SHOPFRONTS & COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

Supplementary Planning Document
March 2019
SHOPFRONTS AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

INTRODUCTION

The Derbyshire Dales District contains the medieval market towns of Ashbourne and Wirksworth together with the later spa towns of Matlock and Matlock Bath. The qualities of the buildings that form the street-scapes of these towns are such that there is a need to be particularly sensitive when alterations are proposed. To the pedestrian, the most visible element of these towns is generally the ground floor elevation where the majority of properties have a commercial use and shop frontage. Shopfronts are, by their nature, vulnerable to alterations over time as a consequence of changing business needs and occupancies. However, some historic shopfronts have survived to the present day, more or less intact with little concession or alteration to suit modern retailing.

There can be no doubt that an attractive and well-designed shopping area will attract shoppers and tourists, creating an atmosphere that is beneficial for business. The intention of this supplementary planning document is to guide and advise commercial property owners, occupiers and developers on how to improve the visual quality of the shopping area of which they are part; maintain its special historic character and contribute to the long-term benefit that this would bring to the local shopping centres and district as a whole.

This supplementary planning document outlines the main principles, guidelines, advice and policies that the Local Planning Authority will use when assessing applications primarily those relating to both historic and new shopfronts and their associated advertisement, colour/finish and illumination. This guidance is, however, also equally applicable to the following commercial properties:

- banks and building societies,
- professional businesses

and also,

- public houses (see pages 18-19)
PLANNING POLICY

The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan contains a number of policies relating to commercial properties and the protection of listed buildings. These policies form the basis of the important considerations the Council will take into account for proposals to alter, add, change of use or convert commercial properties and listed buildings. See Appendix A

SUSTAINABILITY

The objectives of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) are to provide clear guidance to owners/occupiers/developers on works relating to commercial properties and in particular to shopfronts and external advertisement.

Through a sustainability appraisal the Council has identified a number of issues that are important when considering works to commercial properties and shopfronts. Appendix B provides a checklist to help identify relevant sustainability issues that owners/occupiers/developers should address as part of or prior to) the submission of any planning application and/or Listed Building application in order to assess the relative sustainability of their proposal(s).

STATUS OF SHOPFRONTS AND LEGISLATION

Virtually all changes to a shopfront will require Planning Permission and may require other consents, such as Listed Building Consent; Advertisement Consent and Building Regulation Approval. To summarise:

Planning Permission:

Under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 Planning Permission is required for a replacement shopfront or for any alteration, which would materially affect the appearance, of the building.

Commercial properties (within Conservation Areas) have restricted Permitted Development Rights. This would include the alteration of an existing shopfront or the installation of a new shopfront and, consequently, Planning Permission is likely to be required for such works. Building owners (or occupiers/tenants) are recommended to discuss their proposals to commercial properties with the Local Planning Authority at an early stage (via the Council’s Pre-Application Advice Service).

The building on which a shopfront is located may be covered by an ‘Article 4 Direction’ (imposed by the Secretary of State) which may further restrict Permitted Development Rights.

Currently, there is an ‘Article 4 Direction’ in place on a large number of properties in Wirksworth, Matlock Bath and Matlock Bridge. The Local Planning Authority keeps ‘Article 4 Directions’ under review.

Listed Building Consent:

The building on which a shopfront is located may be a listed building. By virtue of the listing the shopfront is protected from inappropriate or unauthorised change or alteration. Listed Building Consent, controlled under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, would be required from the Local Planning Authority to carry out alterations (even potentially minor works) to a listed shopfront. In some cases listed buildings that have shopfronts may also retain historic internal shop features such as counters, display cabinets, shelving etc. Such elements would also be protected by the listing which may further restrict Permitted Development Rights.

Advertisement Consent:

Advertisements are controlled under the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. Where an advert is proposed, the application for Advertisement Consent must indicate:

- the size of the proposed sign, its height, width and depth from the building line;
- the lettering and the way that the letters are to be formed (i.e. are they to be painted on, fixed on, set in or protrude from the fascia);
- the construction materials to be used;
- whether a matt or gloss finish is to be used;
- the colour scheme proposed;
- whether the sign is to be illuminated;
- the method of lighting and its location;
- the location of sign on the shopfront;
- details of the fittings / fixings.

Building owners/occupiers/tenants etc. are strongly advised to discuss advertisement proposals with the Local Planning Authority at an early stage (via the Council’s Pre-Application Advice Service).

The District Council currently has only one ‘Area of Special Control of Advertisements’ in Matlock
Bath. This special control imposes further restrictions within this particular area and owners/occupiers/tenants should consult the Local Planning Authority at an early stage to discuss their requirements/proposals (via the Council’s Pre-Application Advice Service).

See section on ‘Advertisements’ (page 15) for further information.

**Building Regulation Approval:**

Certain building works and changes of use are controlled under the Building Regulations. Approval is required where the proposals are for a significantly different shopfront design; involve structural alterations or affect the means of escape from any part of the building. It will be expected that proposed works, requiring Building Regulation Approval, will be considered and designed, from the out-set, with those Regulations clearly in mind. Early consultation with Derbyshire Building Control is recommended, and certainly prior to any submission of a Planning or Listed Building application.

‘On-line’ application forms for Planning Permission, Advertisement Consent & Listed Building Consent are available on the Local Planning Authority’s website. Fees are applicable to all except Listed Building Consent. (see www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk).

No alterations to a shopfront should be carried out in advance of obtaining the necessary consents or approvals. In the case of a listed building this may be considered as a criminal offence and could result in prosecution.

If unauthorised work is carried out, either in advance of obtaining the necessary consents/approvals or the works are not in accordance with the relevant consents/approvals (and any attached conditions) then the Local Planning Authority will not hesitate to use its power of enforcement to safeguard the environment from inappropriate development or alteration.

**THE EVOLUTION OF SHOPFRONTS**

Shopfronts are a familiar feature of all towns, cities and to lesser extent villages. Their design and appearance is diverse in terms of their form, size and materials, however, there are a number of general elements that have evolved over the centuries. These familiar elements that generally include a raised window or windows, with a decorative surround, a fascia with the shop name and a central or off-set doorway first appeared in the second half of the 18th century. Few of these early shopfronts survive. The golden age of the shopfront was throughout the 19th century and in particular it’s second half.

Many new commercial buildings were specifically designed to have an integral shopfront, whilst others may have been built as residential properties and only later were formed into commercial or business premises requiring the insertion of a shopfront or shop window. In both cases, historic examples show that the design of the shopfront respected the building onto which it was placed or inserted and an often very successful attempt to harmonise them with the entire façade of the building was achieved. Scale and proportion were guiding factors in shopfront design and there are many good examples of historic shopfronts in the District that have survived.

From these examples a clear evolution of shopfront design can be seen. The common elements that evolved include the stall-riser,
pilasters, console brackets, a central or off-set doorway and a fascia with cornice over. In most cases decorative embellishments were applied to these common elements often resulting in very unique and original shopfronts – in some instances clearly, and cleverly, conveying what type of wares the shop was selling. Close examination of these historic shopfronts shows the attention to detail, craftsmanship and the skill and ingenuity of the shopfront designers and builders. As glass became available in larger sheets, shopfronts lost the multi-paned windows in favour of larger expanses of glass. In general, however, the size of glass sheets during the later 19th century was still limited, and vertical glazing bars, often in the form of slender colonettes, divided the shopfront.

