

Shopfront Supplementary Planning Document

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A. Introduction

1. Purpose

1.1. This supplementary planning document (SPD) sets out Gedling Borough Council's policy in relation to the design of shopfronts and their advertisements within the Borough. As an SPD, this document provides further guidance on policies within the Council's adopted Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan. Once adopted, this document will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

2. Policy Context

2.1. Seeking to secure high quality design is described as a core planning principle by the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). The NPPF encourages high quality design, including sensitive and innovative responses to local historic development and urban character. Paragraph 135 states that, among other criteria, planning policies and decisions should "establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit" as well as being "sympathetic to local character and history...while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)".

2.2. [National Planning Practice Guidance](#) revised in February 2024 also emphasises the importance of good design and states that development should promote local character.

2.3. As an SPD, this document provides detail on the interpretation and implementation of existing local plan policies and sets out design standards. It does not introduce new policies. The key policy documents include:

[Aligned Core Strategy \(Part 1 Local Plan\)](#): Adopted in September 2014, the document sets out the strategic policy direction for future development in Gedling Borough. Key policies for this SPD include:

- ACS Policy 6: Role of Town and Local Centres
- ACS Policy 10: Design and Enhancing Local Identity
- ACS Policy 11: The Historic Environment

2.4. [Local Planning Document](#) (Part 2 Local Plan): Adopted in July 2018, the LPD has been prepared to include detailed policies that help deliver specific allocations, site specific policies, allocations of non-strategic sites and designations for new housing, employment, retail, community facilities, recreation and open space, nature conservation and other land uses. Key policies for this SPD include:

- Policy LPD 26: Heritage Assets
- Policy LPD 27: Listed Buildings
- Policy LPD 28: Conservation Areas

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- Policy LPD 31: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- Policy LPD 35: Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Development
- Policy LPD 49: Retail Hierarchy and Town Centre Boundaries. Indicates Arnold as a “Town Centre” and defines “Local Centres” at Burton Joyce, Calverton, Carlton Hill, Carlton Square, Gedling Colliery site, Gedling Village, Mapperley Plains, Netherfield and Ravenshead.
- Policy LPD 50: Development within Town and Local Centres
- Policy LPD 51: Upper Floors
- Policy LPD 54: Development within Small Parades
- Policy LPD 55: Security Shutters
- [Gedling Borough Local Planning Document Interactive Policies Map \(LPD Part C: Policies Map\)](#)

B. Shopfronts

3. History of Shopfront Design

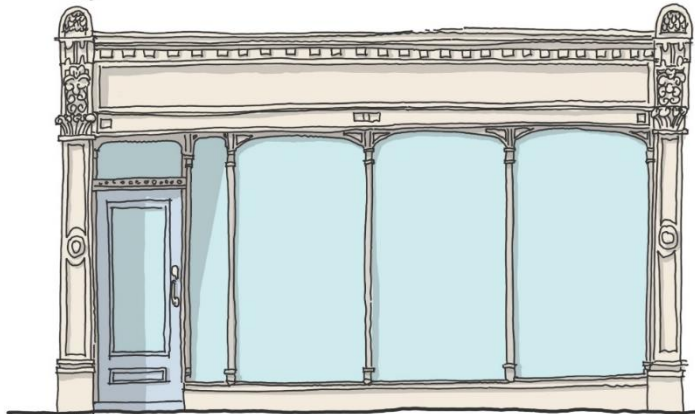
3.1. Retail streets have evolved over centuries, reflecting diverse architectural styles and adapting to changing needs.

3.2. By the 20th century, modernisation prioritised functionality over aesthetics, often covering traditional features. New materials like aluminium, frameless glass and plastics became common, and corporate branding often disregarded local architectural character. This transformation highlights the balance between practicality, commercial needs and preserving street character.

