

Design and Access Statement

Change of use of vacant chapel (Use Class F1) to self-storage (Use Class B8)



Former Wesleyan Church, 41 Hoyland Road, Hoyland Common

Prepared by Elizabeth Maw BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

October 2025

1.0 Introduction and Site Information

- 1.1 The application site is the Wesleyan Chapel at Hoyland Common. The chapel was historically used for worship, funerals, weddings, christenings, choirs, and youth club until its closure in 1987.
- 1.2 Since 1987, the chapel has been rarely used. Periodic uses have included using part of the rear of the building for a kitchen showroom and storage. For many years, the property has been actively marketed for a new use but with little interest.
- 1.3 Due to its longstanding vacancy, which is now nearly 40 years, the building has started to fall into disrepair. This is evident from the exterior and interior. The roof is also in a poor condition with missing roof tiles. The condition of the roof has led to water ingress and nesting birds in the loft.
- 1.4 This application seeks consent for the change of use of the building to self-storage (Use Class B8). The submitted floor plans show 105 self-storage units. Although, the layout is designed to be flexible to allow for smaller or larger units to be created as customer storage needs change.
- 1.5 The purpose of this statement is to give an overview of the proposal and provide further information on the main planning considerations.

2.0 Application Documents

- 2.1 The submission includes the following documents:
 - Application form
 - Relevant fee
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Appendix 1: Site photos
 - Appendix 2: Self storage data
 - Bat survey
 - Site and Location Plan
 - Existing Floor Plans
 - Proposed Floor Plans
 - Site Sections

3.0 Principle of the Proposal

- 3.1 The application site is within the Principal Town of Hoyland and allocated as being within Hoyland Common Local Centre.
- 3.2 The spatial strategy for the Borough sets out that Hoyland as a principal town should be a focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities, and their roles as accessible and vibrant places to live should be enhanced. Policy TC1 of the Barnsley Local Plan states that the Local Centres serve smaller catchments

and development here will be expected to meet the needs of the local area and not adversely impact on the vitality or viability of other nearby centres. Furthermore, the Local Plan supports the economic growth of the Borough by supporting schemes which provide new employment opportunities and jobs.

3.3 The NPPF states that at the heart of decision making is sustainable development. To achieve, sustainable development, there are three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. In support of these aims, the Framework takes a positive approach to sustainable economic growth and the re-use of underutilised buildings.

3.4 The proposal is for the change of use of a vacant chapel to self-storage. The business is intended to provide a storage facility for the local community and in a location which is highly accessible. The proposed units are likely to appeal to small businesses, for instance those who have small internet businesses or households needing long and short-term storage.

3.5 As a B8 use, it is not defined as a main town centre use. However, the storage is likely to have linked trips to existing businesses within the local centre thus supporting its vitality and viability.

4.0 Effect to Surrounding Land and Property

4.1 The site is allocated as being part of Hoyland Common local centre but sits on the very edge of this designation. It is close to a number of commercial businesses and bounded by housing on all four sides. The main change for residents would be activity from customer visits.

4.2 The applicants are closely associated with Hoyland. Prior to going ahead with their application, they have considered whether this is a scheme that would benefit their local area and prevent an amenity impact on nearby residents.

4.3 In order to try and calculate the customer activity level, the applicants approached the Self Storage Association for assistance. The Self Storage Association have passed on data about how self-storage units operate and their activity levels. The data is attached as a separate appendix, but some of the key points of the data are as follows:

- On average: 76% of people visit their unit monthly. 46% get visited no more than 6 times a year. 15% or less visit daily.
- Visiting times fluctuate but they are during the daytime. This would coincide with opening hours of other businesses in the local centre.
- Most visits occur during the hours of 8am and 7pm in the weekday. Peak times in the week are between 4pm and 7pm, after persons return from work. Saturdays are the busiest day of the week with peak times between 10am and 3pm. Sundays are generally quieter.

4.4 In terms of staffing and safety, the site would be unmanned and operated on a secure remote entry system with CCTV. Regular checks to the building would be carried out.

- 4.5 At the rear of the property and outlined blue on the submitted location plan is an area of land belonging to the church. It sits between terraced housing and has been maintained by the neighbours. The applicants have liaised with the occupiers of the adjacent terraces and confirmed to them that the proposal does not include any work or access to this area.
- 4.6 When residents and the LPA consider the effects on amenity, it is asked that they balance into their consideration the constraints of the building and what would be an appropriate future use for it. This is a large building that sits on a small narrow site, and it has been underused for several decades. It is a site with a number of constraints, which limits its potential for a new use. The applicants consider that the self-storage units would be a low-key commercial use that generates a small number of movements and at times when there is activity and footfall along Hoyland Road. A new use also promotes long term maintenance.
- 4.7 It is hoped that the information supplied within this application will allow residents to make an informed judgement on how their amenity will be affected. The applicants are also happy to be contacted directed to discuss any concerns.

