



SHOP FRONTS & ADVERTISEMENTS

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UP TO 2021

Adopted March 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

The role and purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 1.1 The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is to provide guidance on the design of shop fronts and advertisements in Caerphilly County Borough. It is aimed at assisting all owners, designers and shop fitters in preparing proposals for creating, retaining or altering a shop front or a display sign on commercial premises.

Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (Adopted November 2010)

- 1.2 This SPG has been prepared within the context of Policy SP6 Place Making. Policy SP6 and its supporting text identifies that development proposals should contribute to sustainable places by having full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment and therefore promote good design.

Why is shop front design important?

- 1.3 Shops and their frontages have an important role in making town and local centres active, pleasant to walk in, vibrant and safe. The function of shops is not limited to the activity of selling goods. Window-shopping also contributes to the vibrancy and activity of streets and places, and the way shop fronts are designed and displayed contributes to the character of the environment. Passive surveillance, overlooking and accessibility, contribute to make the environment safer for all. For these reasons, the quality and appearance of shopping environments contribute more than anything else to shape visitors' perceptions of individual towns and local centres within the Borough, and help influence the perceptions of residents and investors.

How to use this SPG

- 1.4 This SPG does not set out rigid or prescriptive standards that must be adhered to. Rather, it encourages innovation and creativity. All guidelines should be balanced with the constraints and opportunities presented by each scheme.
- 1.5 In this guidance, the term 'shop front' refers to the full range of commercial premises found in town and district centres including banks, public houses and restaurants, as well as food and non-food retail.

2. SHOP FRONTS



OBJECTIVE 1

To retain unique and historic shop fronts that contribute positively to the character of the area.

- 2.1** Removing and replacing shop fronts over time is not a modern phenomenon. Many historic buildings have a shop front of a later date and of different architectural style. The key to retaining a vibrant shopping area is to ensure that the standard of shop fronts does not deteriorate over time and that each design is appropriate to its particular circumstances.
- 2.2** The decision over whether to repair or to replace the existing shop front will depend upon the age, quality and condition of the existing building and shop front. If the existing shop front is unattractive or inappropriate to the building or the locality, or is beyond repair, then a new or replacement shop front may be the appropriate solution. This could include:
- Replacing the shop front on a 'like for like' basis - 'like for like' means using the same materials, glazing bar profiles etc. and reusing any historic glass - within listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas.
 - Inserting a new traditional-style shop front; and
 - Inserting a new modern-style shop front. With careful design, a contemporary modern style shop front can sit harmoniously on a historic building. In many cases good quality contemporary design will add positively to the character and quality of older buildings and streets.



Traditional or Modern - In some instances it will be desirable to maintain the traditional design of shop fronts or re-instate their traditional features when lost. Modern shop fronts should not try to replicate traditional features just because these are considered to be attractive. They should respond to the local area and the overall design of the development through the application of other good design principles, such as proportions, location, extent and design of advertising and materials.



Removing a shop front - In a constantly changing economic climate, shops and pubs are often converted to ground floor offices or residential property, entailing the removal of former shop fronts and the construction of new ground floor frontages.

Privacy - When a shopfront is converted into a dwelling one of the most important considerations is the need to create an acceptable level of privacy. The replacement of a large shop window by a smaller window can damage the appearance of the property. By replacing the shop window with a modified version of the upper floor windows and employing similar proportions and architectural details, the architectural language of the building can be successfully matched to create a more authentic appearance.



GUIDELINES

- Retain shop fronts and other features that are of architectural or historic interest. Where it is not possible to retain the whole shop front, aim to retain features which contribute positively to the character of the building and surrounding area.
- Where it is not possible to retain the whole shop front aim to replicate any surviving features which give the building visual interest and individual distinctiveness.
- When removing a shop front ensure that the infill design relates to the style and proportions of the upper floors. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to retain the fascia and pilasters.
- Original and distinctive modern design will be encouraged where the basic principles of scale and proportion are followed and the shop front adds quality to the street.
- When designing new shop fronts, the opportunity should be taken to improve the appearance of the building by removing ill-considered additions, such as surface cabling, redundant services, alarms and obsolete fittings.

OBJECTIVE 2

To create vibrant locally distinctive centres throughout the Borough.

- 2.3** Shops and shop fronts are key elements in town and district centres and their design can contribute significantly to visual interest, add vitality to the street scene and promote enhanced retail activity. To help create a distinctive vibrant shopping area, shop fronts should use key characteristics from the local area and host building to inform the final design.
- 2.4** A local assessment will help to identify the characteristics of the area and individual details of the host building. The analysis should be based on the overall character and quality of the street and the wider area, the specific location of the site in terms of the retail hierarchy set out in the Council's local development plan and the appearance, style and structure of the host building.



