

Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area: Shopfront Design Guidance

October 2024



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1.0 Introduction

This document aims to guide the process, design and quality of works to shopfronts within the Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area. It has been prepared to give guidance to retailers, owners, developers and shop fitters on the main components that contribute to a well-designed shopfront. It is intended to offer an overall guide to what is appropriate in the Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area and to assist in discussions with the Council prior to the submission of and, consequently, in the determination of future planning and listed building consent applications.

The needs of today's shoppers are different to those of the past; with the growth of online retailing challenging our town centres, the decline in shoppers and a change in the types of goods and services sought, shops and shopfronts must continue to adapt. This guidance is therefore not about stopping development but rather managing change, improving the local area, meeting the needs of today's shoppers and encouraging new users.

This document has been prepared in tandem with a full review and appraisal of the Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area and the production of an Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP).



A historic shopfront on the corner of Church Street / Wood Street

1.0 Introduction

1.1 WHY HAVE A DESIGN GUIDE?

The benefits of well-designed shopfronts include:

- Creating a positive shopping experience;
- Increasing property value;
- Protecting and enhancing the heritage of the Conservation Area;
- Higher footfall and increased sales turnover;
- Help with the creation of a shopping community, which includes those who buy and sell locally;
- Improved public safety; and
- New investment and long-term sustainability

Shopfronts are key elements in towns and local centres and their appearance can make a significant positive contribution to the streetscape, adding to visual interest and can often reflect the vitality and viability of an area.

Heritage is a key driver for regeneration and tourism, and historic buildings and shopfronts all add to the local distinctive character of Huddersfield. A coordinated approach to shopfront design will enhance the appearance of the built environment and the overall attractiveness of the area.

Heritage need not conflict with economic development and improving the visual appeal of properties can benefit users, owners and improve tourism to the area.

In the Conservation Area there remains a number of high-quality historic shopfronts which are attractive and relate well to their setting. This document will explain why they are important and encourages their retention along with any original internal fittings.

Where in the past there has been unsympathetic interventions to shopfronts, there will usually be an opportunity for improvement when retailers undertake replacement or alteration; this document has been prepared to help when these occasions arise, promoting a high standard of design for new shopfronts and alterations to existing shopfronts.

Many of the changes referred to in this guide will require planning permission, advertisement consent or listed building consent, therefore owners are advised to check online or seek professional advice on what consents you require and the acceptability of your proposals. For more information see the [Appendix](#).

The guidelines apply to shops and all other ground floor premises including banks, building societies, estate agents, pubs and restaurants. It is hoped that their use may lead to an improvement in the design of shopfronts throughout Huddersfield.



Poor quality shopfronts in Huddersfield are having a significant impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area and the experience of shoppers

1.0 Introduction

1.2 POLICY CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last updated July 2021, sets out the government's intent in relation to all planning matters. Those of relevance to this document include the need to secure high-quality design, promote the vitality and viability of our main urban areas and conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

This document also responds to policies as laid down in local planning policy, namely the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted 2019) including policies LP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development, LP17 Huddersfield Town Centre, LP24 Good Design, LP25 Advertisements and shopfronts and LP35 Historic Environment.

1.3 LISTED BUILDINGS

Designation (or listing) marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations.

Historic buildings are a vital part of the diverse character and history of Huddersfield and are important to protect for future generations. The large number of listed buildings in the Huddersfield Conservation Area demonstrates the richness of the area's heritage many of which feature historic and modern shopfronts.

Listed Building Consent (LBC) is required for all work to a listed building that involves alterations, extensions or demolition that will affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. If unsure, it is always best to check with Kirklees Council, as unauthorised works can lead to enforcement action and fines.



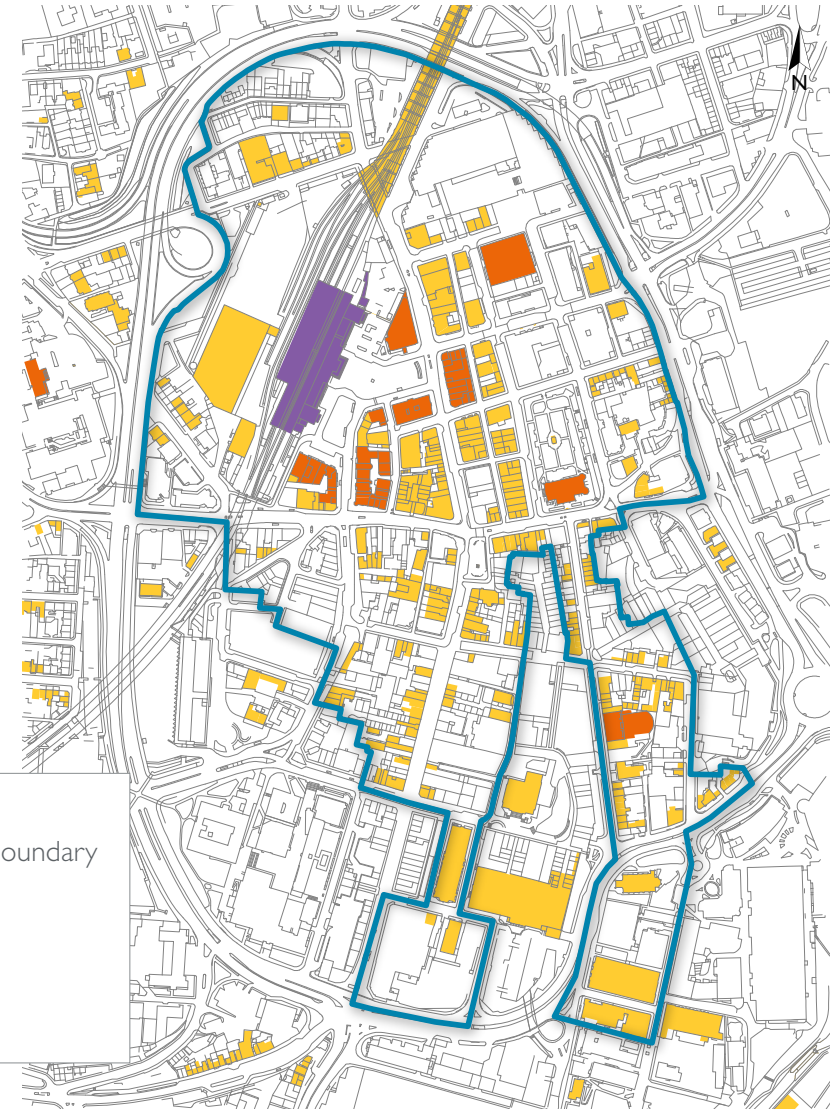
A row of well proportioned, modern but traditionally styled shopfronts in the Grade II Listed building along Market Place

1.0 Introduction

1.4 HUDDERSFIELD CONSERVATION AREA

A Conservation Area is defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is it desirable to preserve or enhance.'⁰¹

Conservation Areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place - in other words, the features that make it unique. There are some extra planning controls and considerations in place to protect the historic and architectural elements which make the place special. They are most likely to affect owners who want to work on the outside of their unlisted building or any trees on their property. For further guidance on the Huddersfield Conservation Area and how its designation may affect proposed changes, see the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan on the local authority website. The following shows the listed buildings and Conservation Area boundary in 2022.



