



# PLANNING STATEMENT

*Hitchin Storage Centre, Cadwell Lane, Hitchin, SG4 0SA*

*Job Ref: 21/120*

*Date: December 2025*



Prepared by Tom Donovan BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI on behalf of

**PETER GEORGE TOWN PLANNING**



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## Section 1: Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Peter George Town Planning has been instructed by Mr Turness of Hitchin Storage Centre to prepare and submit a planning application for the erection of a second layer of storage units (17 additional units in total) at Hitchin Storage Centre, Cadwell Lane, Hitchin, SG4 0SA.



Figure 1 - The Application Site

### Background

- 1.2 Planning permission (ref. 22/01810/FP) was granted on 10 February 2025 for the use of land for the siting of 20 No. steel shipping containers for long term self-storage (Use Class B8) with associated palisade security fencing, vehicular access gates, external lighting, CCTV and hard surface (amended plans received 21/10/2022 and 20/01/2023).



- 1.3 Planning permission (ref. 23/01262/S73) was subsequently granted on 13/07/2023 for an amended version of the approved scheme. The amended scheme was subsequently constructed on site and the use has been operational for approximately 18 months.



## Section 2: Analysis of the Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is an approximately rectangular-shaped parcel of land located to the west side of Cadwell Lane. The site is part of the existing industrial area (lying within Employment Area HE1) and was historically used for parking. Following planning permissions granted in February and July 2023, the site has been developed for use as a site for self-storage (Hitchin Storage Centre).

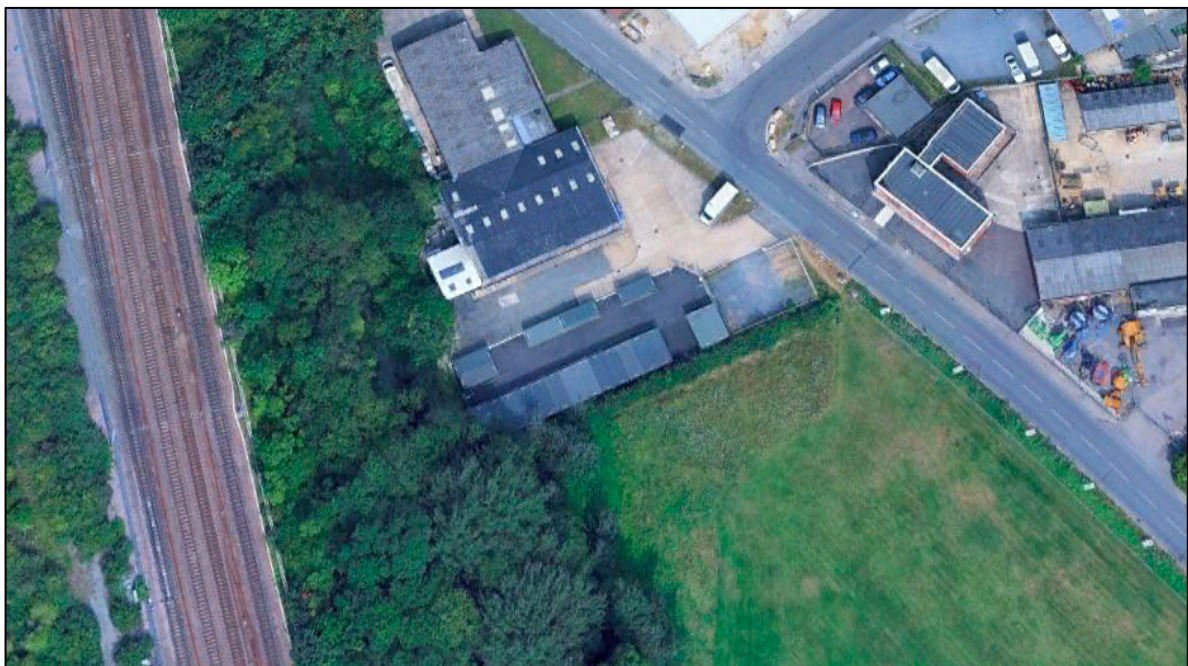


Figure 2 - The Application Site

- 2.2 The site is located immediately adjacent to existing industrial buildings to the north. To the west the site bounds the railway line, with the sewage works and further employment and business areas within Bury Mead Road



beyond. To the south the site bounds the Cadwell Lane Playing Field. To the east the site bounds Cadwell Lane which is an unclassified road.