Two buildings, same shop - There are a number of shops within the Borough that occupy the ground floor of two or more buildings. It is desirable, in design terms, that the fascia relates to each individual building in which it is set, rather than running continuously across the full extent of two or more shop fronts. The identity of multiple units can be retained through a unified approach to colour, lettering and window display.

Local inspiration - Good design extends into public areas beyond the building. The context in which the building is set includes the location of the site, the character of the area, the building that hosts the shop front, the neighbouring premises and the wider street scene.



GUIDELINES

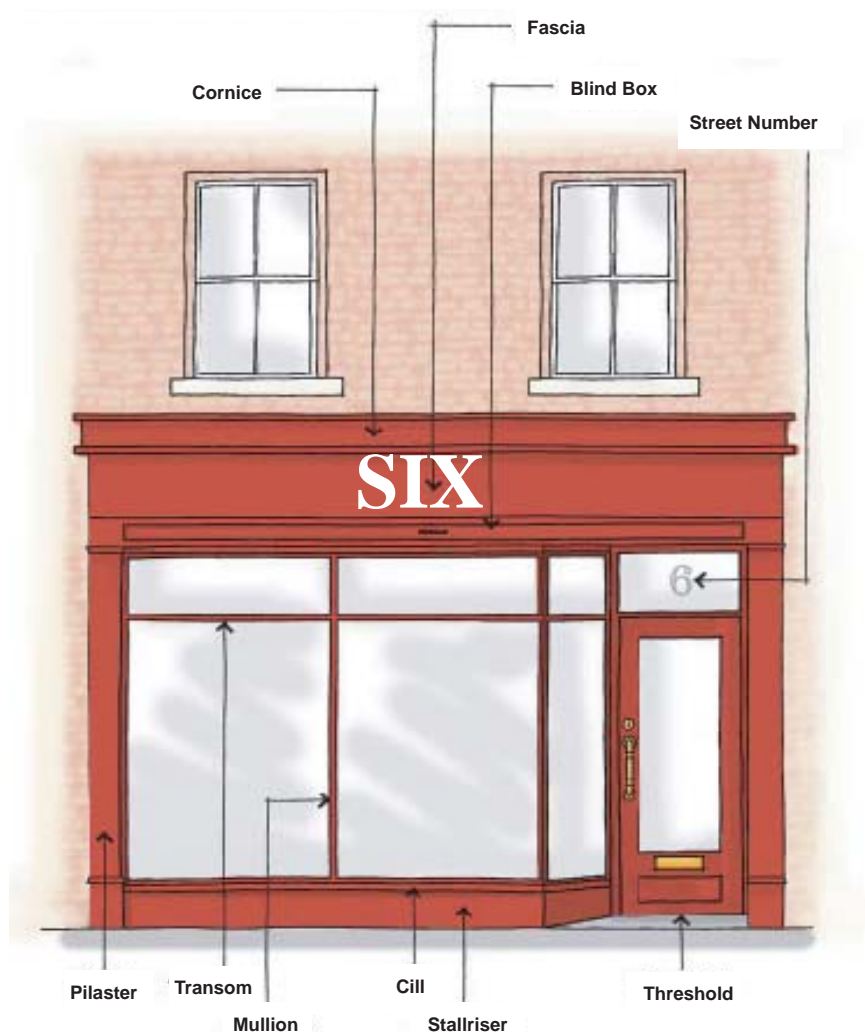
- Use local characteristics to inform the final design by conducting a local assessment of the surrounding area. Buildings and shop fronts that are considered poor in terms of design are not used as a point of reference to inform the final design or as a benchmark for new development.
- Ensure that the design of the shop front takes into account the rhythm, lines and key characteristics of the street. This is especially important if the shop is part of a terrace.
- Ensure that the design and decoration of the shop front complements the proportions, scale and characteristics of the host building.
- Where a shop occupies the ground floor of more than one building, the design and proportions of each shop front should relate to each individual building. Single shop fronts that span two or more buildings disregarding architectural detail and decoration will not be acceptable.
- Where a host building is situated on a corner plot, it should aim to have a lively display on all sides that front onto a street. Proposals which include blank elevations fronting a street will be resisted in any planning applications as they create dead frontages.
- Ensure that new or replacement shop fronts preserve or enhance the Borough's heritage assets.

OBJECTIVE 3

To create new / replacement shop fronts that are well-built, functional and designed to a high quality.