DESIGNATIONS PLAN

- Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area Boundary
- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building

This plan is not to scale

⁰¹ Section 69 (1), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Huddersfield Conservation Boundary in 2022 prior to the most recent appraisal with the location of listed buildings also indicated

2.0 Shop Fronts: A Brief History

Shops and shopfronts as we know them today developed during the Georgian period when shopping emerged as a leisure pursuit. Elements of the 'traditional' shopfront derive from classical architecture including decorative pilasters and cornices which were used to harmonise the appearance of the shopfront with the rest of the building.

During the Georgian period glazing became more affordable, and the shop windows from this period are characterised by numerous panes of glass divided by glazing bars, often within a bow-bay window to help improve the display of goods. A modern example of a Georgian shopfront can be found on Queen Street.



Example of an historic Georgian shopfront, York

Many residential houses in town centres were converted to commercial use as retail areas expanded. Shopfronts were inserted on the ground floor and living accommodation for the shop keeper was located in the floors above. In Huddersfield, this may have been the case on Queen Street and Cross Church Street where many of the buildings date to the early 19th century. The buildings are two or three storeys, occupying narrow plots, creating a strong vertical emphasis, where the regularity of shopfronts provides a visual rhythm to the street scene as demonstrated in the historic image shown below.



Cross Church Street c1900 with a variety of shopfronts

2.0 Shop Fronts: A Brief History

The improved glassmaking techniques of the Victorian period allowing larger windows to be installed, sometimes with retractable awnings. The period also saw the use of new materials, such as terracotta, faience, and decorative tiles. Cast iron technology allowed for larger display areas and multi-storey shops. Signage also became more flamboyant with cut-out letters, gilding and colourful signwriting. Entrances were often recessed to increase window display areas.

The construction of the New Town in Huddersfield around the railway station led to a bold, cohesive town planning scheme and included the construction of a significant number of high quality commercial buildings over a 30 year period from the 1850s to the 1880s, many built with similar neoclassical or Italianate street frontages. In this area, retail premises were purpose-built and part of the overall design; shopfronts in the New Town share similarities such as tall frontages where pilasters and entablatures were often an integral part of the building's façade. Kirkgate Buildings and Lion Buildings are both interesting examples, although stone pilasters have been removed along Northumberland Street.



High quality late 19th / early 20th century shopfront on Westgate.

2.0 Shop Fronts: A Brief History

During the later 19th century, arcades became popular particularly in the North of England and the Midlands, indulging the desires of the prosperous middle classes. Byram Arcade, constructed between 1880-81 is a fine example of this fashion retaining many original features. Shops are set around an atrium and arranged over three floors with access from a galleried walkway. The arcade is lit by a glazed roof and the building is listed at Grade II.



Interior of Byram Arcade



Interior of Byram Arcade

2.0 Shop Fronts: A Brief History

The early 20th century was a dynamic era in architecture, where movements such as Art Deco and Art Nouveau made their way into shopfront design. Additionally, the 1920s and 30s saw Moderne influences, whilst the development of national companies like Marks & Spencer and Burtons employing their own architects to design whole buildings in their distinctive house style. Now a McDonald's fast food restaurant, no. 1 Kirkgate was formerly a Burton's store.

During this period, new materials were introduced such as Vitrolite and chrome. Float glass became available in large sheets from 1959 and frameless jointing techniques have now made most of the structural elements unnecessary. In the 1970s air curtain technology enabled some shops to operate without a shopfront other than folding doors.

Today, the dominance of national retail companies in our town centres has translated into bland corporate identities applied to shopfronts which are uniform throughout the country, often at the expense of local distinctiveness and the removal of historic shopfronts.

Suggested further reading: K Morrison, 2003, English Shops and Shopping, London: English Heritage/ Yale



Rare surviving example of the Moderne style dating to the 1930s in Kirkgate Buildings.



High quality inter-war building and original shopfront on Cloth Hall Street

3.0 The Principal Elements of a Traditional Shopfront

Most traditional shopfronts are based on classical proportions with a series of identifiable features. A traditional 19th century and early 20th century shopfront generally consisted of an entablature (the long, horizontal element) supported at either side by pilasters (the vertical uprights or columns). These in turn comprise individual elements which are shown in the diagram on this page.

Entablature (cornice, architrave and frieze)

Corbel/console

Capital

Stallriser

Fascia

Top light or transom light

Pilaster

Base/plinth



Entablature (cornice, architrave and frieze)

Corbel/console

Capital

Pilaster

Recessed entrance

Base/plinth

Fascia

Fanlight

Mullion

Stallriser



Neverson's shopfront in Cross Church Street circa 1900

Examples of a single and a double-fronted traditional shopfront and their component parts

3.0 The Principal Elements of a Traditional Shopfront

ENTABLATURE

As in classical architecture, the entablature comprises the cornice, fascia (or frieze) and architrave:

Cornice

The **cornice** serves both a practical and aesthetic purpose. This decorative projection crowns the top of the shopfront, providing a visual break between the shopfront and the rest of the building. It also projects forward, throwing rainwater off the shopfront below, the top often protected by lead flashing. Traditionally it may also house a retractable canvas awning.

Fascia

The **fascia** (or frieze in classical language) serves an important purpose as it is where the shop name is usually found. In some traditional examples, the fascia is angled forward to maximise impact. The fascia, like any piece of classical architecture, should always be in proportion to the rest of the shopfront and not overly tall. It can be tempting to install an overly large fascia to advertise your shop, which is often the most damaging intervention found on traditional shopfronts. The fascia should not extend up above cornice level. Standard corporate fascia boards should be avoided.

As a basic rule of thumb, when considering a new or replacement shopfront, the entablature should not exceed more than 20% of the overall shopfront height.

