

WYCHAVON

Shop Front Design Guide



**Supplementary Planning
Document (SPD)**

March 2017

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The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Adoption statement

Wychavon Shop Front Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Subject matter and area covered:

The Shop Front Design Guide SPD is designed to be used by business and property owners, architects and designers, Planning Officers and Inspectors, and will be predominantly relevant to those premises with a ground floor display window and/or fascia sign. This guide provides design advice regarding the form, layout, character and quality of both existing and future development in connection with shop front and signage in the district.

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with regulation 14 of the above regulations:

- On 9 February 2017 Wychavon District Council agreed to adopt the Shop Front Design Guide with effect from 15th March 2017.
- That any person with sufficient interest in the decision to adopt the SPD may apply to the High Court for permission to apply for judicial review of that decision.
- That any such application must be made promptly and in any event not later than 3 months after 15th March 2017, which is when the SPD was adopted.



1. About this guide

1.1

This document provides supplementary planning guidance relating to the design of new, existing or replacement shop front and signs within Wychavon. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the following planning documents:

- **National Planning Practice Guidance**
- **National Planning Policy Framework**
- **The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), specifically Policy SWDP 21: Design**
- **Relevant Neighbourhood Plans**
- **Conservation Area Character Appraisals for the main shopping areas of Broadway, Droitwich, Evesham and Pershore**

1.2

This guide is designed to be used by business and property owners, architects and designers, Planning Officers and Inspectors, and will be predominantly relevant to those premises with a ground floor display window and/or fascia sign. Applicants are encouraged to refer to this guidance when considering their proposals for shop fronts or signage. This guide provides design advice regarding the form, layout, character and quality of both existing and future development in connection with shop front and signage in the district.

1.3

The guidance is intended to explain the vision for the design of shop fronts and signage, including the installation of signage, lighting and security measures to both traditional and contemporary shops and those located within rural and urban areas. As well as being applicable to retail units, the guidance will also apply to catering, financial and professional service businesses located within our historic shopping areas.

1.4

Within this guide you will find an explanation of the Policy context for planning decisions, as well as details showing what alterations can be made to shop fronts without the need to apply for planning permission. This information will also be included within an accompanying document: Wychavon's Quick Guide to Shop fronts and Signage.

1.5

The overall aim of this document is to improve the physical appearance of shop fronts so that they complement the design and appearance of the shop, the street in which they are situated and respect the wider aims for regeneration, including enhancing local and tourist appeal.

1.6

This guidance supersedes the Wychavon Shop front Design Guide adopted 1995. Prior to its adoption, this guidance has been the subject of local consultation, including Civic Societies, Town/Parish Councils, Local Members and Local Planning Authority Officers.



2. Introduction

2.1

Town centres within this country have evolved over hundreds of years and their role and function within society is still continuing to change. Modern shopping habits and the introduction of new building materials has lead to pressure for alterations to the buildings within our shopping streets, frequently resulting in a decline in their traditional function and appearance.

2.2

Shop fronts are becoming increasingly standardised and utilitarian in appearance, with many outlets opting for 'house styles' and corporate logos and showing little appreciation for the proportions of the host buildings. Cumulatively, and in isolation, untraditional and unsympathetic alterations can have a significant impact upon the visual appearance and functional appeal of our shopping streets.

2.3

In Wychavon, the three towns of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore all have traditional linear shopping areas which today largely retain their historic layout and traditional built forms. All three of these traditional shopping streets are protected by Conservation Area designations which offer additional policy protection to development proposed within these areas. The village of Broadway also features in this guide as the High Street is a traditional, historical Cotswolds stone shopping street within the Conservation Area and is also protected by the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation, which places similar restrictions

on unacceptable forms of development. Difficulties arise however, when balancing aesthetic and historical considerations with the needs and demands of local businesses. In these circumstances, this guide will provide additional information and advice to enable a sympathetic and consistent approach is adopted.

2.4

The district of Wychavon is renowned for its pleasant small country towns and villages, the heart of which can often be found in their shopping centres and a thoughtfully designed centre can help to enhance the experience of local residents and visitors to these areas. Shop fronts are an integral part of the shopping street and a sensitively designed shop front can have a beneficial impact by not only promoting the business within, but also by contributing to the overall character of the street.

2.5

Studies have shown that the sympathetic and traditional restoration of shop fronts can improve the wider appeal of town centres and provide economic benefits for the businesses involved. Overall, this can provide significant improvements to the vitality and viability of our towns. This guide will provide a brief character assessment of the main historic retail areas within the district and will also apply to more modern and contemporary premises as well as more isolated corner and village shops. By highlighting the best practice design principles we hope to achieve a more transparent approach to shop front design and improve the visual appearance of our shopping areas.



3. Planning context

Planning Regulations

3.1

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and in particular Part 42 of the T&CPA (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (amended 2015) planning permission will be required for any material changes in the external appearance of a shop.

3.2

Under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 all advertisements require consent from the Local Planning Authority unless they are exempt or have deemed consent under the Regulations.

3.3

For planning purposes, 'advertisement' is defined in section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) as:

"any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction, and (without prejudice to the previous provisions of this definition) includes any hoarding or similar structure used or designed, or adapted for use and anything else principally used, or designed or adapted principally for use, for the display of advertisements."

It is advisable to check with the planning department if advertisement consent is required.

The National Planning Policy Framework

3.4

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out the Government's planning policies for England. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and achieving sustainable development, including individual buildings. The NPPF recognises the importance of conserving and enhancing the historic environment (see section 12 of the NPPF). Whether a new, replacement or alteration to an existing is proposed it is important to consider what visual impact the shop front has to the historic environment, including heritage assets. Any

decisions relating to listed buildings, their settings and conservation areas must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16, 66 and 72) as well as satisfying the relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan.

3.5

Furthermore paragraph 67 of the NPPF recognises that poorly placed advertisements have a negative impact on the built and natural environment and therefore should be controlled in the interests of amenity and public safety

South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP)

3.6

The SWDP was adopted in February 2016 and SWDP 21: Design has replaced the Local Plan policies (Policy SUR4 – Shop fronts and Signs) for Wychavon District Council. Specifically, the following elements of the policy should be taken into consideration when planning any alterations to shop fronts:

- Detailed design and materials
- Public Realm
- Advertisements

3.7

SWDP 6: Historic Environment, SWDP 23: The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and SWDP 24: Managing the Historic Environment are also applicable policies when proposing alterations to shop fronts.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.8

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Joint Screening Statement was produced in January 2014, in light of the intended SPD production in line with the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan policies. The Design Guide SPD was one of those assessed, and it was intended to incorporate guidance on the design of shop fronts. This SPD relates to the same policy basis and therefore the conclusion, that no additional SEA over and above that carried out for the SWDP policies is required, is still valid.

4. Town and village character

4.1

Wychavon's towns and villages each have an individual character which is derived from their historic functions, street patterns and the use of local materials and design traits. This individual identity is important to both locals and tourists and it is this traditional character that should be protected and enhanced.