Large, uninterrupted expanses of plate glass are a particularly modern development.

As well as the exterior of shopfronts it is important to record the survival of a number of historic shop interiors. As much design and attention to detail was often put into these. Where they survive, or partly survive, it is clear that the fittings were designed and considered in parallel with the exterior shopfront to create a holistic ensemble.

**PRINCIPLES**

A number of fundamental principles guide the design approach for both existing and new shopfronts. The understanding and application of these principles are considered to be elementary issues regarding existing, and new, shopfronts. These principles are set out below.

**Quality**

Traditional shopfronts that have survived more or less intact often display a level of high quality design that is both attractive to the eye and significantly enhances the character and appearance of a shopping area. Historic shopfronts are examples of high quality and excellent craftsmanship. In designing a new shopfront the following principles should be embraced.

- A commitment to high quality and standards of craftsmanship;
- Each new shopfront should be designed as a whole, and not as an assemblage of components or separate elements with simply applied mouldings;
- The design of the shopfront should be carried through with flair and skill;
- Materials should be of the highest quality;
- The results should be both elegant and appropriate.

**Relationship to the Building**

Historic shopfronts display a fundamental relationship with the buildings they occupy. In almost all cases they were designed to fit the building in terms of their size and proportion. Shopfronts were generally designed as a whole, where the building above it was considered as an important and integral element at the design stage. The following principles should be employed in this respect.

- The size and shape of the shopfront should be determined in relation to the size and form of the building it is to occupy.
- Architectural elements of the building, such as window positions and spacing, decorative details and overall height and scale should be taken into account in new shopfront design.

**Scale and Proportion**

The study of historic shopfronts reveals a ‘language’ of scale and proportion that is visually apparent in the overall size and shape of the shopfront. This understanding can also be seen in the individual elements and components that form the shopfront. If a new shopfront is to look right, then scale and proportion must form a guiding and fundamental issue at the design stage. Such issues are as follows.

- Through correct scale and proportion the shopfront should respect and enhance the building it occupies;
- The design should reflect a clear understanding of the principles of scale and proportion;
• No single feature of the shopfront should be too dominant;
• All the parts of the shopfront should be in harmony with each other.

Context

Where a number of historic shopfronts have survived within a streetscape they may be of different designs and different sizes but a visual unity is provided by use of a number of common, basic, elements - their craftsmanship and attention to detail and their general appearance and colouring. New shopfronts should always be designed to fit in with their wider surroundings or context. The character of a shopping street can change from area to area, or even from street to street, and research and understanding of this character and context will form an important stage of the design process. Particular attention should be given to the following.

• An assessment and understanding of the character and context of the area where the new shopfront is to be located. If the property is located within a Conservation Area Character Appraisal may be available.
• An assessment of the buildings and their shopfronts to either side of the proposed new shopfront (in terms of form, scale & proportion).
• An assessment of the prevailing, historic, form, details and colours of existing shopfronts in the immediate area.
• The drawn design of the new shopfront clearly shown in context with the shopfronts to either side.
• The appropriateness of the new shopfront design within its context.

Existing Shopfronts

Examples remain of historic shopfronts that have survived more or less intact. Examples also survive of historic shopfronts that have been altered over time but retain some elements and details of the original design (sometimes hidden or concealed behind modern fascia boards). The quality, craftsmanship and detailing of a historic shopfront, and its associated elements, is generally very high. Any proposed alterations to ‘intact’ shopfronts will be assessed in detail in order that their special character and appearance is not eroded or compromised by inappropriate works. Altered historic shopfronts may retain enough original material to enable the shopfront to be, convincingly, ‘restored’. Where such fabric exists this should always be retained. Where only a small element or part of the original shopfront has survived its reconstruction may need to be based on comparative research and examples and any historic photographs. Purely conjectural reconstruction and detailing will not be considered appropriate. To summarise, it will be expected that evidence of a close inspection and identification of any original elements or components of a shopfront will have been made. Permission will not normally be granted for the removal of surviving original shopfront elements or components. Such elements or components should always be integrated into the repair and ‘restoration’ of the shopfront.

New Shopfronts

There are two types of new shopfront – those that are to replace an existing, inappropriate, modern shopfront to an existing building and those that are to be installed to new buildings. With regard to the former, the principles as outlined above will need to be taken fully into account and consideration – the result of which should be a new shopfront that is appropriate to its building and context, and appropriate in its design, detailing, proportion and general appearance. With regard to the latter, it will be expected that the new shopfront will have been designed as a fundamental, and integral, element/part of the new building – the result of which should be a shopfront entirely in harmony with the new building of which it is part.

Whether a new shopfront is a replication of an historic shopfront or a contemporary design, the above principles remain fundamental. Good design, being about attention to detail, proportion, harmony & craftsmanship, the recognition & use of traditional principles and features and the quality of materials and workmanship will always result in a new shopfront that fulfils the desire to enhance the environment. Such an approach will also promote an environment for good business and economic regeneration and be a significant contribution to the town or village-scape and be of value.
Elements of a Shopfront

- Fascia
- Awning Box
- Cornice
- Panelled Door Soffit
- Fanlight
- Colonette or Mullion
- Door
- Threshold
- Stallriser
- Cill
- Recessed Doorway
- Capping Piece
- Console Bracket
- Pilaster
- Pilaster Base
ELEMENTS, DETAILS, MATERIALS & COLOUR

Traditional shopfronts in the District comprise a number of elements that have developed over time. Although in their detailing shopfronts can be diverse, a range of conventional & traditional elements can usually be seen. It is these elements, individually and collectively, that make up a shopfront and these are described below (from ground level upwards).

Stallriser
The stallriser (or plinth) is an important element of any shopfront and separates the glazing elements of a shopfront from the pavement. The virtue of this element is its practicality. Generally, stall risers:

- Are relatively low in relation to the overall height of the shopfront;
- Are constructed from (appropriate) durable materials – such as stonework, brickwork, (painted) render or tile - resistant to scuffing, damp and water spray;
- Generally have a moulded or chamfered top edge;
- Are, traditionally, never constructed from timber or panelled-timber for reasons of damage, rot and damp.