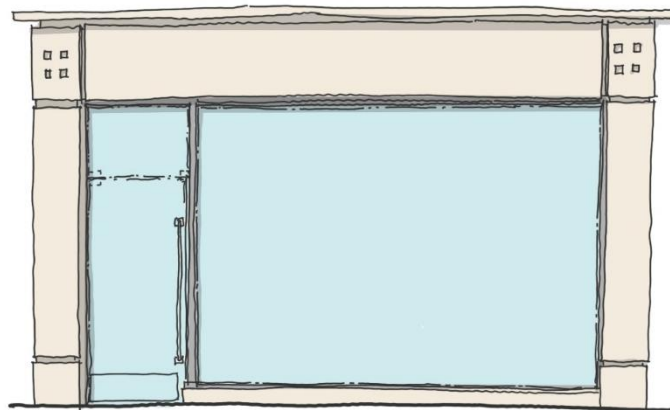
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- Georgian -

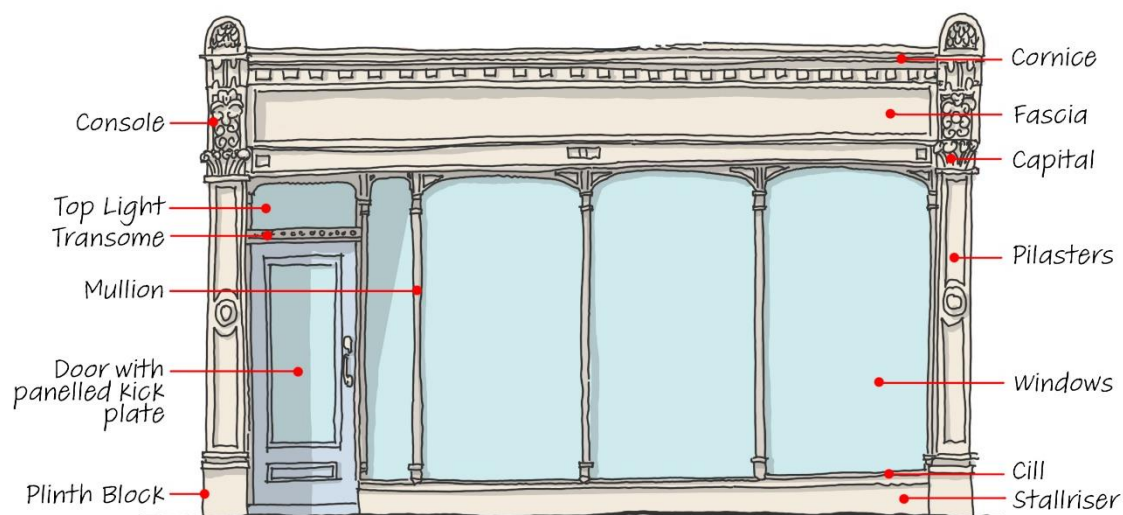


- Victorian -



- Contemporary -

4. Elements of Shopfronts



4.1. Despite the diverse range of architectural styles, most shopfronts incorporate the same basic design elements and are relevant to proposals including new or renovated shopfronts. The architectural terms below denote areas of a shopfront that frame the shop window and signage and create architectural interest and variety. Incorporation of these features, albeit not always highly decorative like the example above, often aids shopfront security as well as making a contextual and characterful design. These features include:

- **Pilasters**

Pilasters can be structural to support the building and fascia above, or purely decorative. Pilasters generally terminate at a plinth at the base, with a capital at the top which can be plain or decorative.

- **Facias and cornices**

Traditional shopfront fascias usually include a decorative moulded cornice running along the top, giving protection from the elements and a strong upper edge, providing a break to the rest of the building façade. Shopfronts from the Victorian era were commonly canted forward within console brackets.

- **Stallrisers**

The stallriser is the element forming a solid base to the shopfront, helping to define the shopfront proportions. Traditional stallrisers may have decorative moulded cills, ironwork or panelling.

- **Windows and doors.**

Windows are typically divided with mullions and transoms. The way the windows are subdivided usually reflects the style of the building facade. Traditionally, shopfronts

had numerous divisions from mullions and transoms due to the limited size of glass available, creating often vertical proportions to the glazing with elegant character. More modern designs generally have larger expanses of horizontally proportioned glass providing wider expanses for displays. Transom lights at the top of the main shop window may feature different types of glass and further break up the window visually.

Door designs typically follow the age and style of the windows (where they have not been updated unsympathetically). Doors can be flush with the window façade or recessed to form a visual break in the shopfront. Doors can be manual or automatic sliding.

- **Mouldings**

In traditional shopfronts, mouldings can reflect the period of the building facade. Stallrisers, pilasters, consoles, windows and doors can all incorporate decorative mouldings displaying the character of the building. More modern shopfronts generally have less decorative elements, favouring functional designs.