- 2.5** Within the borough, there is a mix of different shop front styles. The large-scale regeneration of some areas means that there has been an increase in the number of buildings with modern architecture and this has reduced the need for traditional shop fronts in some areas. Nevertheless, many of the good principles demonstrated in traditional shop fronts can be broadly applied to the design of new shop fronts such as scale, rhythm etc.

Figure 1: Traditional shop front components



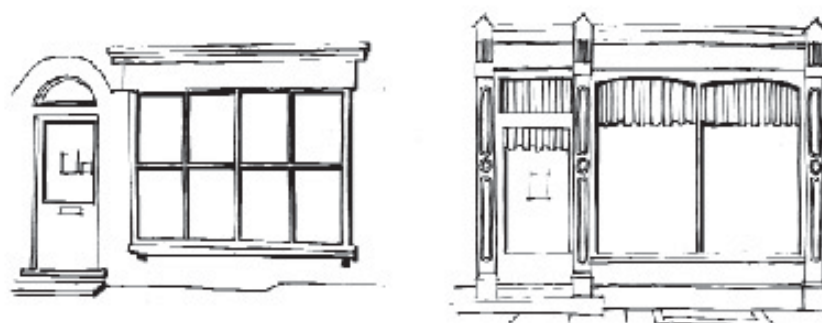
- 2.6** A traditional shop front is made up of a number of elements. Each of these elements has a practical purpose, and contributes to the overall appearance of the shop front and the character of the building. These elements are:

- **Fascia:** The fascia is the space that is often used to advertise the business above the shop window. The fascia generally has a deep moulded section along the top edge, known as a cornice, which provides a visual break between the shop front and the building above.

- **Pilasters:** Pilasters to both sides of a shop front give it a vertical framing that provides visual support to the building above. In a modern style shop front the inclusion of a pilaster might not be desirable or appropriate. However, the principle of providing a clear division between shop fronts and visual support for the upper part of the building still applies.
- **Stallriser:** The stallriser forms the base of the shop front. Its height can vary depending on how much window display area is needed. Where a strong 'structural' frame is created by the architecture of the building a stallriser may not be necessary.

2.7 As with traditional design, a modern shop front should generally comprise of a main frame, a fascia supported by pilasters or columns, a stallriser (functioning as an anchor with the ground), a window and door and a sign to advertise the building. Each of these traditional features should be modernised and adapted to function appropriately.

Shop front design evolution - The style of decoration used on traditional style shop fronts has varied over the years, and at different periods classical, gothic, art nouveau and other styles have been used.



GUIDELINES

Shop front frame/surround

- Avoid the rigid interpretation of a traditional shop front on modern buildings as the result may stifle imaginative design and can be inappropriate.
- Ensure that the height of the stallriser relates to the fascia. In most circumstances it may be appropriate to line up the fascia and stallriser with adjoining buildings, particularly in new developments. This can help to unify a street.
- Ensure that the position of the fascia does not obscure any existing architectural features or decoration of the upper floors.
- Where possible, pilasters should not be clad or treated separately on each side of the party line, or cluttered with fixtures such as signs, alarm boxes or blind fittings.

OBJECTIVE 3 (CONTINUED)

To create new / replacement shop fronts that are well-built, functional and designed to a high quality.

Doors to upper floors - Where appropriate the use of upper floors is encouraged as it can help to improve the vitality and viability of the centre and it also helps to improve security after shopping hours. Independent access to upper floor dwellings is essential. The provision of independent access should be integrated into the overall shop front design.



Accessibility - The shop front and the interior spaces and facilities should be accessible to all potential users. Appropriate provision should be made for the disabled, elderly and those people with prams or push-chairs,

- Handle of appropriate height & design for use by people with disabilities
- Letterbox at convenient height for deliveries
- Kicking plate and bottom rail of door at height of stallriser

Glazing bars - Dividing up the shop windows with glazing bars will add strength to the shop front and minimise the size of each pane of glass. It improves the appearance of the shop and reduces the cost of replacing any broken glass.



GUIDELINES

Doors and Accessibility

- Design doors to be of a style and material that relate to the shop front and building as a whole. If possible retain original features, such as recessed doorways, as these often help to preserve the character of an area.
- Ensure that doors are clearly identified on the shop front. Avoid using frameless plain glass doors as they can be a hazard for visually impaired people.
- Design shop fronts to maximise accessibility as far as is practicable for people with limited mobility by ensuring that details conform to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and relevant provisions of the Building Regulations (Part M).
- For shop fronts on listed buildings and/or in conservation areas, ensure that a balance is achieved between preserving the character of the building and providing easy access.