- 2.3 Business Areas HB1 and HB2 are located to the east/south-east of the existing Employment Area. Residential dwellings are located further along the southern section of Cadwell Lane, the nearest of which is the apartment block fronting the playing fields which is approximately 100m to the south and which were built on the on the former site of a pharmaceutical manufacturing company.
- 2.4 The site has an existing vehicular access onto Cadwell Lane which is an unclassified road. The site access, which is under the full ownership of the applicant, also enables access to the adjacent industrial units to the north of the site. The site has a small area for parking immediately to the east of the existing container site.



## Section 3: The Development Proposal

3.1 The proposed development can be described as follows:

***“Erection of a second layer of storage units (17no. additional units) for self-storage above existing storage units.”***

### The Storage Units

3.2 Each storage unit/ container is proposed to measure approximately 6m in length, 2.4m in width, and have a height of 2.45m. The height of two containers double stacked would therefore be approximately 4.95m. The containers will be painted dark green - RAL-6001.



Figure 3 - Storage Unit Example



## Operation

- 3.3 The self-storage facility contains individual units available for rent by members of the public. As per the planning condition imposed on application ref.23/1262/S73), the facility operates between the hours of 0700-2000 7-days a week.

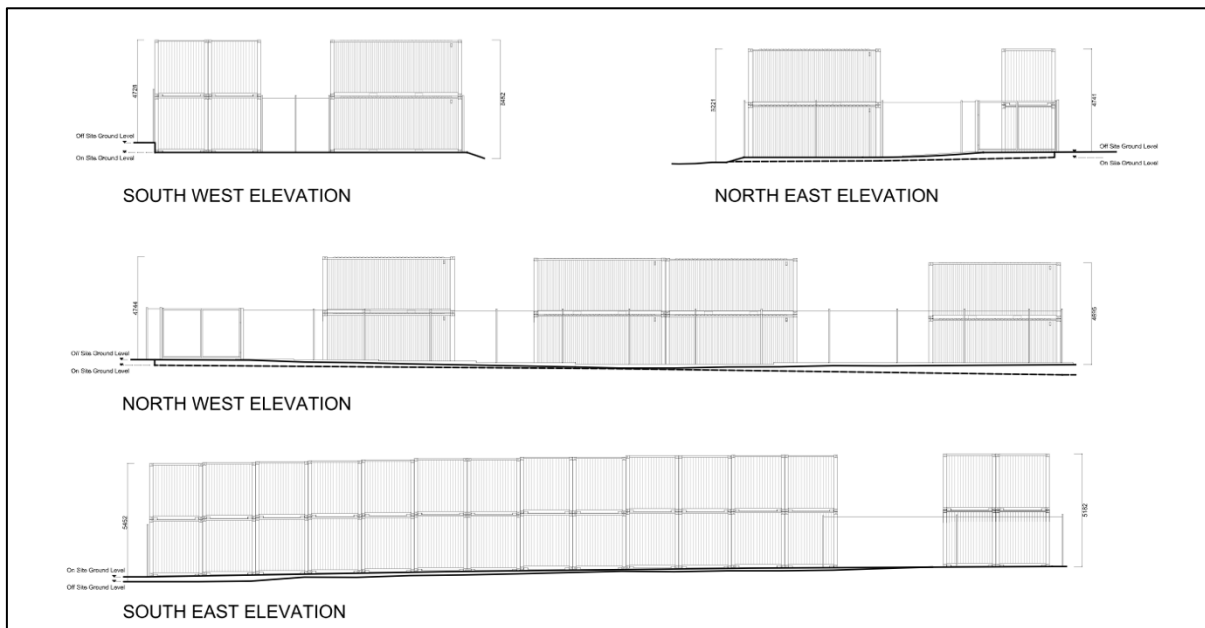


Figure 4 - Proposed Elevations

- 3.4 There are no staff on site and the site is managed remotely from the applicant's office at 2 Wallace Way, Hitchin which is a short walk from the site, and via the CCTV system.
- 3.5 The upper-level containers will be accessed by a mobile access staircase.



