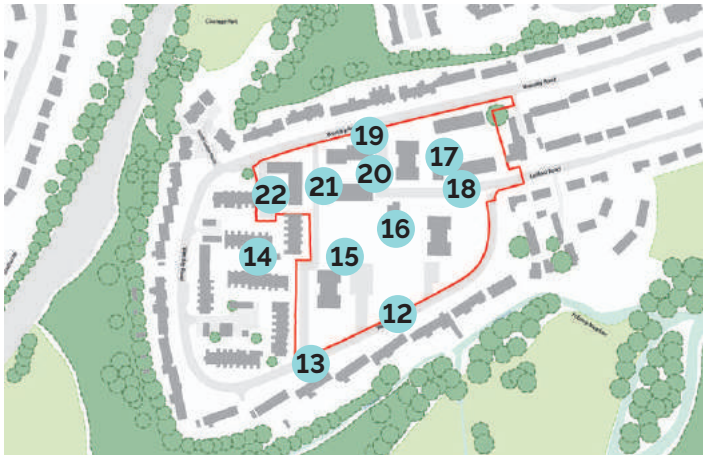
20.



21.



22.



Location of Photos

2.6 Existing Massing & Typologies

Existing Typologies

Within the proposed site are three existing tower blocks, which each contains a mix of studios, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats. Adjacent to the site, within the Wensley Road loop are seven rows of 3-bedroom terrace houses and a single flat block, containing 1 bedroom flats and maisonettes.

Around the periphery of the Wensley loop and on Lesford Road are short terrace rows, semi-detached and detached houses, the majority of which are 3 bedroom dwellings.

Diagram Legend

Garage Building

Terrace House

Semi-Detached/Detached House

Flats

Services (Substation & Water Tank)

Existing Typologies Diagram



Existing Massing

All three of the tower blocks within the Wensley Road site are 15 storeys, however the towers appear to step owing to the change in level across the site. Adjacent to the Wensley Court tower block a single storey garage building contains 13 parking spaces.

The vast majority of the surrounding houses and also the small flat blocks are two storeys with a pitched roof. There are also a number of single storey garage blocks in area.

Diagram Legend

1 storey

2 storey

5 storey

15 storey

Building Heights Diagram



2.7 Existing Ownership

Land Use & Ownership

The buildings and the land within the site boundary site are owned by Reading Borough Council, however some of the flats in the towers has been sold leasehold to private residents.



Tenure

The majority of the site is still within ownership of Reading Borough Council. However, many of the neighbouring houses both within loop and around the perimeter have been purchased by private owners. All of the garages within the site are within the council ownership and these are currently rented, predominantly for storage.



Building Land Use Diagram



Building Ownership Diagram

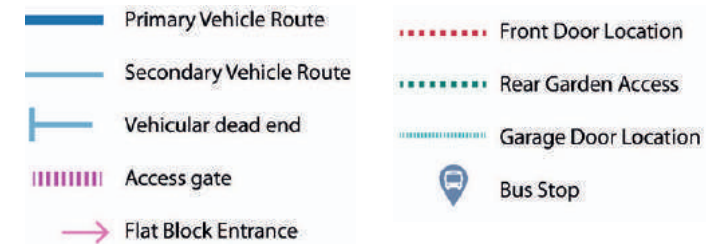


2.8 Existing Movement

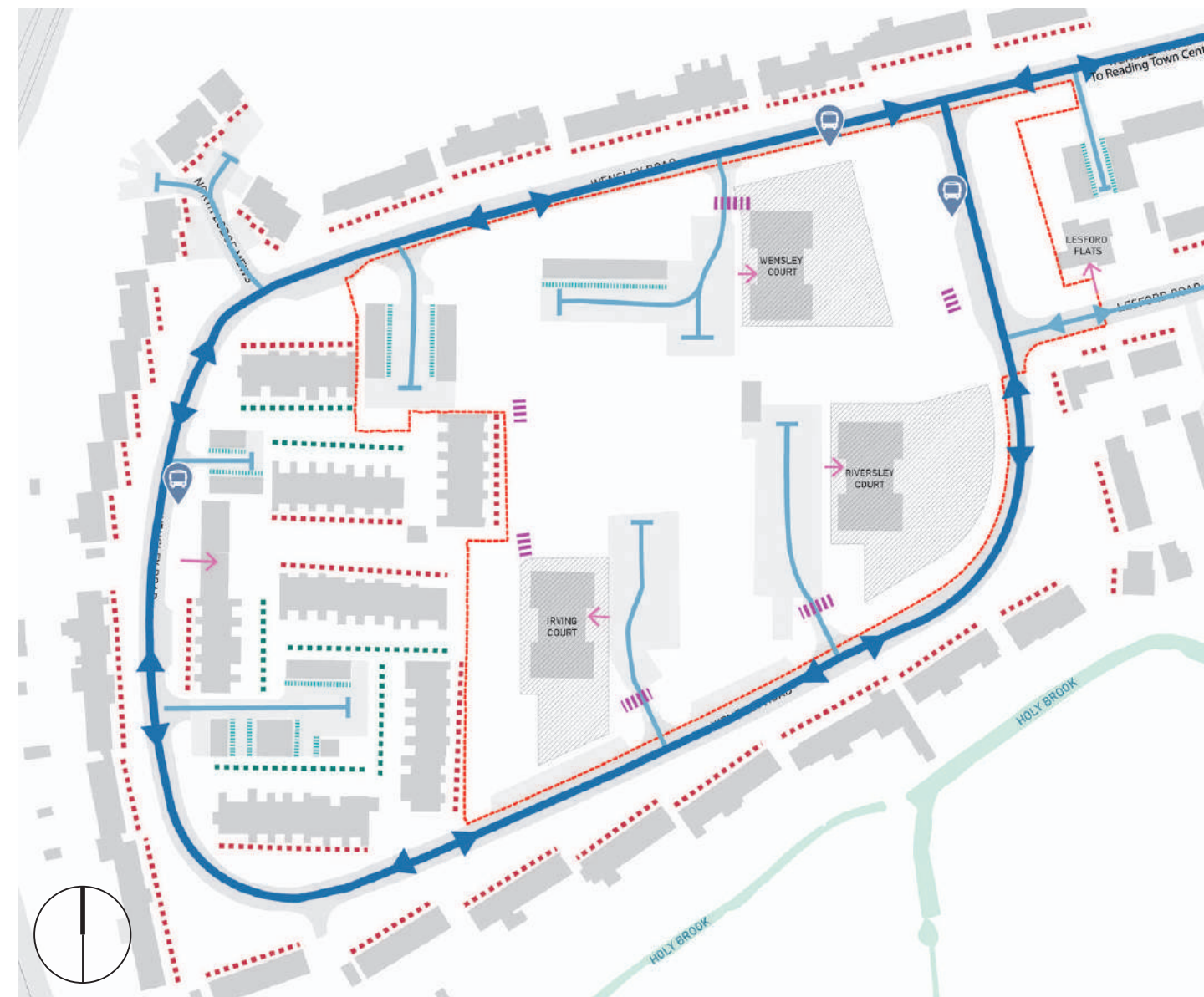
Vehicular Movement

Wensley Road is tertiary loop road that runs east toward Berkeley Avenue (A4), which connect to Reading town centre and Southcote. There are bus stops located along Wensley Road and adjacent to the site. These are served by the '11 bronze' route to Reading Town Centre, which currently runs every 20mins during working hours.