Glazing

- Ensure that proportions of glazing are appropriately balanced with the shop front frame and upper-floor windows.
- Avoid using large areas of unrelieved glazing as this creates the visual effect of a void at the base of the building. Subdivided windows also increase security and lower the cost of any replacement.
- Aim to create an active shop front by ensuring that display windows do not have an unattractive internal view (e.g. of shelving) or are covered (e.g. by acetate).
- If the shop use does not lend itself to a window display or if a shop is vacant consider showcasing its potential by creating a 'virtual shop front' or by allowing display windows to be used for exhibits by artists, schools or community groups. This will help maintain the vitality and attractiveness of a shopping area and attract potential tenants.

OBJECTIVE 4

To design secure shop fronts that make a positive contribution to the vitality of our centres.

2.8 Shop front security can be achieved in a number of ways, and not all involve alterations to the shop front. The emphasis given to security will depend on the location of the shop and the nature of the goods displayed.

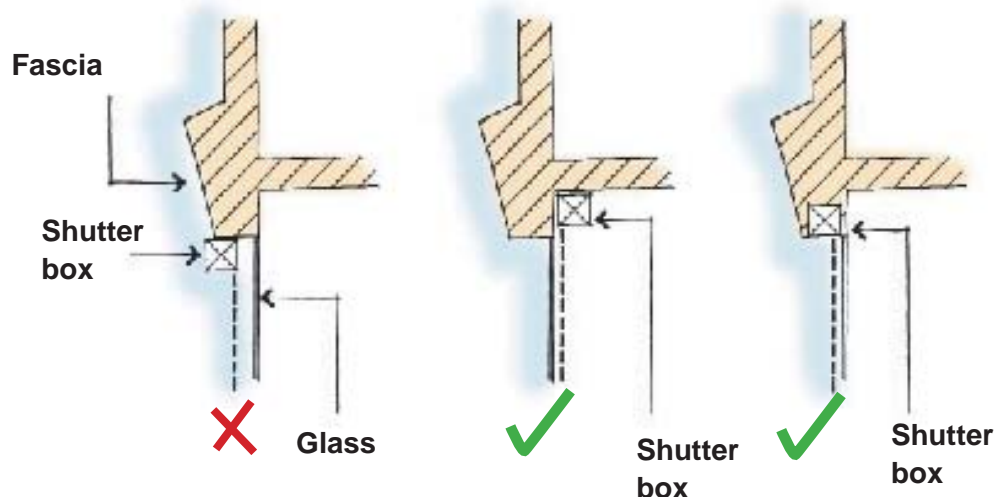
2.9 Overt security measures, such as steel roller shutters, can draw unwanted attention to a shop. At night these shut off light from within the shops and can create an intimidating atmosphere. They also prevent the observation of break-ins and can attract graffiti. External shutters often retract into external boxes below the fascia and vertical runners attached to the pilasters. These harm the appearance of a shopping streetscape. However, there are alternative options that avoid these problems:

- security glass;
- reinforced stallrisers, mullions and transoms;
- internal open weave grilles or shutters;
- removable external shutters; and
- external open weave roller shutters.

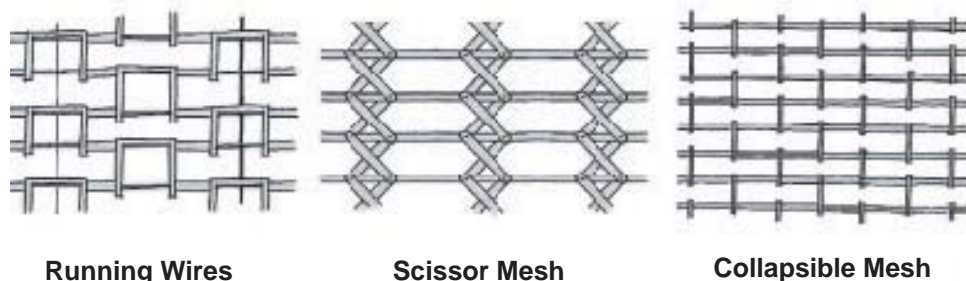


Traditional shop front security - Traditional shop fronts generally provide sufficient physical barriers if strengthened with toughened glass and reinforced glazing bars and stallrisers. In some locations it may also be appropriate to fit removable or demountable external grilles. Where they are acceptable, they should be designed to fit within the pilasters and avoid obscuring any architectural details.

Shutter boxes - Shutter box housings should always be integrated within the shop front (i.e. behind the fascia) or be recessed and flush with the shop front. In exceptional circumstances, removable external shutters can be acceptable if they are appropriately designed to respect the architectural character of the shop front.



Open weave grilles and shutters - Running wires, scissor mesh profile and collapsible mesh profile allow window shopping and passive surveillance during closed hours. They also have the advantage of being less visually intrusive on the shop front and surrounding area.