Architrave

The **architrave** is the moulding below the fascia, separating the fascia from the shop window.



3.0 The Principal Elements of a Traditional Shopfront

PILASTERS

The entablature is supported on **pilasters**, usually one at each end of the fascia. They represent the columns found in classical architecture, framing the shop window and covering the sides of the structural opening. Pilasters may be simple undecorated strips of wood, or more decoratively panelled or fluted.

At the base of the pilaster is the **plinth**, representing the base of the column, whilst a **corbel** (sometimes called a bracket) is found at the head of the pilaster, sometimes separated from the pilaster by the **capital**. In Huddersfield, many of its neo-classical buildings retain stone pilasters which are integral to the building's elevation and frame the shopfront.



3.0 The Principal Elements of a Traditional Shopfront

THE WINDOW

Between the pilasters is the main glazed **window** designed to display goods to the best effect. The glazed area is usually broken down into smaller panes supported by vertical mullions and horizontal transoms, which provide solidity and balance to the window. The more **glazing bars** the window is divided in, the older the shopfront may be.

Above the main window there may be a further horizontal division creating a **top-light window** below the architrave. These may sometimes be decorative, containing coloured leaded glass. Additionally, top-lights sometimes included a hopper mechanism to provide ventilation.

Below the window is the **stallriser**. It provides a robust base to protect the shopfront from damage and gives proportion and character. The stallrisers are often timber and may incorporate panelling or may be in stone or brick. Tiling may also be found on frontages, particularly public houses and butchers, as they are easily cleaned. When considering a new or replacement design, the stallriser should not exceed 20% of the overall shopfront height.



A timber and glazed stallriser on 5 Westgate



A restored traditional shopfront on the Lion Buildings, John William Street. Transoms divide up the shop windows, whilst the stallriser and fascia are of modest height giving an overall balance to the shopfront. The stone pilasters and continuous entablature are an integral part of the building's façade.



Decorative toplight on Kirkgate

3.0 The Principal Elements of a Traditional Shopfront

THE DOORWAY

Providing access to the shop, **the door** is often glazed, with a solid lower panel usually the same height as the stallriser. Second doorways may also be provided in a shopfront; this, however, is not usually glazed as it was originally intended to provide independent access to the above floors.

In taller shopfronts, a **fanlight** is common above the doorway. These may incorporate signage, may include a hopper to allow it to be opened for ventilation, or may be plain glazed.

Commonly found on traditional shopfronts are **recessed doors**. On larger shopfronts, the recessed door is set back from the shopfront, increasing display space and can also accommodate a change in level between the inside and outside in the form of a slope. Traditionally, recessed doors have been decorated with mosaic patterns as a mark of status, often featuring the shop name.



Recessed doorway with decorative mosaic tiling



Recessed doorway with an historic glazed, panelled door

4.0 Shopfront Design Principles

RETAIN AND REFURBISH

Where possible, retention of an existing historic shopfront should be preferred above replacement. This is often the more cost-effective and sustainable solution, which helps to retain the character of the building and of the streetscape.

Where it is appropriate to replace all or parts of a shopfront, traditional styles (or designs that retain the same proportions and materiality) are likely to be most appropriate in Huddersfield's historic buildings. However, sympathetically designed shopfronts are likely to be appropriate in the town's more recent and new buildings. Innovative designs, that respect and are in proportion to the traditional elements and key principles mentioned above, may also be supported by the Council if they make a positive contribution to the streetscape. Fascia in more modern materials may be acceptable if they are of high quality design, material, colour and appropriate size.



Original features like the signage in these images should be retained



4.0 Shopfront Design Principles

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The design outlined in this document is considered the template for historic shopfronts in Huddersfield which should inform future repair, restoration, or alteration. Although few shopfronts will survive in a complete condition, where individual features survive these should guide owners towards the potential to restore a building towards the original design intent, for example, where there is a fascia there is likely to have been pilasters and a stallriser.

The guide aims to establish a template for shopfronts and does not intend to remove local or individual variation that adds character and diversity to the town. Proposals should also consider whether there is evidence for an alternative arrangement, this might be surviving features on a building or using archive material or historic

photographs. Evidence, whether in the form of surviving features or historical photographs, can provide justification for an alternative approach to the template and guidance within this document. It is also important to understand the history and style of the building; a 19th century-style shopfront is unlikely to be appropriate on an Art-Deco, 20th century building.

Huddersfield Exposed (<https://huddersfield.exposed/wiki/Welcome>) has an online resource of historical photographs for many buildings in the town centre and may prove useful for those researching the history of their property.

For further guidance and sources of information see [Appendix C](#).



An archive image of Market Place (Copyright Huddersfield Exposed)



An archive sketch of the Ramsden Estate Building in 1875 (Copyright Huddersfield Exposed)

4.0 Shopfront Design Principles

THE BUILDING AS A WHOLE

A shopfront is part of a building as a whole, rather than being a separate entity. The design of a shopfront therefore needs to reflect the style, period, proportion, vertical or horizontal emphasis and detailing of the rest of the building, particularly the principal elevation. The starting point for considering a new or replacement shopfront is therefore a study of the whole building façade. Some frontages may need to be simple in their detailing whilst others will be able to incorporate a more ornate approach - much will depend on the nature, design and proportions of the existing property.

A good design will consider the relationship between the shopfront and the building above. Large expanses of glass that break up the vertical rhythm can give the impression that the ground floor is unsupported or 'floating', disrupting the relationship between the two elements. This can be overcome by reducing the size of glazing, incorporating architectural details like mullions or pilasters which take note of the position of windows in the above building.

The height of the building, including internal floor-to-ceiling heights, will influence the scale of a new shopfront. A shopfront needs to sit within the original building framework set by structural and decorative features within the elevation. As a general rule, the shopfront should not rise above the floor level of the first floor as this can obscure part of the upper elevation and result in an unbalanced façade.

Where an entirely new shopfront is required and there is good historical evidence of an appropriate earlier design, such as old photographs, then replicating the earlier design is often the best option.

Sometimes unsympathetic later shopfronts are found to have covered older, more traditional shopfront elements. Where this is the case, it is highly desirable to refurbish older elements as part of a new, more appropriate scheme.



When designing a new shopfront it is important to consider the relationship between the shopfront and the building above. Here the symmetry of the new shopfront respects the arrangement of the windows above, whilst it is also designed to be in proportion and not to dominate.

4.0 Shopfront Design Principles

THE STREET

Consideration should also be given to the potential impact of a new shopfront on the existing streetscape. A poor quality, overbearing design could have a negative impact on the appearance of the street, reducing the appeal to shoppers.

