

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Ward:** Minster

**Application No.:** 210257/REG3

**Address:** Land at 72 Wensley Road, Reading, RG1 6DN

**Proposal:** Demolition of 13 vacant garages, removal of 10 parking bays, development of 17 garages and 11 parking bays, and the resurfacing of roadway and footpaths, and landscaping.

**Applicant:** Reading Borough Council

**Date Valid:** 25/02/2021

**Application target decision date:** Originally 22/04/2021, with an extension of time subsequently agreed until 05/05/2021

**26 week date:** 26/08/2021

### RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions, including:

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Materials as specified (compliance condition)
4. Garages shall only be used for ancillary residential uses (e.g. parking and/or storage) and not as individual or combined self-contained dwellinghouses or trade/business uses ancillary to the residential use (compliance condition)
5. Vehicle parking spaces provided prior to first occupation of any garage (compliance condition)
6. EV Charging points to be provided prior to the first occupation of any garage (compliance condition)
7. Construction Method Statement (either a pre-commencement condition, or an as specified compliance condition - to be confirmed in an update report)
8. Unidentified contaminated land (only applies should contamination be found during works)
9. Hours of construction (compliance condition)
10. No bonfires during construction (compliance condition)
11. Pre-occupation hard and soft landscaping details
12. Pre-occupation details of boundary treatments
13. Arboricultural Method Statement as specified (compliance condition)
14. Pre-occupation biodiversity enhancement details
15. Pre-occupation lighting and CCTV details

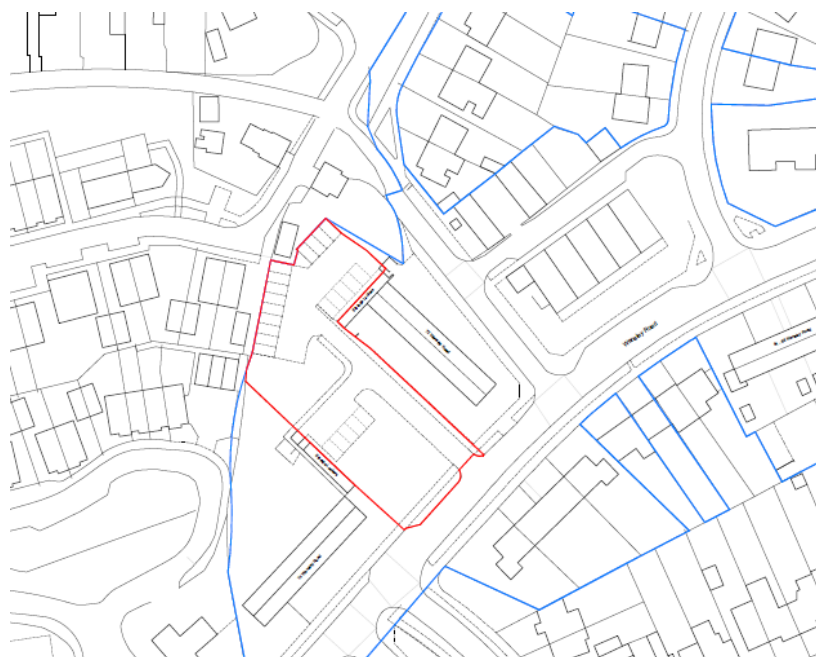
Informatives:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Works affecting highways
3. Clarification regarding electricity routes for lighting needing to have due regard to root protection areas and proposed trees (and this to be detailed in the relevant approval of details applications).
4. Terms
5. Building Control
6. Encroachment

7. Community Infrastructure Levy
8. Birds, their nests and eggs being protected by law

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises Council-owned land to the side and rear of No. 72 Wensley Road, a 4 storey block of predominantly Council-owned flats. The site includes 13 existing garages (based on historical maps these date from the 1960s) and 10 demarcated parking bays, together with vehicular access off Wensley Road and two grassed lawn areas with associated trees (including a middle-aged sycamore in the north-west corner). The existing garages are in two blocks (one of 9 and the other of 4) at the northern end of the site, with 12 of the 13 garages having been vacant since 2013 (the applicant advises that some have been vacant since 2005), with the other in separate ownership (albeit the application submission details that RBC are in the process of purchasing this garage). On the north-west end of 72 Wensley Road are a series of storage lockers, which are adjacent (but outside) of the red-line application site boundary. On the south-western boundary of the site there is access to the refuse storage and rear amenity area of No. 74 Wensley Road. The boundary treatment at this point is part palisade fencing, part wall. There is a rise in the land levels at the site from south to north, with the site freely accessible from Wensley Road.
- 1.2 The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with a variety of flatted blocks 3 (74 Wensley Road) and 4 (72 Wensley Road) storeys in height, terraced properties (for example to the south) and more contemporary properties to the north on Coley Avenue, which also include the Grade II listed East and West Lodge Buildings to the north of the site. The Wensley Road parade of shops is also relatively close-by to the east. A designated 'green link' (Policy EN12) runs through part of the site (it aligns with Wensley Road); there are no other site designations. Wensley Road is part of the classified highway network and includes a designated cycle route.
- 1.3 The site in relation to the wider urban area is shown below, together with a site photograph and an aerial view.



Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Site photograph from Wensley Road



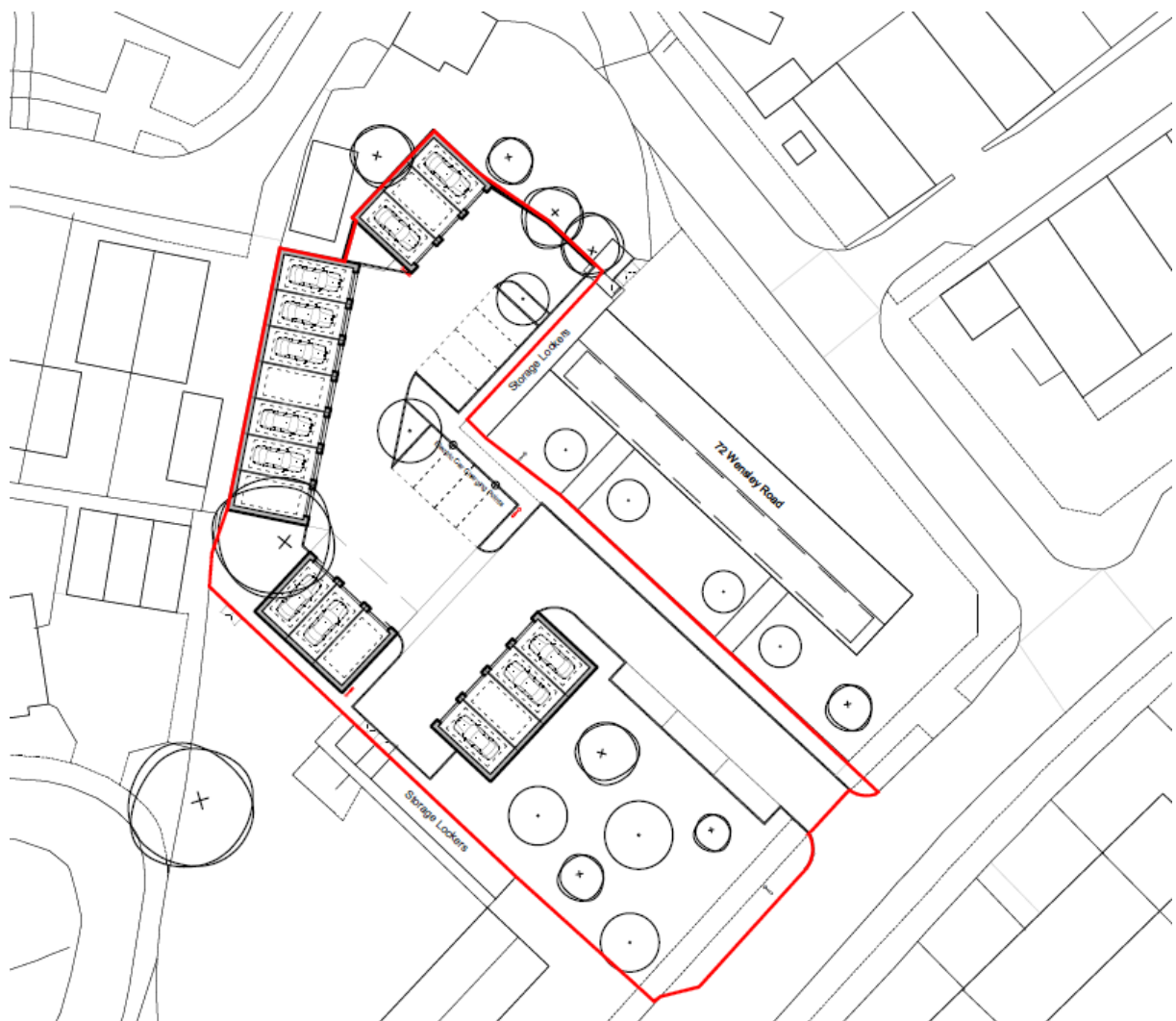
Aerial view looking north

1.4 The application is referred to committee owing to it being a Council's own (regulation 3) development.

## 2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is firstly sought for the demolition of the 13 existing garages and the removal of the 10 existing parking bays at the site. Moreover, the proposed development comprises 17 replacement garages and 11 replacement parking bays. In addition, it is also proposed to resurface the roadway and footpaths at the site, together with altered landscaping.

- 2.2 More specifically, the proposed garages are in four groups. Two follow the location of the existing garages, although the increased size of the proposed garages means fewer than existing are provided at these points (7 rather than 9 and 3 rather than 4). The 'new' locations for garages are a group of 3 garages on the western boundary and a set of 4, in the area of the existing forecourt parking at the site. Each of the garage blocks will be single storey in height, with gently sloping dual pitched roofs. For materials, a light red multi brick stock will be the primary material, complemented by dark grey aluminium roofs, garage doors and rainwater goods.
- 2.3 In terms of the parking bays, 4 are located in an existing position opposite the 72 Wensley Road storage lockers, with a further 4 in close proximity. These parking bays, which are opposite the 3 new garages, will include Electric Vehicle charging points (2 x 2 double socket rapid charge). The final 3 parking bays are located off the main vehicular access route (on the south west side away from 72 Wensley Road). The applicant has confirmed that the parking bays will be freely available for general use, with no restrictions, fee or criteria for use. Lighting, CCTV and a relocated replacement maintenance gate on the 74 Wensley Road boundary are also proposed. Finally, improvements to boundary walls are also specified on the proposed plans, although exact details are not shown in the proposals.