5.0 Parking and Highway Impact

- 5.1 The site has limited off street parking. The off-street parking is a single file drive to the north side of the property, with space for around 3-4 vehicles.
- 5.2 The chapel closed in 1987 and has limited use since, so it has generated very limited traffic for over 20 years.
- 5.3 The application site fronts onto Hoyland Road, which is one of the main thoroughfares through Hoyland Common. To the south of the site is Hoyland Common local centre which includes a number of shops and services including a COOP store, public houses, takeaways, charity shop, nail and hair salons.
- 5.4 On parts of Hoyland Road and outside the site are dedicated on street parking bays with no restrictions. These bays are for the use of visitors and local residents.
- 5.5 According to available data, customer bases for self-storage units are principally within a 0–30-minute journey. However, many existing storage places are located on industrial sites. Being within a local centre, the applicants expect the customer base to be from a smaller geographic area.
- 5.6 The surrounding areas has a number of terraced streets, many of which struggle for storage due to their plot and property sizes. The applicants consider many of the units would appeal to local residents to store domestic items such as fishing items, suitcases and Christmas decorations. Effectively, anything which would fit into the average garden shed. Another appeal is for small internet-based businesses to store stock. Visits to collect and store such items could be made by car or by foot.

5.7 The number of units on the proposed plans are set at 105 but the walls of the units would be flexible to allow for increase or decrease in size, should customers wish to change their storage unit size.

5.8 In order to calculate likely traffic levels, the following data is noted:

- Self-storage units do not operate at capacity. Generally, self-storage units are subject to churn and operate at around 75% capacity.
- On average, 76% of units are visited monthly, 15% of units are visited daily and the remainder are visited fewer than 3 times per year.

5.9 When taking this data into consideration and assuming a worst-case scenario of all visits by car, the following traffic levels are estimated to be:

- At 75% occupancy, 78 units would be in use.
- 76% of the occupied units are visited monthly. This equates to 59 trips per month for 59 of the units.
- 15% of the occupied units are visited monthly, this equates to 11 units being visited daily/ 351 trips per month.
- When combining the two figures above, the average number of movements is 410 trips per month / 13 a day. These visits are spread throughout the day. If this number of movements was compared to a small retail unit or beauty premises, the self-storage proposal would generate less trips.

6.0 Impact on Protected Species

6.1 There are no proposed external works, but some roof repairs will be required to prevent water ingress. Bat surveys have been carried out as a precautionary measure and copy of the ecologist report is submitted with the application.

6.2 In summary, the results of the surveys found that no evidence of bat roosting during the inspections and no evidence of bat roost presence was recorded during either of the nocturnal surveys.

7.0 Biodiversity Net Gain

7.1 The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 state:

4.— (1) The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission

for development which meets the first and second conditions.

(2) The first condition is that the development does not impact an onsite priority habitat.

(3) The second condition is that the development impacts—

(a) less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero;

and

(b) less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

7.2 There are no external works, and the external areas of the application site are sealed surfaces. Therefore, the proposal is below the de-minimus thresholds and exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gain.

Appendix 1: Site Photos















Appendix 2: Self Storage Data

Typical Visitor Patterns for Self Storage Facilities are:

Weekdays (Mon–Fri):

1. **8am–11am:** Light to moderate traffic – mostly business users and tradespeople.
2. **12pm–4pm:** Moderate – mix of personal and business use.
3. **4pm–7pm:** Peak – highest weekday traffic, often after-work personal visits.

Weekends:

1. **Saturday:** Busiest day of the week, peaking around 10am–3pm.
2. **Sunday:** Generally quieter, though activity picks up around end-of-month or during seasonal moves.