A shop design can also look to neighbouring shops for inspiration and to identify the character of the street, whether it possesses a uniformity of style or a variety of styles. The proportions, materiality, colour and detailing should not seek to dominate neighbouring buildings and the streetscape.

Where a unit extends, or is proposed to extend, across more than one building (i.e. across two or more buildings in a terraced row), it is important that the vertical division between the buildings is retained or reinstated. This may also require the use of signage which is divided in two or more parts.

Top Tips:

- The design of a shopfront needs to consider the building on which it is to be installed and the surround context.
- A new shopfront should respect the period, style, proportions and vertical or horizontal emphasis of the building.
- A traditional shopfront which incorporates classical elements is likely to be appropriate on Huddersfield's historic buildings.
- Break up large areas of glass with pilasters, mullions and transoms.
- Respect the pattern of windows in the building above.
- Where shopfronts extend across one or more units, ensure vertical divisions are incorporated and break up the fascia in two or more parts in response.
- Retain and refurbish existing traditional features of a shopfront as part of a new scheme.



EXISTING STREET SCENE ELEVATION



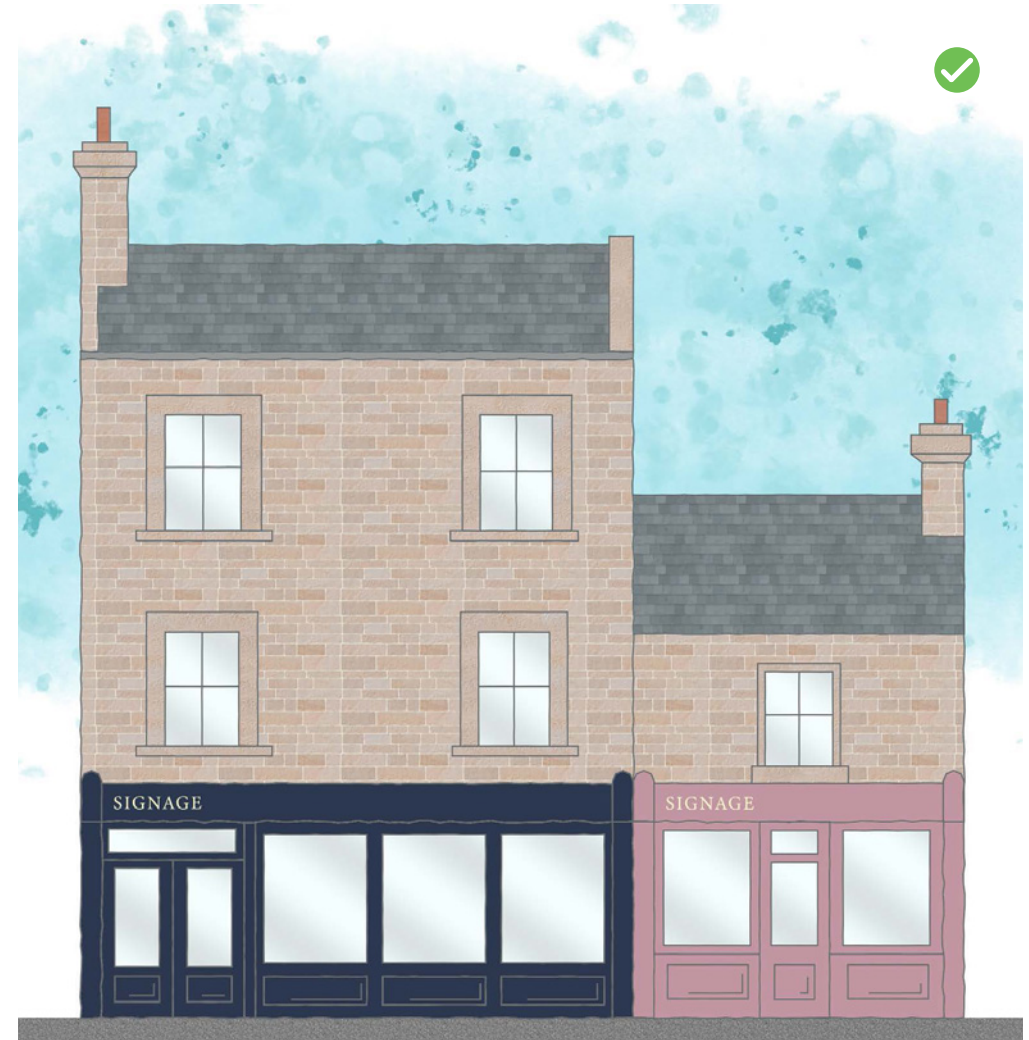
PROPOSED STREET SCENE ELEVATION

Existing and proposed shopfronts along John William Street. Note the consistency and rhythm of the proposed frontages. (Scheme by DK Architects)

4.0 Shopfront Design Principles



This design is not sympathetic to the existing two historic buildings as the fascia covers the first floor windows, and the extent of glazing gives the impression that the upper floors are unsupported



A more sympathetic design treats each building façade individually and provides a visual support for the building above

4.0 Shopfront Design Principles

Examples of modern and historic shopfronts suitable within the conservation area



5.0 Signage and Advertising

THE WINDOW DISPLAY

The window display is the most effective and appropriate way in the Huddersfield Conservation Area for a retailer to advertise their wares. Window displays also bring interest, activity and variety to a street scene. An internally lit display especially after closing hours, can render a shop particularly attractive and can brighten a drab or dark street scene.

Vinyl graphics in windows can work well if well designed, simple and balanced. It can provide privacy and can avoid the need for excessive external signage. Care should be taken that some visibility is maintained, as too much vinyl, or poorly designed window graphics can also over-clutter and deaden a frontage.



Top Tips:

- Shopfronts should aspire to be interesting with minimal signage in order for the window display to be visible.
- Some limited window signage is acceptable.



5.0 Signage and Advertising

INTERNAL WINDOW SIGNAGE

The use of upper floors is important to keep buildings in use and in broadening the commercial base in the town centre. Where buildings containing more than one business, advertising opportunities may be limited; signage for upper floors should be restricted to lettering applied to the inside of windows (traditional painted letters look better than applied transfers) and a nameplate by the ground floor door.