4.2

Wychavon District Council, as the Local Planning Authority has a primary role in preserving this character, although it cannot do this without the co-operation of individual property owners and businesses. The public face of a town is to be found within its shopping streets, thus each property within these areas contributes in some way to the overall visual character and appeal. We therefore seek to promote sympathetic shop front developments and signage within these areas in order to protect and enhance the individuality of our District.

Droitwich Spa

4.3

The High Street in Droitwich Spa forms part of the medieval core with significant level variations within its central section due to subsidence caused as a result of historic brine pumping.



Individual buildings within the High Street are a mix of one, two and three storey units of varying scale and height. They sit tight against each other and directly face onto the pavement, demonstrating the town's early medieval plan. Many of the buildings within the High Street date from the 18th and 19th centuries, which

together with the traditional settlement pattern form the essential elements of the historic character and special interest of the area.



4.4

A number of examples of late 18th century display windows and 19th and early 20th century shop fronts are still found today. The retention of the form and fabric of these features is key to the important character and appearance of the buildings themselves, as well as their contribution to the Conservation Area. Some poor signage, unsympathetic modern additions and under-investment in building repair and maintenance have contributed to some degree to the degradation of the quality of this area.

4.5

An independently owned pedestrianised shopping precinct; St Andrews Square is the home of a number of larger retail chain stores. This area is excluded from the Conservation Area and therefore less restrictive upon shop front design and signage. Premises here sport modern shop fronts with large expanses of glass and almost full-height display windows.



4.6

Signage in this area demonstrates less of the traditional features we would look to incorporate within the historic High Street. Property owners should recognise the distinct character differences between these main shopping areas and design any alterations to shop fronts and signage in a way that respects the immediate surroundings of the property in question.

Evesham

4.7

Evesham was originally a Saxon settlement which underwent considerable growth within the medieval period. The historic connections within the town can still be identified today within its varying road widths, road layout, plot shapes and building proportions. The commercial areas of the town are comprised of a variety of two and three storey properties, varying in scale, style and materials. Generally, properties sit tight against the pavements and create lively streetscapes which contribute to Evesham's dynamic appeal.



4.8

The main shopping areas; High Street, Vine Street and the pedestrianised Bridge Street, within the ancient Evesham Town, are historically important to the town and centre around the medieval Market Place the sixteenth century Town Hall. Evesham's High Street is very wide and was used for street markets until the twentieth century. The Riverside Shopping Centre connecting the Market Place to Bridge Street was built in the late twentieth century and contains the nineteenth century Public Hall. Port Street and Waterside are within the old borough of Bengeworth. Port Street is a narrow road winding up from the river and subject to heavy traffic volumes.

4.9

Buildings within the main shopping areas are within the Conservation Area and date from as early as the 15th and 16th centuries, although newer 18th and 19th century additions and replacements are equally important to the overall character of the town. In the High Street Conservation Area many of the brick frontages are early nineteenth century additions, the buildings behind the facades are timber frame properties.



4.10

Examples of typical 19th and early 20th century shop fronts which are framed with stallrisers, pilasters, fascias and cornices and have large divided plate glass display windows. Shop fronts are often characterised with clerestory lights and a side or central door can be observed, many in a relatively unaltered state. Whereas others retain some of their framework but have seen proportions altered by later modification to the windows. The retention of historic shop fronts is key to retaining the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the sympathetic alteration and replacement of features should be a key concern anywhere within the town.

4.11

In some cases, the quality of parts of Evesham's shopping areas has been degraded by modern 20th century additions. Signage details can often be inconsistent with the quality of the shop front and this can significantly detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area and the host building. Poor signage frequently disguises good quality shop fronts.

Pershore

4.12

The Lower High Street in Pershore was formed as a medieval commercial extension to the earlier core of the market town which comprised of Broad Street and Bridge Street. The linear road is lined with individual buildings that sit tight against one another and abut the back of the pavements, creating a continuous building line which is broken only by an occasional gap between buildings. Today the buildings date mainly from the 18th and 19th centuries and are a mix of two and three storeys in height and of varying scales. Buildings adopt consistent design principles, although the varying ridge, eaves and window levels result in an energetic public vista.



Attention to the detail of the host buildings and overall street character should be the primary consideration when looking to undertake alterations within shopping areas.



4.13

Most of the buildings are listed as being of special architectural or historic interest and retain many of their original features. In the main commercial area some have been subject to pressure for new or updated shop fronts and signage, a few of which detract from the quality of the street scene.

4.14

Broad Street is the former market place of the medieval planned town which today is a mix of residential and commercial uses. A common feature of the commercial units is the presence of bay windows and continuous flat hoods over, expressing the Georgian influence in the town. Many of the shop fronts are Georgian in style with smaller projecting bow windows. The windows are divided into smaller panes of glass reflecting the limitations in glass production technology at the time. Much of the original crown glass has been replaced but where examples still exist, their retention is of



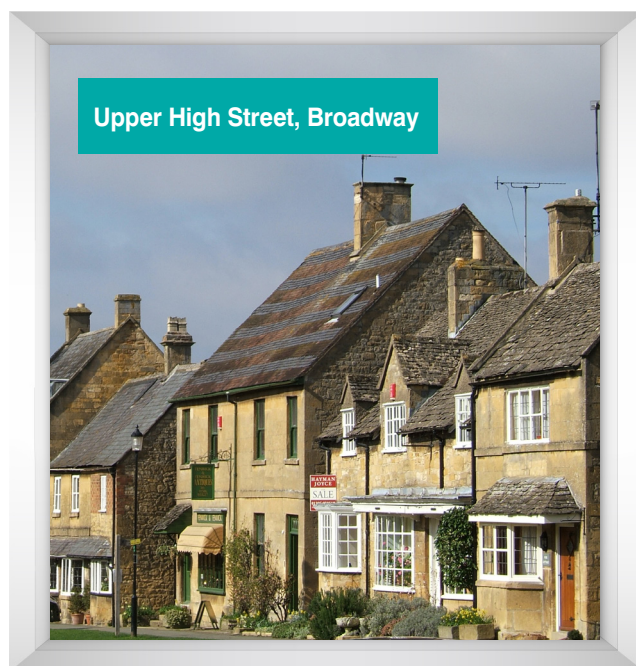
paramount importance within and shop front alteration scheme. The retention of historic shop fronts is important to preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area. Hanging signs are considered a particularly traditional feature of Pershore's shopping centre. This Guide will provide advice regarding how hanging signs should be used respectfully within our shopping areas.



Broadway

4.15

Broadway is a medieval village with a long history, evident by the layout and buildings, dating back to the 18th century. The majority of the village is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is renowned for its Cotswold stone buildings which are a predominant feature along the linear broad High Street, lined with trees and characterised by wide grass verges. The shops in the High Street represent a significant feature of Broadway's Conservation Area, where the most of the buildings are listed. Many of the shop fronts seen today were ground floors of former houses and cottages dating from 18th, 19th and 20th century.