Doors or Entrances
Shop doorways are either aligned with the plane of the shopfront or they are recessed. Recessed doorways are a particularly prevalent feature of historic shopfronts in the District and form a practical and characteristic element to many shopfronts. Recessed doorways are generally splayed and their depth can vary from shop to shop. There are examples of central recessed doorways and off-set recessed doorways. Generally, doorways or entrances:

- Are recessed to a depth of, at least, one metre;
- Contain a threshold of an appropriate durable material such as stone, marble, tile or mosaic-work (the latter may spell out the owners name or illustrate the nature of the business);
- Contain a panelled soffit and possibly panelled or tiled reveals;
- The location of the recessed doorway is generally dictated by its relationship to the overall width or design of the shopfront, or for purely practical purposes (particularly with narrow shopfronts);
- Properties within flood risk areas may need to consider flood resilience measures. Such proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Doors
Many shop doors were specifically designed to complement the design and details of the shopfront as a whole. A traditional form consists of the single door with integral glazing – either in the form of a single pane with a solid timber panel
(with inset perimeter moulding) at the base, or glazing divided by glazing bars into multi-panes or margin panes. The use of double-doors is exceptionally rare and seldom used for practical reasons. Above the door is generally a horizontal ‘fanlight’ (that can be opened for ventilation), or a more decorative fanlight comprising a pattern of fine glazing bars. Ironmongery is usually in the form of a push/pull handle for ease of use. To summarise, doors are generally:

- Single leaf doors – designed & detailed to complement the shopfront;
- Part glazed and part timber panelled;
- Have a fixed or openable glazed ‘fanlight’ above the door or a decorative fanlight;
- Have a pull/push handle – appropriate to the design/style of the door;
- Doors, and fanlights always have a painted finish;

In addition -

- The location of a letter-box within the door generally requires careful design consideration;
- Doors are inward opening. (Outward opening doors have no historical precedent and there are restrictions on a door opening out onto a public pavement);
- Automatic opening doors are generally considered to be inappropriate to most existing shops and commercial properties.

Glazing

The purpose of any shopfront is to display the products they sell and allow a view into the interior of the shop in order to tempt customers inside. Glazing of traditional shopfronts of the 19th and early 20th century, were restricted due to the size of glass that was practically available. The result of this was the need to introduce vertical, and horizontal, division of the shopfront by way of glazing bars. The most common form of division appears to be the slender colonette, with turned head and base. Most traditional shopfronts present a vertical emphasis provided by the ratio of width to height of each glazing pane. The introduction of horizontal members or glazing bars is often not as common. Glazing to shopfronts is generally:

- Divided vertically (to a harmonious proportion) with slender glazing bars in the form of fine glazing bars or colonettes with ornately turned heads and bases. The turned heads and bases come in a variety of designs and local examples should be studied where new ones are proposed;
- There is an emphasis on the verticality of glazing panels;
- The timber cill (fixed to the top of the stall riser) is generally robust in form and moulded and projects to shed water;
- The head rail at the top of the glazing is generally moulded or chamfered. The head rail may also display shaped and relief carved spandrels;
- Colonettes are generally half-round, quarter-round or three-quarter-round colonettes;
- Horizontal glazing bars are, generally, uncommon, but where found are invariably/usually moulded;
- The timber work is always given a painted finish;
- Glass is always clear (and to a suitable thickness for its size);
• Etching of glass is relatively uncommon but examples of property number (usually to the fanlight) and the name of the shop can be found on some historic shopfronts;
• Examples of leaded, coloured, glazing (generally geometric in pattern and small in scale) can be found in some shopfronts;
• Frosted, opaque, tinted, patterned and mirrored glass is not considered to be acceptable for shopfront windows;
• The glazing to a new shopfront would be required to meet the relevant safety requirements of the current Building Regulations (unless conservation issues over ride these requirements). Consultation with the Building Control Officer on this issue should be made;
• The glazing should also comply with the relevant requirements of the current Building Regulations in relation to impact, opening and cleaning.

There are modern examples of concertina or folding shop windows. Historically, these have no traditional precedent. The use of such a feature would not, generally, be considered appropriate to an existing or historic shopfront. With new shopfronts (in new buildings) its architecture and form could be designed so as to accommodate a concertina or folding shop frontage.

Roller Shutters

Some historic shopfronts (mainly dating from the late 19th/early 20th centuries) retain their original, painted, timber roller shutter. These were integral elements of the original shop design and are considered to be important survivals.

Modern, metal, roller shutters or grilles are generally applied or fixed to an existing shopfront resulting in an uncomfortable appearance and location. Sometimes they are added to new shopfronts as an afterthought and can also appear uncomfortable in their form and location (see also section on Security)

• Where original, integral, (timber) roller shutters survive these should be retained. If required to be used they should be maintained/overhauled and the timberwork painted to match the general colour scheme of the shopfront;
• The removal of such features would, generally, be resisted;
• The addition of modern roller shutters to an existing shopfront would generally, be resisted;
• The addition of modern roller shutters to a new shopfront would also be resisted, as its integration should be considered when the new shopfront is designed;
• Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission would be required to install a modern, external, roller shutter on a Listed Building. Listed Building Consent would also be required to install internal roller shutters.
Pilasters
The vertical pilaster, generally located to terminate each end of a shopfront, is an important element based on Classical architecture and is in essence a flat, projecting, column. Its essential parts comprise a base or plinth, the column or shaft and a capital or capping. Many varieties of pilasters are to be found – columns or shafts can be plain, panelled or fluted. Pilasters are generally:
- proportionate in width and height to the size and form of the overall shopfront;
- their projection or depth is related and proportionate to the size and form of the overall shopfront;
- their base or plinth generally aligns with the height of the stall riser but alternatives can be found;
- where pilasters are fluted the fluting is generally based on Classical fluting - i.e. full half-round scoops - rather than slender, narrow, grooves;
- where pilasters are panelled the panels are recessed with inset mouldings to their perimeter with mitred corners;
- the capital or capping is generally moulded/carved and proportionate in size and form to suit the overall shopfront;
- the timberwork is always given a painted finish.

Console Brackets
The console bracket is a familiar element of traditional shopfronts. They can take many forms but the most common are in the form of a projecting scroll bracket based on, or copied from, Classical architecture. Other brackets - such as shaped or angled pieces of timber can also be found. Console brackets are usually terminated with a capping piece. Traditional forms to be seen are triangular or semi-circular – with associated moulded and recessed fronts.

Fascia
The fascia board generally runs between the console brackets and its purpose is to carry the name of the shop. Fascia’s can either be flat or angled and from place to place, or town to town, the tradition can vary.
- The height or depth of a fascia is always proportionate to the overall size of the shopfront – this principle will negate a visually ‘top heavy’ appearance;
- Fascia’s are constructed from timber and have a painted finish;
- The proposed use of a flat or angled fascia should be based on an assessment and understanding of the local & prevailing type of fascia’s in the area;
- Where an angled fascia is to be used the angle degree should be informed by other local & prevailing angled fascia’s in the area;
- Hand written sign-writing is the traditional method of advertising the shop name and what it sells.

**Cornice**
Above the fascia, and running between the console brackets (or on occasions running over the top of the console brackets), is the moulded timber cornice. The mouldings to the cornice are based on Classical mouldings.

- In depth and projection this element is proportionate to the overall size and form of the shopfront and its fascia;
- Cornices are generally always protected by a leadwork capping and flashing;
- In some circumstances moulded cornices can be supported by, proportionally sized, shaped/moulded timber brackets or corbels or dentil courses;
- The timberwork is always painted.

**Canopies**
The introduction of canopies, awnings or sunblinds appears to be a late 19th century element when technology had developed a canopy that could be wound in, or out, whenever necessary.

Many shopfronts of the late 19th and early 20th century have integral canopies designed as part of their shopfront. For practical reasons, canopies are generally found on shopfronts that face south. Where they exist they are considered to be important survivals. In many cases they may not have been used for years but their removal would be resisted as they generally form an integral part of a shopfront design.
**New canopies or awnings:**
- Should be integral to the overall design of a shopfront and not an incongruous addition;
- Should not detrimentally obscure or affect any element of the existing shopfront;
- Should be of a traditional material, such as canvas. Plastic canopies of any form/shape are not considered to be appropriate;
- Should be fully retractable within a concealed box (which should be of painted timber, not plastic);
- Should be located in a traditional location as part of the overall shopfront design.