- **Materials and finish**

Traditionally, shopfronts were constructed using softwood timber which requires regular maintenance and painting, with ironmongery and brassware, such as iron panels and doorknobs, handles and letter flaps all commonly enhancing their appearance. Newer shopfronts generally include aluminium, ceramic tiles and sheet plastic, with more glazed elements.

C. Design principles for shopfronts



Poorly designed shopfronts do not respect the style, proportions & detailing of the rest of the building.



Elements of the building are reflected in the shopfronts.

5. Retention and repair

5.1. The Council will strongly encourage the retention of original shopfronts of high historic or architectural value. Where the quality of shopfronts is poor, replacement will be favoured. However, where there are original elements that contribute to the character of the street, repair and retention of those specific elements will be encouraged within the design of the new shopfront.

5.2. When alterations are made to traditional shopfronts of a high quality, original details should not be covered up or altered. Likewise, where traditional shopfronts

have had their appearance altered by more recent additions, it will usually be desirable to expose and repair these features.

Retention and repair principles:

1. Shopfronts that contribute significantly to the character of the area should be retained, repaired and restored.
2. Traditional shopfront detailing should be retained. Proposals that remove or conceal historic or architecturally important features will be resisted.
3. Where traditional shopfront detailing has been concealed by later additions, it should be exposed, repaired and retained to enhance the character and appearance of the shopfront.

6. Replacement shopfronts to traditional buildings

6.1. Where shopfronts have no architectural merit or historic interest, are unattractive, are inappropriate to the building or are beyond feasible repair then replacement will be encouraged. When considering replacement, the Council will consider the most appropriate design for the style of building façade and character of the area. Replacement should provide an opportunity for high quality design to enhance the building and wider area.

7. Building character, architecture and setting

7.1. Shopfronts should not be designed in isolation from the architectural composition and style of the building. The design of shopfronts should respect the period and style of the building to which it is fitted, and the retailer should adapt to suit the property. The composition of the building comprises of its age, appearance, materials, colours, fenestration, proportion and rhythm. Modern interpretations that respect these design elements in an innovative way are encouraged.

7.2. Where a shopfront is fitted in a traditional style, it should be historically correct in its style and detailing and locality. Research from old records, photographs and pattern books should be sought to support the design proposal.

7.3. The SPD takes priority over existing examples on the ground where they do not accord with the principles set out in this document.

Building character, architecture and setting principles:

1. Any new or replacement shopfronts should consider the architecture of the existing building, including its proportions, style, colour, materials and details.
2. Modern interpretations that respect the original building façade in an innovative way are encouraged.
3. Shopfronts should also consider the character of the street scene generally, in particular the neighbouring properties. However, the SPD takes priority over existing examples on the ground where they do not accord with the principles set out in this document.
4. On traditional shopfronts the original character of the building façade should be expressed. Traditional character can be incorporated using the features of a traditional shopfront within figure above (see Section 4. Elements of Shopfronts).
5. Where a business operates across more than one building of differing styles, the shopfront should be subdivided to reflect the individual characteristics and architecture of each building.

7.3. Shopfronts have an important role in the experience of shopping streets across the Borough. Design details are important in conveying the character, style and heritage of the building and wider area. The following principles should be considered for any new or replacement shopfronts:

Pilasters and console principles:

1. All new shopfronts should use columns, piers or pilasters to define and frame the shopfront.
2. On traditional buildings, any pilasters, piers or columns should be retained or reinstated, and any original detail restored.
3. Materials used in pilasters should be in keeping with those used in the rest of the building.

Fascia principles:

1. Fascias should be contained within and respect the proportion of the original shopfront. Consent will not be granted for fascias that obscure original console brackets, pilasters, any existing traditional fascia or architectural details, or encroach above first floor windowsills.
2. Fascias should not run continuously over more than one building frontage.
3. Fascias should not be excessively deep and negatively detract from the building above.
4. Materials such as reflective acrylic and other glossy or fluorescent materials must be avoided.

Stallriser principles:

1. Stallrisers form an important part of the proportions of a shopfront. The height of stallrisers should reflect the original design of the shopfront or general height of risers in the street.
2. Stallrisers should have a projecting cill providing a solid junction with the window glass.
3. Materials used in stallrisers should reflect those used on the building facade in general.