## **Access & Parking**

- 3.6 No alterations are required or proposed to the existing access arrangements to the site, either in terms of the access point from Cadwell Lane, or the gated access to the site itself.
- 3.7 Typically, customers drive into the site and park adjacent to their container to load/unload. However, an additional parking area for 6 cars has been provided to the east of the site. This is rarely used in association by users of the container site because customers typically prefer to enter the site and park next to or near their containers.



## Section 4: Relevant Planning Policy

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The Government policies on different aspects of planning are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework).
- 4.2 The relevant sections of the Framework are as follows:
- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
  - Section 6: Building a strong and competitive economy
  - Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
  - Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
  - Section 11: Making effective use of land
  - Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
  - Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
  - Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### Development Plan

- 4.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that:

*“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise.”*



4.4 The development plan context for the planning application is provided by:

- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

4.5 Relevant policies are as follows:

#### Strategic Policies

- Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire
- Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
- Policy SP3: Employment
- Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport
- Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability

#### Development Management Policies

- Policy ETC1: Appropriate Uses in Employment Areas
- Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters
- Policy T2: Parking
- Policy D1: Sustainable Design
- Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions
- Policy D4: Air Quality

#### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD September 2011



## **Section 5: Planning Analysis**

### **Key Issues**

- 5.1 The key issues in the consideration of this application are as follows:
- The principle of development.
  - The effect on the character and appearance of the area.
  - The effect on the safe operation of the adjacent highway.
  - The effect on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
  - The environmental and ecological effects of the proposed development.

### **Principle**

- 5.2 The use of the site for self-storage is already established and was found to be a suitable use within the designated Employment Area. Accordingly, there should be no objection to the principle of development.

### **The Effect on the Character and Appearance of the Area**

- 5.3 Section 12 of the Framework places great emphasis on the quality and design of new development, with the aim to ensure that new development is site appropriately and would be appropriate in terms of local character and context. Policies SP9 and D1 have similar goals and thereby considered to be consistent with the aims of the Framework.



5.4 The site is located within Employment Area HE1 and, as such, is surrounded by a wide range of industrial buildings, uses and other employment-related development. Accordingly, the context of the site is largely provided by the industrial character of the Employment Area, albeit it does lie immediately adjacent to the boundary with the playing fields to the west side of Cadwell Lane.

5.5 The original planning permission was for a single layer of containers as per that constructed on site. As is apparent when visiting the site, the existing site is largely hidden from public view as one approaches the site from the south.



Figure 5 - Proposed CGI

5.6 With respect to the proposed second layer of storage units, these would result in the site having a greater level of visibility from the surrounding area. However, the proposed second layer of containers would be set



against the backdrop of existing industrial units to the rear and, given their relatively modest height (approximately 2.45m), we do not consider that the visual impact of the development would be significant.

- 5.7 The impact of the second layer of containers would be further reduced by the presence and strength of the existing boundary planting along the southern boundary with the playing fields. Whilst it would not completely obscure views towards the second layer of containers, it would significantly soften and restrict clear views from the playing fields.

### **Summary**

- 5.8 Overall, given the context within which the site is located and the degree to which the site is already effectively screened, it is not considered that the proposed second layer of containers would be out of keeping with the site surroundings or otherwise be visually harmful.
- 5.9 Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would be compliant with Section 12 of the Framework and LP Policies SP9 and D1.



### **Impact on Neighbouring Properties**

- 5.10 The nearest residential properties include the apartments at Cadwell Green, and the residential dwellings to the south-east fronting Cadwell Lane and Hillfield Avenue. At the nearest point, these are located approximately 100m to the south-east of the site.
- 5.11 However, given the nature of the use, no industrial operations or processes are carried out on the site, with the use involving little more than people unloading or loading storage items to their respective storage units. Moreover, given the nature of long-term storage, customers typically visit their units very infrequently and thus there would be little impact in terms of additional traffic movements or any related aspects. There is moreover a restriction in place limiting operating hours to between 0700-2000 daily which further limits the potential for disturbance.
- 5.12 Accordingly, it is not considered that the increase in the number of units would result in any noticeable impact from an operational standpoint and thus that the proposed development would not be harmful to the living conditions of neighbouring residential properties.



5.13 The northern boundary of the site is located approximately 9m from the southern wall of the neighbouring industrial unit, Unit 3 Cadwell Lane. This elevation contains several windows that would therefore face towards the proposed container yard.

