Heritage 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 Introduction

2.0 Description of the Site

3.0 Assessment of its Significance

4.0 The Design Concept

5.0 The Impact

6.0 Sources

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1.0 Introduction

1. 1 The aim of this Heritage Statement Is to assess the impact of the proposed change of use from Retail (A1) to Assembly and Leisure (D2) on any local heritage assets and to ensure that the design makes the best use of the existing building within its context.

1.2 The property was previously used as Retail premises (A1) with the business name “Cheadle Yarns” – a haberdashery, and prior to that as the HSBC (formerly Midland) Bank. The proposed change of use to Assembly and Leisure (D2) is requested in order to operate as premises for the business named “Baby Sensory and Toddler Sense Staffordshire Moorlands”, providing baby and toddler development classes and parties.

1.3 The building is not listed and is situated to the north east of the centre of Cheadle Conservation Area.

2.0 Description of the site and related assets

2.1 The property is situated at number 13, High Street, Cheadle. Cheadle Conservation Area was designated in 1970, one of the first areas in the County to be designated. Cheadle is one of the oldest market towns in the Staffordshire Moorlands, dating back to Anglo-Saxon times. In 1250 the town was granted “market charter” and progressed from a market trade town with agricultural business to a producer of textiles throughout the Industrial Revolution. The town is positioned in a valley, with the river Tean and Uttoxeter Canal close by.

2.2 The area is a designated Conservation Area due to its “historic street pattern, along with many historic buildings” and its “hillside setting (which) adds to the interest of the built environment.” The most recent conservation area appraisal was adopted by the District Council in 2008.

2.3 In addition to the conservation area appraisal, an Historic Character Assessment was carried out by the County Council in June 2012, identifying the historic core of the town along the High Street (HUCA 1) and HUCA 3 (High Street and Tape Street) within which the property is situated. HUCA 3 incorporates part of the High Street and some of its backplots which have been redeveloped during the late 20th century, with purpose built shops and arcades replacing earlier properties. The HCA states that “the earlier settlement does not conform to the regular burgage plots further south west along High Street, however, it may have formed part of the medieval planned town or may represent late medieval or post medieval expansion.”

2.4 Within the conservation area lie 21 listed buildings and monuments, including St. Giles Catholic Church ("Pugin's Gem"), a gothic building designed by the architect Augustus Pugin. The closest listed buildings to 13 High Street are as follows: No's 1-6 The Square, 19, 20, 21, 29, 47, 51, 53, 62, 64, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79 and drinking fountain High Street, the Church of St. Giles and Churchyard walls and steps, 1 – 15 and archway Cross Street and The Market Cross. A full list can be found in the Cheadle Conservation Appraisal 2017. It is also necessary to consider intervisibility due to the location within a valley and whether this would be altered by any proposed design alterations.

3.0 Assessment of the Site's Significance

3.1 In assessing the significance of the property and its setting, this heritage statement adopts the methods outlined in Historic England's publication "Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance" (see Sources).

The guidance describes four heritage values contributing to the significance of a site: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal. As taken from the Historic Character Assessment, 2012:

1. "Evidential value: It is likely that at least the western portion of the HUCA had formed part of the medieval town plan; representing backplot areas behind houses fronting onto High Street. The section of the High Street which lies within the HUCA also has the potential to inform upon the origins and development of this area and identify the extent of the medieval town. There is also the potential for archaeological deposits associated with the site of the tape factory to survive within the HUCA. Value: High
2. Historical value: There are no known heritage assets lying within the HUCA with the exception of the alignment of the streets. Value: Low
3. Aesthetic value: The historic character has been impacted by 20th century redevelopment and the creation of the car park. The area currently lies within the Cheadle Conservation Area. Value: Low
4. Communal value: The current lack of understanding restricts the potential of the HUCA to contribute to Cheadle's history and the interpretation of that for the benefit of residents and for tourism. Value: Low"

3.2 It is likely that anything of evidential value would have been yielded at the time of construction of the 20th century properties, however the potential for further discoveries remains. No demolition or changes to the existing building will be made therefore there will be no loss of such assets.

3.3 No listed buildings are in the immediate locality of 13 High Street nor lie within HUCA 3 in which it is situated hence the Historical value is low. Numbers 19

and 21 High Street are the nearest listed buildings and are not connected to nor in view of Number 13.

3.4 The building itself and adjacent buildings have little aesthetic value due to their later development and communal value is also low due to a current lack of understanding.