GUIDELINES

- Ensure that all security measures are designed as an integral part of the shopfront and/or building and not as an afterthought.
- Where possible consider using laminated and toughened glass instead of plate glass as it is shatterproof and 'anti-smash and grab'.
- Avoid using external roller shutters. If there is no alternative to an external roller shutter ensure that it is open weave and the shutter box is contained behind the fascia. Solid external roller shutters will not be encouraged.
- If required, ensure that burglar alarms are of an appropriate colour and size and are sited discreetly.
- If appropriate, consider using a security gate to protect a recessed doorway. Good quality modern ironwork designs are welcomed.

OBJECTIVE 5

To ensure that the materials & detailing of shop fronts reinforce the local sense of place.

- 2.10** Good design can be smart, elegant or even quirky. The choice of materials and finishes is a major factor in determining the style of a shop front. As shop fronts are seen at close quarters, the detailing and the quality of materials, execution and finishes are particularly important.
- 2.11** Traditional shop fronts such as those found in conservation areas, generally use materials such as painted timber, glass, steel, render, stone and glazed tiles with varying degrees of detailing. Modern designs tend to be more simple in their design and allow the use of an extended palette of materials such as aluminium, perspex and stainless steel.



Detail Highlighting - The small-scale details of a shop front are very important to a building's individual character and its contribution to the street scene. By providing visual emphasis to the individual elements including stall risers, pilasters and window mullions. The shop front design can add relief and texture to the whole building elevation and the wider street scene.

Canopies and blinds - Canopies and blinds give some protection to the shoppers and shop window against rain and sun and can be a lively addition to the streetscene, provided that they are designed as an integral part of the shop front and are confined to it. Care should be taken to ensure that their size, shape, position are compatible with the character of the building.



GUIDELINES

- Ensure that the level of detailing reflects that of the host building. A highly decorated building deserves a highly decorated shop front.
- Consider using a detail around the edge of the fascia to provide a completed appearance. This was traditionally done with a timber moulding detail, but a modern interpretation of this could be achieved.
- Where practical, use sustainable materials including locally sourced timbers and /or recycled materials.
- Use high quality durable materials and fixings that will withstand their environment with minimal maintenance, whilst still providing an attractive appearance.
- In vulnerable locations consider using materials that resist graffiti or allow easy cleaning.
- Ensure that materials used for shop fronts are sympathetic to the location. Glossy plastic or UPVC are likely to be inappropriate.
- Where appropriate, use colour to emphasise important elements of the design. This should reinforce certain aspects and pick up details, such as mouldings, lettering etc.
- Ensure that shop fronts (occupied or vacant) are maintained to an acceptable level. This includes structural and decorative elements of a shop (paint and external finishes) and advertisements sited on and above shop fronts.

3.ADVVERTISEMENTS



OBJECTIVE 6

To encourage high quality signs and advertisements that complement the design of the building and add to an areas local distinctiveness.

- 3.1 Signs and advertisements can have a significant impact on the street scene. Their purpose is to attract attention. External advertising is important for commercial activity and comes in many forms including fascia signs and projecting signs on shops, free standing signs, menu boards at cafés and restaurants and poster hoardings. However, in all cases the design and location is most important. Well-designed signs can greatly enhance the environment whereas poor design can detract from it.
- 3.2 Applications for advertisement consent can only be considered in terms of 'amenity' and 'public safety'. However, it is considered that for certain types of development, there are certain general principles to be adhered to.

Projected or hanging signs - Projected or hanging signs at fascia level are normally used to help identify a shop from a longer distance. They can provide great interest and character to a shop front and the street scene.



Adapting the corporate image - Shop fronts are particularly susceptible to commercial pressures for their replacement in response to fast changing retail trends. There is a tendency for the design of shop fronts to be dictated by house styles, standard solutions or current fashion, with no regard to the architecture of the building or other shop fronts in the street. Shop fronts can be easily adapted so as to respect the age, style and character of the host building.



GUIDELINES

- Ensure that all advertisements are designed as an integral part of the shopfront and / or building.
- Ensure that the size of the sign is in proportion and scale with the whole of the building as well as the shop front itself.
- Choose signs which blend with the shop front and building to create an individual style. Where appropriate consider using hand painted signs as they can give a shop a unique character.
- Ensure that projecting signs do not obstruct or damage the architectural features of the building or shop front.
- Ensure that advertisements are unobtrusive and do not harm the character of the building and streetscene.
- Ensure that signage does not negatively impact upon highway safety (e.g. illuminated signs close to traffic lights).
- Avoid using box signs attached to the front of fascias or projecting box signs, as they can detract from the appearance of shop.

