

Mint Velvet

Site Address: 7 Exchange Street,
Manchester,
M2 7EE

1072-SC-005 - Access to and Use of Buildings Statement

Client contact details:

Name: Mint Velvet

Address: St John's Place, Easton Street,
High Wycombe, HP11 1NL

Telephone: T: 01494 956 716

Description of development/retail unit:

The building is an existing retail unit, which will be refurnished and re-branded to trade as Mint Velvet. The proposal comprises a number of alterations to the facade and the internal retail space, the works are intended to achieve a store environment reflective of Mint Velvet's brand design language. The works to the facade comprise the removal of existing cut-out letter signage from stone fascia and projecting sign logo panels (from previous tenant). The facade itself will be retained as existing. New cut-out letter signage and projecting sign logo panels with Mint Velvet logo will be installed, all new signage will be installed in line with The Royal Exchange's signage guidelines. Existing internal illuminated signage (from previous tenant) will be removed and replaced with illuminated Mint Velvet signage, this will be designed and installed in line with The Royal Exchange's signage guidelines. The works proposed to the interior of the building comprise of removal of the existing shop-fit, reconfiguration and redecoration throughout.

The property has the following accommodation:

Ground Floor – Retail area, fitting rooms and stairs to basement.

Basement - Stock room, office, kitchen, staff room and toilets restricted to staff access only. These areas are accessed down stairs through the back of the main retail space,

Mint Velvet is a quality women's fashion retailer providing a range of quality garments and accessories suitable for an age range of late teens to sixty plus. The unit is located on a main retail street and is surrounded by similar retail premises.

The retail unit is accessed via public transport and private vehicles and customers will use car parking services etc provided in the area. The unit has no dedicated car parking.

Philosophy and approach:

It is Mint Velvet's intention to provide a fully inclusive retail service to all customers and not to discriminate against any sector of society. Where practicable to do so, ease of access in and around the retail unit will be designed so that independent wheelchair access is possible.

We expect that all our customers will receive equal service once inside the building and we train our team members to be attentive and supportive to all our customers. Any noticeable customers with disabilities will be approached and discreetly asked if they would like assistance.

We will ensure there is a level surface inside the retail unit where practicable to do so. Where new engineered floorboards or tiles have been laid we have specified a product with a slip resistance of R9. Where door mats have been introduced, we have recessed these into the floor to make level with the surrounding flooring. Carpets and rugs have been bonded to the floor using suitable adhesive to minimise trip hazards.

Lighting will be provided to ensure the health & safety of all persons.

We have provided an accessible fitting room by designing a specific space to cater for wheelchair or mobility impaired customers. This includes the provision of handrails/grab rails and a chair which meets DDA guidelines - a fixed dropdown seat will not be provided as we wish to retain maximum use of the fitting room space for all customers. All fitting rooms will have full height mirrors which are visible whether standing or sitting.

Staff are on hand for all users of our fitting rooms and we will provide a personal service to customers to fetch alternative merchandise etc.

Any customers with visual impairment will be assisted as far as they require by team members.

At the till point, we will ensure that all customers are able to access any sales terminals, pin machines etc. Flexible writing tablets will be available for any customers with mobility or physical disabilities.

Key access issues of the design

External areas:	N/A
Shop front and entrance:	Small external ramp to to access entrance lobby. Platform lift within entrance lobby area to provide access to main retail space for wheelchair or mobility impaired customers.
Horizontal circulation:	The store is entered via a lobby which is at a lower level. Stairs/a platform lift give access to the retail Area of the store which is on the same level as the fitting rooms.
Vertical circulation:	Stair access to the basement stock room and staff areas.
Surfaces/internal flooring:	Rugs placed under tables will be fixed to floor.
Lighting:	To be replaced with new lighting layout.
Fitting rooms:	Dedicated DDA fitting room, x4 standard sized fitting room, and personal shopping suit with x1 fitting room to the rear area.
Colour contrasting:	Door frames painted contrasting colour to walls. Floor level change with contrasting nosing.
Use of cash/wrap points:	No low level counter, payments will be made via handheld device.
Emergency egress:	Access through the main entrance door.
Shelving/racking/merchandise display units:	Some high level merchandising

Sources of information and advice

- British Standard 8300-2:2018

- Disability Rights Commission (Equality Commission): Goods and Services: Bringing the DDA to Life for Small Shops: Clothes Shop Case Study (SP5R)
- Equality & Human Rights Commission: Code of Practice on the Equality Act 2010
- Building Control
- Independent Environmental Health Consultants - Perry Scott Nash Associates Ltd
- Equality Act 2010
- Building Regulations Part M: 2015

Proposed solutions to overcoming identified constraints/physical features

Adequately trained staff to assist any persons with disability. All merchandise is safely accessible and not set at eye/face level for a person in a wheelchair.

All matting and carpet is to be fitted in such a way as to avoid trip hazard, i.e. recessed/ suitable trims/ bonded to the floor. Flexible writing tablets will be available for customers with mobility or physical disabilities.

How will this Access Statement and the information supporting it be made available to those who will need it e.g. staff, landlords, managing agents.

A copy of this Access Statement will be provided to the store, as part of their opening pack and all staff will receive training on the specific design features of the premises. Copies of the statement will also be forwarded to premises owners/managers and where appropriate, any local disability groups.

Additional material information (if any)

Access Statement completed by: Alicia Ovington

Position: Designer, StudioJill

Date completed: 22/02/2022