

Shopfronts, Shutters & Signage

Design Guidelines for Gloucester



Shopfronts

Design Guidelines for Gloucester

A Guide for Owners, Designers and Shopfitters

Forward

The City has a number of traditional and historic shopfronts, especially in the Gate Streets and the aim is to ensure that these are preserved and where lost reinstated to a better quality environment. This revised guidance is welcomed and will ensure that forthcoming schemes are well considered to ensure that the City's unique and distinctive historic character is preserved and enhanced for all to enjoy.

The Council appreciates that many retailers in Gloucester are facing increased competition due to a rise in online shopping and the effects of the economic downturn. This issue has been recognised by the Council offering support to businesses and owners through the many grant initiatives in the City. It is also important to attract shoppers and encourage them to return and this can be achieved by maintaining attractive shopfronts and streetscapes to entice shoppers and visitors to Gloucester. Shopfronts play an important role to improve the appearance of the street and add to the historic character of the City.



Councillor Colin Organ
(Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning)

'Shopfronts: Design Guidelines for Gloucester' The Shopfronts, Shutters and Signage – Design Guidelines for Gloucester will be used to support the regeneration of the City. The aim of guidelines is for the members of the public, consultants and developers to use the guide to assist with informing the design shopfronts and signage within the City as part of any development management scheme. This guidance will ensure that schemes are well considered and meet the City Council's requirements leading to a better quality environment. This revised document will follow the same principles of the previous design guide produced in the 1990's by providing design guidance on the alteration or installation of replacement shop fronts, new signage and security measures in order to maintain or raise the design quality of these features in the townscape.

If you have any questions regarding the guide please contact:

Planning Policy & Heritage Service, Gloucester City Council,
Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EQ

www.gloucester.gov.uk

Email: Heritage@gloucester.gov.uk

Supplementary Planning Document - Adopted November 2017

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	1
1.1	The history of commercial shopfronts in Gloucester	2
<hr/>		
2.	Policies	3
2.1	The National Planning Policy Framework	3
2.2	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	3
2.3	City Council Policies	3
2.4	Conservation Area Polices	5
<hr/>		
3.	Elements of good shopfront design	6
	Part 1 Specific building types	
3.1	Shops that occupy more than one building	6
3.2	Buildings designed to have a uniform appearance	7
3.3	Contemporary buildings	7
<hr/>		
4.	Elements of good shopfront design	8
	Part 2 Components	
4.1	Materials	9
4.2	Colour	10
4.3	Shopfront fascia signs	11
4.4	Projecting signs and hanging signs	12
4.5	Illumination of signs or advertisements	13
4.6	Window signs and stickers	15
<hr/>		
5.	Shopfront security	16
<hr/>		
6.	Recessed entrances	18
<hr/>		
7.	Blinds and canopies	18
<hr/>		
8.	Cash machines	19
<hr/>		
9.	Banner advertisements	19
<hr/>		
10.	Access and people with disabilities	20
<hr/>		
11.	Alarms, Satellite Dishes and Antennas	20
<hr/>		
12.	Submitting an application	21
12.1	What will need planning permission?	21
12.2	How to submit a planning application	22
<hr/>		
13.	The process checklist	23

This guide is intended to provide practical advice for developers and retailers who are considering changes to the external appearance of a shop. It outlines the components of a historic shopfront, the elements of good shopfront design and information on any necessary planning consent.

The guidance applies generally to shopfronts throughout the city, but more specifically to those buildings in conservation areas and those which are designated heritage assets, eg specifically listed buildings.



1. INTRODUCTION

Gloucester has a rich history evidenced by the variety of historic buildings that continue to stand in the city today. The commercial centre in particular contributes a vital element to the story of Gloucester's development. It is essential to preserve the character and integrity of these historic buildings, while ensuring that they are able to meet the needs of current and future generations.



Gloucester's heritage, along with its diverse communities, marks what is unique about the city. How that heritage is managed, presented and connected with, has a crucial impact on the perception of the city locally, nationally and internationally. It is central to Gloucester's civic pride, status, sense of place and continuity in times of change.



It is now a well established fact that an attractive and historically sensitive commercial shopping area can help boost a city's economy. The Council appreciates that many retailers in Gloucester are facing increased competition due to a rise in on-line shopping and the effects of the economic downturn. It is therefore more important than ever to attract shoppers and encourage them to return.

Shopfronts have an important role to play. They can promote the image of your business and should be designed to entice shoppers and visitors inside. Shopfronts can also help to improve the appearance of the street attracting shoppers to the area.



It is essential to have a high standard of shopfront design, construction and maintenance in order to provide an attractive and pleasant environment for workers, residents and visitors. This will not only protect the history and heritage of the city, but will make Gloucester more attractive and prosperous.



1.1 The history of commercial shopfronts in Gloucester

Gloucester has been a busy commercial centre for centuries because of its road and river trade. The City centre is laid out in a cruciform plan with four principal streets meeting at a cross. This was a typical Roman plan.

Until 1714, many structures on the main streets were gabled timber buildings. Later, a considerable number were either rebuilt or re-fronted with brick. Also, in the eighteenth century many imposing civic buildings were built and other buildings that were seen as obstructions were demolished.

The creation of the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal, and a series of basins at the Gloucester Docks in the early to mid-eighteenth century, led to an increase in Gloucester's trade and prosperity. These water features, along with the new railway lines, had a direct effect in stimulating commercial activity in the City.



By the 1850s, most of buildings in the centre no longer had timber fronts. They had been replaced by brick and stucco fronts and many had large shop windows.