Windows principles:

1. Traditionally detailed window frames, mullions and transoms should be retained and restored.
2. Window subdivisions should respect the character and vertical proportions of the building façade.
3. Large horizontal expanses of glazing should be avoided, unless as a core principle of the overall design of the building façade.

Doors principles:

1. Shop doors should form an integral part of the shopfront.
2. Traditional door elements should be retained. Generally, these would include glazed panelling with a kickplate or lower panel of a style appropriate to the shopfront.
3. Recessed doorways that contribute to the character of the street scene should be retained. On new shopfronts recessed doors can assist with disabled access.
4. Any independent access to upper floors must be retained.

8. Materials, surface treatments and colour

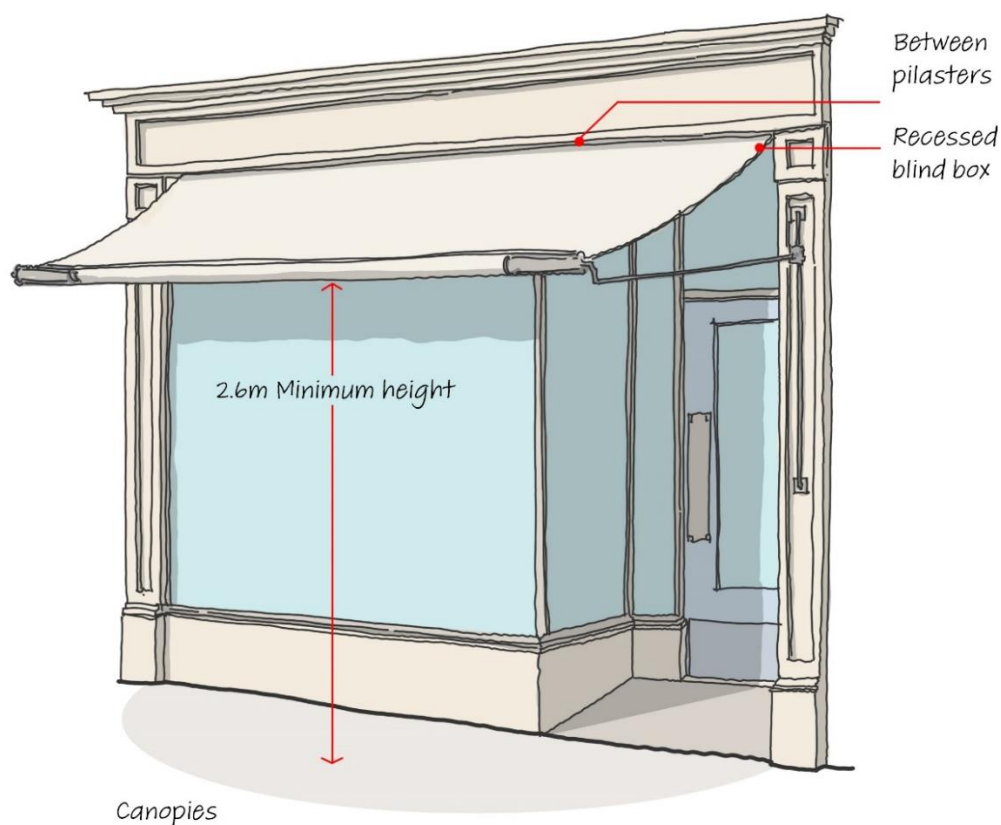
8.1. A range of different materials have been used in shopfront construction and decoration over the years. These materials, finishes and colours have a significant impact on the overall design of shopfronts.

8.2. Most traditional shopfronts were built in softwood timber and painted. There are a few examples of stained hardwood shopfronts, generally used in exposed parts of shopfronts. Edwardian examples also made use of glazed tiles for stallrisers and within the threshold of recessed doorways, which can be attractive materials to retain. More recently, materials such as aluminium have been introduced. UPVC has been increasingly used, however will rarely be acceptable in historic centres, conservation areas or listed buildings and should be used sparingly.