OBJECTIVE 6

To encourage high quality signs and advertisements that complement the design of the building and add to an areas local distinctiveness.



Co-ordinated approach - Poor quality, badly sited or excessive signage can have an adverse impact upon the image of both the wider area and the individual business. Temporary signs can clutter the environment well beyond their lifespan. A co-ordinated consistent approach to signage can help reduce clutter and go some way to establishing a distinct identity and raising the profile of the surrounding area and business.

GUIDELINES

- Signs on industrial type buildings (including premises for employment and storage and distribution uses and large shopping stores)
- Ensure that the proposed signage is of a suitable size, proportion and design and does not impinge upon the character of the host building and surrounding streetscene.
- Design advertisements as an integral feature of the building. Advertisements or signs should not obscure or damage existing architectural features. Surplus or redundant existing signs and brackets should be removed.

Totem' signs

- Ensure that the height and width of the proposed sign does not dominate the scale of adjacent buildings or is too big within the context of the space in front of the building e.g. (in case of a petrol filling station this may mean that a sign should be no higher than an existing forecourt canopy).
- Avoid using more than one sign for each road frontage. If there are a number of uses on one site (e.g. sub-letting of units) or brands and prices or if there is other necessary information to display, it should be on a single totem sign. This will reduce potential signage clutter.

Hoardings

- Avoid placing hoardings within, on or near to listed buildings or those within conservation areas. Statutory designations do not automatically preclude outdoor advertising, but special attention should be paid to the necessity of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the listed building/conservation area and its setting.
- Where hoardings are placed on buildings ensure that they do not detract from the integrity of the building's design and does not detract from or compromise the buildings setting.
- Where hoardings are free standing ensure that the rear of the display structure can not be readily seen to users of the public highway. It may be possible to screen the rear of panels by means of tree planting or through the erection of screen fencing.
- Use landscaping to enhance the appearance of free standing hoardings. Well designed landscaping not only helps to improve the quality of the streetscene but can also frame and draw attention to the advertisement itself. Landscape treatments should be simple, easy to maintain and appropriate to the wider area.
- Ensure that advertisements do not create blind spots or hiding places near residential locations.
- Advertising should not obstruct natural surveillance to or from the street.

OBJECTIVE 7

To add colour and interest to the street scene at night by using subtle well designed illumination.

- 3.3** The lighting of shopping streets and industrial areas requires a co-ordinated approach. The highlighting of buildings and pedestrian spaces is the key to a lively and safe night-time environment. In some cases, sufficient illumination is provided by ambient street lighting and the internal lighting of the shop/unit. There are several different types of illumination, the most common of which are external, internal and halo.



Evening Economy - Good illumination can be beneficial after dark as it can animate the streetscene to make it visually attractive and enhance perceptions of safety. Views into shops after hours are important for natural surveillance. Subtle internal illumination could further assist views into the shop after it has closed.

External illumination - External illumination can be suitable for many situations including traditional shop fronts, and in some circumstances listed buildings. The light sources should be concealed as much as possible and should be carefully directed at the signs, to avoid glare onto the pavement below or into the windows of upper floor residences.



GUIDELINES

- Design illumination to respect and enhance the context and general character of a street as well as being discreetly positioned on the buildings. Within conservation areas or on listed buildings, illuminated signs will only be permitted where their design is well related to the buildings on which they are to be fixed.
- Where possible, proposals for illumination should be integrated into the design of the shop front. In all cases the size and number of fittings should be kept to a minimum to avoid unnecessary visual clutter or obtrusive additions.
- Avoid using completely internally illuminated box signs or fascias. Individually mounted and lit letters or symbols on a background made of suitable materials are usually more appropriate.
- Avoid using neon signs in conservation areas or on or adjacent to a listed building. Attractive and elegant neon signs may be acceptable in other areas if they are of moderate size, suitable colour and complement the frontage.
- Carefully consider the effects of light pollution and avoid light spilling into private residences or distracting road users.
- Where appropriate consider using discrete spotlighting to highlight architectural features of a shop front or building.
- Wherever possible, ensure that the proposed lighting scheme makes use of energy efficient technology.

4. BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The design process

- 4.1** Good design is a process that involves a series of essential steps that lead to a positive outcome. The best results are achieved when all parties including the developer, community and local planning authority work together to solve problems and identify the best solutions.
- 4.2** Figure 2 identifies key stages in the site design process. It should be noted however, that the process of securing good quality in new development does not stop once planning permission has been obtained. The Council will be mindful of the quality of a scheme when discharging conditions and considering minor amendments.