Monthly Trends:

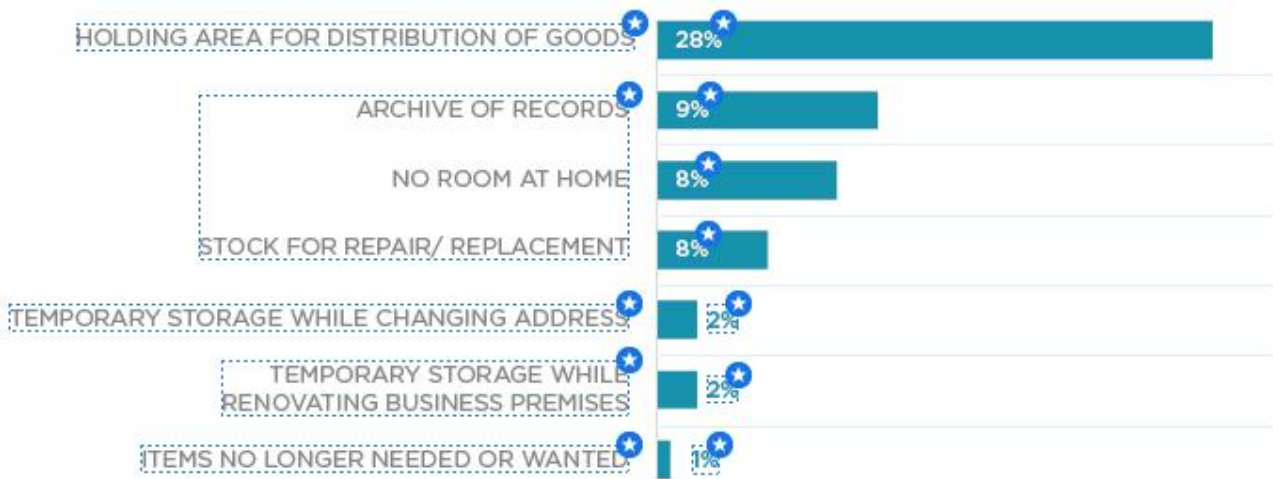
1. **Start/end of each month:** Spikes in activity due to move-ins and move-outs.
2. **Spring/Summer:** Higher footfall due to home moves and renovations.

COMMERCIAL USES OF SELF STORAGE

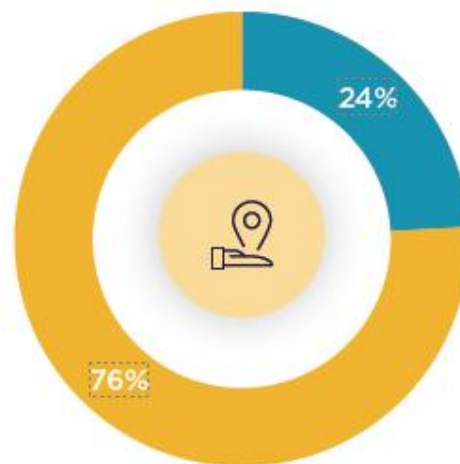
Business users are clearly looking for storage for goods and records. Self storage provides a flexible solution for business storage that does not require a long term lease and can be adapted based on the needs of the business. Hence it is commonly used by small businesses as they expand and move from being home businesses to something larger.

It is also being used by a growing number of online retailers. Only 4% of users are considered temporary, further supporting the concept that business customers stay long term and create less churn.

BUSINESS USES FOR SELF STORAGE



Further supporting the concept that self storage is a local business incubator and supports the local economy, around a quarter of the businesses that use self storage operate solely from their self storage unit. In an average sized store this would be upwards of 25 businesses that could not operate without their self storage unit.