5.0 Signage and Advertising

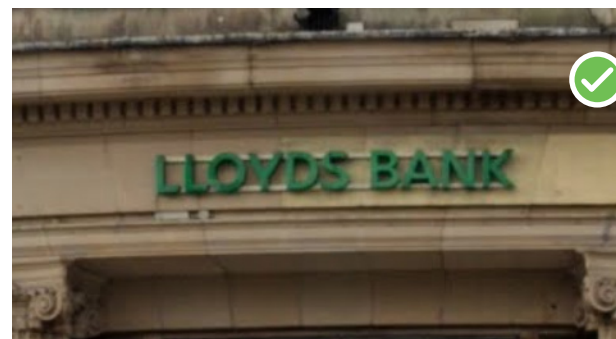
FASCIA SIGNAGE

As the most noticeable element on a shopfront, particular care should be taken on its design. The signage should complement the design of the shopfront and building, conveying a sense of permanence and quality, rather than brashness. The fascia should not overly dominate a shopfront and should reflect an existing historic fascia to ensure uniformity of proportion in the shopfront and along the street. To this end fascia should not be applied which extend above the shopfront onto the floor above, should not extend below obscuring the display window, or extend uninterrupted across a number of buildings (see Shopfront Design Principles above). Where fascia signage has already been increased beyond the original fascia and considered to be disproportionate, a reduction in their size is encouraged.

Traditional painted lettering and designs are preferable. On traditional shopfronts these should consist of either painted lettering directly onto the fascia or individual cut lettering. In the case of the latter, the use of the freestanding letters must be carefully considered so as not to cause permanent damage to a historic fascias on removal. Where potential damage is likely, their use should be avoided.

The lettering upon fascia should reflect the proportions of the fascia and the character of the shopfront. Oversized lettering can look cluttered and unattractive. Shiny Perspex signs affixed to fascia boards or box signs are not successful in terms of their visual appearance or the harmony of shopfront proportions.

Colour palettes, lettering style and illumination need to be considered in the design of a complementary shopfront. Colour schemes for shopfronts and signage should not be garish, preferably blending in with other subtle tones established elsewhere in good shopfront examples in the town centre.



5.0 Signage and Advertising

Top Tips:

- Fascia should NOT extend beyond the top of the window or the bottom of a string course between the ground and first floors.
- Hand-painted lettering should be in a traditional typeface (such as a serif font) and suitably coloured to contrast with the fascia, preferably a light colour against a dark background.
- Freestanding letters should be carefully considered and installed to avoid permanent damage to a historic fascia. They should also be made from metal or timber and the aim should be for a slim as profile as possible. Where lettering is being installed on historic fabric, the signage should be carefully installed to avoid permanent damage.
- In both instances the height of lettering should be no more than two-thirds the height of the fascia and normally centred about its horizontal and vertical axis, leaving reasonable space at each end of the fascia. Phone numbers, web addresses and opening hours should not be included as they clutter the fascia.
- Where a store occupies several units, each should have a separate fascia, linked visually by a common design.
- The use of plastic, Perspex or similar materials incorporated into fascia signs is NOT acceptable.
- Box signage is NOT acceptable. It appears bulky and masks architectural features.
- The use of neon or other bright garish colours is NOT acceptable.



5.0 Signage and Advertising

HANGING AND PROJECTING SIGNS

Hanging signs can have a significant impact on a street scene. When used correctly they can increase the visual appeal of a shop and a street, but their overuse should be avoided to reduce clutter. A hanging sign is best installed at fascia level but where it does not obscure architectural features. They should be avoided above fascia level but may be acceptable where they do not interfere with the symmetry or architectural composition of the façade.

Projecting signs should be high quality and relate to the size and scale of the façade. Hanging signs should be painted timber or cast metal, hang from suitably designed metal brackets fixed into mortar joints. There should be only one hanging sign for every one shopfront.

In some sensitive areas the use of standard corporate advertising and signs can be damaging, whilst plastic and internally illuminate projecting signs are not appropriate in a Conservation Area.

Remember the installation of a hanging sign on a listed buildings will require Listed Building Consent. Also if there are plans to alter or add any new signage on a building, it may be best to check with Kirklees Council as to whether advertisement consent is required.



5.0 Signage and Advertising

TEMPORARY BANNERS

Temporary advertising banners should only be used temporarily and not become permanent fixtures on a building as these are of lesser quality and visual appearance than a superior quality painted timber sign and fade rapidly.

Signs

Printed metal or plastic sign panels on buildings where there is not a shopfront can be intrusive and are generally less successful than a painted timber sign or individually applied lettering. Where attached to a Listed Building, additional consents may also be required. Modest lettering in windows is the preferred option, and particularly appropriate for businesses in upper floors (see Internal Window Signage).

A-boards

A-boards are generally discouraged as they can make streets appear cluttered and can create problems for pedestrians, particularly wheelchair users or people with pushchairs.

A-boards require a licence and they will only be acceptable where the applicant can justify there is no impediment to pedestrians or negative impact on the streetscene.⁰¹

Top Tips:

- Hanging signs are best installed at fascia level at one end of the fascia board.
- Timber or metal are the most appropriate materials.
- Hanging signs should hang from an appropriately design bracket.
- Trade symbols, such as the chemist's pestle and mortar or optician's glasses are encouraged and generally preferred to projecting signs.
- Projecting box signage and A-boards are NOT acceptable in the Conservation Area.



⁰¹ <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/licensing/pdf/a-boards-on-the-highway-policy.pdf>

6.0 Lighting

Appropriate lighting can contribute interest and vitality and make streets more welcoming and safer in the evenings. Internally lit window displays can be effective and attractive, encouraging out-of-hours window shopping.

Generally, in most areas of the Conservation Area, it is not necessary to illuminate shopfronts and fascia and a proliferation of fittings such as long stemmed or swan-neck projecting lamps are disfiguring to a shopfront. Additionally, internally illuminated fascias are not appropriate in historic areas and will be resisted. Internally illuminated shops may also negate the need for additional external lighting.

Venues such as pubs and restaurants may require some form of illumination at night. Where installed it should not be distracting or issue glare. Subtle, minimalist, external lighting, preferably LED fittings discreetly placed illuminating key features on the shopfront, is more appropriate than large projecting light fittings. Illuminated projecting signs are generally discouraged, with the possible exception of businesses open late at night. Where lighting is proposed, full details of the fitting, method of fixing and luminance will be required in support of the planning, listed building consent and advertising consent application.



Top Tips:

- It must be demonstrated that any proposed lighting will enhance or maintain the character of the area and the frontage. Some areas may not be appropriate for additional lighting.
- Ensure fixtures and fittings, such as cabling, are suitably concealed within any design proposals.
- A slim LED strip light above the fascia to illuminate the signage is likely to be the most discrete approach in most cases.
- Avoid internally illuminated box signs or lighting flood the pavement or wider area.