Diagram Legend



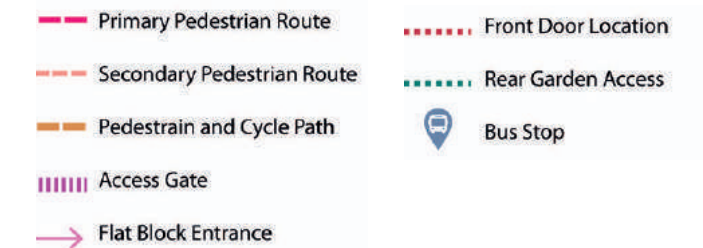
Vehicular Movement Diagram



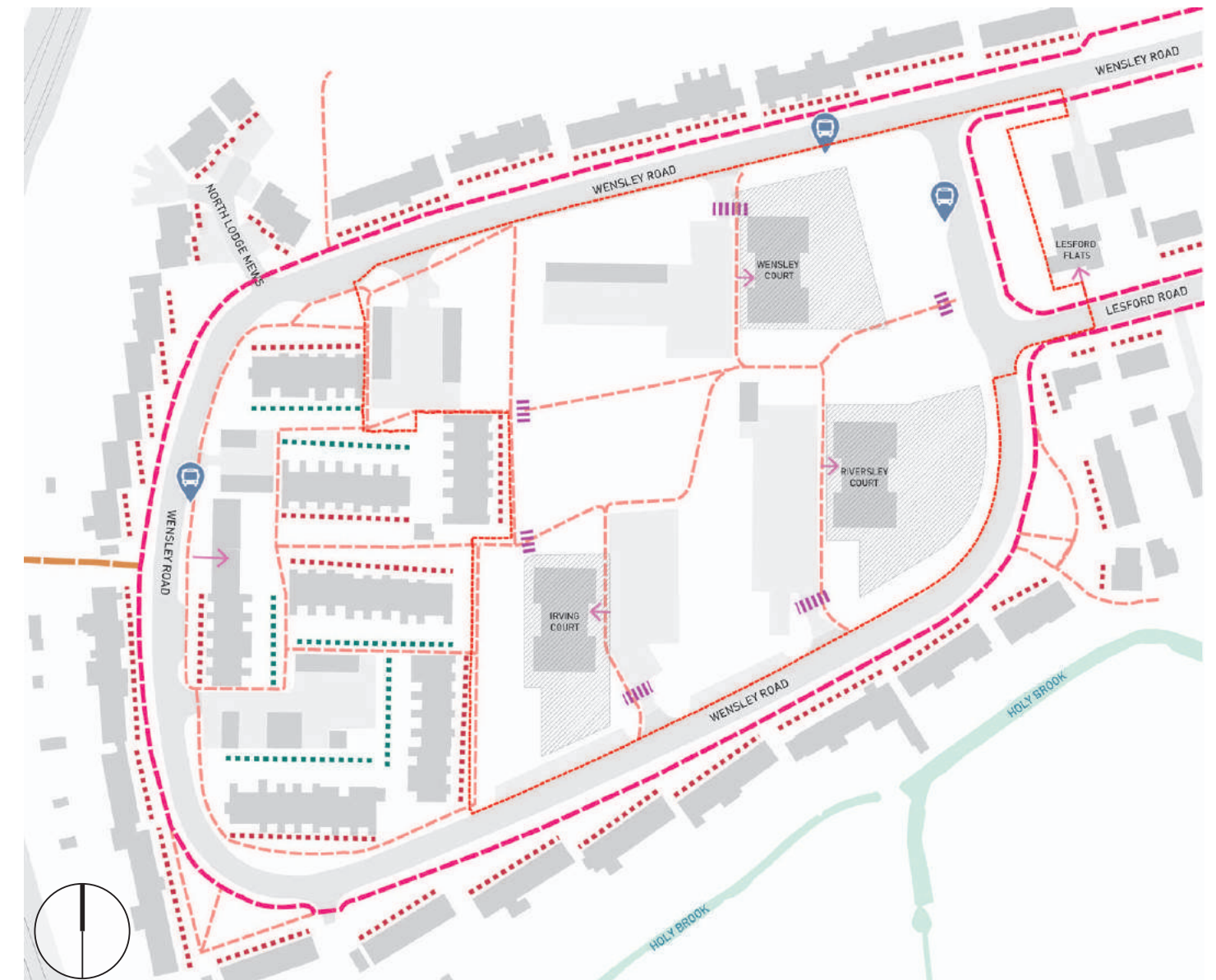
Pedestrian & Cycle Movement

The site can be accessed by pedestrians from all sides, directly from Wensley Road or from footpaths through the neighbouring housing area. There are unsecured access gates around the perimeter of the site which link to footpaths to the play areas and entrances of the tower blocks. Sustrans cycle routes runs past the site, which leads to Southcote via a Railway underpass to the east towards Reading town centre.

Diagram Legend



Pedestrian Movement Diagram



2.9 Existing Accommodation

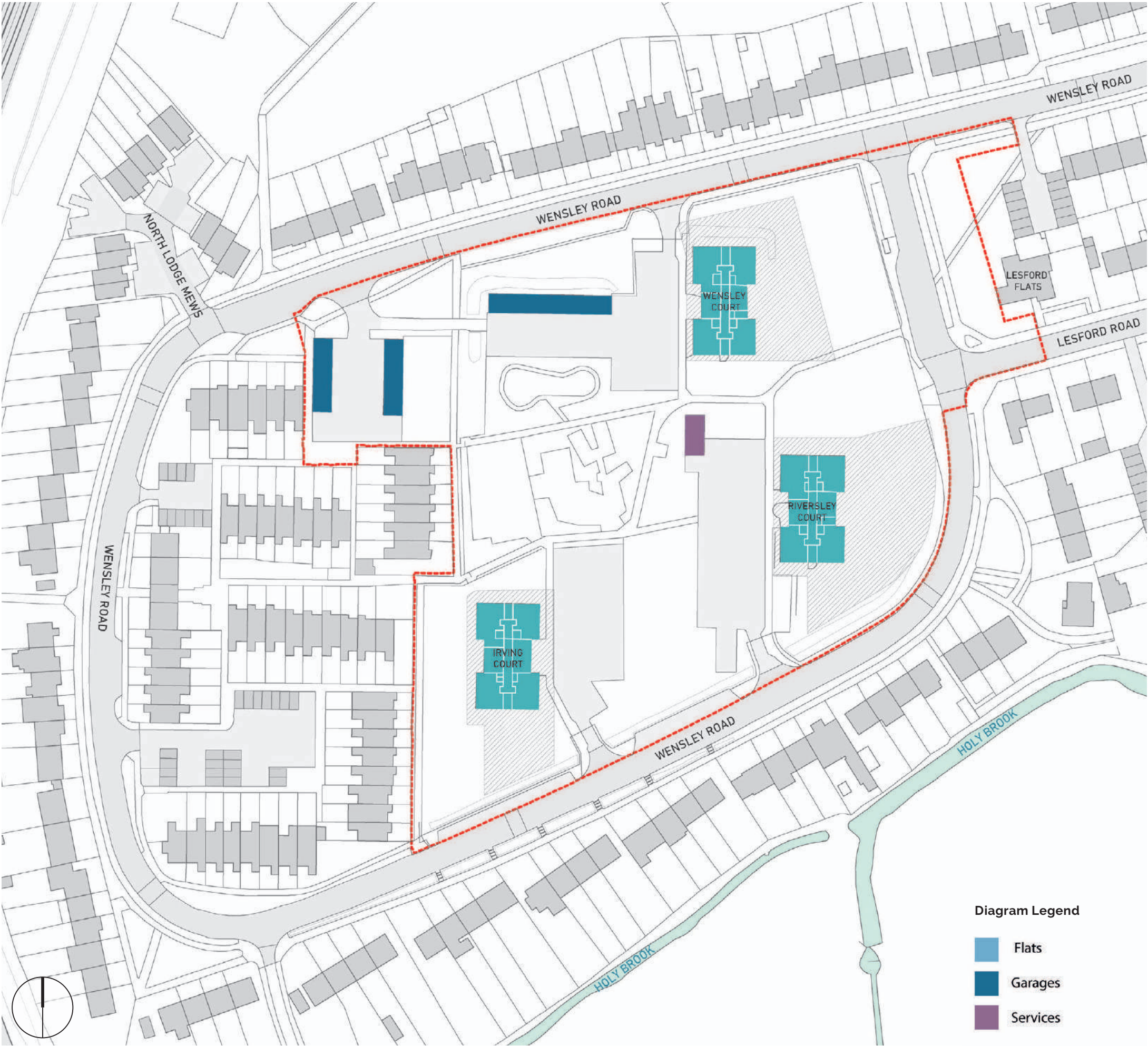
The three existing 15 storey tower blocks, Wensley Court, Irving Court and Riversley Court are situated within the boundary of proposed site. Each of the blocks contains 89 flats with a mix of 1 bed, 2 bed and 3 bed flats arranged around a central core, with two means of escape. The majority of the flats are owned by RBC, however a small number have been sold leasehold.