From the end of the nineteenth century through to the First World War, the centre had been transformed because of the numerous new additions - public buildings, banks and shops.

In the 1920s and 1930s, many new shops were built in the city centre and areas of slum dwellings were demolished. One large commercial development was King's Square created in 1929 in the City centre.



Throughout the twentieth century, much redevelopment occurred in the city centre and some historic buildings were demolished. In the 1960s and 1970s the primary shopping centres of King's Walk and Eastgate were created. The latter required the relocation of the historic Eastgate Portico to create the new entrance to the shopping centre. Several of the historic shopfronts were replaced with more modern and less historically sensitive façades.

In the twenty first century, the focus has been on regeneration in Gloucester and new commercial areas such as the Gloucester Quays have been created. There is an emphasis on preserving existing historic shopfronts and on restoring newer shopfronts so that they are historically sympathetic.

2. POLICIES - National Guidance

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. One of the key elements of sustainability is protecting and enhancing our historic environment and heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. This is to ensure that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life by current and future generations. The NPPF continues the theme of PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment paragraphs 126 to 141, which are the core historic environment paragraphs contained within chapter 12 of the NPPF.

2.2 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act places a statutory duty on local planning authorities in the exercise of their planning function to *'pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'* (Sections 16 and 66). Also, *'to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas'* (Section 72).

The Department of Communities and Local Government has produced *'Outdoor Advertisements and Signs: A Guide for Advertisers'* (June 2007) which provides further assistance on signs and advertisements. This booklet is only a guide. It does not include every condition or limitation for every class of those advertisements which are normally permitted. For full details see *"The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007"* and *"Circular 03/07: Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007"*. It is possible that shop signage will be considered *"deemed Consent"* and therefore will not require a planning application as this falls within the parameters of current advertisement control, but please check with the Council before proceeding with any changes.

2.3 City Council Policies

The City Council has a Development Plan containing policies that assist in shaping development and ensuring good standards - The City of Gloucester Second Stage Deposit Local Plan (2002). The Plan has a policy relating to shopfronts, shutters and signs which states:

Policy BE.11 Shopfronts, Shutters and Signage

Proposals to alter an existing shopfront or sign, or create a new shopfront or sign, should take account of the following guidelines:

1. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining good quality traditional shopfronts that make a positive contribution to the character of the area and are capable of repair.
2. A new or refurbished shopfront should be designed to take account of the design, style and proportions of the building of which it forms a part and the character of the street in which the proposal is located.

3. Advertisements, signs and notice boards must be appropriate in scale, design and materials to the character and appearance of the building of which it forms a part and the street scene in which the proposal is located.
4. Proposals for external security measures on shopfronts will only be approved where the proposal harmonises with the shop front and the street scene.
5. The new shopfront should be accessible to wheelchair users wherever this is practical.
6. Hanging or projecting signs must not interfere with the visibility requirements of existing CCTV cameras.

The City Council are reviewing the 2002 Local Plan and Gloucester's emerging Development Plan Documents are:

- **Joint Core Strategy**
- **Gloucester City Plan**

The pre-submission Draft Joint Core Strategy 2014, has been produced in partnership between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council and sets out a planning framework for all three areas. Policy SD8 in the Joint Core Strategy concerns the historic environment:

Policy SD8 - Historic Environment

1. The built, natural and cultural heritage of Gloucester City, Cheltenham town, Tewkesbury town, smaller historic settlements and the wider countryside will continue to be valued and promoted for their important contribution to local identity, quality of life and the economy.
2. Development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, having regard to valued and distinctive elements of the historic environment.
3. Designated and undesignated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced as appropriate to their significance, and for their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place. Consideration will also be given to the contribution made by heritage assets to supporting sustainable communities and the local economy. Development should aim to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and put them to viable uses consistent with their conservation whilst improving accessibility where appropriate.
4. Proposals that will secure the future conservation and maintenance of heritage assets and their settings that are at risk through neglect, decay or other threats will be encouraged. Proposals that will bring vacant or derelict heritage assets back into appropriate use will also be encouraged.
5. Development proposals at Strategic Allocations must have regard to the findings and recommendations of the JCS Historic Environment Assessment (or any subsequent revision) demonstrating that the potential impacts on heritage assets and appropriate mitigation measures have been assessed.

This policy contributes towards achieving Objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5.

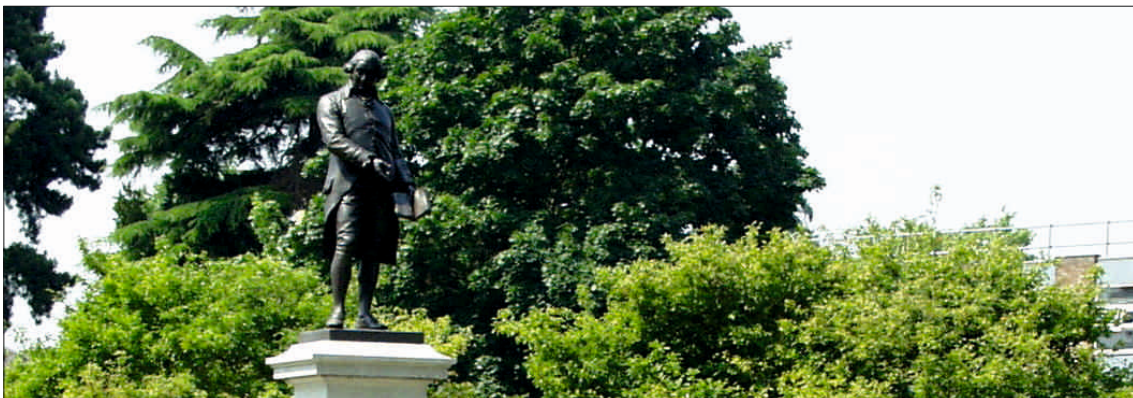
The Gloucester City Plan will sit beneath the Joint Core Strategy and provide more detailed site allocations and development management policies. It will, for example, set out where and when major regeneration schemes are expected to emerge, as well as identifying sites for new homes, jobs and shopping.