Proposed Site Plan

- 2.4 In terms of landscaping, the proposals include the removal of a Category B1 sycamore in the north-west corner of the site and a Category C1 Indian Bean Tree. The applicant is proposing to provide ten replacement trees in order to seek to increase canopy cover and amenity on site, including four adjacent to 72 Wensley Road and 3 within the retained grassed lawn. Areas of planting, including new trees are also proposed adjacent to the garages and parking bays too. The parking bays will comprise Tegula permeable block paving.
- 2.5 The applicant has specified that the use class of the garages are ancillary to Use Class C3 (residential).
- 2.6 The proposed garages seek to partly fulfil the requirements of a nearby planning permission granted in 2020, further to the west on Wensley Road (see relevant history below - application 200122). The approved nearby development involved the demolition of 29 garages, with a unilateral undertaking planning obligation requiring the applicant (Reading Borough Council) to offer each person affected by the loss of a garage or garages an alternative 1 garage/storage per garage given up within the Coley area. The applicant has detailed that 24 of the garages are in use and are affected by the demolition. This application (17 garages), together with separate application 210258 at land to the rear of 51-65 Wensley Road (see relevant history section - 8 garages) would meet the requirements of permission 200122. The site is within the zone included within the planning obligation where the replacement garages could be provided. The provision of 25 garages across the two sites accounts for the 24 garages required as part of permission 200122, together with the single existing space at 72 Wensley Road under separate ownership being replaced and re-provided too.
- 2.7 During the course of the application the applicant has submitted revised plans to address some minor typographical errors, a Construction Method Statement and further information in respect of landscaping matters.
- 2.8 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL liability form as part of the submission of this application. Based on the information provided the 321.9sqm floorspace of the proposed garages would be CIL liable, with this equating to £50,444.95 (based on 2021 CIL residential rate of £156.71 per square metre). Should the existing garages be able to be deducted from the liability, this would reduce the liability by £26,107.89 (if both existing blocks can be deducted - 166.6sqm), £18,115.68 (if the larger existing block is deducted - 115.6sqm) or £7,992.21 (if the smaller existing block is deducted - 51sqm).
- 2.9 Plans and documents considered:
- HTA-A\_DR\_0002 Rev B Location Plan, as received 16/02/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0004 Rev B Existing Site Plan, as received 16/02/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0005 Demolition Plan, as received 16/02/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0240 Rev A Proposed Site Sections, as received 16/02/2021  
TPP 05516/2021 Tree Protection Plan, as received 16/02/2021  
TPP 05516/2021 Tree Plan (existing), as received 16/02/2021  
B026501-TTE-00-00-SK-O-0001 Rev P01 Swept Path Analysis, as received 16/02/2021  
Planning Statement by HTA Design LLP dated February 2021 Ref RBC-CGR, as received 16/02/2021  
Design and Access Statement by HTA Design LLP dated February 2021 Ref RBC-CGR-HTA\_A, as received 16/02/2021

HTA-A\_DR\_0302 Rev C - Garage Types - 1 of 3, as received 25/02/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0303 Rev C- Garage Types - 2 of 3, as received 25/02/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0304 - Garage Types - 3 of 3, as received 25/02/2021  
HTA-A\_00\_DR\_0810 - CIL Areas, as received 25/02/2021  
Photograph of gate to be relocated, as received 25/02/2021  
Reading Borough Council Transport Asset Management Plan Specification for  
Streetlighting Installations, as received 25/02/2021

HTA-A\_DR\_0103 Rev C Proposed Site Plan, as received 02/03/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0230 Rev D Proposed Plan, as received 02/03/2021  
HTA-A\_DR\_0231 Rev A - Proposed Roof Plan, as received 02/03/2021

Arboricultural Survey by Duckworths Arboriculture dated February 2021 Ref SCD  
05516 / 2021, as received 27/03/2021  
Construction Phase Plan 72 Wensley Road Garages by Glenman Corporation, Ref  
2951, Number: FRSD019, dated: 15/01/21, Revision No: 02, as received  
27/03/2021.

HTA-A\_DR\_0930 Rev B Proposed Landscape Plan, as received 07/04/2021  
Demolition and Construction/Environmental Method Statement 72 Wensley Road by  
Glenman Corporation, Issue: 002, dated 07/04/2021, as received 07/04/2021.

### **3. PLANNING HISTORY**

Application site

- 3.1 190703/REG3 - Erection of two 2 bed houses. Withdrawn 30/11/2020.
- 3.2 Pre-application advice was sought and provided prior to be submission of this application (Reference 201591/PREAPP).

Nearby sites

Wensley Road

- 3.3 200122/REG3 - Demolition of 29 garages and development of 46 new dwelling units, including the provision of affordable homes, provided in a mixture of houses and apartments (1 bed / 2 bed / 3 bed / 4 bed) in blocks of between 2.5 to 4 storeys, and the provision of bicycle parking spaces, car parking spaces and public realm works. Granted following completion of unilateral undertaking legal agreement 16/12/2020.

Land to the rear of 51 to 65 Wensley Road

- 3.4 210258/REG3 - Development of 8 garages and 4 parking bays, and the resurfacing of roadway and footpaths, and landscaping. Current application under consideration.

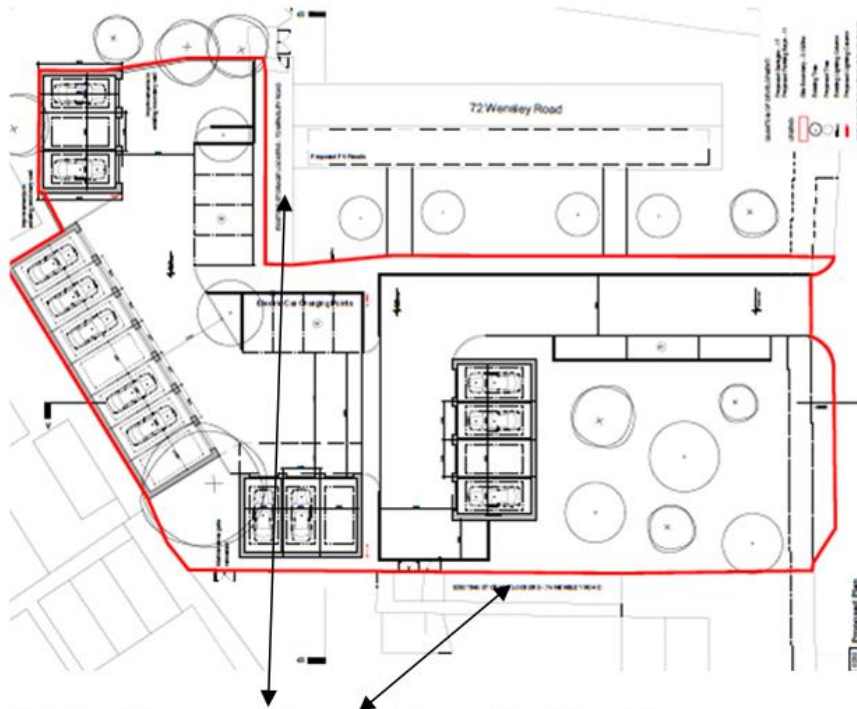
### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