RBC Ownership

Site	Accommodation Type				Total
	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	
Wensley Road:					267
Wensley Court	25	4	33	25	87
Irving Court	14	15	42	15	86
Riversley Court	28	-	31	26	85
	69	19	113	68	267

Private Leasehold

Site	Accommodation Type				Total
	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	
Wensley Road:					267
Wensley Court	-	-	1	1	2
Irving Court	-	-	3	-	3
Riversley Court	1	-	2	1	4
	1	-	6	2	9



2.10 Existing Car Parking

The diagram indicates the different types of existing car parking within the site and the immediate surrounding area. The number of existing parking spaces within the proposed development site is annotation of the diagram and listed in the table below:

Existing Car Parking

Site	Parking Type				Total	Ratio
	Parking Court	Garage	Road side	Non-demarcated		
Wensley Road:					175	0.63
Wensley Court	34	13	19	0	66	0.74
Irving Court	46	0	12	0	58	0.65
Riversley Court	33	0	15	3	51	0.58
Garage Site	8 (apx.)	16	0	21	45	N/A
TOTAL					220	0.82



Existing Car Parking Diagram

2.11 Existing Landscape

Within the site is a play space containing a selection of play equipment, a small bike track and MUGA. A large car parking court is situated adjacent to the front entrance of each of the tower blocks and to the rear is a large grass area with no defined use.

There is a cluster of existing trees between the Riversley Court car park and the play area. Beneath the trees are a number of benches, although this area does not appear to be well used.

In the surrounding area there are a range of external amenity spaces. Within a 5 minute walk from the site, via a pedestrian route is Courage Park and within a 10 minute walk along Wensley Road is Coley Park. Coley Park allotments and Fobney meadow are also easily accessible from the site and can be reached in less than 5 minute walking.



☞ Coley Park Allotments



☞ Fobney Meadow

Existing Landscape Diagram



2.12 Existing Layout Arrangement

Surrounding Homes

The houses around the periphery of Wensley Road are orientated so that the frontages face onto Wensley Road. However, the terrace houses within the Wensley Road loop are situated either parallel or perpendicular to the neighbouring tower blocks on the Wensley Road site, therefore active frontages range in orientation.

- North, west and south terrace face onto Wensley Road, however with large set back from the street.
- Two central terraces, face onto one another with a pedestrian link between.
- East terrace rows have active frontages facing onto pedestrian footpath and the boundary fence of the neighbouring site.
- Rear gardens are directly accessible from either the parking courts or alleyways

Wensley Road

- The three tower blocks are situated in the same orientation, with the long elevations facing due east and due west.
- Residential windows are located on all four facades of each of the blocks. There are no recessed or projecting balconies.
- All flats are accessed from internal circulation; therefore, the single main entrance is the only active frontage at street level on each of the three blocks.
- The main entrances to Wensley Court and Riversley Court are located on the west façade and on the east façade of Irving Court. The entrances are not aligned with one another.

Lesford Road

- There is a single main entrance, located on the south façade, accessible from Lesford Road. There are no other entrances at ground floor..
- Windows are located on all four facades of the block. On each façade there are two balconies, these are situated at the first and third floor providing outdoor amenity to the two bed maisonettes.