It will provide a framework for managing and enhancing the city's wider historic and natural environment, including conservation areas, listed buildings, sites of archaeological interest and public open spaces. This document will also contain historic environment policies including one relating to 'Shopfronts, Shutters and Signage', and this guidance will form part of the evidence to inform this policy.

2.4 Conservation Area Policies

Gloucester City has fourteen adopted Conservation Areas, which cover most of the City centre, as well as parts of Hempsted and Hucclecote Green. The most recent, Denmark Road Conservation Area (No 14), was designated and adopted by Full Council on 27 November 2008. The associated management recommendations give guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of the conservation area can be achieved. The following policies are of importance:

- The Council will seek to ensure the retention of existing historic shopfronts and notable elements of historic shopfront design.
- The Council will expect all applications for new or altered shopfronts to accord with the advice given in the publication 'Shopfronts - Design Guidance for Gloucester', and in Policy BE.11 'Shopfronts, Shutters and Signs' in the 'Gloucester Local Plan, Second Stage Deposit August 2002.'
- The Council will seek to ensure that all advertisement proposals relating to shops respect the character and appearance of the conservation area, in terms of siting, number, colours, materials and form of illumination.



3. ELEMENTS OF GOOD SHOPFRONT DESIGN

Part 1 - Specific building types

3.1 Shops that occupy more than one building

It is important for the appearance of buildings and the street scene that shopfronts correspond to only one building, even if the shop occupies more than one building.



Many properties in Gloucester are tall and narrow fronted. As a result, shops sometimes occupy more than one building, for example, in Worcester Street and on Bristol Road.

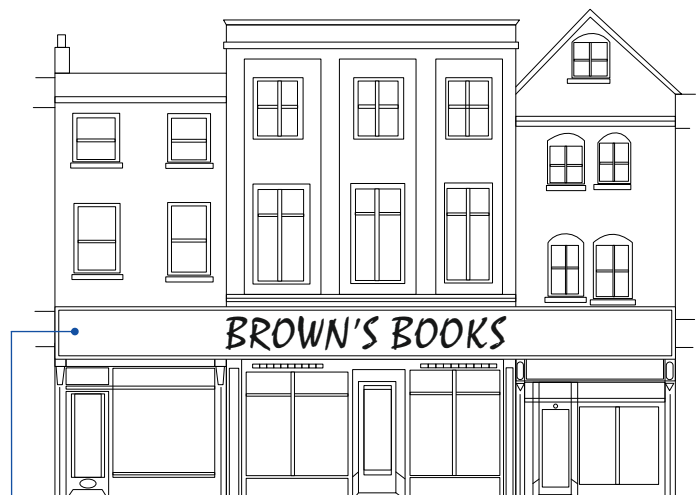
In order to distinguish the separate buildings, the shopfronts should be divided to correspond with each building. This can be done with pilasters, columns or, where appropriate, a change in fascia level so that the individual buildings are still apparent.

Failure to subdivide the shopfronts visually can have a detrimental effect, not only on the appearance of the buildings and the street scene, but on the interest and variety provided by individual buildings as well. Where a shop occupies more than one unit, it is better to repeat fascia signs and canopies rather than extend them across.

This is because overlarge fascias and canopies affect the balance across the building and often result in the loss of original features such as corbels and capitals. The street scene also takes on a horizontal appearance rather than the correct vertical appearance.



Preferred arrangement



A number of traditional features have been lost beneath the fascia board

3.2 Buildings designed to have a uniform appearance

Some terraces in Gloucester were designed and constructed at the same time to give the building a uniform appearance. Examples of this are St. Aldate Street, The Oxeboode and College Street. Shopfronts in these buildings should be designed to retain this uniformity as originally designed.

Within these terraces, fascia levels, corbels and pilasters should be similar in all units. However, there is an opportunity for each shopfront to take a somewhat individual design approach, provided the design stays within similar proportions. In some cases, such as College Street, the precise uniformity should remain unchanged.