4.16

Many of the shop fronts are characterised by broad window displays, either bow or canted bay, with distinctive features including small fascias and hanging signs with modest or no signage. Where signage is present, lettering is small and applied directly onto the fascia in sympathetic colours. The main features on shop windows are glazing bars, on stone bases, many with pitched tiled or flat lead topped canopies extending over the adjacent doorway. There are some examples of timber shop fronts incorporating a door and large glass window cranked arm window blinds, although these are the exception rather than typical.

4.17

Early 20th century shop window displays have been influenced by the Arts and Crafts Period, incorporating carved and decorated timber work in larger bowed windows with glazing bars, or smaller bow or bay windows with leaded lights.

4.18

There are good examples of modern shop windows in Broadway which have replicated historic shop windows, albeit less detailed, however this standard is encouraged for future proposals, as illustrated in the photographs opposite:

A good example of 18th and 19th century shop windows is illustrated in the photograph below. Modest canted display windows to the side of a separate entrance door with pitched tiled canopies.

4.19

In view of Broadway's distinctive character it is important to respect the historic and architectural character and appearance of the Conservation Area when considering alterations to shop fronts. Property owners should consider sympathetic design and retention of traditional features in any alterations to shop fronts or signage.

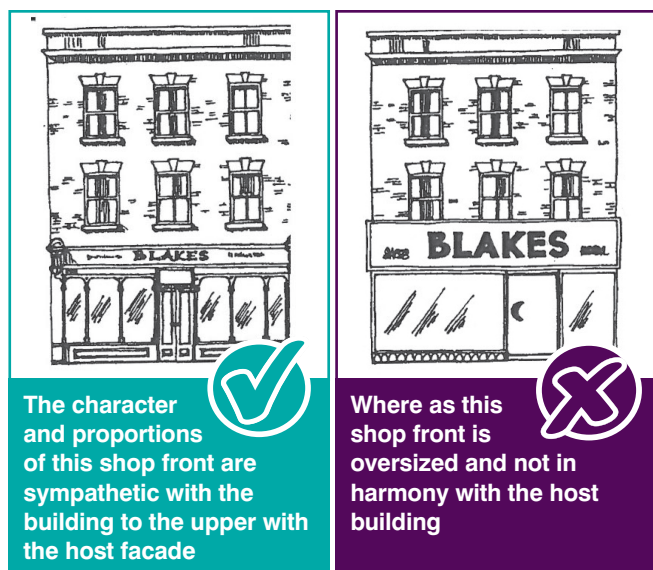


5. Shop front design principles and considerations

Attention to scale and surroundings

5.1

The design of the shop front should respect the character and proportions of the entire building, including widths, horizontal and vertical elements and details of the upper stories. Good design will enhance the individuality and character of the building.



5.2

Many of the buildings which now function as shops within the historic town centres of Wychavon are built on narrow frontages. Often they are tall with their vertical emphasis reflected in the shape of the upper floor windows. Strong vertical features break up the visual flow by capturing the attention of passers by and attracting visitors into the shop.

5.3

Historically, the shop fronts were used to create a frame for the window displays, in a similar way to the frame used to display a painting. A display window framed by a visually robust surround gives the impression of structural stability and offers a visual support for the upper floors. Such principles can be applied to the reproduction of traditional shop fronts as well as contemporary versions.

5.4

The design of a shop front needs to be informed by the individual character of the host building. Where the host building is of little architectural merit, and it would be inappropriate to mimic its style within a proposed shop front, key features such as design, materials and height

should be drawn from neighbouring properties. This will enable the shop front to harmonise with the overall streetscape.

5.5

The presence of unsympathetic shop fronts already within a host building or features elsewhere within the street is not sufficient argument for the installation of equally unattractive or inappropriate features in a new shop front. Betterment will be sought in all cases to improve the character and appearance of the street scene and complement and enhance features of the building in question.

Typical shop fronts

5.6

The traditional shop front has strong functional logic within its design. The main purposes of the shop front include providing an identity to the premises; attracting shoppers; protecting goods from damage; and drawing shoppers inside. These functions have informed the design and evolution of shop fronts and continue to be important considerations today.

5.7

Before considering alterations to shop fronts, it is necessary to assess which features make a positive contribution to the individual property or street as a whole. The period of the original building or street can help to highlight the most important aspects of a property or shop front.

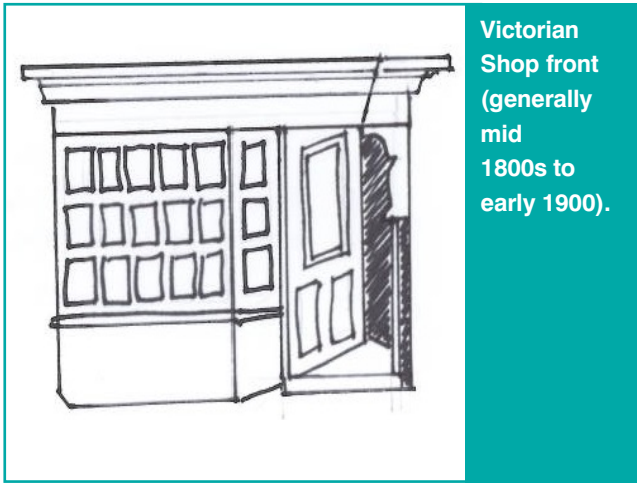
5.8

Within Wychavon, shop fronts fall within 3 main historic categories: those from the Georgian period; those from the Victorian period; and those of 20th century design. The main features of these are summarised below:



5.9

Example of a Georgian shop front on Bridge Street, Pershore shop fronts include a small, simple frame to the windows, often with vertical columns (pilasters) supporting the top of the shop front and its signage (generally known as the emblature).



Greek or Roman influence can often be seen within the proportions of Georgian shop fronts. Which often include projecting bow windows with small leaded panes of glass.



5.10

Victorian shop fronts generally follow the theme of Georgian design but increase the ornamental features and practical functionality. They tend to be set flush with the host building so as not to obscure the pavement and a bay was often created through the setting back of the doorway. Larger panes of glass are introduced which reflects the advancements in glass production manufacturing processes.

20th century shop fronts

5.11

This Guide has been primarily concerned with the design of traditional shop fronts, which generally dominate the shopping streets of Wychavon's towns and villages. However, single or groups of 20th century shops also exist in parts of the Droitwich Spa where it may not always be appropriate to design a shop front using traditional methods.



5.12

In such circumstances, the design of the shop front will be less restricted but inspiration should be sought from the architectural composition of the building and the surrounding properties, never treating the individual premises in isolation. In all cases, good contemporary design which uses high quality materials and craftsmanship will be encouraged.