#### **i) RBC Transport Officer**

- 4.1 The Transport Development Control section advises that the site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading.
- 4.2 As detailed in the Design and Access Statement, rented garages, owned by RBC are to be removed as part of the regeneration works elsewhere on Wensley Road

(permission 200122). 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. It should be noted that the proposed replacement garages are associated with Application 200122, parking spaces in front of the garages have already been replaced as part of that permitted development.

- 4.3 This application proposes 17 garages in 4 blocks comprising 3, units, 3 units, 4 units, and 7 units located to the west of the access way, and along the west / north perimeter of the site. Located outside the redline boundary are storage sheds used by neighbouring residents as illustrated in the extract below:



Existing Storage Lockers Outside of Red Line Plan.

- 4.4 These storage lockers are accessible to pedestrians from a gate leading from the central parking court, the submitted Planning Statement states that this access will be maintained under this proposal.
- 4.5 The site is accessible directly from Wensley Road. The width of the single access road is deemed acceptable as the movements of vehicles in and out of the site would be comparable to the original use. The Planning Statement confirms that access gates to the rear gardens, and access to the privately owned garage will be retained as part of this proposal.
- 4.6 The length of the proposed garages illustrated on the Site Plan drawing do not conform to the Council's current standard, where it is stated that the internal dimensions for a single garage are 3m wide and 7m long, however as agreed for application 210258 a reduced size can be accepted in this instance. Forecourt depths of 6m have been illustrated, as have tracking diagrams illustrating vehicles entering and exiting spaces. Dimensions of the proposed parking bays conform to the Council's current standards.

- 4.7 Electric vehicle charging points are also proposed and have been illustrated in submitted plans; this provision is in line with the Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 policies for investing in new infrastructure, to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. These will be secured via a compliance condition.
- 4.8 The Construction Method Statement, submitted during the application, has been initially assessed and, at the time of writing, is in the process of being discussed further with the applicant to include some transport-based refinements. Further comments will be detailed within an update report, to clarify whether the document is acceptable (and therefore secured via a compliance condition) or require changes subsequent to any positive determination of the application (whereby a pre-commencement condition would be required).
- 4.9 From a Transport perspective, there are no Transport objections to this application, pending the further comments in the update report in relation to the Construction Method Statement.

**ii) RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection Officer**

- 4.10 In terms of contaminated land, the developer is responsible for ensuring that development is safe and suitable for use for the intended purpose or can be made so by remedial action. Owing to the use of the site as garages there is the potential for contamination from oil spillages, for example. It is acknowledged that the proposed use of the site is not changing. Therefore, a site investigation is not required. However, it is considered appropriate to include a single contaminated land condition relating to unforeseen contamination. This will ensure that future users of the site are not put at undue risk from contamination.
- 4.11 Turning to the construction phase, the construction method statement is satisfactory regarding noise and dust controls and pest control measures. A compliance-based condition (construction method statement to be adhered to as specified) is recommended, together with standard conditions relating to the hours of construction and precluding bonfires.

**iii) RBC Planning Natural Environment Officer**

- 4.12 The development requires the removal of one B category Sycamore with high amenity value (along with a couple of lower quality trees). Whilst of amenity value, it is multi-stemmed so of sub-optimal form and its retention would not be possible within the current proposals which aim to maximise the potential of the site. This is therefore accepted with the proposal, with it welcomed that a replacement tree is proposed, along with other new trees as part of the proposed landscaping, to ensure a net gain.
- 4.13 In relation to landscaping some initial concerns were raised in relation to the consistency between the Arboriculture document and Tree Protection Plan; these were clarified during the application. Comments were also made in relation to the choice of species shown and interaction with the proposed garages, with possible subsidence concerns given limited foundations are likely. Detailed landscaping (including tree species choice) can be agreed at a later stage through a planning condition and the applicant will have to ensure that foundations are suitable for that choice. In terms of the proposed lighting and EV charging points, details of the



electricity routes for these should be provided via condition, to ensure due regard is given to RPAs and proposed trees.

4.14 In terms of the Construction Phase Plan document some initial concerns have been raised in relation to the consistency with the Tree Protection Plan; at the time of writing these are in the process of being discussed further with the applicant. Accordingly, the update report will provide further comment in this regard, aligning with the position detailed at paragraph 4.8 above in relation to Transport comments.

4.15 In conclusion, there are no objections subject to conditions relating to full landscaping, boundary treatment details and lighting (all pre-occupation) and a compliance-based condition relating to the arboricultural method statement (with a caveat that it excludes approval of landscaping detailed in the document). Further comments on the Construction Phase Plan will be provided in an update report.