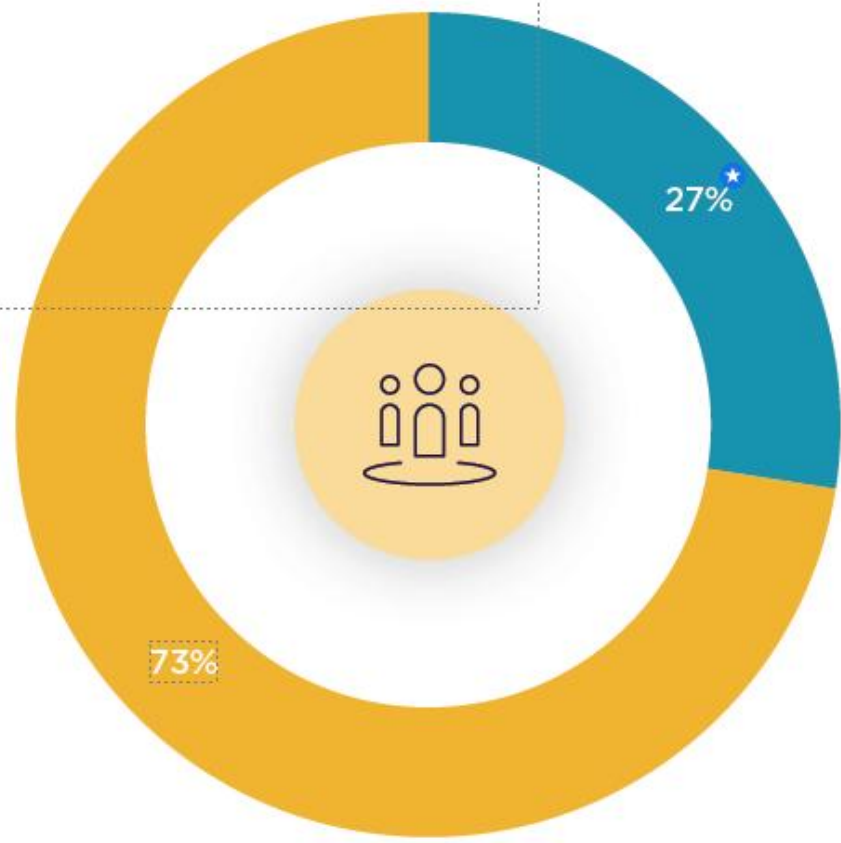
THE BULK OF THE BUSINESS IS RUN FROM THE STORAGE UNIT





WE HAVE ANOTHER OFFICE OR STORAGE CENTRE WHERE WE PREDOMINATELY RUN THE BUSINESS FROM

Businesses account for around a quarter of self storage customers but they take up over a third of the storage space as they tend to take larger units.

This has remained relatively stable for the past 10 years. External storage sites with drive up units have a higher percentage of commercial customers with many over 50%. The larger drive up style units can be more accommodating to people with stock or equipment that they need to access regularly.



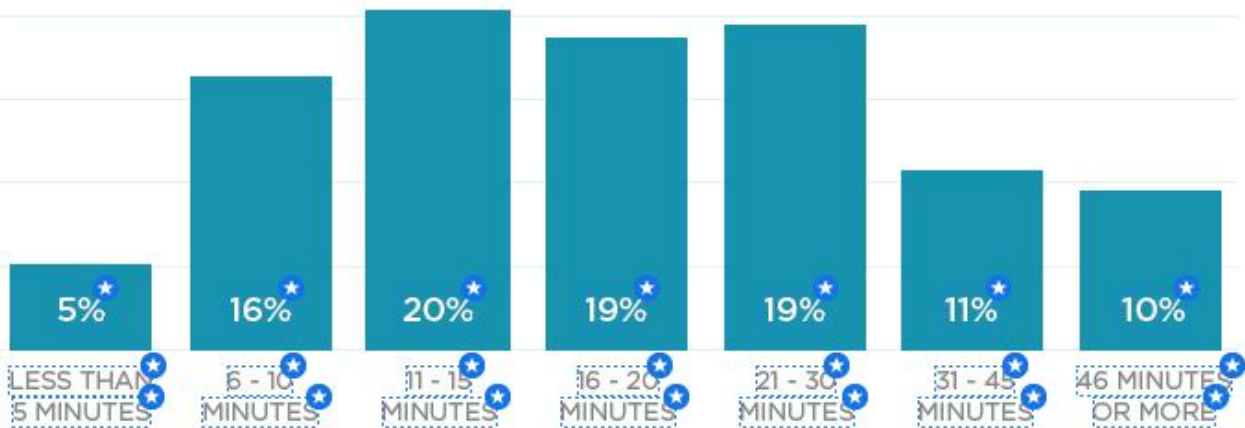
-  A BUSINESS CUSTOMER - YOU USE A SELF STORAGE UNIT PRIMARILY FOR YOUR BUSINESS OR YOUR EMPLOYER'S BUSINESS
-  A PRIVATE CUSTOMER - YOU USE A SELF STORAGE UNIT PRIMARILY FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL OR DOMESTIC PURPOSE

DISTANCE TO TRAVEL

Few customers travel more than 30 minutes to their chosen self storage business. Although in recent years, people have been traveling further, with the number of people travelling 5 minutes or less, half what it was 5 years ago and almost twice as many people travelling 21 - 30 minutes.

This could be due to increasing traffic taking people longer to travel, but it is more likely that people are travelling further to their units. This could be as people are looking for stores with higher levels of security or technology or as a result of increasing up front discounts persuading people to travel further to save on storage fees.

