Design and Access Statement in support of Proposed Change of Use from Retail (A1) to Assembly and Leisure (D2) of 13, High Street, Cheadle ST10 1AA

1.0 Site and Use

1.1 The site is situated at 13, High Street, Cheadle, comprising a 2-story building in a decent state of repair, terraced to either side (both retail properties; to the left a "Vape" shop and to the right "Savers" toiletries). Access to the main entrance at the front of the property is from Cheadle High Street and to the rear via a fire door from a car park / privately-owned land. The internal measurements of the property include 102.7sqm internal space, currently vacant, previously used for retail (a haberdashery downstairs, storage and toilets to the upstairs). The property was constructed in the 20th century and formerly housed the Midland / HSBC bank and subsequently Cheadle Yarns. It is currently vacant and has been for approximately 6 months.

1.2 The ground floor retail space is approximately twice the area of the first floor, with the upper floor located to the High Street side (front) of the property and accessed by internal stairway with handrail. The ground floor is proposed to be entirely used as Assembly and Leisure (D2) as a Baby Sensory and Toddler Sense Wow Centre, providing Sensory Development classes to babies from birth and Toddlers to age 4 years. The premises are in an ideal location attracting both foot traffic and passing trade with a recognisable internationally acclaimed brand.

1.3 The first floor will remain as storage for play equipment, and toilets (x2). To the front of the property is a ramp, with railing, providing access to the customer entrance. To the rear of the property is a fire exit with heavy (presumably bank security standard) fire door leading externally to stairs, a small attached 1 story store and a loading / refuse area. The car park to the rear of the property is privately owned by a local landlord.

1.4 The property has been maintained in a decent condition by the current owners and previous tenant, although both the air conditioning and fire alarm require repair or reinstallation. All walls both internal and external (externally only window frame and signage mount) require repainting but are otherwise in good condition. The advertising signage to the front of the property will require removal and replacement and separate permission will be sought for this.

2.0 Accessibility

2.1 The site is considered to be in a sustainable location, with transport links to the site as follows:

- Private car access; paid parking available on Tape Street car park. Limited High Street parking available plus some loading bays to front of building.
- Local transport links: buses run from surrounding areas to Cheadle High Street close to where the property is located.
- Pedestrian access: to the front of the premises on the High Street with ramped access for wheelchairs / pushchair access. Although at points the pedestrian access

is narrow it is still accessible by both wheelchairs and pushchairs from Tape Street car park to the premises.

2.2 The main customer entrance to the property is located on, and clearly visible from, Cheadle High Street and will be clearly signed with high quality vinyl window signage and main banner sign above the front windows. Rear access is via a fire exit / loading only (not for general day to day customer use) and backs onto the privately-owned car park.

2.3 Customers will enter the premises via the High Street entrance which has a ramp and rail for wheelchair / pushchair access. The addition of automatic door entry button is currently being priced to enhance accessibility. Customers will then circulate to the left to hang coats and place bags in wall-secured storage boxes, continuing round to the far left and under the stairs for pushchair / buggy storage as required. The floor space in this area will be partially divided from the main room by fencing with safety gate and the resulting walk space running parallel to the shop front will be wide enough for pushchair / wheelchair access at 900mm minimum. Customers will then move directly into the open exploratory play and sensory area with clear access to the lever-handled fire exit to the rear of the property and to stairs to the first floor (via a fire door). The two main fire exits will therefore be the main fire escape to the rear of the building with an assembly point at the far side of the car park (close to Homepoint shop) and the main front entrance / exit.

2.4 The provision of pushchair storage and the arrangement of play equipment will ensure that paths to these and the doorways themselves will be kept clear at all times. Each class begins with a Health and Safety announcement in which fire exits and assembly points are clearly highlighted along with other safety information.

2.5 The entrance and cloak areas will be covered with non-slip vinyl flooring (current vinyl flooring may suffice, subject to risk assessment) and the play and sensory areas will be covered from wall to wall with 20mm mixed martial arts mats (1sqm each, jigsaw edging, already in use and to be installed at the premises).

2.6 There are two toilets in the property, both located upstairs on the first floor, both with separate hot water washing facilities. It is unfortunately not feasible to provide a ground floor WC due to the large amount of floor space required for activities to run safely downstairs (e.g., a 1m gap is required away from walls for all soft play equipment), leaving no available room to install additional facilities. Although by no means ideal, an accessible toilet with radar key is located nearby on the Tape Street public car park should it be required for those unable to access the upstairs facilities. Facilities available at the premises will be detailed on the customer website and booking emails, along with a request for customers to provide information about any accessibility requirements; any enquiries regarding accessibility are directed to the business owner for a swift response.

2.7 The upstairs toilet facilities are accessed via an internal stairway with railing to one side, through a fire door located in the centre of the east wall of the premises. On inspection, the stairway is likely to be too wide for a second hand rail to be of use in providing extra support for those who struggle with accessing the upstairs facilities but other options will be further considered.