3.3 Contemporary buildings

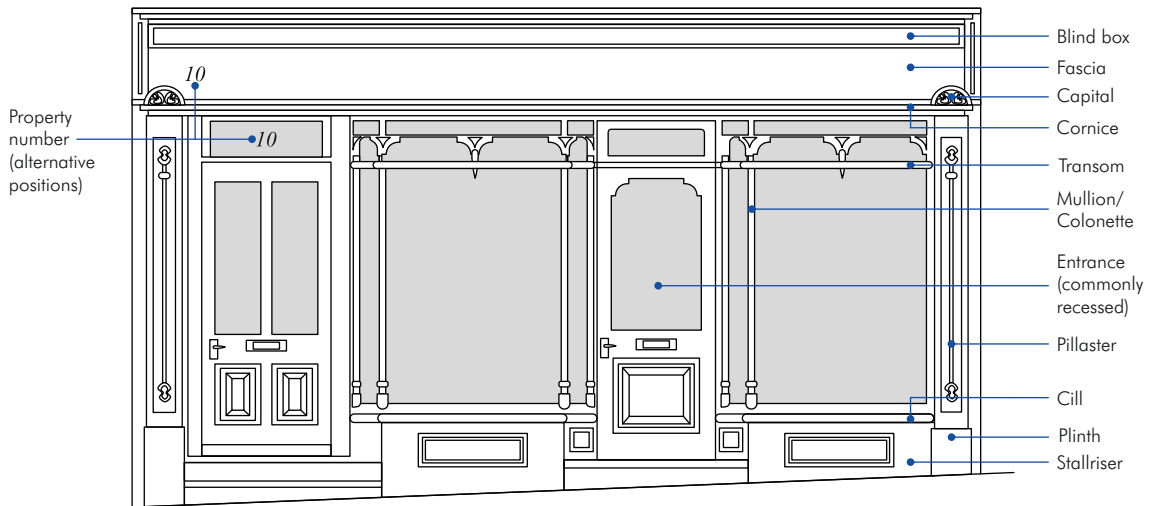
Reproduction of traditional shopfront designs are usually inappropriate for modern properties as they generally ignore the character of the building within which they sit. Modern buildings can, however, present a good opportunity to add examples of the architecture and styles of our own period into the townscape.

A modern shopfront must still have quality design, materials and workmanship. This is particularly important when the property is situated within a conservation area or adjacent to a listed building. The proportions of the design and the correct use of materials are as important as with the design of a traditional shopfront. However, with modern buildings there is more scope for innovation and creativity, which could be a valuable contribution to the variety and interest of the City.

4. ELEMENTS OF GOOD SHOPFRONT DESIGN

Part 2 - Components

A traditional shop front is based on a number of key architectural features that link together to form a framework. These features will be discussed in the following section and are identified in this key diagram for quick and easy reference.



Traditional Shop Front

Definitions

Blind Box - Originally used to conceal a roller blind, now used to hide trough lights within a fascia.

Console/Bracket - Sometimes the pilasters are topped by a console or bracket. These frame the fascia and the blind box.

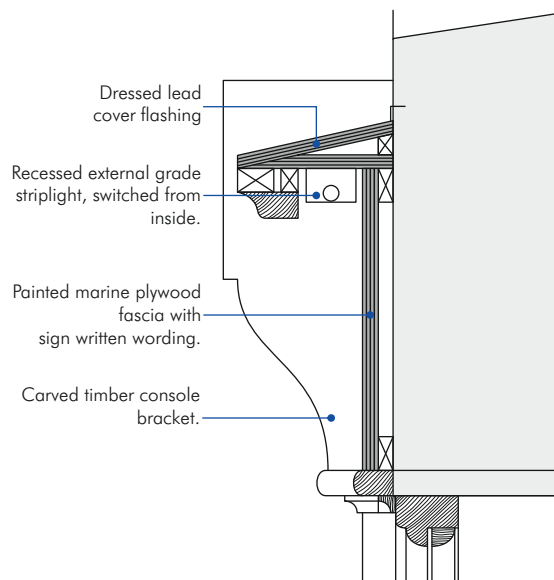
Fascia - The fascia is the primary place that a shop displays its sign.

Pilasters - Frame the shopfront vertically and are on either side of the windows, providing visual support to the fascia.

Mullion - Vertical pieces of timber that divide the window into smaller panes of glass.

Cill - This tops the stall raiser and both protects it and throws rain from it.

Stallriser - The panel below the window that not only raises the window from the ground but also provides a visual base for the rest of the shopfront.



Blind Box (section)

(continued overleaf)

Transoms - The horizontal divisions used to divide large expanses of glass.

Cornice - Provides a horizontal divide between the shop front and the upper floors.

Pilaster - Pilasters provide vertical framing to the shop front and provide visual support to the fascia and upper floors. They are a traditional building feature designed with a base and capital and can also establish a visual division between neighbouring properties.

Threshold - The recessed entrance lobby leading to the door that allows for more window display area. Often these areas have floor tiling, sometimes in a mosaic pattern.

If you intend to upgrade your shopfront it is worth considering the opportunities that you already have in place. Re-using existing features can be a cost effective and sustainable way of improving your shop and is less likely to require planning permission.

Whilst there are some modern shopfronts in Gloucester, the city retains many historic shopfronts with their traditional elements such as pilasters, capitals, corbels and cornices. These original features can bring identity and character to your shop and should not be removed, damaged or obscured. Where necessary, they should be repaired and retained as part of any proposed alteration.

Where you have a wholly original shopfront, serious consideration should be given to refurbishment rather than replacement. The original shopfront is likely to have been manufactured from quality materials (such as timber), and the proportions of the design are likely to balance across the shop and the building as a whole. Original features bring identity and character which many replacements lack. It is for this reason that the Council will seek their retention and recommend repair rather than replacement when planning applications come forward.

4.1 Materials

Shopfronts of historic and traditional buildings should only be constructed of traditional and natural materials. Such materials could include timber, stone, marble, slate, brass or cast iron. The materials will vary depending on the age, style and location of the property, but they must be appropriate to the building and show careful consideration to historical accuracy and local tradition and be responsibly and sustainably sourced.





Historic shopfronts were usually constructed from hardwood and were painted. Some materials that are used in replacement shopfronts are not appropriate to historic shopfronts. These include modern materials such as plastic, aluminium and acrylic sheeting.

Even modern shopfronts should be constructed of high quality materials. Some appropriate materials may be timber, stone, brass, marble, stainless steel or chrome. Staining of shopfronts should be avoided as it rarely achieves a quality finish.