**iv) RBC Ecology Consultant - GS Ecology**

4.16 The application site comprises two blocks of garages and hardstanding. The garages appear to be built of brick with flat roofs made of corrugated roofing material and are unlikely to host roosting bats. It is proposed to demolish the garages and erect 17 garages and 11 parking bays with associated landscaping. The existing garages may however be used by nesting birds and, if the application is approved, an informative relating to birds, their nests and eggs being protected by law should be included on the decision notice.

4.17 In accordance with paragraph 175 of the NPPF, which states that “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” a condition should be set to ensure that enhancements for wildlife are provided within the new development. This shall include bird and bat boxes, tiles or bricks on and around the new buildings and native and wildlife friendly landscaping (including gaps at the bases of fences to allow hedgehogs to traverse through the gardens). As such, subject to the condition, there are no objections to this application on ecology grounds.

**v) Conservation and Urban Design Officer**

4.18 The application site is 30m south of a pair of Listed Grade II, former Park Entry Gate Pavilions. Apart from these listed buildings on Coley Avenue, it is noted that generally, the existing buildings in the area are mid-20th century, of varying heights, but of little heritage significance. Area of interest is shown, circled in BLUE. Listed Entry gate circled in RED.



4.19 The proposed works are considered to have a neutral impact on listed heritage assets. There are no objections to the current scheme for the new garages.

**vi) Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) at Thames Valley Police**

4.20 In relation to community safety and crime prevention, the CPDA welcomes the proposal which includes lighting and CCTV within the parking area. The CPDA therefore has no objections to the proposed development.

**vi) Public consultation**

4.21 Notification letters were produced to be sent to adjacent occupiers on 03/03/2021, with the statutory 21-day consultation period expiring on 24/03/2021. A site notice was erected on 02/03/2021, with an extended date specified to state that comments should be received by 01/04/2021, to align with the expiry of the statutory press notice period, following publication on 11/03/2021. Four responses have been received, amounting to two observations (both from separate Coley Avenue addresses) and two objections (both from separate Wensley Road addresses). A summary of the issues raised in these observations are:

- a) Happy to see this area will be restored to a useful purpose and will not have houses built on it.
- b) Construction stage comments - Request for builders to work in a respectful way given the delicate nature of the neighbouring (listed) properties, take due care of possible asbestos at the existing garages and consider nearby site security.
- c) Seek for the rear of the garages to be finished to a high standard so as not to impede views.
- d) Another response seeks for the improvements to existing boundary walls to be of a suitable quality and style so as not to detract from the setting of the Grade 2 listed 'East Lodge' abutting the site in north east corner.

4.22 A summary of the issues raised in the two objections are:

- a) 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. This stated an A3 poster would be

displayed throughout the planning consultation period. The poster has not been displayed.

- b) Unacceptable distance between the garages and homes - Residents expected to walk 8mins with shopping from garages to homes
- c) The number of parking spaces will be reduced
- d) Lack of consultation with residents to confirm whether they would be willing to rent those garages or prefer to use parking spaces only.
- e) Loss of outlook/view - the green space in front of my flat and the neighbours living below and above me will be replaced by a new garages and electric car charging points. Suggestion for additional tree planting to restore greenery and privacy
- f) Noise disturbance to nearby bedrooms from the proposed parking spaces.

#### 4.23 Officer responses to objections:

- a) RBC Housing has confirmed that the posters were displayed on the notice boards within the 72 Wensley Road block. This does not form a statutory part of the consultation as part of the planning application.
- b) The proposed garages fulfil the locational requirements of the planning obligation secured as part of permission 200122.
- c) Both the number of garages and parking bays is increasing at the site.
- d) The proposed garages are intended to help fulfil the planning obligation requirement as part of 200122.
- e) & f) See amenity section below.

## 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.3 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is now in one document - the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019), which fully replaces the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan. The application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.4 **National**  
National Planning Policy Framework (2019)  
National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.5 **Local**  
The relevant Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) policies are:  
CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction  
CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change  
CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development  
CC7: Design and the Public Realm  
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity  
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN6: New Development in a Historic Context  
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network  
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland  
EN15: Air Quality  
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources  
H14: Suburban Renewal and Regeneration  
TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy  
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters  
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

**5.6 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents**  
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

**5.7 Other relevant documentation**  
Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)  
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)  
Manual For Streets 2007 (Department for Transport)  
Reading Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 (2011)

**6. APPRAISAL**

**6.1 The main issues are considered to be:**

- i) Principle of development and land use considerations
- ii) Scale, appearance, design and impact on nearby heritage assets
- iii) Amenity
- iv) Transport
- v) Trees, landscaping and ecology
- vi) Sustainability
- vii) Other matters

**i) Principle of development and land use considerations**

**6.2** The existing site comprises a series of garages and parking bays, together with soft landscaped amenity space. The proposals seek to provide replacement and new garages and parking bays. As such, no change of use is proposed, albeit a more intensive use is proposed with a greater number of garages and parking bays, and these being larger than existing. 12 of the 13 garages are vacant, in a poor state of repair and do not meet modern standards. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should “give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs...”. This proposal aligns with that clear objective. Furthermore, it is also pertinent that the proposals will assist in partly fulfilling an obligation associated with a nearby development elsewhere on Wensley Road, namely by providing replacement garage facilities for those to be demolished as part of a separate development for 46 dwellings (see relevant history above). Therefore, the proposals accord with Policy H14. Set within this context, the principle of development is considered to be established.

**6.3** It is acknowledged from the planning history section of this report that there was a recent application for 2 residential dwellings at the site (see relevant history). This application was however withdrawn prior to a decision being issued. The applicant has explained that the need for this site to assist in the delivery of the 46 dwellings elsewhere on Wensley Road was of higher priority than the delivery of 2 dwellings. Given there is no live application or permission in place for residential

units at the application site, there is no policy conflict with the provision of garages rather than dwellings at the site, set within the above context.