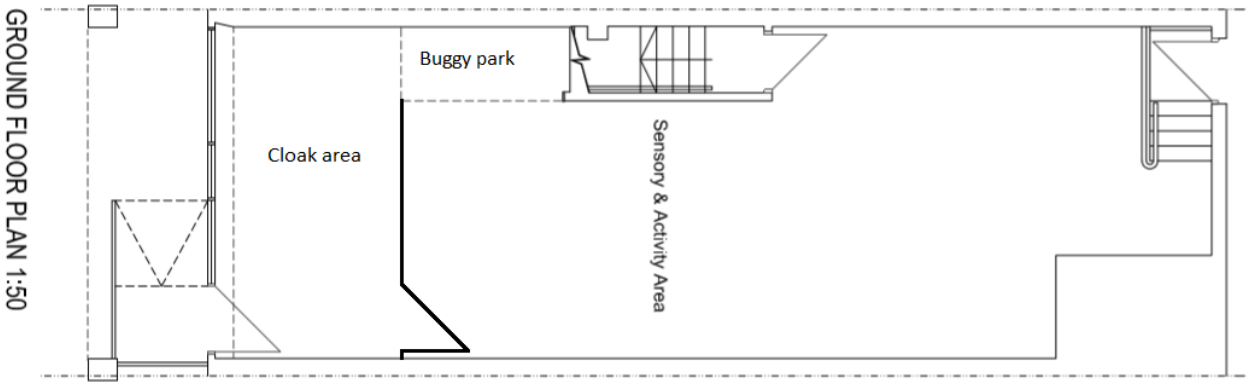
2.8 Fire exits, WC and storage areas will be clearly signposted with infographic signs, illuminated as required. A fire risk assessment will be carried out before business commences and a daily risk assessment is carried out by the Class Leader before classes begin with interim risk assessments and cleaning regimes between classes.

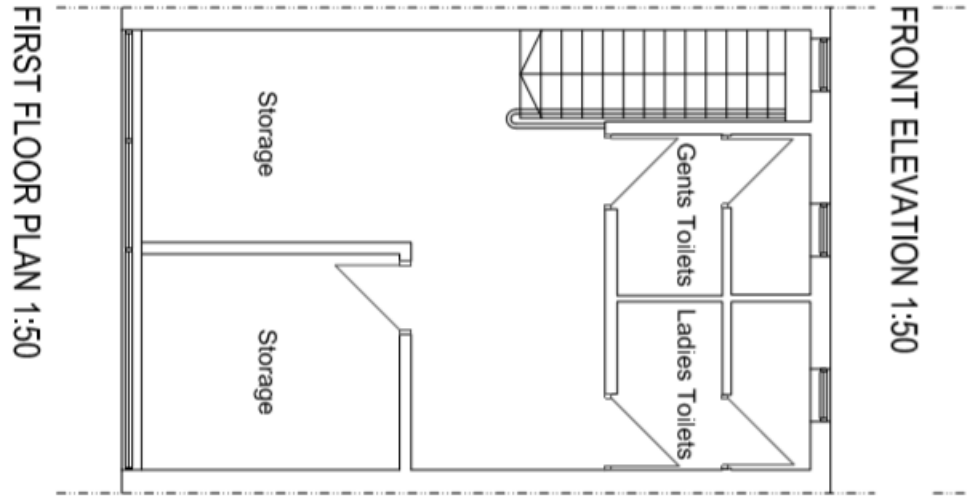
2.9 A breastfeeding area will be designated with comfortable seating and all parents / carers are made aware at the start of every class that they may feed their baby wherever they are comfortable doing so.

3.0 Children are supervised at all times during classes by a parent / carer who is responsible for their safety and a register is kept for each class by the Class Leader.

4.0 Layout

4.1 There is no change to the internal layout or total floor space at the property. Internally, the layout shall be as below (see also attached plans).





4.2 The main changes to the building include: cosmetic improvements; to repair replace fire alarm system and air conditioning; and to repair or replace the existing toilets and sinks / taps as required, including provision of hand rail, provision of baby change facilities in one toilet, addition of waist height wooden security fencing and gate and possible addition of accessible automatic door system.

4.3 The external shop signage will be well-proportioned and sympathetically replaced above the window on the current shop frontage and separate permission sought for this. Illuminated signage is not required. Hanging signage will be considered if it is felt this fits with the overall appearance of the area. Repainting of window frames may be required and will be kept in the same colour (white) as existing and aside from signage the shop frontage will be maintained as is. Permission for high quality window vinyls (blackout at least in part to respect the privacy of those attending class and to enhance the sensory aspect of interior lighting) will be sought.

4.4 A security alarm will be fitted to the premises. No cash nor expensive equipment is kept onsite therefore it is unlikely that further security will be required to the current front door / windows. The rear door remains from when the property was a bank and is highly secure.

4.5 A security gate with high level button release will likely be installed either at either the entrance to the cloak area or to the main exploratory play and sensory area, depending on the recommendation of Fire Safety Officers and following a risk assessment. This will provide a child-proof barrier whilst allowing fire escape where necessary.

4.6 Fire extinguishers will be installed and clearly signed and labelled.

4.7 The main ground floor area will be open plan with fire escapes and routes to them left clear of equipment and personal belongings at all times.

4.8 Customers will be instructed to arrive at the premises no more than 15 minutes before class starts, with a minimum 30-minute changeover period allowing for safe entry and egress. The maximum number of children / babies attending a class is 20 with a corresponding number of supervising adults.

5.0 Scale / Appearance

5.1 The external scale of the building will not be changed.

6.0 Landscaping

6.1 Landscaping is not applicable for this application.

7.0 Heritage Assets

7.1 Please see attached Heritage Statement

8.0 Sources

A Local Plan for the future of Staffordshire Moorlands – Staffordshire Moorlands Local Development Framework 2014
Cheadle Town Centre Masterplan 2011
Draft Growth Strategy for Staffordshire Moorlands, May 2018 – Staffordshire Moorlands District Council & Staffordshire County Council
Equality Act 2010 – Ban on Age Discrimination in the provision of services, public functions and associations
Equality Act 2010 – What do I need to know? Quick-start guide for businesses who sell goods and services
Equality Act 2010 – What do I need to know? Disability quick-start guide
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Design Guide (SPD) 2018
Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2014

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