Where timber is used for a shopfront replacement or repair, it should be obtained from a sustainable source. The choice of architectural ironmongery such as letterboxes, nameplates and kick plates is also important. Poor quality or inappropriate designs can easily spoil the appearance of the shopfront.

4.2 Colour

The colour of a historic shopfront should be historically sympathetic if not historically accurate, paint should preferably be of a matt finish and carefully chosen not to clash with adjacent properties. Here are just a few colours that are considered suitable:

					
RAL 3004 Purple Red	RAL 5001 Green Blue	RAL 5020 Ocean Blue	RAL 6021 Pale Green	RAL 7037 Dusty Grey	RAL 5007 Brilliant Blue
					
RAL 9005 Jet Black	RAL 6034 Pastel Turquoise	RAL 3016 Coral Red	RAL 1020 Olive Yellow	RAL 1015 Light Ivory	RAL 1002 Sand Yellow

However, many other colours are also considered historically sympathetic and should harmonise with the street scene. The RAL range of conservation or heritage colours is particularly relevant for Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts and a number of paint companies provide a variety of colours based on a heritage range.

It is appropriate for shopfronts to be painted a single colour, sometimes with a second colour to highlight decorative elements. Overly bright or garish colours are not considered acceptable within conservation areas or on listed buildings.

4.3 Shopfront fascia signs

Fascia signs should appear as an integral part of the design of the shopfront and the building, and should not dominate the façade.

Fascia signs should not be overly large in comparison to the building as a whole. The fascia board should not be boxy or deep or conceal traditional features such as the first floor windows or the corbel brackets; instead, it should sit comfortably on the building between the corbel brackets. The depth of the fascia should not normally be greater than one quarter of the height from pavement level to the bottom of the fascia.

In general, fascia signs in conservation areas should be constructed from timber with hand painted lettering. These signs should not be made of glossy acrylic or plastic. Hand-painted fascia boards are usually appropriate for historic or traditional properties, especially on listed buildings.

Fascia boards should contain the name of the business and preferably the property street number. Repetition of information or excess wording is to be avoided, as this creates a confused and cluttered appearance. Fascia signage should avoid including large images as part of the advertisement.



Hand-painted fascia signs are particularly appropriate for traditional shopfronts. These must be created by an experienced sign writer so that the sign has a professional appearance and finish. The lettering must be of an appropriate style and size so that the sign appears as an integral part of the shopfront design.

Alternatively, individual letters could be mounted onto the fascia, fixed by spacers. The type of materials and the details of the lettering should be chosen according to the design of the shopfront and the historic nature of the building.

The materials of the lettering should always be of good quality and a matt finish. Glossy acrylic or plastic will not be acceptable on listed buildings or in conservation areas and should be avoided.



Fascia signs - Summary

Not permitted

- Internally illuminated signs, swan-neck and other projecting lights.
- Boxy, deep fascia signs which dominate the shopfront or sit proud of the fascia board, pilasters or console brackets.
- Fascia signs made of shiny plastic.
- Oversized/acrylic/plastic lettering.
- Fascias coloured in overly bright or garish shades that would not normally be considered acceptable in the historic setting of a conservation area.

Permitted

- Signs constructed from timber with hand-painted lettering.
- Lettering to detail business name and street number.
- Signs of a size that sits comfortably on the building between console brackets.
- Signs with a satin or matt finish.
- Signs lit by individual halo illumination.
- Signs illuminated by trough light if concealed within fascia/blind box.

4.4 Projecting signs and hanging signs

Traditional hanging signs are an important feature to historic high streets, but they must be designed so that they relate positively to the age and style of their corresponding shopfront. Ideally, these signs should be symbolic trade signs that depict the business carried out on the premises.

Traditional signs should ideally be constructed from timber and hand painted. They should not be made of glossy acrylic or plastic. The sign should be high quality, and should be made to a high standard of workmanship and design. Signs should be displayed on traditional hanging brackets in a style to suit the building. The positioning of the bracket will



depend on the style of the building, but ideally the sign will be either adjacent to the fascia sign or be at the first floor level.

A sign's position must take into account the architecture of the building, the design of the shopfront and the

location of other signs in the vicinity. Only one hanging sign per business is permitted and in some cases, any form of hanging or projecting sign may be inappropriate.

Modern projecting box signs are unsightly and obtrusive and disrupt the streetscape in historic areas. Therefore, projecting box signs will not be permitted in conservation areas or on listed buildings and should be avoided.

Projecting signs should not be internally illuminated and ideally be no greater than 50mm in depth. The size of the sign itself will need to be carefully considered in order to ensure that it sits comfortably on the building without dominating the scale of the building or the streetscape. A maximum size should be 600mm x 400mm, but a smaller sign may be required.

Advertisement consent is required for any hanging or projecting signs if illuminated. Inappropriate signs are discouraged, and where no valid advertisement consent exists, it may be appropriate for the Council to take enforcement action.

Projecting Signs - Summary

Not permitted

- Internally illuminated signs.
- More than one per building.
- Acrylic or plastic signs.
- Signs over 50mm deep.
- Box-style signs mounted directly onto the building.

Permitted

- One sign per building.
- Constructed from wood.
- Displayed on a metal hanging bracket.
- Size of sign in suitable scale with building.
- Signs should be no more than 600mm x 400mm.

4.5 Illumination of signs or advertisements

It may be desirable to have illumination of shopfronts and signs to encourage a night-time economy, but some illumination may have a negative effect on historic areas. External illumination of signs or advertisements on listed buildings, and all buildings in conservation areas, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it makes a positive contribution to the preservation and enhancement of that area or building.