It is unlikely that retro-fitted, new, canopies or awnings to historic shopfronts will be visually and physically appropriate as they will appear as an addition to the shopfront rather than being an integrated part of it. Where such, new, canopies or awnings are proposed to an historic shopfront their design, form, type, location and positioning will all need very careful consideration so as to present a proposal which the Local Planning Authority considers is not harmful to the character and appearance of the historic shopfront.

**Existing canopies or awnings:**
- Should be retained and brought back into working order;
- If not required, left in-situ, together with their metal brackets, stays and winding gear.

**MATERIALS**

Traditional shopfronts represent works of fine joinery and carpentry. The attention to detail and traditional craftsmanship were essential parts of the construction of any historic shopfront.

The overall achievement of this presents a fundamental and distinctive characteristic of a traditional shopfront. The majority of the elements that make up a shopfront are constructed from timber and that timber is always given a painted finish. The choice of timber is considered to be an important and a fundamental consideration in terms of long-term durability and integrity. Only durable, traditional materials, (well-seasoned good quality softwood, or sustainable hardwood) in conjunction with high quality skills and craftsmanship and the attention to detail, will be considered for both repairs to existing shopfronts and the fabrication of new shopfronts. For particularly vulnerable elements such as cills or the capping to a cornice, consideration could be given to the use of hardwood.

With regard to stall-risers, where these are to be of stone the stone type & colour should be appropriate to the area (i.e. locally sourced). The unit size, colour and finish of any external tile work should be given careful consideration to the locality & context to which the shopfront is part. Similarly, render (self-coloured or painted) should also be given careful consideration to the locality & context to which the shopfront is part.
PAINT COLOUR

Preamble
Shopfronts were always intended to have a painted finish as a practical coating to protect the timberwork. The historical development of paint colours to shopfronts, from the earliest survivals, dating from the late 18th century, to the last decorative timber shopfronts of the 1920s, shows that these changed over time.

The greatest concentration of surviving historic shopfronts are to be found in the towns and larger villages of Matlock, Matlock Bath, Wirksworth, Cromford & Ashbourne. Whilst many historic shopfronts may have undergone some minor physical changes over time as a result of their age and general maintenance, architectural paint research appears to confirm a distinctive change in colour preference and use during the 19th century. The ‘Georgian’ period strictly runs from 1714 to 1830 but in terms of architecture and design is seen to end about 1840. The ‘Regency’ period, within this time period, is generally considered to be circa. 1800 to 1820. After 1840 the 19th century is divided into the early, mid, high and late ‘Victorian’ periods, ending in about 1900. The ‘Edwardian’ period, whilst strictly being only nine years from 1901, covers an architectural and design period of circa. 1900 to 1920.

On-going architectural paint research (much of which has been carried out, nationally, by Historic England) has revealed that shopfronts of the later 18th and early 19th centuries – i.e. the late ‘Georgian’ & ‘Regency’ period were often painted in greys, creams and beige/fawn colours, as well as being painted, on some occasions, in imitation of expensive dark woods such as mahogany & walnut. Across the Derbyshire Dales only a few shopfronts from the ‘Georgian’ & ‘Regency’ period survive.

The vast majority of the surviving historic shopfronts in the District date from after 1840 and the greatest number of these date from the later 19th/early 20th centuries – circa. 1870-1915. There are fewer examples of surviving post-War shopfronts (after 1920). There is an important distinction to be made regarding the date of the installation of a shopfront to a building façade. In Ashbourne, for example, where the majority of the building facades date from the ‘Georgian’ period, the majority of shopfronts were installed onto these buildings during the ‘Victorian’ period.

Whilst there was no immediate change of preference for paint colour to shopfronts at the beginning of the ‘Victorian’ period research indicates that a strong tradition emerged where the paint colour of shopfronts was of a dark hue. This tradition has strong historical justification and is supported by historical photographs of the late 19th/early 20th centuries where few light coloured shopfronts are to be seen. Whilst the actual dark hues/colours cannot be ascertained from such photographs it is clear that dark colours were almost universally used. The pigments that were used to make these dark colours were both cheap and practical. As such, a tradition became widespread and those ‘Georgian’ shopfronts, perhaps originally painted in lighter colours, were re-painted in the darker colours prevalent, and in use, during the ‘Victorian’ and ‘Edwardian’ periods.

Where new shopfronts are approved in a ‘period’ style the finish paint colour will be expected to follow the established tradition of paint colours of the original ‘period’. Where a new shopfront is of a modern, contemporary, design and materials the choice of finish paint colour would not be restricted to ‘period’ colours.

Choosing a Paint Colour
The choice of colour remains a crucial consideration particularly where the buildings are listed or where additional planning controls are in place. In making a decision on which paint colour to use, a shop owner/tenant should undertake research to identify the date of the building and the date of the insertion of the shopfront (these may be different).

The colour of a shopfront should never detract from the overall building façade of which it is part and should always have careful regard to its immediate and wider setting and context (in some cases the property may be located within a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site).
In terms of authenticity and the appropriateness of paint colours for historic shopfronts it is considered that the date or period of the shopfront should advise and inform this decision. Based on paint research and colour charts from heritage paint manufacturers, the following approach to the choice of paint colour for historic shopfronts is advocated by the District Council.

The following generic colours are considered appropriate to ‘Georgian’ & ‘Regency’ shopfronts (circa. 1780-1840):

- BROWN
- GREEN
- GREY
- CREAM
- BEIGE / FAWN

The following generic colours are considered appropriate for ‘Victorian’ & ‘Edwardian’ shopfronts (circa. 1840-1920):

- BLACK
- DARK BLUE
- DARK GREEN
- DARK RED
- BROWN
- GREY
- BEIGE /FAWN
- DARK CREAM

The District Council suggests that owners/tenants refer to the following colour ranges when considering paint colour for their shopfront:

- British Standard 4800 Range
- Little Greene/English Heritage Range
- Dulux Heritage Range
- Farrow & Ball Range

Whilst the above paint colour ranges contain colours that are vibrant, bright or acidic in tone and hue, architectural paint research has shown that such colours were not used, externally, in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. Such colours should, therefore, be avoided as wholly inappropriate and historically incorrect for external, period, joinery painting.

With regard to shopfronts from the ‘Victorian’ and ‘Edwardian’ periods the traditional use of a basic palette of dark hues persists. In some locations, the overall or entire painting in one colour is the traditional norm, whereas in other locations a tradition of picking out minor elements of detail in a lighter colour (such as cream) can be seen. Such variations distinguish the character and appearance of a shopping area or street. These contribute significantly to local distinctiveness and are, therefore, important considerations where new shop fronts are proposed, or indeed where historic shopfronts are to be re-painted.

Where ‘picking out’ of detail is proposed this should be based on the local prevailing tradition. Where that tradition is not evident the use of ‘picking out’ will be resisted as being inappropriate.