- 6.4 The applicant has specified that the use class of the garages are ancillary to Use Class C3 (residential). With this in mind, it is considered reasonable and necessary to include a planning condition specifying that the garages shall only be used for ancillary residential uses (e.g. parking and/or storage) and not as individual or combined self-contained dwellinghouses or trade/business uses ancillary to a residential use. This is for the avoidance of doubt bearing in mind the use class and the nature of the proposals.

ii) **Scale, appearance, design and impact on nearby heritage assets**

- 6.5 The layout of the garages and parking bays have been carefully considered, in terms of function, accessibility and maintaining the amenity of existing nearby occupiers. While it is fully acknowledged that the footprint of the garages and parking bays at the site are increasing in comparison with existing, the newly proposed areas for garages are in the least sensitive parts of the site in terms of existing nearby occupiers and the public realm along Wensley Road. Although there will be a fairly noticeable change in the character and appearance of the space when viewed from Wensley Road, it is considered to be a positive addition in comparison with existing and aligns with the character created further north at the more contemporary Coley Avenue properties.

- 6.6 Furthermore, each of the four proposed garage blocks are intentionally modest and simple in form and design, in order to assimilate successfully into the surrounding area. The consistent use of red brick aligns with the predominant character of the area, with gently sloping roofs minimising the overall height of the structures, noting the general topography rise from south to north. The choice of materials is consistent on all four garage blocks and on each elevation of every block too, meaning there is no reduction in design quality on elevations not readily visible. In particular, when viewed from Coley Avenue, the design quality of the rear elevation of the garages is far improved in comparison with existing. The level of information submitted at application stage means a 'materials as specified' condition is recommended, rather than requiring further details or samples. With this condition secured, the proposed development accords with Policy CC7.

- 6.7 As per the observations from the Conservation and Urban Design Officer (see Section 4v above), there are no heritage-based concerns with the proposals, mindful of the setting of the nearby listed buildings to the north-east of the site.

iii) **Amenity**

- 6.8 For nearby occupiers on Wensley Road and Coley Avenue the proposals have been carefully designed in order to ensure the development does not cause a detrimental impact on their living environment. For example, the height of the garages have been minimised, to ensure they are not visually dominant or harm outlook. It has intentionally been proposed to include pitched roofs, rather than flat roofs, to minimise the potential for anti-social behavior in this regard. No windows are proposed in any elevation, to prevent possible opportunities for overlooking. The provision of four new trees to the west of 72 Wensley Road will help protect amenity from the more intensive use of the site. Access is maintained to the storage lockers on the north-west end of 72 Wensley Road. Access is also maintained to the refuse storage and rear amenity space of 74 Wensley Road on the western boundary. The submission states that in some areas the boundary

treatments are to be improved (e.g. the north-east corner of the site), but no details are specified within the submission. Accordingly, details will be secured via pre-occupation condition.

- 6.9 It is also acknowledged that crime and safety could be of concern with any proposal of this nature. The Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) at Thames Valley Police provided input at pre-application stage, together with formal comments at application stage (see section 4vi above). The CPDA welcomes the proposal, including lighting and CCTV, and has no objections. As previously mentioned, the change from flat roof garages (as existing) to pitched roofs will assist in minimising potential for climbing, access and anti-social activities between Coley Avenue and Wensley Road, as referenced in one public consultation response. Officers note that exact details of the extent and nature of the CCTV operation and precise details about the lighting proposals are not provided in full, so a pre-occupation condition is recommended to ensure nearby residential amenity is maintained.
- 6.10 Environmental Protection (EP) officers have also considered the proposals (see section 4ii above) and recommend conditions relating to unidentified contaminated land, hours of construction and the prevention of bonfires during construction conditions. All such conditions seek to maintain amenity. EP officers are satisfied with the construction method statement submitted, but at the time of writing there are some unresolved matters from Transport and Natural Environment officers (see section 4 above). Accordingly, an update report will provide further comments on the overall acceptability of the document, to ascertain whether a pre-commencement (requiring more details) or compliance (in the event the document is acceptable) condition is required in this instance.
- 6.11 For future users of the proposed garages (set within the context of permission 200122), these facilities mark a significant upgrade in terms of size/quality of provision, in comparison with existing off-site garages. Whilst acknowledging that the garages are not as conveniently located in comparison with existing, they fulfil the locational requirements of the planning obligation secured as part of permission 200122. For the privately owned garage at the application site, the replacement facility represents a vast upgrade on the existing provision. In terms of the parking bays, the eleven freely available to use spaces offer an improvement in comparison with the current provision of 10 demarcated spaces. The provision of 4 EV charging points is another benefit of the proposal. The provision of additional lighting and new CCTV will also represent a marked safety improvement in comparison with existing, for all future users of the site.
- 6.12 With the above in mind, subject to the conditions noted, the proposals are considered to comply with Policy CC8.

iv) **Transport**

- 6.13 As per section 4i) above, Transport officers are satisfied with the proposals, pending the further comments in the update report in relation to the Construction Method Statement. Notwithstanding this, a further transport related condition concerns the four parking bays being provided prior to first occupation of any garage, to ensure that this component on the scheme is implemented. A similar style of condition will also ensure the 4 EV charging points (2 x 2 double socket rapid charge) are provided.