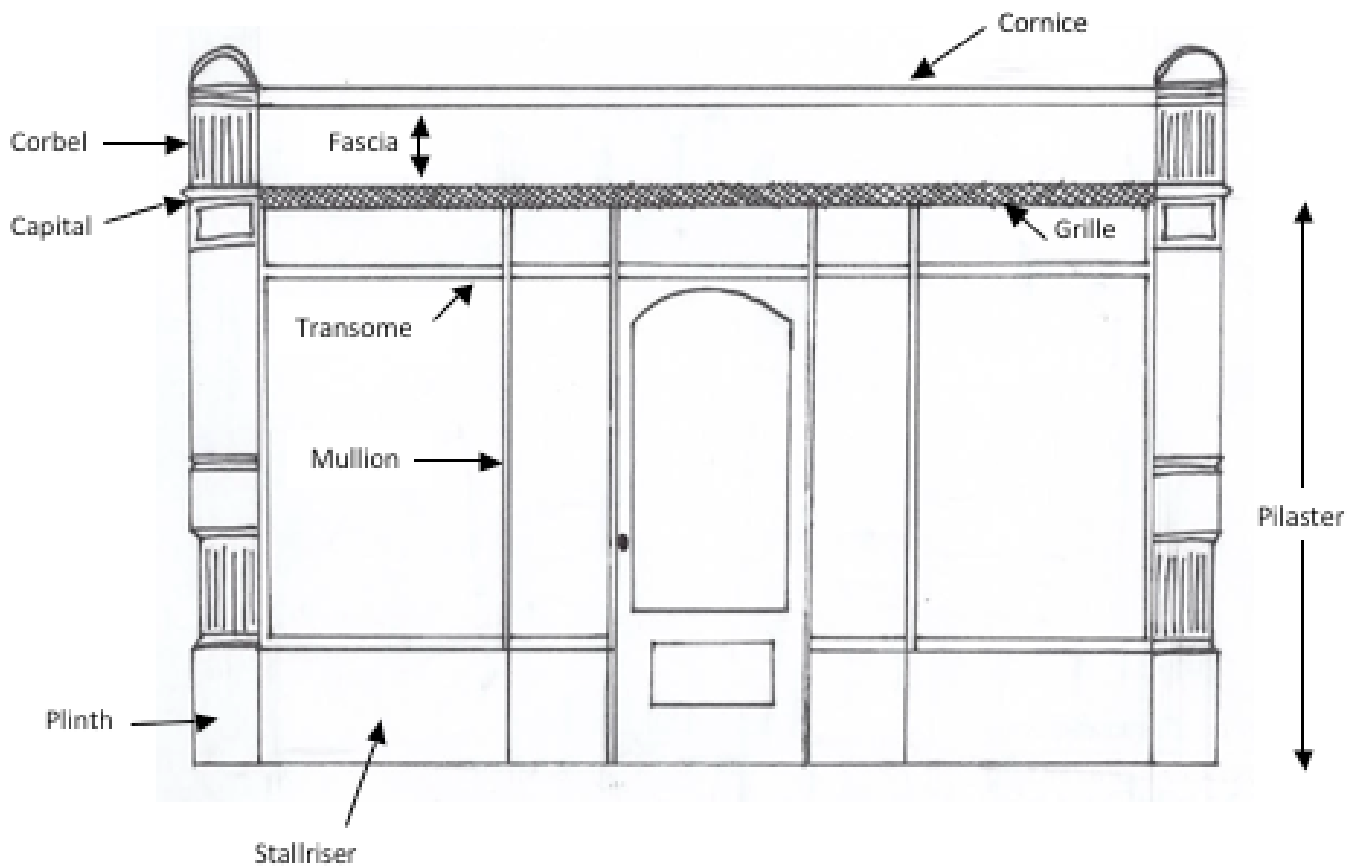
5.13

It may be acceptable to relax the restrictions upon the installation of shop security features and the illumination and design of advertisements in more modern shopping areas, but these will be assessed on an individual case-by-case basis as opposed to precedent dictating the outcome of planning decisions. Many poor examples of modern shop fronts can be found within the traditional shopping streets of Wychavon but betterment and the enhancement of an area will be sought in all cases.

5.14

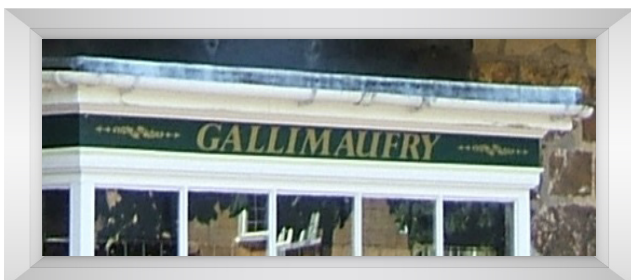
The design of a shop front is comprised of various individual elements which all have their own visual or practical function. These features define the style of the premises and integrate the shop front with the character of the host building. The diagram below shows how each component features within the overall shop front and the text below explains the unique role both structurally and aesthetically of each of these features.

Features of a Shop Front



Cornice

The cornice is a principle feature of the shop front, providing protection from the weather and giving a strong visual line to the top of the shop front.



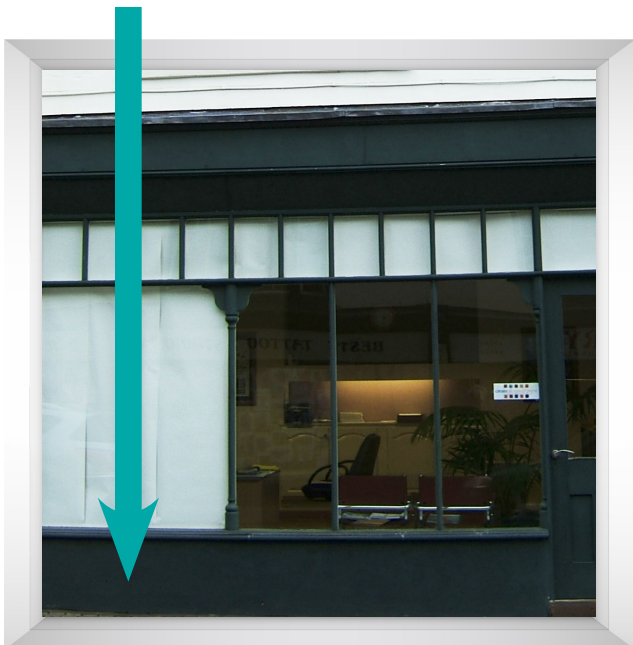
Fascia

The fascia provides a flat surface to allow for signwriting. Traditionally, Georgian and early Victoria shops have flat fascias, whereas the higher shop fronts of the late Victoria and Edwardian eras often included angled fascias for increased visibility from the pavement. Separately applied fascias of plastic or similar materials are discouraged. As a guide, the height of the fascia should generally not exceed 10 % of the overall height of the shop front. Further guidance on the design of signs is detailed in the 'Advertisement and Signage' section below.