The amount, type and design of illumination in all cases must be sympathetic to the building and the street scene. Internally illuminated fascias, lettering and projecting box signs will not be permitted within conservation areas or on listed buildings. Illumination in the form of projecting swan necks, trough lights and spotlights can adversely affect the character of a historic shopfront by obscuring historic features and giving the façade an untidy appearance.



This type of lighting, along with internally illuminated fascias and projecting box signs will not be permitted within conservation areas or on listed buildings.

When illumination is allowed it should be creatively integrated into the façade of the building in a discrete way. The preferred method is high quality halo illumination which provides a wash of light around individual lettering. Where fascia signs are to be lit, concealed top light tubes or spotlights are an acceptable alternative, provided they are sufficiently discreet.

Projecting trough lights are difficult to integrate satisfactorily into a shopfront design and should not be used if they cannot be sited unobtrusively. Trough lighting may be acceptable but depends on the type of shopfront and whether this can be hidden within the fascia blind box. The Council will not permit the illumination of signs where it cannot be achieved in an appropriate manner. See page 8 for section drawing of hidden trough light detail.

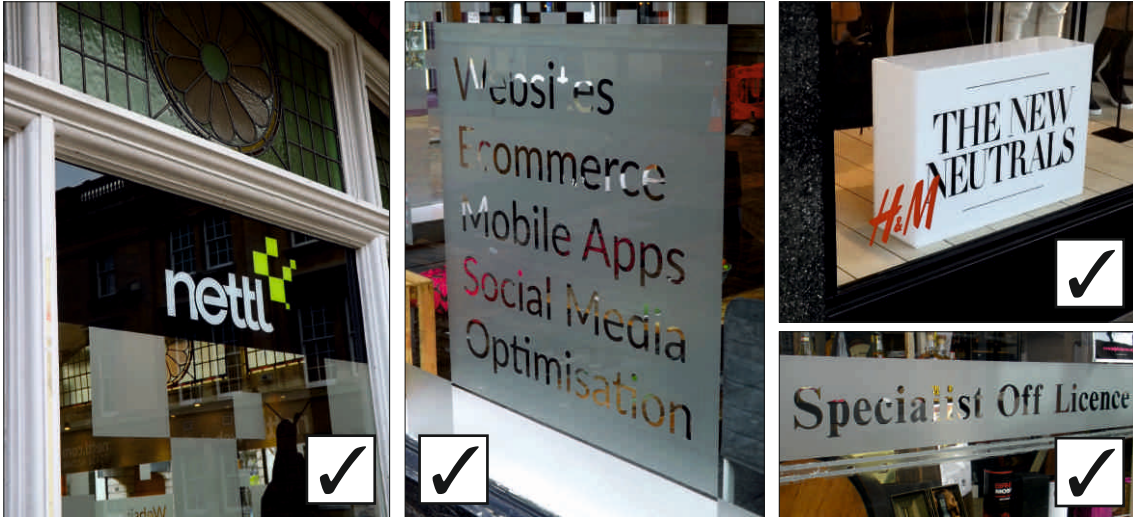
Internally illuminated shop window displays may be a good alternative to illuminated signs. These types of displays can be an excellent means of advertising goods or services during and outside shopping hours, and can provide good levels of street illumination.



Where considered necessary, Gloucester City Council will take appropriate enforcement action to remove illumination/signage from advertisements that do not have the required consent.

4.6 Window signs and stickers

Hand-painted signs onto the inside of window glass can be an attractive means of providing signage and advertising, especially where the design of the fascia does not provide space for the name of the business. These must be carefully designed and created by an experienced sign writer so as not to give a cluttered or untidy effect.



Frosted window stickers with signage incorporated is also an option where advertising space is limited. Street numbers should also be included as part of any design to help postal deliveries and encourage general accessibility to the property. Examples above of acceptable designs for window stickers.

However, bright window stickers, illuminated signs and posters in the windows will make the shop look cluttered and unwelcoming. De-cluttering the front of your shop can significantly improve its appearance and attractiveness to shoppers. Too many posters and notices can weaken the message you are trying to make. Shoppers may also be reluctant to enter a shop when they cannot see into it.

Window signs will not be permitted on upper floors, except for businesses operating solely on upper floors. Where appropriate and necessary, the council will take enforcement and legal action against signs or advertisements that are displayed without the required consent.

Inappropriate signs are discouraged, and where no valid planning permission exists, it may be appropriate for the council to take enforcement action.



5. SHOPFRONT SECURITY

The installation of grilles and shutters can have a detrimental effect on the safety and attractiveness of a street. However, the City Council acknowledges that, in some extreme cases, there is a need for shopkeepers to provide a higher level of protection against theft and vandalism than would normally be required.

Why solid shutters are NOT acceptable

From good..

to bad..

to worse!



✓ Security glass

✓ Internal grilles

✗ External grilles

✗ Solid shutters

Security glass is a laminated glass that has the capacity to remain intact even when it is broken. This glass is virtually indistinguishable from ordinary glass, so is considered the most desirable option to retain the historic character of shopfronts. Security glass can provide protection against theft and may act as a deterrent against repeated acts of vandalism. The City Council encourages the use of security glass rather than grilles or shutters, especially in relation to listed buildings and properties in conservation areas.