Materials, surface treatments and colour principles:

1. Only materials which are appropriate to the period and character of the shopfront and building should be used. Where materials deviate from these, clear reasoning should be used to support the use of said materials.
2. The choice of colours should be guided by either the original building or, if new, the overall colour strategy for the building façade. All colour schemes should enhance the visual quality of the shopfront and complement adjacent properties.
3. Period ironmongery should be retained. On new shop units the materials should reflect the style and design of the overall building façade.

9. Canopies



9.1. Traditionally, canopies were used to protect goods on display from damage by sunlight and could be retracted to avoid obscuring the shopfront. Blinds were traditionally a canvas-like material, designed as an integral part to the shopfront and

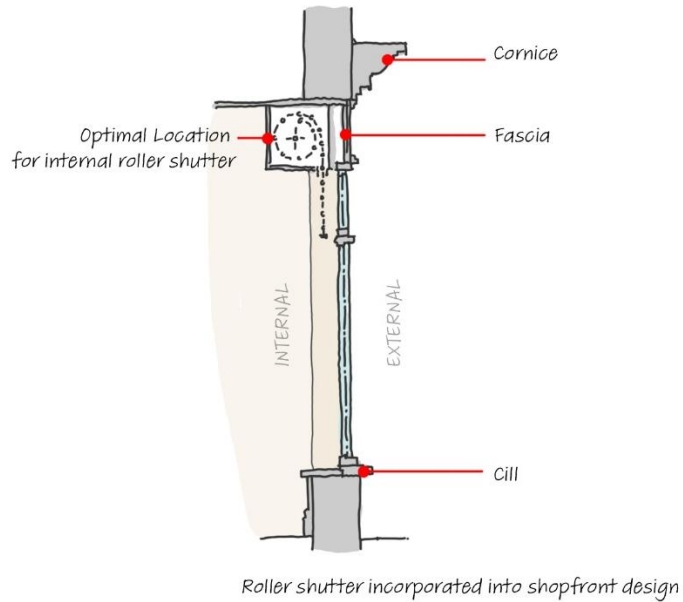
generally recessed back into the shopfront above or below the fascia when not in use.

9.2. In more modern shopfronts, businesses have sometimes installed oversized canopies and blinds, primarily to carry additional advertisements or signage. The function of these blinds is generally unnecessary and can be out of character with street scenes.

Canopies and blinds principles:

1. Canopies should form a complementary part of the overall appearance and character of the shopfront.
2. Any proposal to remove existing traditional blinds and blind boxes will be resisted.
3. Blinds should be positioned between shopfront pilasters and be in proportion to the building and street scene. Continuous lengths of canopies across multiple shopfronts will be resisted, unless as a part of a wider strategy for the streetscape.
4. Blind boxes should be recessed, should not obscure or damage the shopfront or architectural features and should be designed as an integral part of the whole shopfront.
5. There should be a minimum of 0.5m from the outer edge of the blind to the kerb line, and the height from pavement level must be no less than 2.6m to the underside of the blind.
6. Plastic blinds or canopies in fluorescent and glossy materials will be resisted.

10. Security



10.2. Security measures form an integral part of shopfront design and can be provided in many forms, including internal roller shutters, security grills, railings as well as alarms and security cameras.

10.3. Local Planning Document Policy LPD 55 – Security Shutters sets out specific guidance for externally mounted roller shutters.

Security principles:

1. Security measures should form an integral part of the design process and not as an add on.
2. Alarm boxes should not be placed on fascias.
3. Sensitively designed internal grilles may be permitted.
4. Shutters must be appropriate to the building they are installed on, wherever possible be internal and, when closed, they should allow visibility into the shop.
5. External roller shutters are not acceptable within a Conservation Area, on a Listed Building or a non-designated heritage asset.
6. If external shutters are required for specific security reasons, the box above the roller shutter should be sited internally. Where this is not possible it should be tied in with the design of the fascia.

11. Advertisements and Signage

11.1. For planning purposes, [Advertisements](#) is defined in section 336(1) of the [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#).

11.2. The overall effect of signage has an impact on the appearance and character of the streetscape. Visual clutter, detrimental to the quality of the streetscape, can be caused by the number, scale and colour of signage, as well as how it is illuminated.

11.3. Signage should be included as an integral part of shopfront design from the outset. Signage and branding should be appropriate to the period and styling of the shopfront.



Clutter caused by too many signs.



Contextually appropriate signage on traditional buildings.