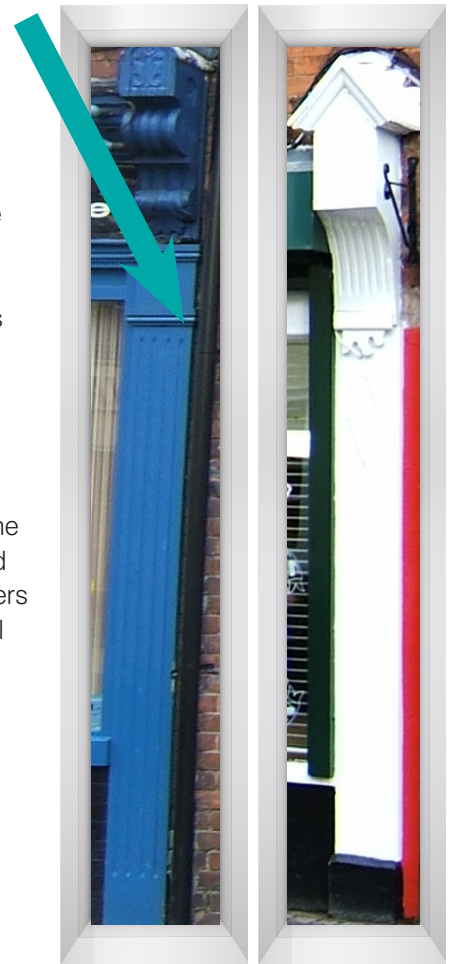
Stallriser

The stallriser provides protection to the base of the shop front as well as raising the goods displayed inside to an easily viewable height. Brick, stone or rendered stallrisers are usually flat, whereas timber stallrisers are usually of a frame and panel construction. Where stallrisers exist, they should be retained, and where they have been removed they should be replaced.



Pilasters

The pilaster is a shallow column that projects slightly from the wall on each side of the shop front. They create a vertical emphasis to the shop front and a physical division between neighbouring properties. Combined with the plinth, capital and corbel, the pilasters provide the visual support for the shop front.



Corbel

Also termed the 'console'. This is a projecting feature positioned above the pilaster. Both corbels and pilasters can range in their degree of decoration but most have some element of moulding or surface embellishment. Where pilasters and consoles exist, they should be retained. Any new additions should be designed to reflect the level of detail included elsewhere within the shop front and constructed from an appropriate material.



Capital

The upper-most part of the classical column.

Transom

The transoms provides a horizontal divide to the shop window, splitting the shop window into smaller panes.



Plinth

A slightly projecting block at the base of the pilaster.

Mullion

The mullions provide the vertical elements to the window frame.

Grille

A grating of metal, wood, or another material used as a barrier in a shop window. This is a less-intrusive security feature allowing the proportions of the shop front to be maintained. See the sections entitled 'shop security' and 'Do I need planning permission?' for further advice on appropriate security measures.

Shop blinds

5.15

A shop blind is an extension of a shop frontage and when withdrawn can still have an impact on the street scene. It is important that shop blinds are a positive feature, particularly within conservation areas and on a listed building. Blinds require planning permission/listed building consent. Fixed dutch or balloon blinds are not considered as a traditional shop front feature and therefore are not generally permitted in conservation areas, listed buildings or on older buildings. These style of blinds require planning permission and advertising consent. Traditional retractable canvas style blinds maybe considered if a blind is necessary and there is space in the fascia for it.



Appropriate materials

5.16

Traditional materials such as timber, masonry, and stucco are normally more appropriate within Conservation Areas and on listed, historic or traditional buildings. For new shop units, materials used should be traditional, in keeping with the wider building and be of a high quality. Synthetic materials such as anodised aluminium, plastic or fibreglass are rarely appropriate.

6. Shop security

6.1

The council recognises that there will always be a demand by shop owners to apply security measures to their properties. However, it is the council's role to ensure that security features respect the character of the individual building and the appearance of the street as a whole. Ideally, security features should be considered from the outset of shop front design and included as integral parts of a shop front rather than added as an after-thought.

6.2

A handful of examples of inappropriate and unsympathetic security fixtures can be witnessed within the retail areas of Wychavon, despite even the protection of Conservation Area status in many of these areas. Where unauthorised security features exist, their removal will be pursued through the Enforcement process. In instances where poorly designed fixtures are present, in order not to set a precedent, these will not be considered when assessing future similar decisions for security devices of similar design. Betterment will be sought in all cases and a wider focus on the regeneration objectives of our shopping streets will be the driving force behind the granting of planning permission for security fixtures within our town centres. Should security features be required, the following methods should be explored in preferential order.

1. Installation of security glass

6.3

There are two main types of security glass available. These are laminated glass and toughened glass. The installation of security glass should be the first security measure considered as it has limited visual impact upon the shop front and character and appearance of the area

Laminated glass

This is the council's preferred option as it can be cut to fit an existing shop front on-site and if broken, it will only break around the point of impact.

Toughened glass

This is a much stronger glass, but will break into tiny fragments upon impact. The glass needs to be cut to size off site before it can begin the toughening process, which can cause time delays and difficulties where glass needs to be replaced at short notice.

6.4

If a shop front benefits from the original or authentic hand-made style glass, its replacement with a modern factory made alternative is likely to diminish the quality of its original design. Planning permission is not always needed to replace glass within a shop front, although this provision would not include the substitution of window frames. Any glass replaced without planning permission must be a like-for-like replica, which would prohibit the replacement of traditional handmade glass with modern factory-made equivalents. If the property is listed this will also need listed building consent.



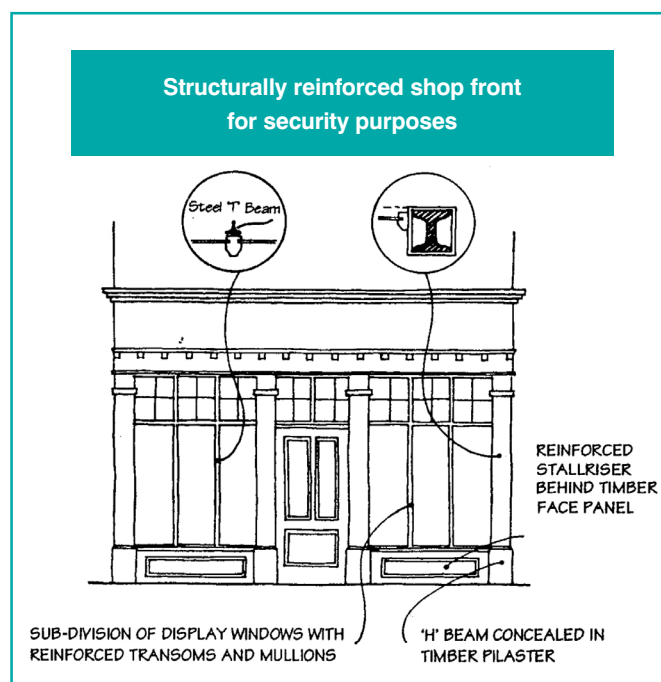
2. Reinforcement of traditional shop front features

6.5

The traditional shop front is designed to give a visual appearance of structural stability as it forms the visual support for the upper floors. Already, there are advantages to the features of traditional shop front design, in that the expanse of the window is divided into smaller panes by the transoms and mullions. If breakage occurs to glazing within a traditional shop front, only those affected smaller panes will need to be replaced, as opposed to an entire expanse of glass within a modern shop front. Replacing glass panes on a listed building will require listed building consent. Steel reinforcement of the transoms and mullions can also add further structural stability to the shop front.