6.0 Lighting



Heritage Action Zone funded shopfronts in Rochdale where lighting was utilised only where required. Lighting utilises discrete fittings above the fascia with an angled profile bar (West Virginia Fried Chicken). Toronto Fried Chicken has halo discrete lighting behind lettering.

7.0 Canopies and Awnings

Awnings and canopies can add interest to the streetscene and in the past were a common feature of Huddersfield retail areas. They serve to protect the shop and its display from heat and intense light and are particularly appropriate as summer temperatures continue to rise.

Within new shopfronts, sensitively designed awnings should be designed as an integral part of the shopfront, be retractable and should not obscure architectural features. Retractable awnings were traditionally positioned within the cornice above the fascia, but an alternative location is below the fascia, the suitability depending on the overall shopfront dimensions.



Awnings in New Street in the early 20th century



The blind box and fittings for an historic awning built into the cornice are clearly visible in this image above the overly-large fascia. Every effort should be made to preserve and reinstate such features

7.0 Canopies and Awnings

In some cases retractable awnings may still remain unused in an existing shopfront which should be repaired and put back into use. A projecting hanging signage will allow the shop name and advertising to remain visible when the canopy is down.

Where new blinds or awning are to be fitted retrospectively, it is important that blind boxes are integrated into the shopfront and do not protrude, but care should be taken not to damage the entablature during installation. Plastic materials for canopies are not appropriate and canvas should be used.

For public safety, awnings should be set back at least 0.5m from the kerb and there must be at least 2.3m headroom under the blind.

Dutch-style canopies, which are unattractive and are visible when retracted are not appropriate.

Listed Building Consent will be required for the addition of, or amendment to existing canopies.



8.0 Security

Top Tips:

- Good shop security balances the needs for security with wider public and environmental interests.
- Good security should be integrated into the overall design of a new shopfront.
- Solid external roller shutters are having a negative impact on the appearance of Huddersfield's streets and should be phased out.
- Consideration should be given to alternatives:
 - Specialist toughened or shatterproof glass;
 - Internal lattice shutters or grilles; and
 - Decorative external grilles and gates.



Security measures on shops are not a new thing; early measures include timber or metal gates to prevent access into recessed doorways, whilst timber shutters were frequently used on the smaller shop windows.

Security after closing time is clearly important for all businesses, but it is also apparent that security measures can be intrusive and a balance needs to be achieved between shop security and wider public and environmental interests. Good security of a shop should be integrated into the overall design of a new shopfront, as ad-hoc additions are rarely well implemented, function less well and are generally visually poor.

Solid external roller shutters are commonly found throughout Huddersfield's Conservation Area and are having a negative impact on the appearance of its streets. The housing of external shutters are usually applied to the exterior of the shopfront and can overly 'boxy' and obscure historic features and window display. They can also create an inactive and unpleasant street scene and are often the target of graffiti out-of-hours. Evidence suggests that external shutters are counter intuitive, as they can lead to the impression that an area is a high crime risk, further encouraging anti-social behaviour.

There are several alternatives to roller shutters which should be considered:

- Specialist glass such as shatterproof or toughened glass may be installed, but only where no historic glass exists and where the window frame allows for the wider glass panels.
- Lattice shutters or grilles fitted internally are a preferred security option which does not compromise the external appearance of the shop and allows for the interior of the shop to be visible out-of-hours.
- Decorative external grilles and gates may be an option in some circumstances particularly if they are well designed and are decorative.

8.0 Security



Although there is still some visual impact, internal lattice gates or shutters maintain the overall appearance of a shopfront and are preferred in most instances to external measures. (Drake Street, Rochdale)

8.0 Security

External roller shutters and grilles should be the last option to be considered, as they have the greatest visual impact on a shopfront. Permission (either Planning or Listed Building Consent) will be required, and permission is likely to be refused where more suitable options are available. Consideration may be given for roller shutter grilles which have been carefully integrated into the shopfront design.

Additionally, CCTV and alarm boxes should be carefully sited to be as unobtrusive as possible, and consideration should be given for the installation of cameras internally. They should be incorporated sensitively into the overall design of a new shopfront.

Most external security measures will require planning permission and Listed Building Consent (internal measures may also require Listed Building Consent).



9.0 Materials and Colour

The choice of materials should reflect the design, status and period of the building. Generally, good quality timber, which is both versatile, durable and a sustainable material, is encouraged on historic shopfronts. Depending on the host building, stone, ceramic, stucco or metalwork may also be appropriate. Modern glossy materials such as acrylic, Perspex and uPVC are not appropriate as they have a poor-quality appearance against the traditional materials of older buildings and do not age or weather well.

Glazing is a traditional feature of shopfronts and is fundamental to the advertising and display function. Full height glazing is a modern feature and does not reflect the character of historic buildings. Smaller windows with stallrisers, transoms and mullions are typical traditional features and more appropriate in historic contexts. Where original glass remains in a shopfront it should be retained. Modern float glass is a poor replacement for historic glazing as it lacks the texture and surface interest of older glass.

The colour scheme should complement the character and appearance of the building and the street scene and should avoid garishness. The use of traditional colours with a matt finish is generally recommended; heritage and more muted colours are usually the most appropriate in a conservation environment. Most shopfronts in Huddersfield are from the 19th century and earthy colours were generally popular during this period such as: dark reds; greens; and browns. These traditional colours are encouraged, however, alternatives are acceptable if they ensure coherence with a wider streetscene, are not garish, and do not overpaint a traditional paint scheme of interest.



10.0 Conversion and Reversal

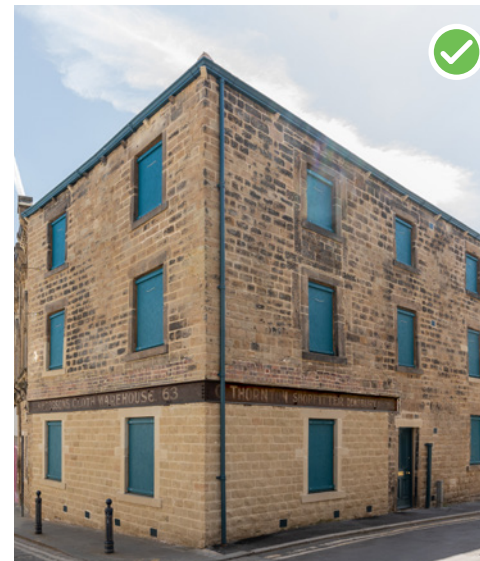
Changes to the planning system that have made it easier to transform retail premises into residential properties. These changes can have a major impact on the character of historic places.