Listed Buildings:
The main consideration of any application for Listed Building Consent is the potential effect of the proposal on the ‘special character and appearance’ of that listed building. Where Listed Building Consent is required, an objective approach which can be soundly justified, should always be undertaken. Where it is considered that the special character and/or appearance of the building will not be affected by such works, Listed Building Consent will not be required. The above information, contained within the ‘Shopfront & Commercial Properties Design Guidance’ aims to focus on, and utilise, objective research that has been undertaken in this regard.

Where an owner/tenant wishes to pursue an application for Listed Building Consent for a paint colour outside the above, suggested, generic colours, or for a colour that is vibrant/bright/acidic, they would need to provide sound justification for the use of such a colour.

Properties covered by an ‘Article 4 Direction’:

Where the building/shopfront has had its permitted development rights removed in respect of painting (i.e. via an ‘Article 4 Direction’), the control of paint colours has been introduced to ensure that proposals will accord with the identified character and appearance of the wider historic environment and ensure that the impact of any chosen colours will not be detrimental to the overall street scene and the Conservation
Area in which the building is located. ‘Article 4 Directions’ are based on a comprehensive assessment and consideration of the types of development which may be considered to be harmful to the historic environment.

**Corporate Colours:**
As a result of their recognition and value, listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas are deemed to be particularly ‘sensitive’ to change in their character and appearance. Some businesses may have a *corporate* colour that they wish to use nationwide. However, such colours will be considered but only in association with the philosophy and approach as outlined in the above guidance. It is possible that a corporate colour that is deemed inappropriate in its colour and context will be resisted or that the company is asked to put forward a more appropriate, perhaps muted shade/hue, to suit the particular status and context of the shopfront.

**Paint Finish:**
With regard to paint finish, the traditional finish is for a relatively high gloss. This has practical advantages in being able to be washed down on occasions and may also be more resilient to damage. Discussions regarding the proposed paint finish should be made with the Local Planning Authority.

*Footnote:*
‘Article 4 Directions’ are currently in place controlling external paint colours on properties in the Conservation Areas of Matlock Bath (render & joinery), Matlock Bridge (joinery) & Wirksworth (render, stonework & brickwork).

**Permissions & Consents:**
The Local Planning Authority will assess any proposed colour schemes for shopfronts on the impact they make on the building and on the wider area and context of which they are a part. To summarise:

- Planning Permission is required for painting a shopfront (and in some cases the building itself) where an ‘Article 4 Direction’ removes permitted development rights in relation to painting. Currently this covers a large number of shops/properties at Matlock Bath and Matlock Bridge.
- On a listed building, Listed Building Consent is required for painting a shopfront where the colour is considered to affect the special character and appearance of the building. Re-painting a shopfront in the *exact* same colour does not, normally, require Listed Building Consent.

With any application for painting, an accurate colour sample(s) and/or British Standard references number(s) are required. Where the shopfront is ornate or of a two-tone colour scheme an elevation drawing indicating the colours of each component or element may also be required as part of an application.

**ADVERTISEMENTS**

**Preamble**
Any shopfront can be completely ruined by ill-considered colour schemes and badly and un-inspired lettering and illumination. It is recognised that in advertising a shop this will be done using appropriate colour, lettering/signage and illumination, however, there is a modern tendency to make a shopfront stand out by using bright colours, large signage and lettering and over-illumination.

Shopfronts that people remember most tend to be those that have an element of historical accuracy and detail and use restraint in colour, imaginative signage and discrete illumination to allow the characteristics of the building and its integral shopfront to be their advertisement. An approach and philosophy of ‘less is more’ can often be most applicable to a successful shop.

**Guiding Principles**
There are a number of guiding principles that should be considered with regard to advertisement. Generally they should be:

- Designed to be in scale and proportion with the shopfront and the building of which the shopfront is part;
- They should be to a high standard of design;
- They should relate architecturally to the building on which they are part and should not dominate the shopfront or building but should respect its scale and proportion;
- They should not appear over significant to the shopfront or building;
- They should be sympathetic to the surrounding scale and street scene;
- They should be constructed from durable, and traditional materials;
• The type-face or font for the lettering and its layout and design should form a satisfactory composition.

**General Principles**
Advertisements are generally found in four forms – horizontally along the fascia board to the shopfront, on a projecting, hanging, sign, on wall mounted boards or signs (to the front or side of a building) and as lettering applied directly to the building fabric (generally render). There can be combinations of these.

**Fascia boards**
The fascia is the most traditional part of a shopfront to display its name and what it sells. Many of the late 18\(^{th}\) and early 19\(^{th}\) century fascia’s were much shallower than normally seen on modern shopfronts, but they were usually written with just the shop name or trade.

As fascia’s increased in the depth, as the 19\(^{th}\) century progressed, lettering became a little more decorative and ornate.

Traditional lettering was not confined to the fascia but could also be found on the cill, stall riser or entrance threshold. In the later 19\(^{th}\) century and early 20\(^{th}\) century some fascia’s had incised and gilded lettering protected behind a sheet of glass.

Sign-written lettering remained the tradition until the mid-20\(^{th}\) century. On a traditional fascia board this gives the shopfront a sense of individuality and distinction. In general:
• Existing fascia’s should be used wherever possible;
• Lettering should, ideally, be sign-written directly onto the fascia board. Lettering should always be well spaced, the font carefully chosen and the colour of the lettering and background also carefully considered;
• Historically, a dark background with lighter coloured lettering was the norm;

• Added modern plastic or aluminium fascia’s are not, generally, considered appropriate, however, where (in particular cases) they may be appropriate they should respect the depth and width of the existing fascia;
• Intermittent, flashing or moving fascia displays are not considered to be acceptable;
• Wholly backlit or internally illuminated fascia’s are not considered to be acceptable;
• Shiny, glossy, highly reflective and luminous colours are not considered to be acceptable;
• Halo illuminated lettering is not considered to be acceptable;
• Shiny, glossy, highly reflective and luminous colours are not considered to be acceptable;
• Historically, a dark background with lighter coloured lettering was the norm;

**Hanging and/or Projecting Signage**
There is a general tradition for hanging, or projecting, signage to shops and commercial premises. In many historic town centres these were once prevalent and occasionally original wrought and decorative metal brackets survive. A true hanging sign is allowed to swing freely. Some modern projecting signs are static and have been designed to mimic a traditional hanging sign. Although hanging signs can provide a useful form of advertisement, proliferation can create visual clutter to a street scene, thus undermining their advertisement purpose.

With regard to hanging/projecting signs the guiding principles are:
• Where existing metal brackets survive these should be re-used. Their size will generally dictate the size of the hanging sign. The metalwork is almost always painted black;
• Where a new hanging sign is proposed the bracket, and its location on the building frontage, should be given careful design consideration;
The scale and size of the new hanging sign should respect the scale, form and appearance of the building;

Hanging signs should be positioned so as not to be a hazard to both pedestrians and to adjacent carriageway vehicles. Height restrictions, as recommended by the Highway Authority, are in force;

Generally, only one hanging sign to each shop unit will be permitted. The necessity for a hanging sign will need to be soundly justified and the Local Planning Authority will carefully scrutinise its justification and make a determination based on the long-term character and appearance of the street scene;

The historic tradition of hanging signs has led to two principle shapes - the vertical rectangle and the oval. These are generally always of painted timber with a robust and substantial, moulded, perimeter frame (to three and often four sides). There is, of course, scope for innovation and imagination. A number of historic hanging signs are cut and shaped to reflect the principal product or produce on sale or have been purposefully designed to reflect the unique character of a shop. Such signs add inspired variety and vitality to a street scene;

Internally illuminated hanging or projecting signs are not considered to be acceptable.