6.6

The stallriser can also act as a visual deterrent to vandalism, particularly ram-raids. This can be further reinforced with masonry, concrete or steel, behind the visible frontage which can enhance the physical barrier to vandalism.



3. Security grilles

6.7

The visual appearance of a security grille is the primary consideration when considering planning applications. A variety of grilles are available and priority should be given to less intrusive varieties such as those fitted internally before considering external options. There is no evidence to suggest that internally fitted grilles are any less effective at deterring crime than externally fitted shutters within South Worcestershire and therefore

priority should be given to methods that respect the proportions and features of the shop front and its host building.

It should be noted that external security shutters and grilles are not permitted in conservation areas or on listed buildings.

4. Internally fitted grilles

6.8

Planning permission is not needed for internal security grilles although it is advisable to check with the Conservation Officer if your building is listed as listed building consent may be required.

A variety of internal grilles are available which enable the proportions of the shop front to be maintained, yet still provide security benefits. The grilles often consist of a light mesh grille or lattice roller shutter which are mounted behind the fascia panel. This type of grille allows the window display to be visible to passers-by yet -reduces intrusion into the character of the street.

5. Removable grilles

6.9

Removable grilles can be fixed to the outside of windows or doors on runners or hooks and then locked to the frames. Removable grilles often still allow views into the premises, maintaining an open appearance. Their detachable nature also means that they have a minimal physical appearance due to not requiring any housing or rails.

6.10

The grilles should be of light-weight construction, be fitted so as to respect the design features of the property and should be removed and stored indoors during opening hours. If your building is listed, listed building consent will be required. Planning permission will be required for removable security grilles on a property and listed building consent will be required where the buildings are listed.

6. Externally fitted shutters

6.11

There are considered to be distinct disadvantages of externally fitted grilles or roller mounted shutters as they are often criticised for giving a feeling of deprivation and can be a target for graffiti and vandalism.

6.12

Not only do the shutters themselves have a significant, detrimental visual impact, but the mountings, guides and housing all contribute to a cluttered and unattractive shop front. Such fittings are considered

to be inappropriate on buildings of traditional design or within historic areas; particularly those protected by Conservation Area or listed status as listed building consent will be required.

6.13

Wychavon have been successful in resisting various applications for new external security shutters within our Conservation Areas in recent years, and received the backing at planning appeals which have upheld our decisions to resist additional examples. Despite a handful of examples of similar style shutters being present from historic planning applications or lapsed enforcement periods, there has been a general consensus from Planning Officers and Planning Inspectors that the visual quality of our shopping streets should be preserved and enhanced.

6.14

Planning permission is always needed for external shutters and listed building consent will be required for listed buildings in instances where they are not considered visually detrimental, the council would favour shutters with an open weave to allow some form of visibility into the shop. The shutters should be designed as an integral part of the shop front and cover only the windows, not the whole frontage.

6.15

The architectural features of the property should be respected and should not be obscured or harmed by the fixtures (for example pilasters should not be covered by the grilles). It is essential that a coloured finish is used, preferably in a dark recessive colour and the guidance channels should be painted to match the colour of the shop front.

7. Exploring other methods

6.16

The greatest deterrent to criminal activity is human presence. The more inviting the street appears at night, the more people are likely to use it. Residential use above premises can help to increase pedestrian footfall and therefore natural surveillance outside of shopping hours. There are certain permitted development rights for the conversion of first floor accommodation above retail premises to a residential unit. The planning department can offer further assistance on this matter.

6.17

The use of street furniture can be used to deter certain criminal activities, such as bollards to prevent ram-raiding. Done well, this can enhance the appearance of these public spaces, and add to the character of the area. However, this should always be carried out as a co-ordinated approach covering a wider area, rather than on an individual or ad-hock basis which could appear cluttered and out-of-keeping with character of the street.

8. Alarms

6.18

Alarms and alarm boxes offer an effective crime prevention mechanism although care should be taken over the location of alarm boxes. It is essential that the positioning of the alarm box is visible, without being intrusive and their colour can often help to make them more visually acceptable. The installation of an alarm box on the frontage of a property would not require planning permission as this type of operation would be considered to be 'de minimus', meaning too small or minimal to be taken into account. However if the building is listed, the alarm box will require listed building consent.



7. Signage and advertisements

7.1

The design and location of signs within Wychavon's shopping streets is particularly important, especially in conservation areas and on listed buildings. Signage can be designed to complement both traditional and modern shop fronts and can greatly enhance the quality of the street scene. A badly designed sign, even if it is only of small proportions, can have a detrimental impact upon a larger area.

7.2

The display of advertisements is subject to a separate consent process within the planning system and is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. The regulations state that it is an offence to display unauthorised advertisements and therefore enforcement action will be taken.

7.3

Where a building is listed, the display of adverts will need to be sensitively designed and sited to ensure minimal harm to the appearance of a listed building and its setting. A new sign or advert of any size on or attached to a listed building is likely to require listed building consent as an alteration may affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Advertisements proposed in a conservation area will require careful consideration and will need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.



7.4

Signage is most appropriate and most effective when it is kept to a minimum. Too much signage can smother the architectural quality of a building and lead to a cluttered and confused street scene.

The window display

7.5

Traditionally, shop fronts were designed to frame the goods on sale internally within the premises. Particularly within Conservation Areas, the most appropriate form of advertising is through the display of goods within the shop window which can tell the shopper far more about the goods on offer than any external sign. In recent years there has been an increase in illustrated plastic film and posters inside windows to advertise goods for sale. Plastic film on listed buildings is not permitted and we discourage its use on non listed buildings within the district, however discreet etched glass type maybe an acceptable form of window display. Similarly posters can also detract the appearance of a window display and therefore should be avoided, particularly where the poster is classed as an advertisement the advertisement regulations will apply.





The design of signs

7.6

Sign design should be simple and the information displayed on a fascia sign in particular should be kept to a minimum, and no bigger than 1.55 square metres. Ideally the signs themselves should be designed as integral parts of the building and property owners should ensure they are sympathetic and conform to the wider visions for the area. The visual upgrading of an area and the economic benefits that come with it are simply not possible without the co-operation of individual property owners. We therefore would urge anyone seeking to undertake works to any property within our shopping streets to observe the efforts already made to certain key properties by aspirational property owners, and focus on the wider vision and benefits associated with seeking betterment of existing situations.