11.4. All advertisements are subject to the standard conditions in [Schedule 2](#) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

11.5. The following principles give guidance on various aspects of advertisements and signage:

Number and size principles:

1. To avoid unnecessary clutter, one fascia sign and one projecting or hanging sign are considered adequate to identify a shop unit in most cases.
2. Signage should be restricted to the shopfront.
3. Historic signs and traces of historic signage should be retained where practical.
4. New signage should not obscure or damage existing important architectural features.
5. Advertisements applied above fascia level are generally unacceptable.
6. Signage should be in proportion with the shopfront and building in general.

Fascia sign principles:

1. Generally, lettering on fascia signage should not exceed more than two-thirds of the depth of the fascia.
2. Hand painted traditional signwriting will be preferred on historic and listed buildings.
3. The sign should only state the name and trade of the business.
4. Modern box fascias and precast signage boards fixed to an existing fascia are inappropriate within conservation areas, on listed buildings and on-designated heritage assets.
5. Reflective plastic, Perspex or overly bright materials are generally inappropriate. A strong contrast between the fascia colour and lettering is encouraged to increase visibility.

Hanging and box sign principles:

1. One hanging sign should be used to identify each shop unit.
2. The design of the hanging sign should complement the design of the shopfront, building and streetscape.
3. Hanging signs can be used effectively with an overall street strategy, visually tying together the character of the street.
4. Signs should relate only to the name and trade of the shop.
5. The sign should not be attached to the fascia or obscure architectural details.
6. Blade signs should generally be avoided in favour of a hanging sign.

Freestanding principles:

1. Advertising boards should not impair access for people with restricted mobility and ensure that no hazard exists for blind and partially sighted people.
2. Consent is required from the owner of the land on which the advertising board is to be displayed. Nottinghamshire County Council has provided conditions and guidance on the placement of advertising boards on their land which can be found on the County Council's [Advertising Boards and Displays of Goods on the Highway](#) document.

12. Illumination:

Illumination of shopfronts has an impact on the atmosphere of the streetscape. Lighting the streetscape is essential for a safe and attractive nighttime environment. In most cases, existing streetlamps and light from shopfront windows is sufficient to illuminate shopfronts.

Illumination principles:

1. The use of external lighting to illuminate shopfronts or signage needs a careful and co-ordinated approach with consideration of any cumulative impact on the street scene. External illumination is not considered essential for many businesses and the Council may request justification for its use especially if the building is listed or within a conservation area.
2. If illuminated signage is proposed to be used it must be designed in at an early stage. It must be discreet and its intensity must not be excessive or impact on the upper levels of the building or its neighbouring properties.
3. Internally illuminated signs and illuminated box signs will need to be sensitively designed.
4. Halo lighting will not generally be acceptable on historic and listed buildings. It can be acceptable on less sensitive buildings as long as it has no detrimental effect on the character of the building and appearance of the shopfront.
5. Where illumination is appropriate, excessively bulky trough lighting, flood lighting and swan neck lights should generally be avoided in favour of more discrete and less bulky forms of illumination.

13. Inclusive access to buildings

New shopfronts should provide convenient access for all people. All development proposals must be in line with the guidance in [Approved Document M](#) and BS 8300-1:2018 and BS 8300-2:2018 'Design of an Accessible and Inclusive Built Environment', or any guidance produced subsequently that supersedes these documents.

Access principles:

1. A stepped entry into the shop should be avoided, doors should be unobstructed and of sufficient clear width to permit wheelchair manoeuvring.
2. Flush thresholds, vision panels, glazing manifestation, accessible door furniture and power-assisted or automatic doors should be incorporated into designs wherever possible.
3. Access into shop units should be considered at an early design stage. When renovating historic shopfronts, a balance must be achieved between providing easy access and preserving the character and heritage of the building.
4. Impacts to heritage buildings on access grounds will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

14. Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)

ATM principles:

1. ATMs should be positioned to allow for wheelchair access, ie. not too close to the inside of a corner. The access route should be flat without barriers to people with impaired mobility or vision.
2. The area in front of an ATM should be at a minimum 1.5m by 1.5m, with a gradient of no more than 1:50.
3. ATMs should be well signposted without negatively impacting on the street scene. The surrounding of the ATM should suit the style and character of the shopfront and not be excessive.
4. Proposals to install ATMs on listed buildings, non-designated heritage assets and in Conservation Areas must demonstrate a clear need for an ATM and be designed so as to minimise impact on appearance and building fabric.