Printed canvas or vinyl banners stretched between two horizontal brackets have no traditional precedent and do not have the visual/physical permanency and integrity of traditional painted timber hanging/projecting signs. In this regard their use will be resisted.

Other, wall mounted, signage and “A” boards
Commercial premises sometimes show a lack of respect for the street of which they are part, in their attempt to over-advertise. This is generally seen in a proliferation of signage to various parts of the building in the hope of attracting attention. This also includes ‘A’ boards placed outside a shop. Such proliferation of signage is most often visually damaging to the street scene and does not, in reality, provide the shop with a presence or appearance in the street scene that is attractive in any way. Other signage (other than the fascia and hanging signs) should:

Only rarely be considered;

Its size, form and location should be carefully considered;

Such signage should respect the building and the street scene;

Its materials and colours should reflect those of the shop itself;

In most cases such signage should be small and discreet (if required at all);

Such signage should not be illuminated in any way;

In many cases the pavement immediately outside a shopfront is not a private forecourt but is controlled by the Highway Authority. ‘A’ boards are not generally allowed to be placed on the pavement as they can be a hazard to the old and infirm, visually impaired persons and wheelchairs and pushchairs. The placing of ‘A’ boards on pavements is controlled by the Highway Authority.
Placing an ‘A’ board on land controlled by the Highway Authority should only be undertaken with their approval.

**Lettering on Render**

There is a historic tradition of lettering being applied, in painted form, directly onto render (and occasionally onto brickwork). In some circumstances this method of advertisement can be appropriate and complement a building and shopfront.

Such advertisement should:

- Be appropriate to the type, style and period of the shopfront and the building of which it is part;
- Be hand sign-written in a clear and (appropriate) attractive script/font;
- Be appropriate in its scale, form and proportion to the building/part of the building on which it is applied.

**PUBLIC HOUSES**

**Preamble**

Signage and lighting on public houses can present specific issues for consideration by the Local Planning Authority. The following approach and guidance to signage and lighting on public houses is advocated by the Local Planning Authority.

**Listed Public Houses:**

As a building is listed for its special architectural and historic interest, the extent or amount of signage and lighting can often be an issue of concern. Many public houses are corporately owned. From time to time breweries re-brand their buildings and this generally involves a unification of appearance. With listed buildings, and historic un-listed public houses, their architectural form, materials, details and appearance are unique and different. A unifying branding is therefore not always appropriate and the Local Planning Authority will resist such proposals where the corporate branding is not flexible in respecting the uniqueness of individual listed, and un-listed historic public houses.

- The extent or amount of signage to the external elevations of a public house should be based on the minimum required. In formulating that minimum the guiding approach should be a primary concern that the architecture and character of the building can remain to be clearly 'read';
- The proposed size, form and location of the signage will require careful consideration. All signage should fully respect the special architectural character and appearance of the building.

The signage should not overwhelm the building elevations or detract in any way from the architectural character of the building. In essence, a minimalist and subservient approach should be taken. This approach also applies to any curtilage listed walls or structures associated with the public house.

- The signage should all be of painted timber with hand-written lettering;
- Individual signs should all have a perimeter moulded frame (in proportion and detailing to the size of the sign);
- Paint colours should generally be a dark background with lighter coloured lettering. The script or font should be of a type to harmonise with the character and age of the building;
- Where the building is rendered, lettering painted directly onto the render may be considered to be acceptable in place of applied signage boards. Its location, size, font and its proportion & design should be carefully considered and be appropriate to the building/part of the building on which it is applied;
- Where a hanging sign is proposed its size and location will need careful consideration. The traditional shape for hanging signs is a vertical rectangle with a carefully selected and painted pictorial image. Lighting of a hanging sign (if necessary) should always be from its bracket and not from lights attached to the fabric of the building. Hanging signs should always have a traditional metal bracket;
- External lighting to a listed public house will require careful consideration. All lighting
proposals should be the minimum required. Modern light fittings will generally be inappropriate, unless their design, form & finish is considered appropriate to the listed building. Light fittings should be of a durable and traditional material and be of a design/form that complements the building character;

- Excessive lighting proposals are not considered appropriate. All lighting requirements should be able to be clearly justified in each case. Concealed 'trough-lighting', subject to its design, form and size, may be considered acceptable for some signage. Lighting introduced to provide a 'light-wash' over a building façade(s) is unlikely to be justifiable and is likely to be deemed harmful to the character & appearance of a listed building.

Un-listed Public Houses:
There are a number of un-listed public houses within the District which are of historic origin and retain something of their historic character and appearance. Although they do not have listed status, the Local Planning Authority will aim to safeguard their unique character and appearance, wherever possible. The Local Planning Authority will seek to achieve the minimum amount of signage and lighting to the exterior of the building. Any new signage should complement the architecture and appearance of the building in terms of its size, form and location. Unlike listed public houses, the Local Planning Authority will consider the use of (appropriately designed & detailed) non-traditional signage materials, such as painted or screen-printed aluminium.

ILLUMINATION

Street lighting was generally poor or non-existent in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and shopfronts were often shuttered at night. Gas lighting became more widespread in the later 19th century but its luminance was poor in comparison with modern day street lighting.

Shopfronts themselves were never, specifically, illuminated. With a superabundance of lighting types the modern approach, and desire, is to illuminate a shopfront. In general terms it is considered that the illumination of a shopfront is only required to those businesses that operate in the evenings. Those that close at 5.30pm should rely on internal illumination for security purposes. Where illumination is required for evening operation the proposed method of lighting should be given careful consideration from the outset. To summarise, approval from the Local Planning Authority would be required for:

- The installation of any form/type of lighting to the building or to the shopfront/signage to a listed building;
- The installation of lighting to any shopfront, signage or hanging/projecting sign to an un-listed commercial property.

Where the principle of external illumination is considered to be appropriate, lighting should be:

- Carefully considered in design terms to reflect the character of the shopfront and its presence in the street scene;
- Discreet and the minimum level of illumination provided;
- Lighting should, wherever possible, be designed as an integral element of any new shopfront;
- Lighting should not be fixed to the building fabric – particularly to illuminate a hanging sign or sign board.

In addition:

- Concealed strip-lighting (with a metal tubular cowl painted to match the shopfront colour scheme) of an appropriate scale, form and detail may be appropriate in certain circumstances;
- Integral spot lights concealed within a painted projecting soffit or moulded cornice may be appropriate in certain circumstances;
- Internally illuminated box signage is not acceptable (including for projecting/hanging signs and wall mounted sign boards);
- Brass or painted ‘swan-neck’ light fittings are not considered to be appropriate;
- Spot lights/floodlights mounted on the fascia, cornice or elsewhere on the shopfront are not considered appropriate;
- Partial or wholesale illumination of a building frontage, above the shopfront, will generally be resisted, unless the reasons for this can be strongly justified;
- The use of neon lighting will generally be resisted as being particularly inappropriate;
- Flashing, intermittent or moving illumination/displays are not considered to be appropriate.