5.14 Consideration has been given in ensuring that the proposals would not have a significant effect on light or outlook to this property and this has involved not proposing to add the second layer of containers above container nos. 18, 19 and 20. This would reduce the impact on the occupants of Unit 3.

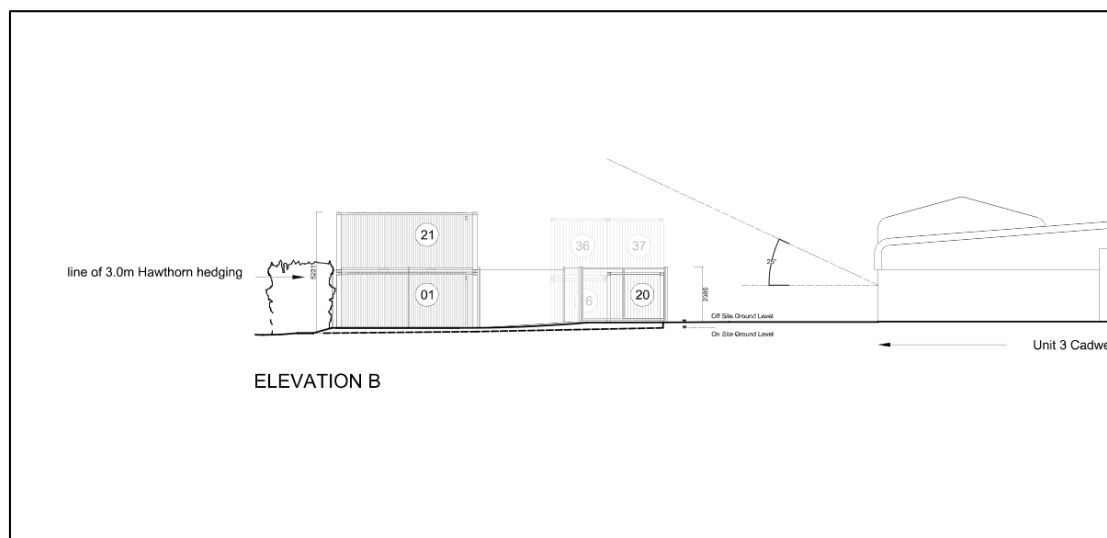


Figure 6 - Section B-B

5.15 Drawing 2512-05 includes 'Elevation B' which includes a 25-degree line struck from the centre of windows on the south-facing wall of Unit 3. The proposed containers would not interfere with this 25-degree line thus



further demonstrating the limited impact that the proposed containers would have on light and/or outlook to Unit 3.

### **Highways Considerations**

- 5.16 The Council's Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD 2011 contains parking standards which are expected to apply. It sets out that, for B8 uses, 1 car parking space should be provided per 75m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area (gfa). In addition, one cycle space is required per 500m<sup>2</sup> for staff, and one per 1000m<sup>2</sup> for visitors. Based on a floor area of 244m<sup>2</sup>, this equates to a requirement for 3 parking spaces (rounded down).
- 5.17 The existing approval made provision for 6 spaces which are located immediately to the east of the site, with additional space for parking within the facility itself. Indeed, it is usually the case that customers drive into the facility to unload next to or near their respective storage unit. Accordingly, the designated parking area is typically not used by customers to the site.
- 5.18 It is moreover the case that, due to the nature of the use, across any 7-day period, there are typically a very low number of visitors to the site (typically 1 or 2 a day as per the applicant's records). This demonstrates that there is



actually a very low demand for the allocated parking and that what is provided is more than sufficient to serve not only the existing site, but also a site expanded in size as per these proposals.

- 5.19 Accordingly, it is considered that the existing 6 parking spaces provided, in addition to the parking available within the facility itself, would be sufficient to serve the expanded facility.

#### **Other Matters**

- 5.20 It is not considered that there are any other matters material to a determination of the planning application.



## **Section 6: Summary & Conclusions**

- 6.1 This statement supports a planning application for erection of an additional layer of 17no. storage units above the existing storage units at Hitchin Storage Centre, Cadwell Lane, Hitchin, SG4 0SA.
- 6.2 For the reasons discussed above, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development would be acceptable in this location, whilst the proposed development would also be acceptable in all other respects including in relation to the effect on the character and appearance of the area, the effect on the safe operation of the adjacent highway and other material considerations as discussed above.
- 6.3 Consequently, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.