7.7

New fascias should not be added over the top of existing fascias and lettering should be applied directly to the fascia board within traditional properties. In situations where fascia boxes are already in place, their removal will be encouraged. The main shop sign should be located within the fascia area and any signs should not cover up or damage any architectural features or any original details, including consoles, decorative brick courses and window sills at first floor level.

7.8

Painted timber fascias in a matt finish are the preferred design and colours should be careful not to clash with neighbouring premises. Ideally colours from 'Heritage' ranges which complement the colours of the overall shop front and the premises above will be favoured in the historical shopping areas of Wychavon.

7.9

Fascia lettering should be carried out in a script style and scale to complement the period of the building and the available space. As a guide, the lettering should not be more than 65 per cent of the height of the fascia, or 75 per cent of the width and should be centrally placed. The photo below illustrates appropriate letter size on the fascia.



7.10

The wording on a fascia sign should usually be limited to the shop name and/or trade of the business. The display of property numbers will also be encouraged to assist emergency services locate properties within the shopping areas. Clearly displayed property numbers will also benefit the shop owners by assisting customers to locate a particular shop. Sponsored fascia signs should be avoided and companies with multiple retail outlets will be expected to adopt a flexible approach to their branding to tie in with the characteristics of a historic shop front.

Projecting signs

7.11

A proliferation of signs can lead to a cluttered and confused street scene, it is therefore necessary that a premise should be limited to no more than one projecting sign each. Traditional hand-painted signs are favoured and these should include appropriate lettering or symbols. Generally projecting signs should be fixed at fascia level and tie in with the overall character of the shop front to which they serve. It is unlikely to be appropriate for a projecting sign to exceed 1 metre from the wall or two thirds of the width of any footway or pavement below.

Illumination

7.12

Internally illuminated projecting or fascia signs, including back lit individual letter signage, is not considered acceptable within the council's Conservation Areas, as illustrated in the first photo below.



The first photo above shows a poor example of a shop front and unacceptable illumination. The second photo shows the same building with shop front improvements, including new canopy, repainting and repositioned lettering.

7.13

If some form of illumination is considered necessary to encourage evening trade for example, illumination should be discreet, such as trough lights. Lighting should be sympathetic to the design and style of the building. Within Conservation Areas there are no permitted development rights for illuminated signage, these would always require planning permission and where the building is listed, listed building consent will be necessary. Internally illuminated and flashing signs will not be permitted. It may be that in some

Conservation Areas illuminated signage of any kind is not considered suitable. Each case will be judged on its own merit.

A-Boards

7.14

The positioning of A-Boards should be carefully considered as they can be seen as an obstruction, especially to blind and partially sighted people. The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) recommend that A-Boards are placed 2 metres away from the shop premises; however this is dependant on width of the pavement. It is therefore advisable to discuss this further with the Local Authority. As a general rule, A-Boards are subject to advertisement consent; however a temporary board that is removed in the evening will be tolerated in the district. More than one board will be pursued by the enforcement team.

7.15

Under the Highways Act 1980, Section 148, it is an offence for a person without lawful authority to locate anything on the highway that would interrupt any user of the highway. This includes items such as A-boards, signs, displays etc.

Empty shops

7.16

It is recognised that empty shops can look unsightly when the window display is vacant or closing down signs remain. When possible, officers within the Regeneration team will proactively contact the agents of empty units to discuss enhancing the aesthetics whilst

Further advice

7.17

It is possible that shop signage will abide by certain conditions of advertisement control and therefore will not be subject to planning control (known as 'deemed consent'). However, it is always advisable to contact the Local Planning Authority prior to commencing any signage work as specific restrictions may apply to individual properties or areas. In all circumstances, shop owners will be encouraged to choose an appropriate design and type of signage for the area in which the premises are located. Planning Officers and Heritage Officers are available to provide specific advice on signage as and when required.



8. Good design principles

8.1

The following list outlines the general principles that should be taken into account when planning any alterations to shop fronts.

- Proposals for alterations should consider the impact they will have on the individual building and the surrounding area and should aim to enhance quality in all cases.
- Fascia signs should not span more than one property or obscure original details such as fascias, pilasters or consoles.
- Fascias should not extend above first floor and obscure details.
- Many modern or poorly designed shop fronts use large single panes of glazing that extend to the ground. Stallrisers can make a significant contribution to the proportions of a shop front and the character of an area and should be retained where possible.
- Shop fronts should complement neighbouring premises and the buildings that contain them.
- Sensitive repair of traditional features are often preferable to replacement. Retain, repair and reinstate where possible.
- A lack of vertical framing to a window creates poor visual support for the upper floors. No stallriser makes the building appear to have no base.
- Materials should complement the style and period of the building and the area. Traditional shop fronts should use natural materials; styled, coloured and finished in traditional ways. More modern designs allow for greater flexibility but the finish and colour should complement rather than contrast with the surroundings.
- Illuminated fascia signs are often inappropriate and will be strongly resisted within the Conservation Areas. In other less traditional areas special justification will be required in order for them to be deemed acceptable.
- Lettering within signage should be unobtrusive and hanging signs should be well proportioned.
- Poorly conceived features such as undivided plate glass, excessively deep fascias, inappropriate materials and crude joinery should be designed out when considering shop front alterations.
- Security measures should be incorporated at an early stage of the design of a shop front to ensure they have minimal visual impact on the final appearance of the premises.

- The design of a shop front should avoid standardisation, reflecting the diversity of a street scene.
- Once a new shop front has been installed, regular cleaning and maintenance will help attract custom and ensure the longevity of the works carried out.

Disabled access

8.2

There is a statutory obligation through the Disability Discrimination Act and the Building Regulations (Part M) to provide reasonable access for disabled users.

8.3

The following considerations should be taken into account when making provisions for disabled access.

- Doors should be a minimum width of 800mm to allow adequate access for a wheelchair, although 850mm will allow for electric wheelchairs and double pushchairs.
- Doors should be light enough to enable visitors to open them with limited strength. Some opening mechanisms can be fitted without compromising character.
- Automatic doors would not usually be acceptable within a traditional shop front.
- Frameless glass doors are dangerous for children and partially sighted people and may be prone to damage by wheelchairs and pushchairs.
- Door bells and door handles should be installed at around 1m above ground level. Handles are better than knobs.
- Kicking plates can be installed to a maximum height of approximately 400mm in height to protect the door from damage.
- Ramps can often be used to allow access higher level shops. However, internal ramps are preferable. A ramp should not exceed 1:12 gradient.
- Adequate internal space within the premises should be provided to allow free movement and manoeuvring.
- Care should be taken to allow disabled access within the public highway. Common problems include the display of produce within the confines of the public highway, display of A-boards within the public highway and disabled ramps that project into the footpath.