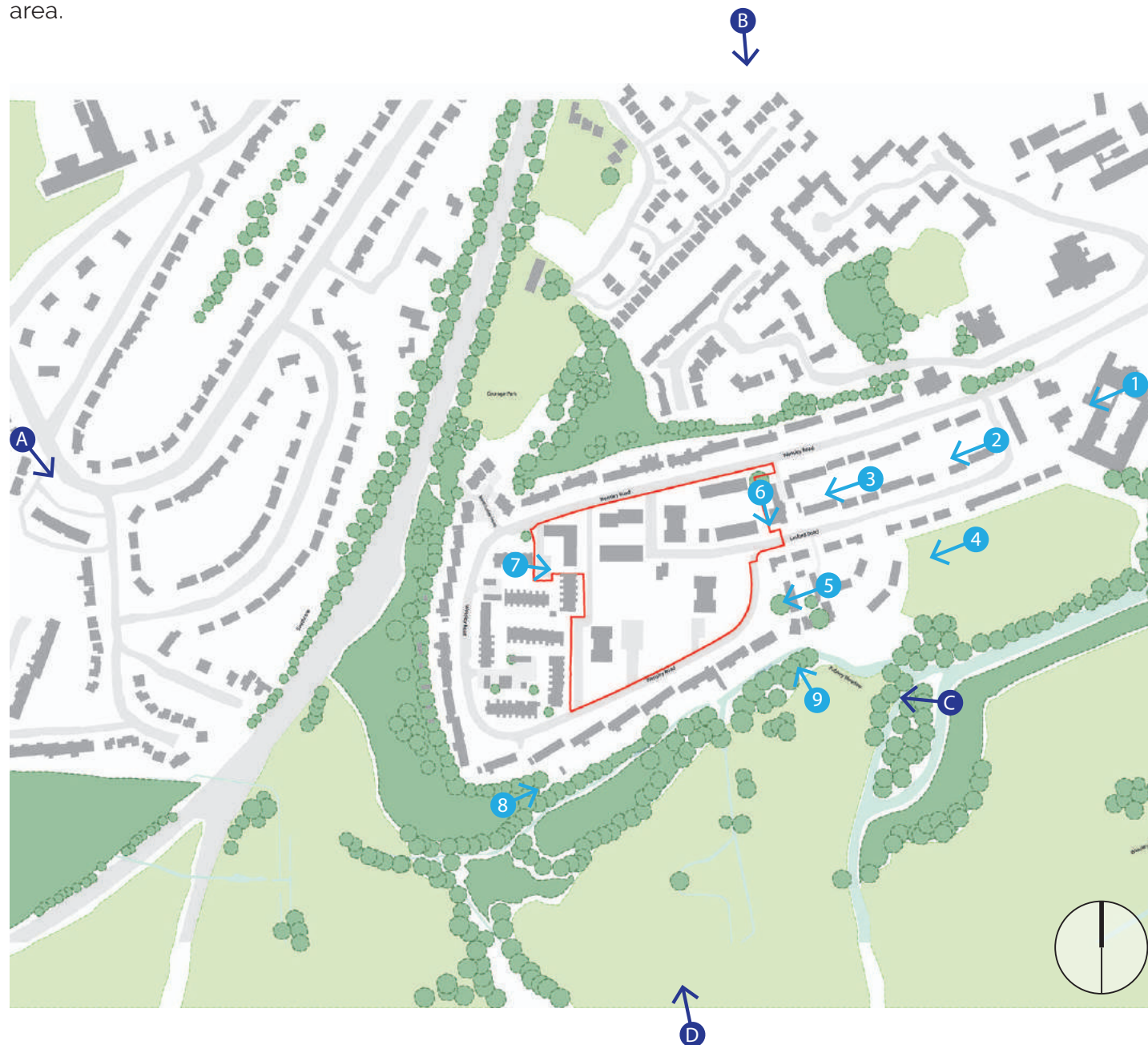
2.13 Views Analysis

The following pages appraise the different views seen when approaching the proposed site, as well as from vantage points further afield.

As the site is surrounded to the north, east and west by predominantly two and three storey residential properties and with Fobney meadow to the south, the three 15 storey tower blocks situated on the site can be viewed from various locations in the wider area.

View Analysis

- ➡ 1 Approach Views
- ➡ A Wider Context Views



Existing Site Plan



Image A: Southcote Farm Lane - Looking east along Winsor Drive



Image B: Berkeley Avenue - Looking south along Ashley Road



Image C: Holy Brook - Looking West toward Wensley Road



Image D: Waterloo Meadows - Looking North

2.13 Views Analysis

Approach Views

After the Wensley Road roundabout, the existing towers are continually in view on the approach to site. However, the tower situated further to the west, Riversley Court, is often obscured by Wensley Court and Irving court.

The five storey block of flats currently situated on the Lesford Road site, at the junction between the Wensley Road loop and the termination of Lesford road only becomes visible much closer to the site, which is not only owing to the building height but also due to a large set back from Wensley Road and the established oak tree on north part of the site.

Wensley Road is the only vehicular approach route to site, apart from a slight diversion onto parallel residential street, Lesford Road. Therefore, in terms of approach views the site is predominantly viewed from the east side. However, there are also two pedestrian and cycle approach routes to the site, one from the Southcote to the west and the other from Courage Park to the north-west of the site.

Owing to proposed development site being situated in the centre of the road loop, the site is clearly visible for several angles, which is also affected by the changing gradient across the site.



Approach View 1 : Wensley Road (West Facing)



Approach View 4 : Lesford Road (West Facing)



Approach View 7 : Wensley Road (North-West Corner)



Approach View 2 : Wensley Road (West Facing)



Approach View 5 : Lesford Road (West Facing)



Approach View 8 : Wensley Road (South-West Corner)



Approach View 3 : Wensley Road (West Facing)



Approach View 6 : Wensley Road (North-East Corner)

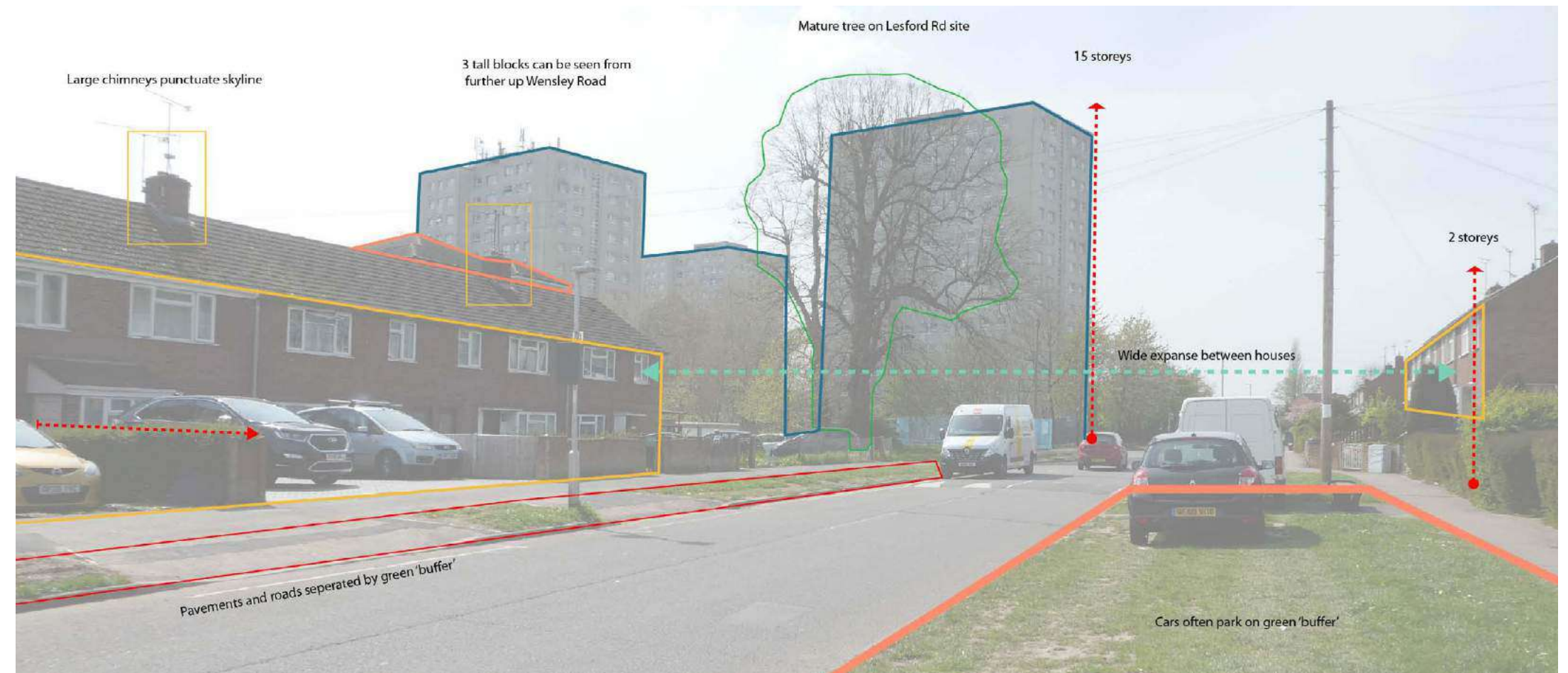


Approach View 9 : Wensley Road (South-East Corner)