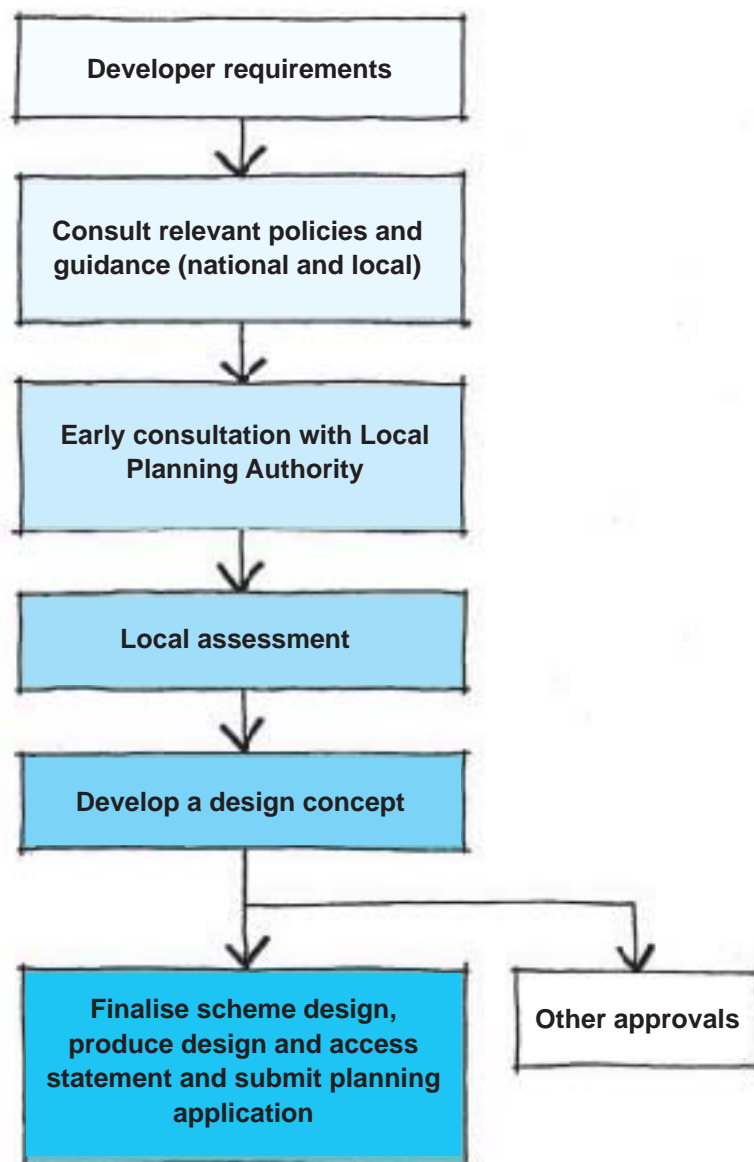


FIGURE 2: THE DESIGN PROCESS

Local Assessments

- 4.3** Good design does not stop at the front door, but extends into public areas beyond the building. The context in which the building is set includes the location of the site, the character of the area, the building that hosts the shop front, the neighbouring premises and the wider street scene. A local assessment is generally based on the appearance, style and fabric of the building that accommodates the shop front, and the overall character and quality of the street and the wider area.
- 4.4** The Council is committed to raising the design quality of all shop fronts in any location and will use every opportunity to do this. In particular, the Council will encourage all applicants to adopt good design that can set an example for others and can trigger improvements in the appearance of other shop fronts in the locality. Existing shop fronts of poor or unsatisfactory design are not to be used as a precedent or a reference in assessing the context and the character of an area.

The Planning Application Process

- 4.5** Planning applications are required for all new shop fronts, or alterations to existing shop fronts, that materially affect the external appearance of a building. Although some very minor changes to shop fronts do not require planning permission. Alterations requiring permission include but are not limited to:
- modifying the design of the whole or part of the shop front;
 - installing steps or a ramp; and
 - installing an external shutter box.
- 4.6** If you are unsure as to whether or not your proposal will require planning permission please contact the Council's Development Management Team.
- 4.7** At the same time as establishing if planning permission is required you may also wish to establish whether a proposal is likely to be acceptable in principle. A pre-application discussion can help establish at an early stage, the likelihood of a particular proposal being successful. In many cases, even though a particular proposal may be unacceptable initially, the Council may suggest amendments to make it more acceptable.

Other Consents and Approvals

- 4.8** Even if you do not need to apply for planning permission for the works that you are intending to undertake to a shop front, you may still need to apply for other consents or approvals.

Advertisement consent

- 4.9** Advertisement consent is usually required for illuminated signs, projecting signs and large signs above the ground floor shop area.