SECURITY

Security is acknowledged as a primary consideration for shop owners. On this basis, however, security measures should always be
gauged and considered in relation to the building and the shopfront. In Conservation Areas or on listed buildings this should be carried out in a sensitive and respectful way, which does not detract from the character and appearance of the area or building. There are several security measures that are generally seen – lighting, alarm systems and shutters.

**Lighting**

Security lighting to a shopfront should be considered only where it is necessary. In most cases security lighting will be provided by external lighting (subject to approval) and internal lighting. With regard to the latter, such lighting is invariably left on overnight to act as a deterrent. The use of floodlighting or additional high luminance lighting will generally be resisted.

**Alarm Boxes**

On listed buildings consent is required to install an external alarm box. Where there is a sound, justified, need for such a system, the location and type of box will need to be given careful consideration. In general, they should not be fixed to the main frontage of the building. On un-listed buildings, the location of the box should also be carefully considered.

**External roller shutters**

Some historic shopfronts retain original painted timber roller shutters. Where these survive they should always be repaired and used. Modern external roller shutters/grilles have no element of design and are purely functional components. Such elements virtually always spoil or detract from the visual appearance of a building/shopfront. Their impact on a building is such that when they are open, the large projecting external box (often crudely fixed directly onto the shopfront) is an ugly appendage and when closed they create a flat and deadening effect to the whole frontage. They can also have a confrontational effect on the street-scene, making the area less attractive, particularly at night. They induce an unwelcoming atmosphere and in some cases can attract graffiti, which again can make the area feel threatening.

All security shutter systems should be *internally* located and should be of an open lattice or perforated design and should be positioned as far back from the display window as possible, preferably behind the window display itself. This type of open grille should be suitably painted or colour coated to disguise or co-ordinate them with an existing colour scheme. Illumination from behind the grille / screen also helps to animate the shop after dark.

Security measures should always be incorporated into new shopfronts at the design stage. Traditional shopfronts are generally well placed/designed to provide increased security. Solid stall risers can prevent ram-raiding and window Mullions can give additional strength as well as reducing the size of the glazed area.

**Glass**

An alternative to shutters, which may help to reduce vandalism, is laminated or toughened glass. In the design of a new shopfront this element could be integrated into its design. With existing shopfronts the replacement of old glass may be considered appropriate if the justification for such measures is sound. With listed buildings the replacement of historic glass would generally be resisted.

**To summarise:**

- Planning Permission is required for any external roller shutter and is unlikely to be supported especially on traditional shopfronts, shopfronts in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings.
- On a listed building, Listed Building Consent is required for any external roller shutter and is unlikely to be supported.
- Planning Permission is not required for internal shutters.
- On a listed building, Listed Building Consent is required for internal shutters and may be supported dependent upon the effect of them on the special character and appearance of the building.
- Planning Permission is not required for the installation of laminated or toughened glass.
- On a listed building, Listed Building Consent would be required for the installation of laminated or toughened glass if this were considered to be a significant alteration to the special character and appearance of the building.

**AUTOMATIC TELLING MACHINES (ATM)**

Banks, Building Societies and some post offices & shops are often required to install an ATM (and/or Night Safe) on the external face of their premises. These should be accommodated where it will have the least impact on any architectural elements of the building or character & appearance of the shopfront. The District Council will resist the presence of ATMs where they will be intrusive, restrict window display or have a detrimental impact on the building elevation and/or the character & appearance of a shopfront.
• Planning Permission is required for the installation of an ATM where they form part of a larger shopfront scheme.

• Planning Permission is required for an independent ATM if it is considered to constitute a material alteration to the premises.

• On a listed building, Listed Building Consent would be required for the installation of an ATM as potentially affecting the special architectural and historic interest of the building. Dependant on location and potential loss or alteration of historic fabric and building character, such a proposal may not be supported.

• When an ATM (or night safe etc.) is no longer required it should be removed (obtaining the necessary approvals where applicable) and the cavity etc. infilled and made good to match the existing, surrounding material/fabric.

External metalwork hand railing of a simple and robust nature does have historical precedent. Proposals for such an installation should:

• Be carefully considered with regard to its necessity (based on the Access Audit);

• Be designed to complement the building and/or shopfront of which it will become part;

• Be, generally, of simple and robust design without any decorative or ornamental elements;

• Have a painted finish (to a suitable and appropriate colour);

• Be located/positioned so as to not cause hazard or hindrance to users of the building, restrict egress in the case of an evacuation or cause issues with the highway/public footway.

In addition, such installation should also:

• be considered in terms of its potential impact on a listed or non-listed building;

• be designed to a high standard with materials of high specification;

• be complementary and harmonious with the building and its immediate setting.

With regard to the provision of steps and/or ramps the design, form, materials and detailing of such would require careful consideration in terms of its potential impact on the character and appearance of the shopfront/building. Proposals will be considered and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

7 STEPS TO MAKING AN APPLICATION FOR ALTERATIONS AND/OR ADVERTISEMENT:

1. Find out the status of the building – is it listed, un-listed, in a Conservation Area, covered by an ‘Article 4 Direction’?

2. Find out something about its history. Is the existing shopfront original, partially original or a modern replacement? Do any original features survive under later fascia’s, boxing-out or cladding? Some physical investigation may be required. Do any historic photographs survive showing the building and its shopfront as it was?

3. Based on your proposals for the building/shopfront undertake early discussion with the Local Planning Authority (via the Pre-application Advice Service) to obtain their initial comments and what approvals may be
required – planning permission, listed building consent, building regulation approval, advertisement consent. You may also wish to discuss your proposals with the Highway Authority.

4. Find a professional architect/designer who fully understands the special demands of historic areas and buildings. Such skills and advice will be required if alterations to an existing building and shopfront are proposed or a new shopfront is to be designed.

5. Make sure that the architect/designer is fully aware and understands the principles set out in this guidance, and how those principles may affect your particular building/shopfront as well as your proposals for the building/shopfront. Ensure that your architect/designer has acquainted him/herself fully with the area and its particular character and details.

6. Following initial work by your architect/designer they should prepare plans/drawings etc. in order to obtain more specific and perhaps detailed advice and information from the Authority (via the pre-application advice service). This stage will allow final adjustments to be made to the proposals prior to formal submission as an application or applications.

7. Submit your proposals to the Local Planning Authority for the relevant approvals that are required. Application forms detail the amount of information required for each type of application and the type and metric scale of drawings that would be required. If the building/shopfront is listed and/or within a Conservation Area, your application may go before the Council’s Conservation Advisory Forum for comment. Applications take up to 8 weeks to determine and this time period should be included as part of your overall project timetable. If any conditions are imposed on the grant of planning permission or listed building consent then an application to formally discharge those conditions can take up to 8 weeks from submission (this time period should also be included as part of your overall project timetable).