2.13 Views Analysis

Approach View 3 - Wensley Road

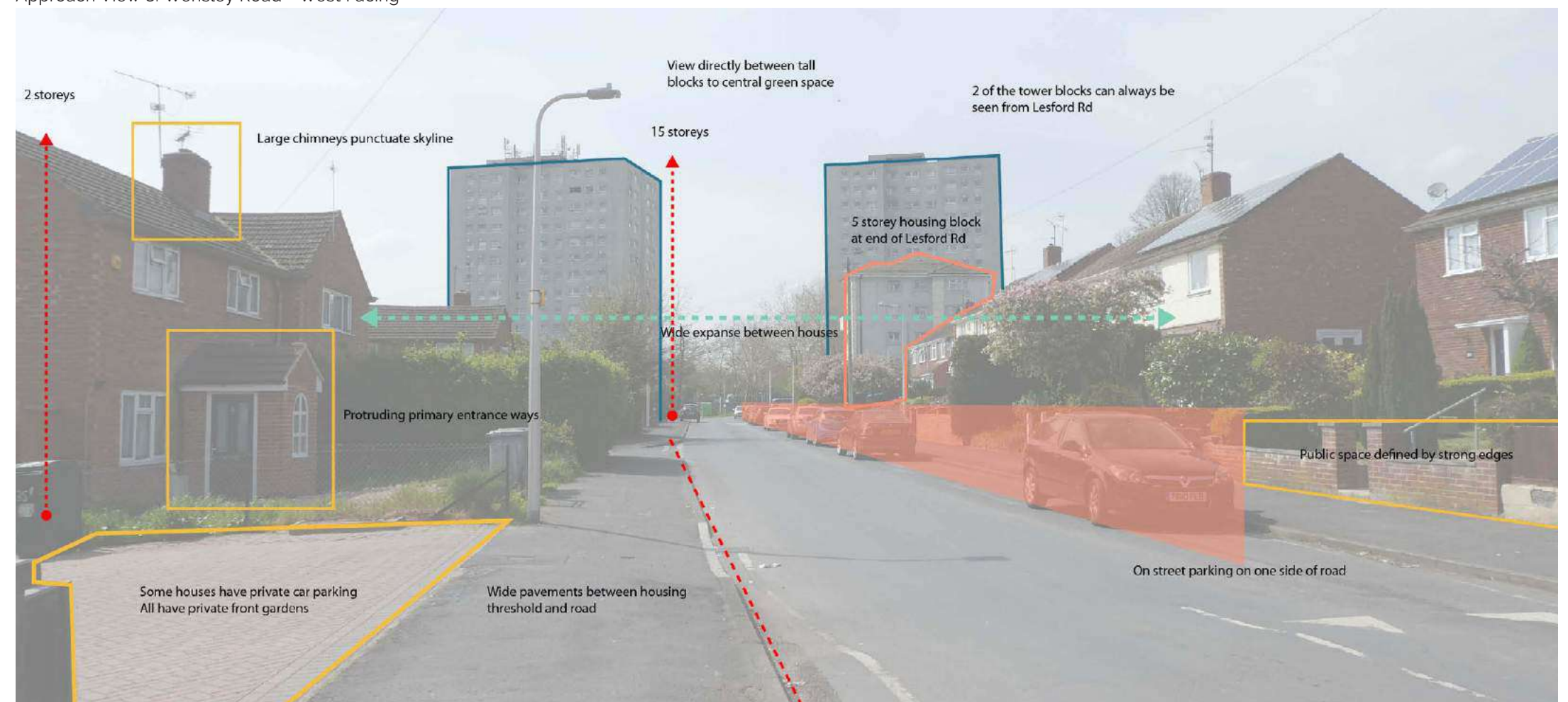
- Two storey terrace houses, with a low pitch roof sit either side of Wensley Road. These are set back by several meters from the road edge, owing to a large grass verge, pavement and front gardens on both sides
- Owing to the change in level houses to the south side of the road sit below the road level, whereas house to the north are raised.
- Beyond the houses on the south side of the road, Lesford Road flats are now visible, with Irving Court Flats behind. Wensley Court can be clearly seen, however it is partially obscured by the mature oak tree on the Lesford Flats site.
- At the end view, in the background more of the two storey terrace houses can be seen on the north-west corner of Wensley Road.



Approach View 3: Wensley Road - West Facing

Approach View 5 - Lesford Road

- Lesford road a is solely residential street, with short rows of two storey houses either side.
- Houses are set back from the road by a pavement either side, then by raised front gardens on the north side of the street and lowered front gardens on the south side.
- The frontage of Lesford flats roughly aligns with the houses of the north side of the street. From this view point the lower storeys are obscured by planting in the neighbouring front gardens but the third storey and above are clearly visible.
- Both Irving Court and Wensley Court are clearly visible and appear to roughly align with the terraces on the south and north sides of Lesford road respectively.
- Roughly in the centre of the view, just beyond the junction between Lesford Road and the Wensley Road loop, is a disused gated entrance to the site with a view through to the central green space beyond.



Approach View 5: Lesford Road - West Facing

2.13 Views Analysis

Approach View 7- Wensley Road & North Lodge Mews

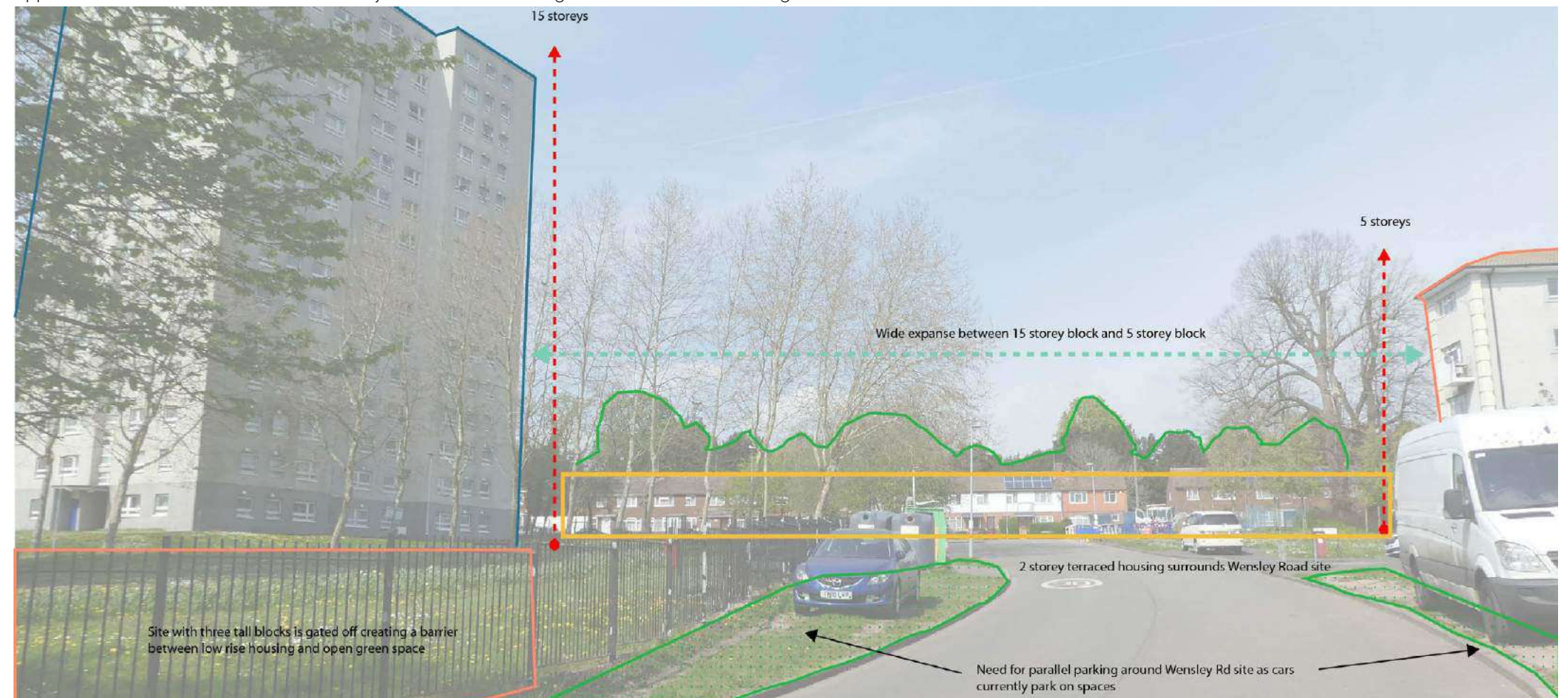
- This viewpoint is at the junction between North Lodge Mews and Wensley Road, adjacent to the pedestrian route from Courage Park. From this position almost the whole the Garage site is visible.
- In the foreground the single storey garages can be clearly viewed, as well as the rear elevation of the east-west orientated terrace houses beyond.
- All three of the 15 storey tower blocks are clearly visible from the point, although Irving Court flats are partially obscured by a mature tree
- The parking court and garages associated with Wensley Court flat are obscured by a row of trees.