Many shops in our town centres were originally built as houses; shopfronts have been added historically, frequently making use of the building's prime location and the opportunity to exploit passing trade. Good quality historic shopfronts demonstrate the history of a building and add character to a streetscape. Where they survive, the shopfront must be retained in any application for conversion; the replacement of the shopfront with solid walls and windows would not be acceptable.

To ensure privacy, internal blinds or curtains are preferable to opaque glazing or film. In some cases it may be appropriate to insert a light-weight but reversible partition at an appropriate distance behind the shop window, thus allowing new uses for the interior.

The shop door should become the front door of the property. If the building is being divided into flats, additional doors into individual flats should be located beyond the front door, rather than inserting new doors into the shopfront.

Where there are poor-quality modern shopfronts, conversion to residential use may be appropriate through the reinsertion of the ground floor walls, windows and door. However, the design should consider the materiality, period and style of the building above. Historical research may also be helpful in establishing the original form of the ground floor through historic photographs and plans.



11.0 Access for All

All buildings open to the public should be fully accessible to everyone, including those with mobility or sight difficulties. Careful consideration should be given to the shop entrance which should be made level with the pavement, should be wide enough for wheelchair access with adequate manoeuvring space, and doors that are easy to open. Ramped access can be achieved by creating a ramp either internally or externally. Traditional recessing doorways are ideal in this respect as the recess itself will often incorporate a slope. All new work should conform to current standards as set out in Part M of the Building regulations where applicable, although there are concessions regarding Listed Buildings. Highlighting entrance steps and overhanging edges assist where entrance steps are unavoidable.



A ramp has been installed adjacent to the stairs of this property on Northumberland Street. In some cases this may not be practical or appropriate due to pavement width or the external appearance of the historic building.

Planning and Listed Building Consent will be required for external changes, such as ramps or widening doorways. In the case of good surviving shopfronts or listed buildings it may be that an accessible entrance cannot be provided without adversely harming the shopfront's historic character.

Where new shopfronts are proposed there is an expectation that they should comply with all elements of Building Regulations and Part M; a suitably trained architect should be able to advise on this area.



This modern shopfront in a historic building has an unnecessary external step and could easily accommodate step-free access via re-design or an internal sloped floor.

12.0 Case Studies

12.1 52 JOHN WILLIAM STREET

On the John William's Street elevation, ground floor shops are separated by stone pilasters and share a continuous stone entablature. Shopfronts in this building have generally undergone significant alteration, with a limited number of traditional shopfronts remaining. In this example below, a modern shopfront is removed and a new design suggested. The design utilises the principles of the shopfront design

template shown earlier in this document and other neighbouring shopfronts as a guide. It shows how traditional materials, colour schemes and restrained handpainted lettering as signage can make a dramatic impact on the overall appearance of a shopfront.



12.0 Case Studies

13.2 CROSS CHURCH STREET

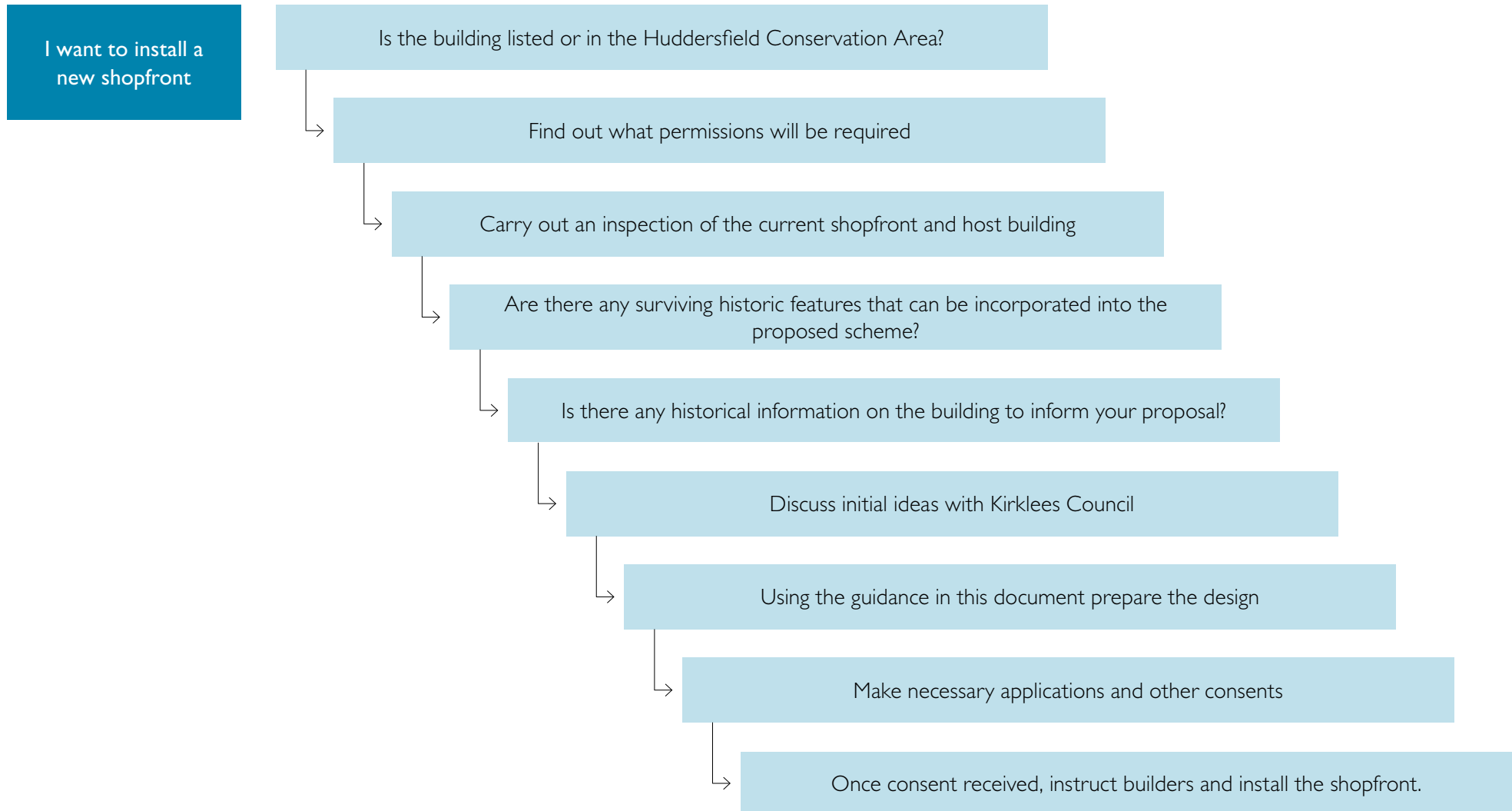
Cross Church Street was laid out in the first quarter of the 19th century to provide a connection between the Kirkgate and King Street. It featured houses, shops, businesses and two inns, the Sun Inn and the White Lion Hotel, which date back to the early incarnation of the street. The White Lion (now the Revolution) originally featured bow-bay windows, but now features a half-timbered frontage and Tudor-style doorway, probably installed in the early 20th century. Next door, the Sun Inn's façade was rebuilt at the end of the 19th century into an impressive stone frontage with gables and central turret. The central arch formerly led into a yard to the rear, now the main entrance lobby of a vacant bar/club. A rising sun is depicted at the top of each gable.