v) **Trees, landscaping and ecology**

6.14 As per sections 4iii) and 4iv) above, the Natural Environment and Ecology officers are satisfied with the proposals subject to several conditions, and also pending the further comments in the update report in relation to the Construction Method Statement. Aside from this matter, it is particularly noted that whilst the loss of the Category B1 Sycamore tree is regrettable, its loss is mitigated by the 10 replacement trees proposed at the site.

vi) **Sustainability**

6.15 The proposed development includes features to demonstrate sustainability measures have been incorporated, showing adaption to climate change as per Policy CC3. These include the retention of existing trees and the planting of new trees, the use of permeable paving, the provision of 4 EV charging points and solar power being used to charge the proposed lighting. The applicant's submission has also referred to PV panels being installed on the western roofspace of 72 Wensley Road (also predominantly owned by the applicant). However, this specific measure does not form part of the proposed development and is outside of the red line boundary of the application site and thus, does not form part of the proposals. Accordingly, it would need to be pursued separately. Nevertheless, the measures which are proposed are sufficient to demonstrate compliance with Policy CC3.

vii) **Other matters**

6.16 Equalities Impact - In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions summarised at the outset of the report.

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell



Aerial view looking south



View from Wensley Road





Existing garages



Existing garages (East Lodge listed building in background)



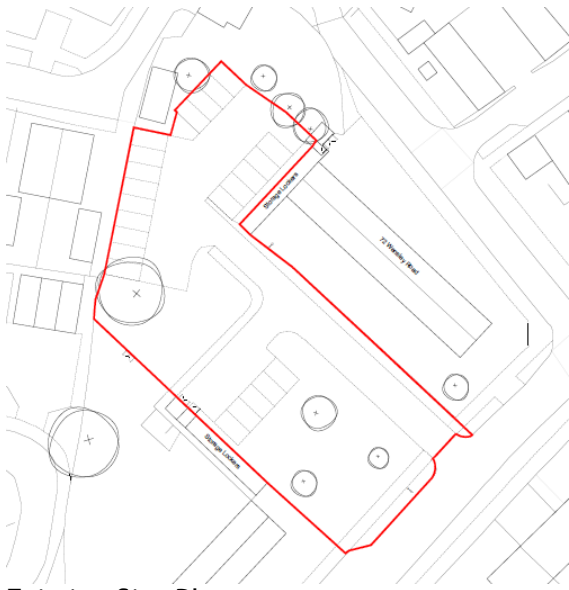
From within the application site looking south



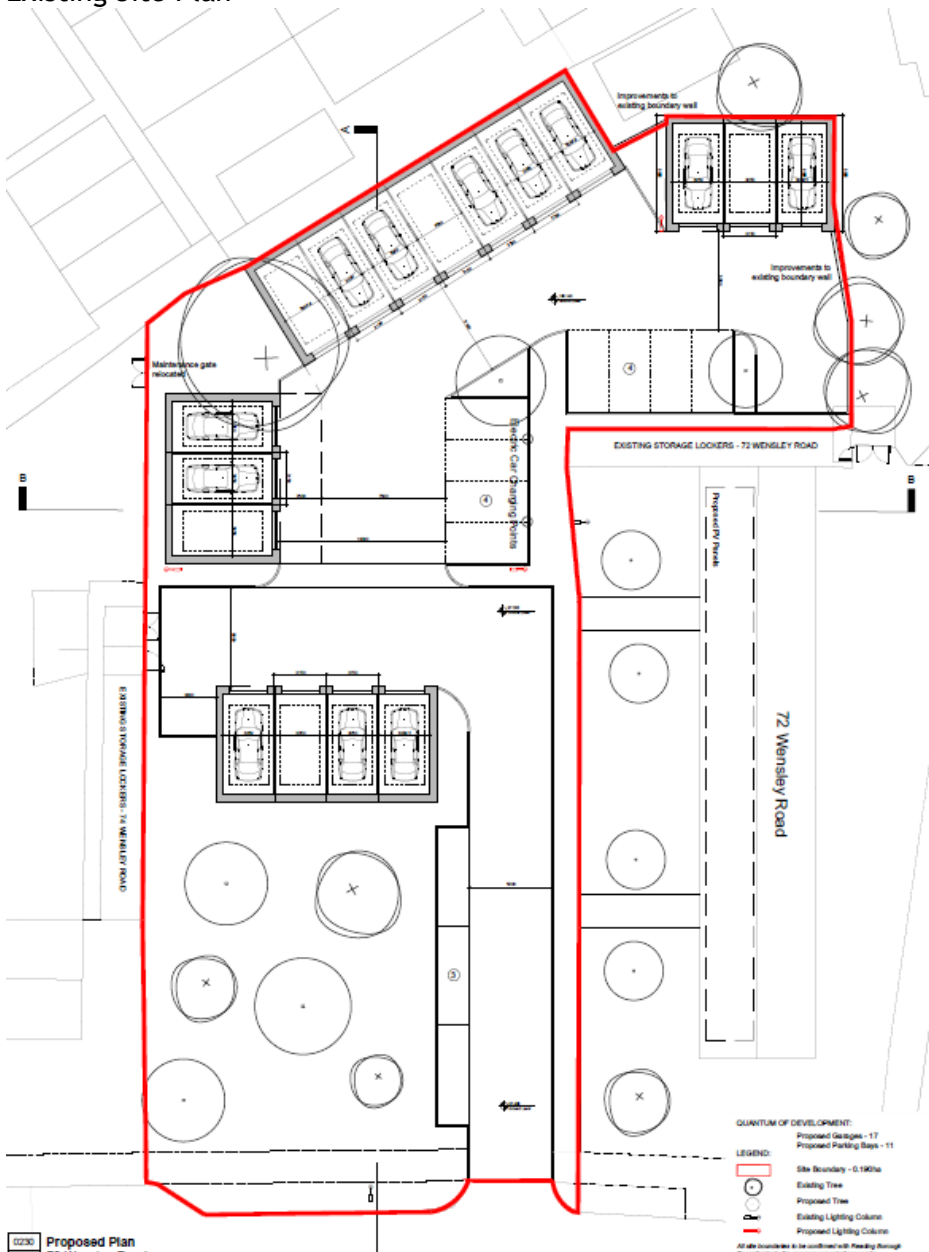
Existing rear elevation of garages from Coley Avenue