Approach View 9 - Wensley Road South East Corner

- Looking up Wensley Road, the north-south gradient is more apparent, as is the change in level between the road and the base of Irving Court.
- On the west side of the road there is no pavement however the grass verge is used for informal parking. There is a considerable set back between the road the and Irving Court flats.
- On the east side of the street, there is a clear view of the mature oak on the Lesford Road site, as well as Lesford Flats.
- In the background, the raised terrace houses on the north side of Wensley Road can be seen clearly, with the backdrop of trees behind.



Approach View 7: Junction between Wensley Road and North Lodge Mews- South-East Facing



Approach View 9: South east corner of Wensley Road, facing north

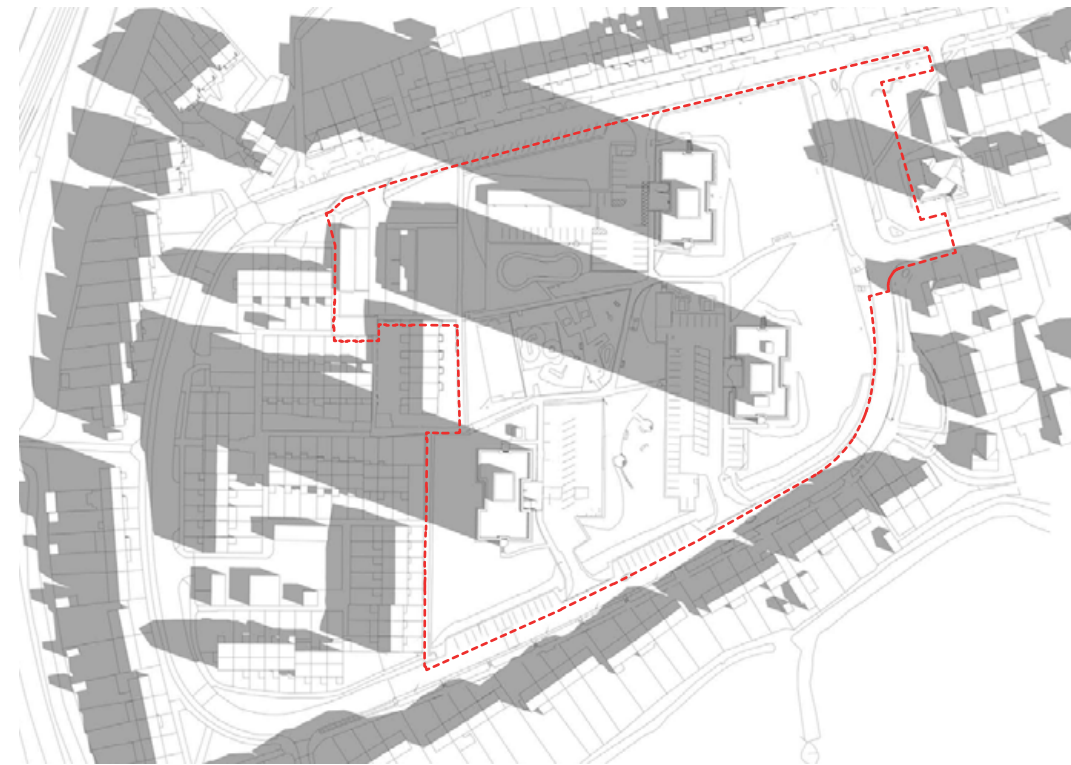
2.14 Existing Overshadowing

Spring Equinox - 21 March

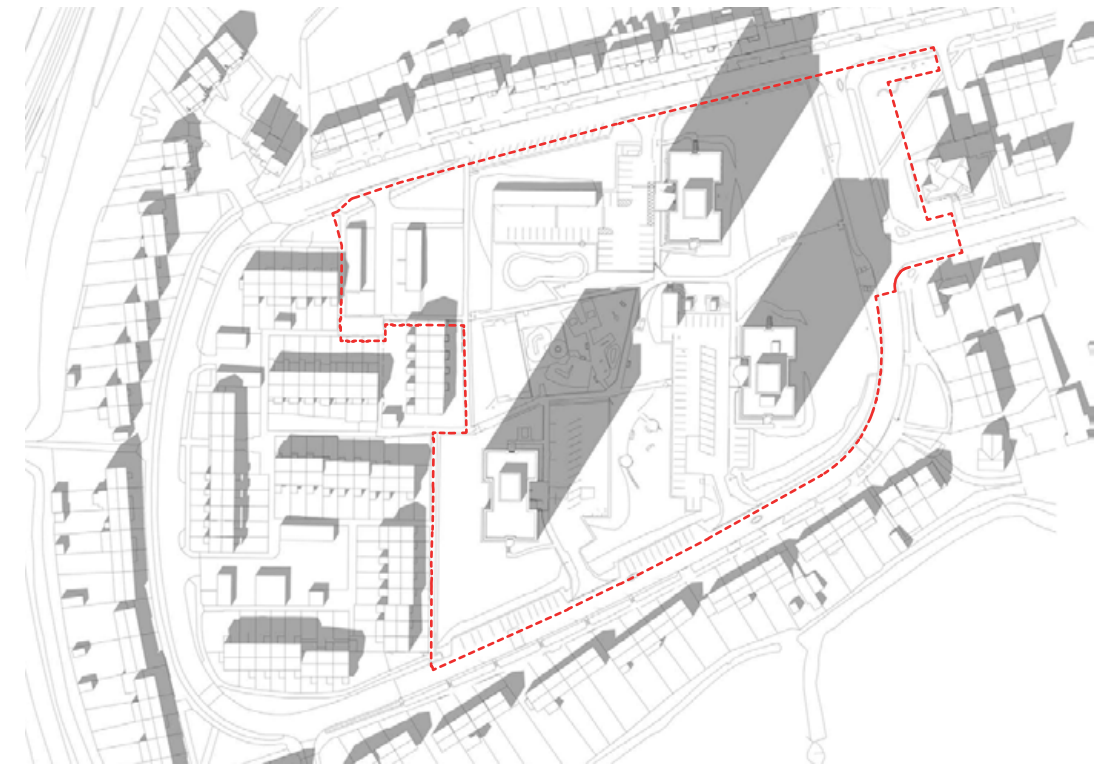
The images opposite show the shadows cast by the existing building on the site during the spring equinox.