Further guidance & advice:

The District Council operates a pre-application advice service, more information can be seen here: http://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/planning-a-building-control/submit-a-planning-application/pre-application-advice

Derbyshire Dales District Council
Town Hall
Bank Road
Matlock
Derbyshire
DE4 3NN

Tel: 01629 761366
APPENDIX A

PLANNING POLICIES RELATING TO SHOPFRONTS & COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

National Planning Policy Framework 2018

In addition to the range of shops and services, the quality and appearance of town centres across the Local Plan Area is essential for their continuing vitality and viability. When considering proposals for the alteration to shopfronts, or other fixtures it is important that they do not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) puts considerable emphasis on achieving well designed places with good design seen as a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 124 states that “Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.” Supplementary Planning Documents are seen as having a role in setting out design guidelines. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 for more information.

Derbyshire Dales Local Plan 2017

The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (Adopted 2017) Policy PD1: Design and Placemaking sets out the importance of design quality and the contribution design makes to sustainable living. Policy PD2: Protecting the Historic Environment sets out how the District Council seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The policy includes the requirement that shop-fronts of architectural or historic value are retained wherever possible. Policy PD2 also states “Proposals for replacement shop-fronts, signage and colour, or alterations to shop-fronts affecting heritage assets should respect the character, appearance, scale, proportion and special interest of the host building and its setting.” Policy EC6: Town and Local Centres refers specifically to enhancing the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres.

This SPD seeks to add guidance and detailed advice to help owners, occupiers, managers, agents and developers of commercial properties to understand how the policies in the Local Plan should be applied.

The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan can be seen here: http://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/images/L/DDDC_Planning_Doc_2018_vweb2.pdf and for more information about the Local Plan see: www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/LocalPlan
APPENDIX B
SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST

You are advised to consider and address the following sustainability issues before submitting your application. The checklist aims to assist applicants give full consideration to these issues before discussing their proposals with the Council. Failure to take account of this may result in your application being delayed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Issues for Consideration</th>
<th>Action</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>To provide high quality design that respects the local and historic context</td>
<td>An attractive town centre helps to maintain its vitality and viability, as well as contribute significantly to the achievement of sustainable development.</td>
<td>You should ensure that the design principles as set out in the design guidance are fully understood and how they affect your particular building/shopfront/commercial business.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To improve the visual quality of the shopping area</td>
<td>It is important that when considering proposals for alterations to shopfronts, or other commercial businesses that they do not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Heritage Assets</td>
<td>To protect and enhance finite historical assets</td>
<td>A number of shops (and commercial businesses) are within Conservation Areas and/or are listed in recognition of their special architectural and historic interest.</td>
<td>Where appropriate proposals should include schemes to record and protect any architectural interest informed by an independent assessment of the listed building.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Many buildings on which a shopfront is located may be a listed building. By virtue of the listing the shopfront is protected by change or alteration. Listed Building Consent, controlled under the Planning (Listed Buildings &amp; Conservation Areas) Act 1990 would be required from the Local Planning Authority to carry out alterations to a listed shopfront.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Any works of alteration, however subtle, which would be considered to affect the special character or appearance of a listed building, would require an application for Listed Buildings Consent.</td>
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<td>Where a proposed new shopfront is situated within a conservation area or the property is a listed building, the Council will seek the retention and restoration of existing shopfronts in preference to their replacement.</td>
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| 3  | Historic Shopfronts    | To protect and enhance finite historical assets                           | The Derbyshire Dales District contains the medieval market towns of Ashbourne and Wirksworth together with the later spa towns of Matlock and Matlock Bath. The qualities of the buildings that form the streetscapes of these towns are such that there is a need to be particularly sensitive when alterations are proposed to shopfronts and commercial properties. | You should find: 1) Something about the shopfronts history including:  
• if the shopfront is original or a modern replacement  
• Do any original features survive under later fascia’s, boxing out our cladding?  
• Do any historic photographs survive showing the building and its shopfront as it was?  
2) A professional architect/designer who fully understands the special demands of historic areas and buildings. Such skills and advice will be required if alterations to an existing building and shopfront are proposed or a new shopfront is to be designed. |
| 4  | Townscape              | To protect and enhance the character and appearance of town centres.      | The character of the local street scene is being threatened by the replacement with inappropriate designs and materials.  
The loss of traditional shopfronts will impact on the character and appearance of the physical environment where people live and work. An attractive and well-designed shopping area will attract shoppers and tourists, creating an atmosphere beneficial for business  
The District has an important and varied townscape which is reflected in the buildings that occupy the town centres. | It is important when considering alterations to a shopfront or other fixtures that they do not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Advertisement / illumination</td>
<td>To reduce the visual impact of over advertisement/illumination on the highway and street scene.</td>
<td>The visual impact of over-illumination and over-advertisement on the highway and street scene. Any shopfront can be completely ruined by ill-considered colour schemes, excessive advertisements and badly and un-inspired lettering and illumination.</td>
<td>You should ensure that the design principles as set out in the design guidance are fully understood and how they affect you particular building/shopfront/commercial property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Energy Efficiency</td>
<td>To reduce consumption and waste production and facilitate renewable energy.</td>
<td>The installation of energy efficient systems is important to help reduce and conserve energy consumption. It is important that the use of energy efficiency materials / systems does not have an adverse impact upon other issues such as the character and appearance of the building and its surrounding</td>
<td>You should consider whether there are appropriate opportunities to install an energy efficient system or use materials that would help reduce energy consumption. Where appropriate, proposals should provide details of energy efficient measures and their potential impact(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Source of local materials</td>
<td>To ensure that the design of the shopfront is not detrimental to the fabric and character of the street scene.</td>
<td>The majority of the elements that make up a shopfront are constructed from timber. The choice of timber is considered to be an important and a fundamental consideration in terms long term durability and integrity. The use of, appropriate, sustainable materials in the fabrication of a new shopfront helps to achieve efficient use of resources and reduce energy consumption and waste production.</td>
<td>You should consider using: • Sustainable materials only if they are in character with the existing buildings and street scene / townscape. • You should consider using local building materials whether possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Local employment labour</td>
<td>To encourage and support local employment</td>
<td>It is important to encourage and support a high and stable level of employment to help contribute to safeguarding and strengthening the District’s economy. High quality skills and craftsmanship and the attention to detail, will be required for both repairs to existing shopfronts and the fabrication of new shopfronts.</td>
<td>You should consider, where appropriate, employing appropriately experienced local builders to undertake the work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Issues for Consideration</td>
<td>Action</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>To reduce the level of crime</td>
<td>The role of good design can help create safer places, reduce crime rates and reduce the fear of crime. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of shops wishing to install permanent security shutters. Unless sensitively &amp; appropriately designed these can have a detrimental impact upon the appearance of both the individual property and the town centre street scene.</td>
<td>Security measures should always be gauged and considered in relation to the building and the shopfront/commercial property. In Conservation Areas and on listed buildings this should be carried out in a sensitive and respectful way, which does not detract from the character and appearance of the area or building.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>To provide access to commercial properties, where possible, for people with a disability</td>
<td>Part three of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) places specific duties on shops and business that provide services available to the public to alter, adapt or remove physical barriers that make it unreasonably difficult for disabled people to receive fair treatment</td>
<td>A useful starting point in assessing the current state of accessibility of buildings and services is to arrange for an access audit of the premises to be conducted. This involves a survey of the building and facilities to identify its accessibility and ease of use by disabled people. It focuses on a number of different issues around physical access, such as physical barriers, signage etc. Conducting an access audit can identify barriers and hazards to people with disabilities.</td>
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</tbody>
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