Despite modern interventions due to the construction of the Kingsgate Shopping Centre, the street retains many of its historic buildings, but few traditional shopfronts. In this example, the modern intrusive shopfronts are replaced with more traditional designs, reflecting the former character of this historic street.



APPENDIX

A. DESIGN PROCESS



APPENDIX

B. WHAT PERMISSION DO I REQUIRE?

Do I need Planning Permission?

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), requires planning permission to:

- the proposals involve the insertion or creation of a new shopfront;
- any alteration to an existing shopfront including the size or position of the door, changing the size of the shop window, cladding the exterior, altering the frontage line, or removing a recessed door;
- the installation or replacement of glazing, blinds, security grill or shutters on a shopfront;
- installing of steps or a ramp;
- the development is within the curtilage of a listed building;
- is within a Conservation Area;
- any part of the development would extend beyond an existing shopfront;

Like-for-like changes or painting a shopfront do not normally require permission, unless the building is listed. Pre-application is recommended and further details are available on the Kirklees Council website here:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/get-pre-application-planning-advice.aspx>.

Be aware that carrying out work which requires planning permission or listed building consent, may result in enforcement action. Kirklees Council can insist that all work carried out without consent is reversed and in more serious instances individuals may be taken to court.

APPENDIX

B. WHAT PERMISSION DO I REQUIRE? *(Continued)*

Do I need Listed Building Consent?

In order to alter or extend a listed building (including an attached shopfront) in a way that affects its character or appearance as a building of special architectural or historic interest, or demolish it, listed building consent (LBC) from the local planning authority is needed.

The need for LBC is set out by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. In the context of shopfronts LBC is generally required for:

- Fixtures, for example satellite dishes, shutters, burglar alarms, soil and ventilation pipes, rainwater pipes and gutters
- External alterations, for example rendering, cladding or painting any part of the building
- Internal alterations, for example the subdivision of rooms or removal of walls and the insertion, alteration, or removal of historic features such as shop fittings, doors, fireplaces, panelling, staircases and decorative mouldings; changing internal decoration may also require consent
- Substantial repairs where the character of the listed building is changed, such as a major or complete roof replacement
- Any repair which is not like-for-like

LBC is not generally needed for:

- Repairs, particularly if they are on a like-for-like basis (identical in every respect of design, techniques, materials)

However, it is advisable to discuss with the conservation officer as to whether LBC is required, as for example, the replacement of a substantial section of timber shopfront with matching new timber might be considered to affect the character of the listed building, requiring LBC.

Unauthorised work is a criminal offence and individuals can be prosecuted. The planning authority can insist that all work carried out without consent is reversed and in more serious instances individuals can be fined or even imprisoned.

Planning permission may be needed alongside Listed Building Consent and pre-application advice is recommended ahead of most applications. A Heritage Statement or Heritage Impact Assessment will likely be required as part of your application (see information box).

For further guidance on Listed building consent, see Historic England, [Advice Note 16, Listed Building Consent](#).

B. WHAT PERMISSION DO I REQUIRE? *(Continued)*

What is a Heritage Statement or Heritage Impact Assessment?

Heritage Statement or Heritage Impact Assessment is a process used when proposals are put forward for change to the historic environment. It is usually a requirement of listed building consent or planning consent for proposals within a Conservation Area. It identifies what is historically and architecturally important about a heritage asset, in order to be able to assess whether proposed changes will have a positive, negative or no impact on the heritage values of the place. Advice is usually given by a specialist heritage consultant and the resulting conclusions presented in a report, which should include:

- Identification and description of the proposals site and its setting;
- Identification of any designations, such as listing, which the site is subject to or which are within the setting of the site;
- Description of the history of the property;
- Identification of the 'significance' of the site, i.e. its historic and architectural interest; and
- An assessment of the impact the proposals will have on the significance of the site, as well as recommendations for any changes to the scheme that will reduce any negative impacts that are identified.

Do I need Advertising Consent?

The display of advertisements is controlled through Advertisement Consent and separate planning permission is not required in addition to the consent. Generally, consent is required for most illuminated and non-illuminated signs, and there are tighter controls within Conservation Areas.

Detailed guidance is available in the Government publication 'Outdoor Advertisements and Signs: A Guide of Advertisers' available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outdoor-advertisements-and-signs-a-guide-for-advertisers>

Do I need to apply for Building Regulation Approval?

Building Regulation approval may be required for any alterations to shopfronts, advice should be sought from the local authority Building Control team.

APPENDIX

C. RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF A BUILDING

Before proposing any change to a shopfront, it is important to understand the history of the building or street in which it is located. This will require some research into its historical development. Some useful places to start your search are detailed below:

The National Heritage List for England, to find out whether your building is listed and now gives detailed histories on many of the historic buildings in the Conservation Area: [https:// historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/)

Kirklees Image Archive holds many images of streets and buildings which can be searched here: <https://kirkleesimages.org.uk/>

Huddersfield Exposed holds a collection of images, articles and more about the history of Huddersfield and the surrounding area: <https://huddersfield.exposed/wiki/Welcome>

Huddersfield Local History Society is an organisation for anyone interested in the history of Huddersfield. Its website has some useful sources available to non-members: <https://www.huddersfieldhistory.org.uk/>

The National Archives. These are located at Kew, London, but the catalogue can be searched online at: <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

British Newspaper Archive Online, which can often be a useful source of local history information: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

National Library of Scotland, which allows you to view numerous historic plans online: <https://maps.nls.uk/>

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