The three fifteen storey tower blocks located on the site are orientated due North. Therefore during the morning the tower blocks overshadow several existing properties to the west and the garage site. At midday shadows are cast to the north overshadowing houses on Wensley Road and the central amenity space. Whilst in the afternoon some properties to the west of the site are overshadowed, including the Lesford Road flats.

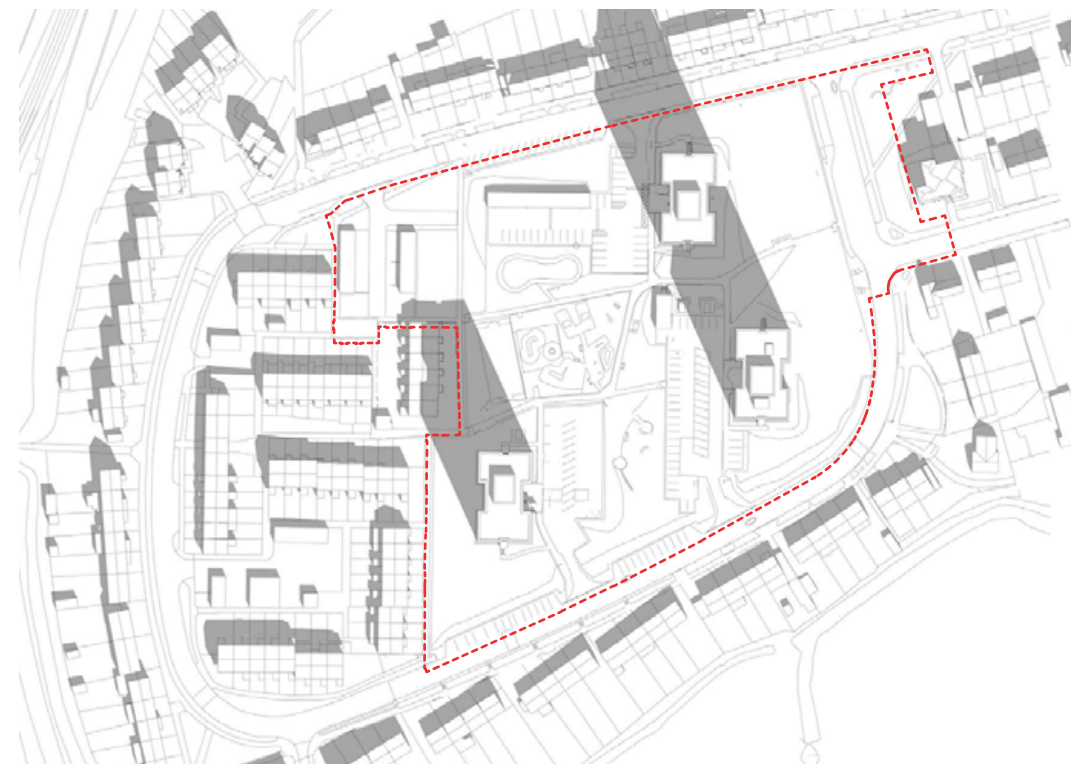
As all the other existing buildings within the surrounding area are predominantly two storey, with a pitched roof. None of these buildings cause any overshadowing on the proposed development site.



Spring Equinox - 21st March - 08.00



Spring Equinox - 21st March - 14.00



Spring Equinox - 21st March - 11.00



Spring Equinox - 21st March - 17.00



2.15 Building Character Analysis

Buildings in the centre of Reading date back as early as 1121. There is a rich historic fabric within the town from landmark buildings such as the Town Hall and Abbey to the traditional brick terraced housing which is prevalent throughout the town.

Many of the terraced streets have regular elevation rhythms due to repeated windows and entrance proportions. Paired front doors and dormers windows are also common features on these streets.

A variety of detailing and bricks types define the character of individual houses, as well give a sense of character to the overall street.



Pell Street Terraced Housing

Prevalence of Pitch roof forms with occupied roofs - reduce the visual scale of the buildings, with gable end windows and dormers providing

opportunity for light and glazing. Defensible outside space is provide from the public street for privacy, and space for bins and bikes.



Elgar Road Terraced Housing

Mirrored terrace facade with decorative brick banding, aligning with floor level. Recessed entrances with defensible outside space is

provide from the public street for privacy, and space for bins and bikes.

2.15 Building Character Analysis

Wide-Fronted Terrace & Semi-Detached Houses

Around the periphery of the Wensley loop road, as well as long Lesford Road are a series of short terrace rows and semi-detached houses, consisting of wide fronted three-bedroom homes constructed within the late 1950s and 1960s. Originally these homes were built with a central front door leading into a hall way and a secondary door at the front to a workshop/storage room which was also accessible directly from the rear garden.

The facades of the terraces alternate between two storey brick work and ground floor brick work with either first floor painted render or in some instances hanging tiles. Several of the houses have undergone various renovations, most commonly the addition of porches and replacing the secondary front door with a window.

Narrow-Fronted Terrace Houses

Neighbouring the Wensley Road site are seven rows of narrow fronted three-bedroom terraces houses. At the front these houses have a single-storey projecting entrance and to the rear a single storey projecting store. Constructed within the 1970s, some of the terraces are built in a light red brick, whilst on other rows a light buff brick has been used.



Wensley Road - Wide-fronted semi-detached houses.