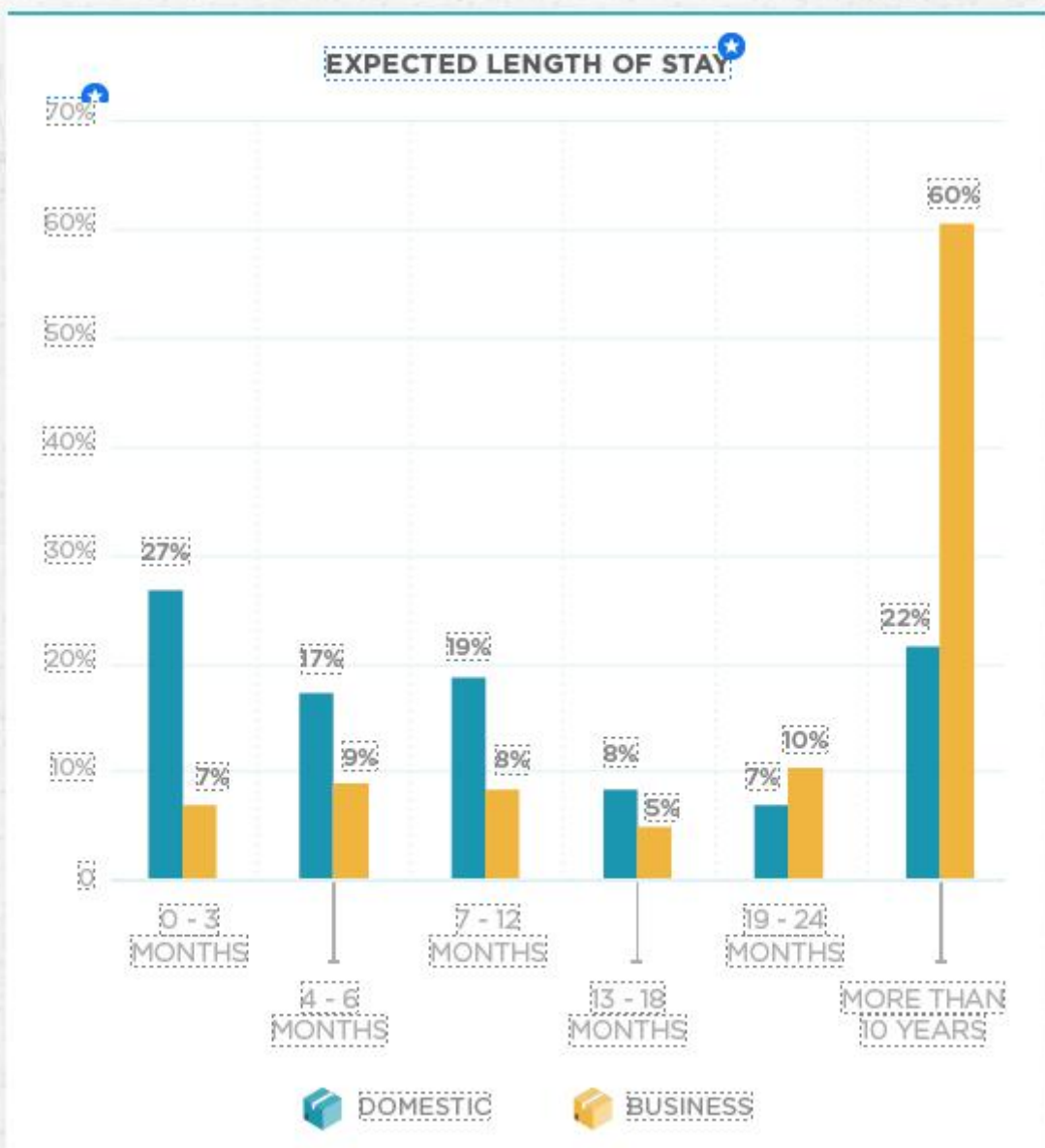
TRAVEL DISTANCE TO SELF STORAGE STORE



EXPECTED LENGTH OF STAY

As expected, business customers use self storage for longer periods of time, however around 40% of domestic customers have stated they expect to use self storage for more than 12 months and 22% for 2 years or more. Consider also, that some of the customers completing the survey that have just moved into self storage, may expect to stay for only a few months but may still be converted into long term customers.

Churn is a natural part of self storage with customers moving in and out each week. Long term customers provide benefits for the self storage business, reducing churn which means the unit is not vacant between uses, and providing more value for the cost of acquisition for the customer. There is also more option for operators to increase rents once the customer stays past the up front discounts often offered.



FREQUENCY OF VISIT

Despite convenience being one of the major reasons people choose a self storage business, in reality they do not access their goods frequently. 76% of personal use customers access their unit monthly or less and only 15% of business customers access their unit daily. This means that self storage business generates less traffic than many people expect.



FREQUENCY OF VISIT