Within the application site looking east



Existing Site Plan



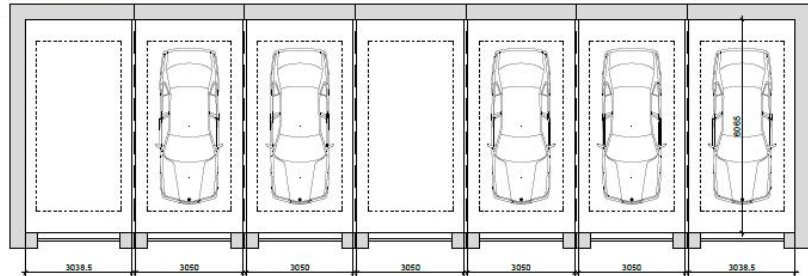
Proposed Plan  
 Proposed Site Plan



Gable Elevation 1



Seven Bay Garage - Elevation



Seven Bay Garage  
113.9m<sup>2</sup>



Gable Elevation 2



Seven Bay Garage - Rear Elevation

## Proposed Elevations

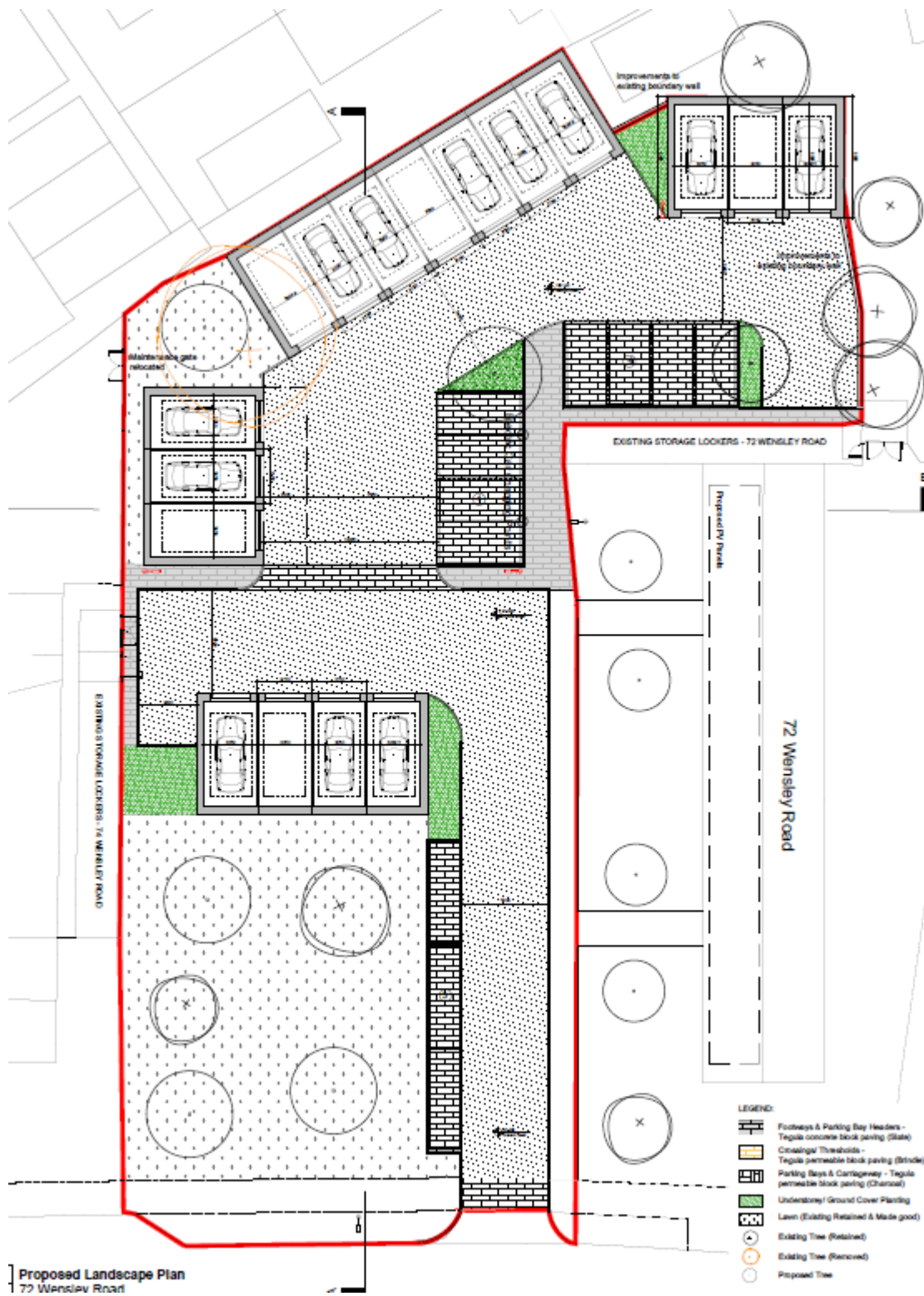
Proposed Site Section AA  
72 Wensley Road



Proposed Site Section BB  
72 Wensley Road



## Proposed Sections



Proposed Landscape Plan