9. Do you need planning permission?

9.1

This guidance should not be seen as a substitute for professional help. You are responsible for ensuring that the correct permissions are obtained before making any changes to your shop front and when putting up advertisements. The issues involved can be complicated and it is always advisable to contact Wychavon's Planning Department before making any alterations.

However, below is a summary of controls and legislation that will be applicable.

Shop fronts

9.2

Replacements and changes or alterations to shop fronts will always require planning permission, unless they are very minor repairs which do not materially affect the appearance of the shop front. If the building is listed, then listed building consent will also be required.

Internal alterations

9.3

Internal alterations within the shop often do not require planning permission unless the building is listed, then the works would require listed building consent.

Alterations to shops, including first floors or above

9.4

Within a Conservation Area, any area of a shop would not benefit from permitted development rights. This means that any alteration, including the external area of the first floor or above floors will require planning permission, including the alteration or replacement of windows.

Fascia and hanging signs

9.5

There are certain allowances for the installation of fascia signs on shop fronts included within the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007. These are subject to size restrictions and dependent upon their positioning within the shop front. New signage on a listed building will require planning permission however.

9.6

In general, deemed consent is granted where:

- the advertisement is no bigger than 0.3 square meters (or any size if illuminated) on the front of, or outside, of the premises;
- no character or symbol on the advertisement may be more than 0.75 metre in
- no part of the advertisement may be more than 4.6 metres above ground level,
- only one advertisement is displayed

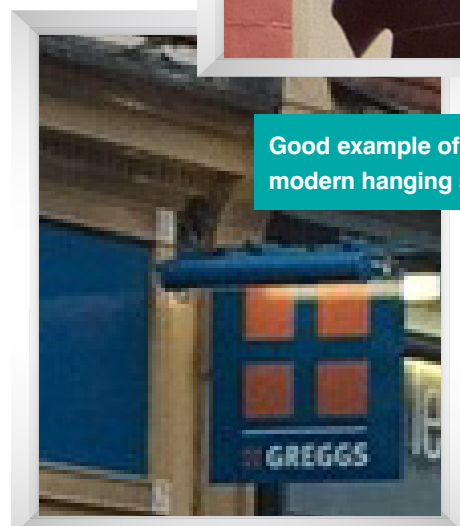
9.7

Outside of these restrictions, advertisement consent will usually be required for the display of signs including most illuminated signs.

Good examples of traditional hanging signs



Good example of modern hanging sign



9.8

Temporary adverts up to 0.6 square metres relating to local events may also be displayed for a short period and should not be bigger than 0.5 square metres.

9.9

Where larger, professional adverts, business signs or outdoor advertisements are required applicants must comply with five 'standard conditions' as listed in the advertisement regulations (see Appendix 2).

9.10

When considering advertisements that require consent in a conservation area, the local planning authority must also give special consideration to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of appearance of that area.

9.11

There are no permitted development rights for any illuminated signage within the Conservation Areas. Illuminated signage will always require planning permission and/or advertisement consent.

9.12

Further information relating to these allowances can be obtained within the accompanying 'Quick Guide to Shop Fronts and Signage'. Advertisement control is complex and the conditions vary depending on the proposal, therefore it is advisable that you seek confirmation from the planning department before carrying out the work.

Shop blinds and canopies

9.13

The installation of shop blinds will require planning permission. Where the building is listed, listed building consent will also be required. Dutch or balloon blinds also need advertisement consent.

Roller shutters and grilles

9.14

Planning permission is always necessary for external security shutters and grilles. Listed building consent is also needed where the building is listed.

Satellite/antenna

9.15

These require planning permission within Conservation Areas on elevations which front a road and listed building consent where the property is listed.

Building regulations

9.16

The Building Regulations are applicable if there are structural changes to the building such as a new shop front or if new glazing and access into the premises is required. A variety of shop front alterations will therefore also need to comply with the Building Regulations in addition to any requirements for planning permission, listed building or advertisement consent. For further information regarding building regulations, please contact the South Worcestershire Building Control Team (see Appendix 1)



Appendix 1: Useful contacts:

General planning enquiries:

Planning Services

Wychavon District Council
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Pershore
WR10 1PT

**Telephone: 01386 565565 - between 9am-5pm,
Monday-Friday**

Email: planning@wychavon.gov.uk

Listed building and conservation enquiries:

Planning Services

Wychavon District Council
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Pershore
WR10 1PT

**Telephone: 01386 565565 - between 9am-5pm,
Monday-Friday**

Email: Elaine.Artherton@wychavon.gov.uk

Building control enquiries:

All general enquiries, Building Regulation applications, additional information and technical queries
South Worcestershire Building Control Partnership

The Council House
Avenue Road
Malvern
Worcestershire
WR14 3AF

Telephone: 01684 862223

Email:

mail@southworcestershirebuildingcontrol.gov.uk



Appendix 2: Further reading

The Town and Country Planning Act (1990)

www.legislation.gov.uk

Control of Advertisement Regulations 2007

www.legislation.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

www.gov.uk

South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) 2016

www.swdevelopmentplan.org

Wychavon District Council Planning Forms and Local Requirements List

www.wychavon.gov.uk

Conservation Area Appraisals

www.wychavon.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Plans

www.wychavon.gov.uk

History of Windows and Glass: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers

www.wychavon.gov.uk

Accessible Historic Environment: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers

www.wychavon.gov.uk

Quick Guide to Shop Fronts and Signage

www.wychavon.gov.uk

Street Charter Toolkit – Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

www.rnib.org.uk



Wychavon District Council,

Planning Policy Team,

Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 1PT.

T: 01386 565565 E: policy.plans@wychavon.gov.uk

This information is available in large print, Braille, PC and CD-Rom on request. Please call: 01386 565565 or email: policy.plans@wychavon.gov.uk

If you need help communicating in English, please call 01386 565565, or email contact@swdevelopment.org

Arabic

إذا أنت بحاجة المساعدة في التخاطب معنا باللغة الإنجليزية، يرجى الإتصال بمركز خدمة العملاء على هاتف رقم 722 233 أو بواسطة البريد الإلكتروني: customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Polish

Jeżeli potrzebują Państwo pomocy w porozumiewaniu się w języku angielskim, prosimy o kontakt z Centrum Obsługi Klienta pod numerem 01905 722 233 lub na adres customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਸਟਮਰ ਸਰਵਿਸ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਨਾਲ 01905 722 233 'ਤੇ ਜਾਂ customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Bengali

যদি ইংরাজীতে কথা আদানপ্রদানের জন্য আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01905 722 233 এই নম্বরে অথবা customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk এখানে গ্রাহক পরিষেবা কেন্দ্রের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন

Portuguese

Se necessitar de ajuda para comunicar em Inglês por favor contacte o Serviço de Apoio a Clientes através do 01905 722 233 ou através do e-mail customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Urdu

اگر انگریزی میں گفتگو کرنے میں آپ کو مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم 01905 722 233 پر یا customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk پر کسٹمر سروس سے رابطہ کریں



www.wychavon.gov.uk

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