Listed Building Consent

- 4.10** Listed Building Consent (LBC) will be required for new shop fronts or listed buildings. It may also be required for new projecting signs or even small alterations to existing shop fronts.
- 4.11** Works of alteration to a listed building must have regard to the requirement to preserve its fabric, character and any features of importance. Undertaking such an assessment requires specialist knowledge and any planning application for the insertion of a new shopfront, alteration of an existing one or the erection of new signs will be expected to be supplemented by detailed information on the impact of these works on the fabric and character of the building. The techniques required to convey this information will vary and may include an agreement to open up sample areas of fabric to confirm the existence (or otherwise) of historic timber framing or brickwork. No such works of investigation should be undertaken without the express, written consent of the Council.

Building Regulations approval

- 4.12** Building Regulations approval will be needed for any work requiring structural alteration or changes to a shop that would affect a means of escape or would make access more difficult for people with disabilities. There are several parts of the regulations which will need to be taken into consideration and the associated provisions must be incorporated in your design. These include:

Part A Structure.

Part B Fire Safety.

Part L2B Conservation of fuel and power

Part M Access and the Equalities Act 2010

Part N Glazing

Enforcement

- 4.14** It is essential that before any alterations are undertaken to a shop front and / or advertisement, that all the necessary approvals have been obtained prior to the commencement of works.
- 4.15** Enforcement action may be taken against unauthorised work which is considered unacceptable, and this can lead to the need for further work to alter or reinstate or may result in prosecution.

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

Advertisement: Any letter, model, sign, placard, board, awnings, blind or device, whether illuminated or not, that is used for the purposes of announcement, advertising or direction for any business or product at a particular site.

Architectural frame: Frame around the shop front comprising pilasters with architectural details such as capital and plinth, corbel or console bracket and fascia.

Banner: A permanent or more often a temporary advertisement display on a panel of flexible fabric and usually displayed either above first floor level or on boundary structures.

Blind: A fabric shade attached to a rigid bar at one end and which is retractable into the fascia above a window and usually has a shop name on it.

Clutter: The provision of a number of signs to the detriment of the appearance of a site. This may take the form of numerous signs, often of different sizes, at various positions on a building or site.

Cornice: Moulding at the top of the fascia that defines the top of the shop front and gives protection against the weather.

Corporate image: Marketing image for a retailer.

Deemed Consent: A term used for a type of advertisement which can be displayed under Schedule 3 of the Regulations without needing formal permission from the Planning Authority and which is governed by specific conditions and limitations set down in the regulations.

Discontinuance: The procedure enabling a Local Authority to terminate the consent to display an advertisement.

Fascia: The area above the shop window on a building, which traditionally takes the form of a wooden board, used to display an advertisement.

Forecourt: A private open area with defined boundaries between a building and a highway.

Halo-illumination: A means of externally illuminating individual letters of a fascia or projecting sign which gives a low light wash to the rear of each letter that is set slightly away from the fascia board by a spacer.

Hanging Sign: An advertisement sign suspended beneath a supporting bracket and able to swing.

Hoarding: The term hoarding relates to a variety of sizes of both hoardings and poster panels. There are various sizes of hoardings ranging from the smallest “4-sheet” size which measures approximately 1 m x 1.5 m to the “96-sheet” hoarding which is approximately 12m x 3m. The most popular size within an urban environment is the 48-sheet hoarding (about 6m x 3m).

Pilasters: Upright elements that separate each shop from its neighbours and define the width of the shop front.

Projecting Sign: A sign that projects at right angles to the wall of a building but which is fixed by a rigid support and is often in the form of a box.

‘Public Safety’: The consideration of any sign or advertisement to ensure it has no distracting or confusing effect and that it creates no hazard to traffic or transport on road, sea, waterway or air.

Mullions or vertical glazing bars: Slim vertical bars that divide a window.

Stall riser: The panel below the shop window. Its purpose was originally part of the display table at a time when most shop fronts were open. It concentrates the display of goods at waist height rather than floor level. It also provides an anchor with the ground.

Totem or Gantry sign: A vertical sign often with a number of separate elements and often associated with garage forecourts to advertise petrol prices.

Traditional shop front: Historic shop front design that relies on a set of principles that are based on proportion, balance and the right relationship of the parts to the whole.

Transoms or horizontal glazing bars: Slim horizontal bars on a window.

Trough Lighting: A means of externally illuminating a fascia or projecting sign whereby a strip light shines down on the sign but the light source is hidden by the front of the trough which is built into the top of the sign.

The Shop Fronts and Advertisements SPG has been produced by the Strategic Planning Team. If you have any queries regarding this document or the Local Development Plan you can contact Strategic Planning Team at the address below:

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