

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

**Proposed replacement of rear store at:
Christchurch Methodist and United Reform Church,
Bedford Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1HF**



March 2025

1. Introduction

This statement seeks planning approval for a replacement single storey lean-to store located at the rear of the church building.

Planning Approval was granted in 1980 (ref. 643/80(388)) for the current store which is now in a poor condition and has reached the end of its useful life.

2. Context and background

Christchurch Hitchin is a thriving local church community open to all. The church building is open throughout the week and is used for church activities, and by community groups and local organisations. Affiliated to the church are Scout and Guide groups which provide weekly activities as well as camps, events and other opportunities for over 100 young people.

The Scouts and Guides use the store for their camping and other equipment, and it is also used by the church for the storage of general maintenance equipment and resources.

The building is 45 years old and in a dilapidated condition. It is not watertight as there is a gap between the roof and side wall which also allows ivy to grow into the store, and the poor condition of the doors leads to water running into the front of the store.



This application proposes replacement of the store with another lean-to store using the same footprint as the current store. The height of the proposed store is also within that of the current store.

3. Supporting statement

The application has been carefully considered. The existing store has been in position for 45 years and allows Scout and Guide equipment used at weekly meetings to be kept close to the church hall where they meet. Camping equipment is kept in the store and used throughout the year. The church keeps maintenance equipment such as ladders, scaffold tower, lawnmower in the store for ease of access. Alternative solutions including larger and brick-built buildings have been considered but the proposed solution is to replace the current store with a similar size unit constructed of pre-built panels on the existing base.

4. Description of the proposal

The new store is formed of interlocking concrete panels with a pebble dash finish and true brick fronts in Cedar Buff. The roof will be formed of corrugated coloured cement fibre roofing sheets. Fascias will be PVCU white maintenance free. The front doors are 8ft wide, 6ft 6 ins steel side hinged doors in white. The store will be placed on the existing base and the right-hand elevation (looking from the front) will be fixed against the church wall.

There will be no internal rooms or facilities, the store will be fitted with racking for equipment.



5. Design

The proposed store is detailed on submitted drawing: Hanson Garages LA24x10.

There are no changes to existing landscaping arrangements around the store. The store cannot be seen from surrounding roads and does not detrimentally impact the existing church building.

6. Access

There is no vehicular access to the store. Pedestrian access is through the Church building. This will not change.