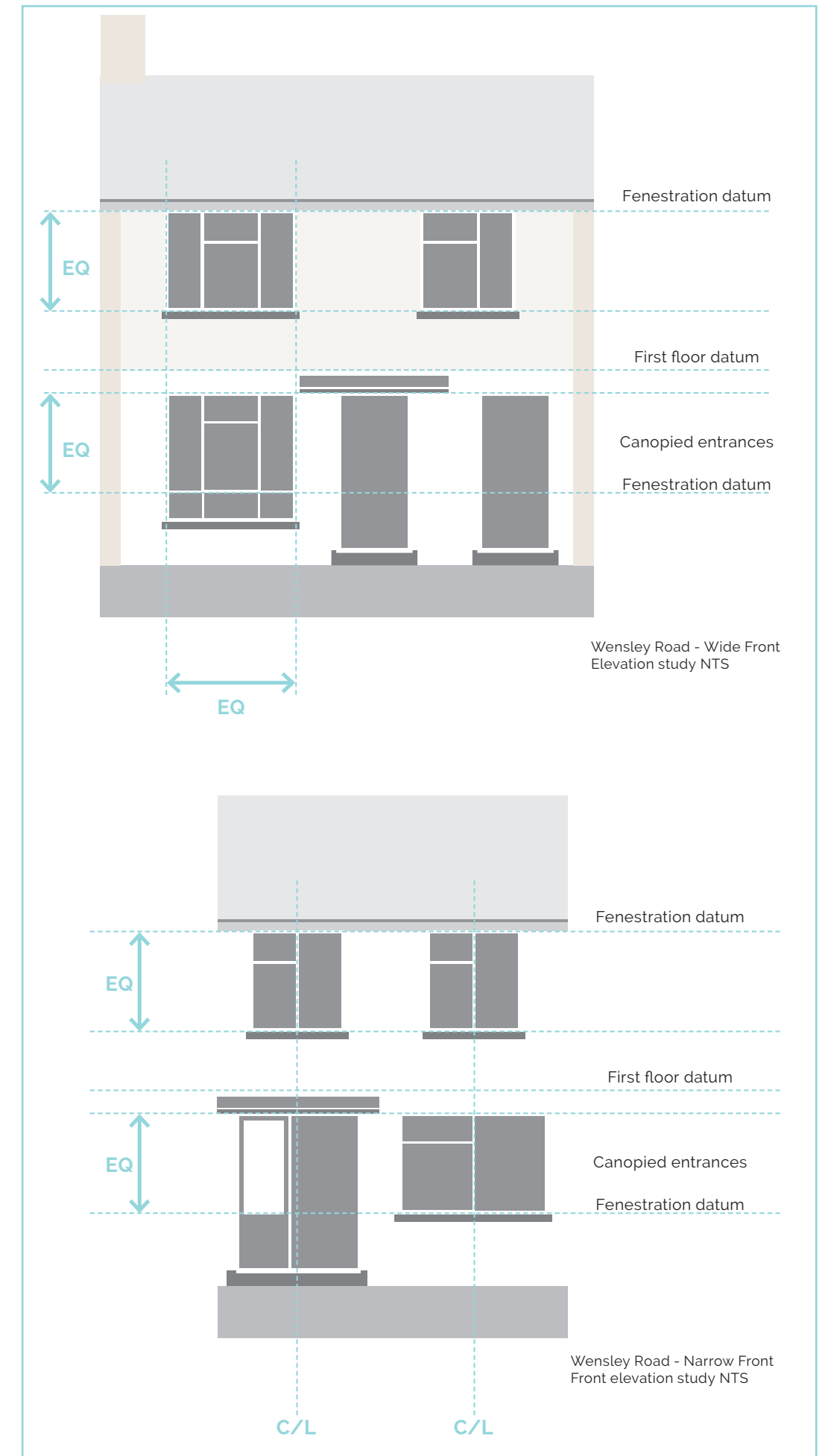
Wensley Road - Apartment Block (1 Bed Units)



Wensley Road - Apartment Block (1 & 2 Bed Units)



Wensley Road - Narrow-fronted terrace row, with two storey brick work



2.15 Building Character Analysis

Coley Park Towers

Originally constructed in the late 1950s and renovated in the early 1990s, the three tower blocks on the Wensley Road site have a simple architectural language. All the residential windows are a consistent height throughout the facades, with three variations in width.

The main entrance to both Wensley Court and Irving Court is recessed, however on Riversley Court an extension was added to the entrance during the previous renovation of the towers. This contains a concierge office for the management of all three towers, however this is no longer in use.

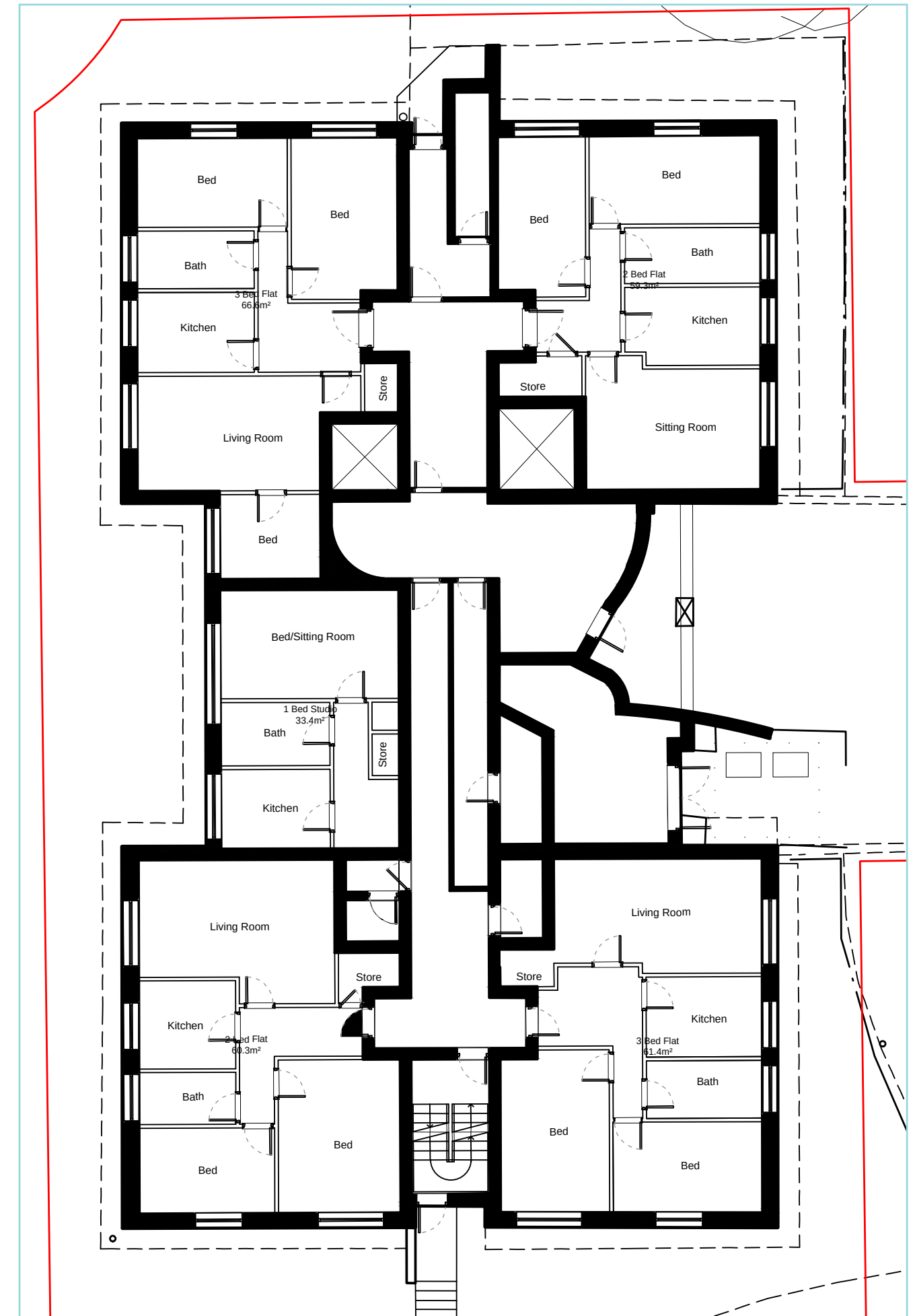
On the north and south elevations, a vertical recess the full height of each of the blocks, combined with taller windows expresses the location of the stair cores. All three of the blocks have a flat roof with a parapet.



Wensley Court - West Facade



Riversley Court - South Facade



Irving Court - Indicative Ground Floor Plan - not to scale