3.5 The property retains a connection to the community as a former bank (HSBC) and in more recent years a haberdashery.

4.0 The Design Concept

4.1 The property internally is in a decent state of repair. Proposed alterations to the property are minimal and primarily consist of internal repairs as required to bring the building up to Health and Safety standards. They are listed as follows:

- Repair / replace fire alarm system
- Repair / replace air conditioning system
- Repair / replace heating system (currently electric storage heaters)
- Minimal repair of existing windows
- Repainting of interior and exterior walls (white)
- Replace existing frontage signage with Baby Sensory & Toddler Sense Wow Centre branded signage – high quality window vinyl & wall-flush sign to front above windows, in line with company branding guidelines, separate permission to be sought

4.2 There are no extensions or alterations planned to the external building nor the internal layout at present.

4.3 No parking areas will be required due to the presence of the local car park located in the centre of Cheadle.

4.4 The internal layout has been carefully considered to make best use of the existing space with minimal alteration (essentially cosmetic improvements).

5.0 The Impact

5.1 Lying within the Cheadle Conservation Area, the building is unlisted but occupies a location on the High Street within the town centre and as such forms part of its heritage particularly in terms of communal value. Following the assessment of the significance of the site and surrounding areas and the minimal changes required to the property beyond the proposed change of use it is felt that the proposal represents a positive contribution to the building and no negative impact on the conservation area.

5.2 The property is currently unoccupied and although previously well-maintained by the current landlords it is likely to fall into disrepair without regular service and maintenance, both of which would be required by the new owner and tenant. The front elevation to the High Street will remain unchanged, benefitting from regular repair and maintenance.

5.3 No permanent changes will be made or are planned to the internal layout of the building. The layout will remain the same in order to maximise activity / sensory space whilst allowing maximum accessibility on the ground floor, whilst maintaining maximum storage space and toilet and changing facilities upstairs.

5.4 It is also worth noting that with an existing customer base already exceeding 100 babies and toddlers from Cheadle, Dilhorne, Leek, Newcastle, Ashbourne, Uttoxeter and other surrounding areas this would drive a steady, staggered flow of daily trade into the centre of town, supporting local retail and service business and adding to the vibrancy of the High Street whilst providing valuable local parenting support and quality child development opportunities.

5.5 The proposed internal and external works (both minimal) represent no material harm to the significance of local heritage assets and should provide a positive long-term contribution to the local community. Indeed, the Cheadle Masterplan (adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by the Council Assembly on 26th March 2014) set out several Strategic Objectives which this development supports including the following:

- To repair the damaged urban fabric to the east / south east of the Town Centre
- To complement and improve the environment of High Street
- To develop the Town Centre's offer for residents and visitors
- To reduce the high level of vacant premises

The main aims of the Masterplan are to:

- Identify job and business growth opportunities through the redevelopment of vacant and underused land and property
- Identify the potential to increase resident and visitor expenditure;
- To strengthen the town's role as a service and retail hub.

This development supports all of these aims through the redevelopment of a vacant property, increasing resident and visitor expenditure whereby customers to the new Centre are very likely to extend their visit to the town each week after classes while visiting cafes and shops, and by provision of an additional service within the centre of town (currently only offered at local village halls in neighbouring villages).

5.6 The Draft Growth Strategy for Staffordshire Moorlands 2018 (see Sources below) also sets out some key objectives which this development further supports:

- To deliver a business growth approach that supports entrepreneurship, innovation and investment across a diverse economic base to provide a wide range of jobs and opportunities for present and future residents.
- To facilitate leisure development, enhance leisure infrastructure… to support the visitor economy and increase visitor spend.
- To be a place where improved health and wellbeing is experienced by all

5.7 The brands Baby Sensory and Toddler Sense are Gold Accredited by the Children's Activities Association and are internationally recognised and award-winning franchises, with strict brand guidelines and standards. The addition of these services to the town centre will set Cheadle aside as a provider of high quality baby and child development classes, with the nearest other similar Centre located some 10 miles away in Festival Park, Hanley. The programmes delivered have been designed by childcare expert Dr. Lin Day and have been carefully crafted to support baby and child development through a multi-sensory play-based approach to learning. The opportunity for parents and carers to meet in a clean, safe, warm and welcoming environment must also not be overlooked; providing a social and supportive aspect to what can often otherwise be a lonely and potentially isolated period for many.

5.8 In conclusion, the proposed changes are unlikely to affect the listed heritage assets in immediate vicinity, therefore the application for change of use represents no negative impact on the conservation area and related assets.

6.0 Sources

Cheadle Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2017
Cheadle Historic Character Assessment June 2012
Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance – Historic England
Draft Growth Strategy for Staffordshire Moorlands, May 2018 – Staffordshire Moorlands District Council & Staffordshire County Council
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Design Guide (SPD) 2018
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990