Internal grilles are less damaging to the streetscape and have many of the advantages of external grilles over solid shutters. Internal grilles can be fitted behind the shop window and are retractable. These are particularly useful in buildings in conservation areas. When used in conjunction with security glass, these grilles normally provide a theft-proof shopfront security system whilst allowing visibility into the shop. This is the preferred security method and will usually be permitted, subject to the design and colour of the grille.

External grilles may be appropriate but only in extreme circumstances. With external grilles, the contents of the shop are still visible for window shoppers and display illuminations



can light the street. Intruders inside the shop are visible from outside which may act as a deterrent against break-ins. External grilles could be either demountable or on a roller. If the grille is on a roller, the box into which it retracts must be recessed behind the fascia board whenever possible. If this is not possible, the box should be clad in suitable materials so that it is unobtrusive.

The grille and box must be installed and operated only within the shop opening and must not cover any part of pilasters, columns or fascia. When intended for use on new shopfronts, the grille and box must form part of the overall design and be hidden behind the fascia. Care must be taken to ensure that this does not result in overly deep or projecting fascia boards.

The grille itself should be of high quality material such as brass. Otherwise, the grille should have a suitably coloured, powder-coated paint finish rather than raw aluminium. These can be acceptable if they are open in nature and designed to compliment the features of the original façade, and when the attachment brackets are designed sensitively. However, as they are removable, storage space is required for them when the shop is open.

Alarms or CCTV cameras, while useful for security purposes, can be unattractive and can detract from the appearance of the shopfront. They should be incorporated as unobtrusively as possible into the façades of the buildings. They should not be located on architectural features.

Solid shutters are not acceptable because they have a seriously damaging effect on the character of the street scene and shopping area. These shutters make window-shopping impossible outside shopping hours and make the streets darker by cutting out display lighting. It can be intimidating for pedestrians due to the lack of surveillance and lighting.

They also discourage pedestrian activity and as a result, lead to emptier streets. Rather than reducing crime, they can increase the opportunities for vandalism, theft and graffiti.



6. RECESSED ENTRANCES



Many traditional shopfronts had recessed entrances which should be retained. These entrances served the purpose of providing increased window display areas and lend greater visual interest to the façades of these properties. Several had floor tiling, often in mosaic patterns. Where the tiles exist they should be retained, and new shopfronts in the traditional style should incorporate these details.

7. BLINDS AND CANOPIES



Some canopies are better presented than others...

Some older shopfronts still possess their traditional pull-out blinds and these should be retained in preference to modern blinds or canopies. These traditional pull out blinds are attractive, functional and more appropriate in historic areas and on historic buildings. Blinds should not obscure architectural features and ideally they should have the ability to be retracted into a blind box above the fascia. The canopies and blinds should enhance rather than detract from the character of a streetscape.

Modern plastic, balloon-type canopies are not appropriate on traditional properties and are never acceptable in conservation areas. If they are chosen for use on modern properties elsewhere, they should not be used as additional means of advertising.

Blinds and canopies should be made of canvas, not glossy plastic. The colour of the blind or canopy should correspond to the colours of the shopfront and fascia. Bright and garish colours should be avoided. The blinds and canopies should not act as the primary sign for the shop and any lettering on them should be kept to a minimum.

8. CASH MACHINES

Cash machines on historic shopfronts and in conservation areas should ideally be located in internal lobbies of buildings or in the least obtrusive location on the façade.

When the machines have to be located on the façades, they should be incorporated as much as possible into the design and not to detract from the character of the building or interrupt its integrity. Cash machines in these areas should be simple in design and not have excessive advertising, signage and illumination.



9. BANNER ADVERTISEMENTS

Fixing or placing of banners on any property within a conservation area or listed building is not an acceptable form of advertisement. Advertisement consent will be required for banners and consent will not be granted for any banner containing direct commercial or sponsorship advertising. Fixing banners to trees or street furniture is not permitted and may be removed by the Council Enforcement Team.

The purpose of banners is to provide effective publicity for local charitable, cultural and educational events and not commercial advertising. Promotion of charity events and activities should be both appropriate and of benefit to Gloucester and the surrounding area, with minimal environmental impact.

Activities and events should serve the local population and visitors to the area without prejudice. Please check with Development Management prior to erecting any banner within a conservation area for this purpose. If a banner advertising a charity event is permitted, it should be removed within 24 hours of the event ending.

Flag advertisement outside or attached to premises is not an appropriate method of advertising. The City Council



operates a license permit for A-boards and table and chairs and the Council has produced a policy for Licensing Advertising Boards on the Highway, which took effect on 01/07/12. This is to ensure that the number, size and positioning is regulated, so that these items do not become unreasonable and create hazards for other highway users.

10. ACCESS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Wherever possible, entrances to shops should be at pavement level to allow easy access for people with wheelchairs and pushchairs. Design proposals for new shopfronts must take this into account, wherever practicable.

Widths and safety standards of doors and the positioning of door handles and letter boxes must be designed so that they are suitable for use by wheelchair bound or disabled people.

Where access cannot be provided at street level, a ramp should be provided if possible. The ramp could either be within an external entrance recess or within the shop itself. Handrails may also need to be provided.

Where appropriate, encouragement may be given to the alteration of existing shopfronts to meet the above requirements. However, if a shopfront is traditional or historic, it may not be appropriate or possible to allow these types of modifications.

If alterations neither preserve nor enhance the character of a historic building or conservation area, then more creative solutions may be required. Listed building legislation may restrict such work and discussions should be undertaken with the conservation team.