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D. Permissions and consents

15. Planning permission

15.1. Altering or replacing shopfronts is likely to require planning permission and might additionally require Listed Building Consent. This can include the installation of additional features such as blinds, canopies, shutters or grilles and many other changes to the external appearance to the building, including changing glazing. If there is uncertainty as to whether consent is required, advice from the Council should be sought through the pre-application advice service.

15.2. Changing the use of a building to a retail unit may require planning permission. Up to date guidance can be found on the [Planning Portal](#).

15.3. Changing a building to another use class, such as a change of use from non-retail to retail, will require planning permission and the guidance provided by this SPD will apply to the new shopfront.

- Advertisement consent

15.4. The display of advertisements is subject to a separate consent process within the planning system. This is principally set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#).

16. Listed building consent

16.1. To alter a listed building in a way that affects its character or appearance as a building of special architectural or historic interest, listed building consent must be sought from the Council.

16.2. Consent may also be required for minor works such as changing a painting scheme, altering the shop interior, advertisements, shopfront security, removing architectural features or installing an alarm box.

16.3. If there is uncertainty as to whether listed building consent is required, advice should be sought from the Council prior to installation.

17. Building regulations consent

The purpose of building regulations is to ensure the building satisfies its functional requirements and provides sufficient health and safety for shoppers and staff. Building regulations approval will be required for alterations and improvements to an existing building as well as new buildings. For example, electrical or plumbing work or replacing doors and windows. Building regulations consent must be applied for in a similar way to planning permission. More information can be found on the [Planning Portal](#) and on the Council's [Building Regulations Applications](#) page.

18. Pre-application advice

Pre-application advice can be sought before applying for full planning permission, listed building consent or advertisement consent. Pre-application advice allows the applicant to understand how the development plan policies will apply, gain advice from a planning officer, identify any potential problems and rectify them before an application is submitted. More information can be found on the Council's [Do I need planning permission?](#) page. Pre-application advice can be requested by completing the pre-application advice form on the Council's [Request for Pre-application Advice](#) page.

19. Enforcement

Where expedient, the Council has the authority to take enforcement action against works carried out without the necessary planning permission or consent. Unauthorised works to a listed building and unauthorised display of advertisements are both criminal offences. If served with an enforcement notice, a building owner may be required to restore the building to its condition before the unauthorised work was carried out. If this is not complied with or appealed against successfully the offence will be prosecuted in the courts. Breaches of planning control include, but are not limited to:

- Building work and/or a change of use of land/ building, undertaken without planning permission being granted;
- Developments not being carried out in accordance with a planning permission;
- Non-compliance with conditions imposed upon a planning permission;
- Works being carried out to a Listed Building which affect its character without listed building consent being granted;
- Non-compliance with conditions attached to a listed building consent;
- The display of an advertisement for which express consent is required but has not been granted;
- Untidy land or buildings which affect local amenity;
- Unauthorised works to protected trees.

20. Information required for applications

To ensure applications are dealt with efficiently they need to contain all the necessary information listed below, in addition to the requirements set out by the Council's [Local Requirements List](#):

- Existing and, if relevant, historical photographs and information to support the proposal when adapting or replacing an existing shopfront.
- Existing and proposed elevations of the shopfront and signage, 1:50 scale.
- Existing and proposed full height sections of the shopfront, 1:50 scale.

- Existing and proposed elevation drawings depicting the relationship between the shopfront and the rest of the building façade and at least part of any adjacent buildings and shopfronts.
- Details of any architectural elements such as glazing bars, sills, pilasters at a scale of at least 1:10.
- Detailed design and dimensions of signage, including fixing details and information on luminance levels of lights and whether static or intermittent.
- Details of all materials and colours is required to be annotated on the plans, elevations and sections.

21. Other useful information

For information about application advice, whether planning is required, for submitting a planning application or information on building regulations please visit the Council's [Planning Applications](#) page.

[Aligned Core Strategy \(Part 1 Local Plan\)s](#)

[Local Planning Document \(Part 2 Local Plan\)](#)

[Supplementary Planning Documents and guidance](#)