11. ALARMS, SATELLITE DISHES AND ANTENNAS

Security is a consideration and therefore alarms and associated boxes offer an effective crime prevention mechanism. It is recommended that the location of any alarm box required should not impact on any features of a historic shopfront and be of a colour which is not visually intrusive. If the property is listed, the alarm box will require listed building consent. Satellite dishes and antenna require planning permission within Conservation Areas on elevations which front a road and listed building consent where the property is listed.

12. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

12.1 What will need Planning Permission?

Most alterations to a shopfront will require planning permission. Owners are therefore advised to check with the Council before carrying out any work.

Planning Consent may be required for the following works:

- Construction, removal or modifications to a shopfront, including ramps and handrails.
- Changes to the external and internal security measures.
- Erection of canopies and blinds.

As a general rule Advertisement Consent may be required if:

- The sign or advertisement is illuminated.
- It does not relate to the shop, for example the name or type of shop, the goods sold.
- There is not a shop window in the wall on which the advertisement is displayed.
- It is above the bottom of the first floor windows.
- It is more than 4.6m off the ground.
- Any letter or feature is more than 0.75m high.

The procedures for applying for Advertisement Consent are broadly similar to those for applying for Planning Permission. Gloucester also has a number of listed buildings and any alterations proposed would require Listed Building Consent together with any planning permission and/or advertisement consent.

Separate applications will be required for Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent, Advertisement Consent and Building Regulation Approval, as appropriate. Because of the interrelationship between shop fronts and signs, it is helpful to submit applications for Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent at the same time.

Conservation Areas. There are fourteen Designated Conservation Areas in Gloucester that cover most of the City centre, as well as Barton Street and parts of Hempsted and Hucclecote. Maps showing the boundaries of the existing Conservation Areas are in the City Council's publication 'Conservation Areas in Gloucester.'

Listed Buildings. There are 659 listed buildings in Gloucester. Listed buildings are those that have been identified as being of special architectural or historic interest, and that have been added to the National Register compiled by the Secretary of State. If a building is listed, the entire building is considered listed, not just the façade. Further guidance can be found in the City Council's publication 'Listed Buildings in Gloucester.'

If you wish to know whether a property is within a designated Conservation Area or if it is a listed building, see the Gloucester City Council website at www.gloucester.gov.uk

If you are planning to make alterations to your building, you are advised to seek the advice of the Conservation Officers at a very early stage. Please be aware that you will need to allow time for any necessary application to be approved before you can begin work. In this

way, you will avoid any danger of enforcement action or prosecution. The council offers a formal pre-application service and early discussions are advised with the Planning Department.

Enforcement. It is important that you apply for any necessary permission as you may leave yourself at risk of enforcement action being taken against you by the Council. Advertisements, alterations or building works that are carried out without consent may have to be removed if the Council takes enforcement action. This could involve a variety of approaches depending on the scale of the works, but could include the Council completing the works and recharging the cost back to the owner. This charge will be placed as a charge against the owner until such time as paid. The Council will also consider whether or not to prosecute the owner and/or administer a simple caution.

Building Regulations. You will need approval under Building Regulations to carry out many types of building work. Such approval is very likely to be relevant for work to shop fronts, and advice should be sought from Gloucester City Council's Building Control Officers.

12.2 How to submit a Planning Application

In order to submit an application so that the construction or alteration can be authorised, you must supply drawings of the proposed work as part of any submitted application to Gloucester City Council.

The required drawings should include the following:

- A floor plan.
- An elevation of the shopfront, showing the whole of the building and the buildings on either side at 1:50.
- Vertical sections through the shopfront.
- Details of advertisements and signs.
- Details of illumination (if any).
- Large scale drawings of the details of the shopfront such as the pilasters, corbels, cornice, stall riser at 1:20.
- Details of the materials to be used.
- Details of the finishes, such as paint colour.
- Full constructional details for the carpenter, joiner or builder.

We recommend that those wishing to make alterations employ an architect or designer who is experienced and knowledgeable in shopfront construction and design.

The choice of the builder, joiner or carpenter is very important. We advise that those hiring these individuals examine the work that they have done previously to ensure that they are capable of good quality workmanship.

13. THE PROCESS CHECKLIST

1. Be clear about what you want to achieve. New shop window? New sign? Complete new shopfront?
2. Talk to the Council about your proposals.
3. When your plans are developing, meet with the Council to discuss the details (and possible grant aid).
4. Find out which consents you need.
5. Ask for advice about contractors who could carry out the work to the correct standard.
6. Find a professional architect or designer who understands your needs and the limitations of conservation areas. Give them a copy of this Design Guide.
7. Prepare the required drawings and other information for your applications.
8. Be prepared to amend or justify your plans if they depart from this guide.

Application forms are available to download from the City Councils website, please see the planning section at www.gloucester.gov.uk. Certain demolition work may also require Building Regulation Approval and Listed Building Consent.

The City Council offers a pre-application service providing advice and guidance regarding applications within designated conservation areas and listed buildings and it is recommended this is undertaken.

If you have any doubts, please contact the Council's Development Management Team and Building Control Team.

Further information can be found on the Gloucester City Council website:

www.gloucester.gov.uk



Contacts

Historic Environment

T: 01452 396855

E: Heritage@gloucester.gov.uk

Building Control

T: 01452 396771

E: buildingcontrol@gloucester.gov.uk

Development Management

T: 01452 396775 or 396776

E: development.control@gloucester.gov.uk

Help with accessing this information

www.gloucester.gov.uk

E: Heritage@gloucester.gov.uk

If you, or someone you know cannot understand English and needs help with this information, or if you would like a large print, Braille, or audio version please call 01452 396396.