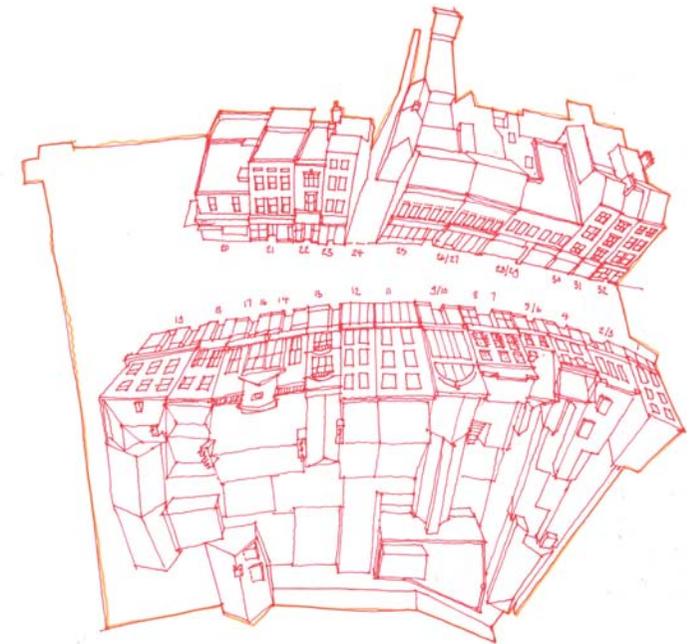




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1070 - Wisbech

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Wisbech Shop Front Design Guide
D027

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01/04/2016

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1.1

This supplementary planning document provides guidance to improve the standard of shop front design throughout Wisbech. The town's principle shopping area is centred around the Market Place which is a key public space within the town and located within the heart of the Wisbech Conservation Area. The character and appearance of Market Place, High Street, Hill Street, Bridge Street, Post Office Lane, Little Church Street and Norfolk Street, all within the conservation area, is greatly influenced by the shop frontages and signage of premises which occupy the ground floor of buildings. This guidance is not intended to be overly prescriptive or to stifle contemporary, innovative designs. It is to provide a cohesive approach to shop front design and shop front signage for Wisbech to facilitate the development of high quality shop frontages and advertising schemes which the Local Planning Authority could support when determining applications of this nature.

1.2

A shop front is a retailers opportunistic window to present the best possible advertisement for their business. It creates the first impression of the trade with potential customers. However the shop front should also add interest and vitality to the street scene, to attract shoppers and visitors alike, encouraging them to stay.

1.3

Carefully designed shop fronts and signage can contribute positively to street scenes and the character and appearance of conservation areas, and can fundamentally improve the experience of those using the shopping area. Conversely poorly designed shop fronts and signage, such as oversized fascia's, signage with excessive wording or garish graphics can be visually intrusive and harm the amenity of an area and its retail potential.

1.4

In this guide the term 'shop' is defined as any commercial premises having a fascia sign or display window, including non-retail premises such as banks, public houses, betting offices, amusement centres, restaurants, takeaways, estate agents, building societies and other businesses in a retail area.

1.5

Fenland District Council seeks to ensure that proposals for the alteration or construction of retail premises do not harm the character of any area established by the existing buildings and shops in Wisbech. Through control of the shopfront design, they themselves should make a positive contribution to the street scene.



Wisbech High Street, South side, 2015

2.1

Due regard is given to the Fenland Local Plan (May 2014) in the development of this design guide, specifically Policy LP16, LP17 and LP18.

2.2

Due regard has been given to the National Planning Policy Framework (April 2012) in the development of this design guide, with specific reference to section 2, section 7 and section 12.

2.3

On 25th February 2016 Fenland District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, adopted an up to date conservation area appraisal and management plan for the Wisbech Conservation Area. The Wisbech Conservation Area Appraisal (March 2016) provides a detailed assessment of the conservation area identifying its special architectural and historic interests. It provides a framework for positive decision making in respect of applications with a view to preserving and enhancing the conservation area's special interests. The accompanying Wisbech Conservation Area Management Plan (March 2016) identifies factors within the conservation area which have harmed or threaten to harm the conservation area alongside identifying opportunities to enhance the conservation area. By identifying these issues objective have been developed to determine and prioritise actions to effect positive changes and protect the conservation area's special interests. Priority Objective 3 specifically focuses on shop fronts and signage issues and states the Council will produce up to date shop fronts and signage guidance which will include clear information on the style and design of shop fronts which will be considered acceptable within the Wisbech Conservation Area. The design guide has been specifically produced to meet this objective.

2.4

Key illustrations and passages within this guidance document have been referenced and adapted from the Peterborough Supplementary Planning Document '*Shop Front Design Guidance*' adopted 27 January 2014.

Relevant information is also taken from '*English Historic Towns Form: Book of Details & Good Practice in Shopfront Design*' (1993).

3.1 Local Authority Requirements

Changes made to shop fronts and signage are likely to require approval from the Local Planning Authority potentially in the form of Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent or Advert Consent but this will depend on the nature of the work and the specific building where works are to be carried out on. It is advisable to seek the advice of the Local Planning Authority or independent planning professional before progressing a project that would involve changes to a shop front or signage in order that you receive the correct advice regarding any approvals that may be required. Fenland District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, does offer a pre-application advice service and will consider the merits of ideas and schemes ahead of formal applications being submitted. Details of the pre-application advice process are available under the planning pages on the Council's website www.fenland.gov.uk.

3.2 Planning Permission

In general terms Planning Permission is required for works which constitute development. In respect of works to shop fronts development would be seen as any work which involved building operations such as structural changes and rebuilding as well as any works that materially affect the external appearance of frontage. Works requiring planning permission would include replacing the shop front, reconfiguring the arrangement of the shop front, introducing a new door, installing security grills and shutters and installing external blinds and canopies. Works not requiring planning permission would be those involving general maintenance, localise repair and redecoration.

3.3 Listed Building Consent

Listed buildings are afforded statutory protection under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Listed Building Consent is required to carry out any works involving the alteration, extension or demolition of a listed building and failure to obtain such consent constitutes a criminal offence. When a building is listed the whole of the building is listed both internally and externally along with any object or structure fixed to the building or any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948. Undertaking works to a listed building ranging from the wholesale replacement of a shop front to the reconfiguration of the shop front to the wholesale replacement of a historic door or window would require consent. It is always advisable to seek advice from the Council's Conservation Team if you to clarify if a building is listed and to discuss proposed works to a listed building.

3.4 Advertising Consent

The present rules controlling advertisements fall under the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007. Certain advertisements can benefit from deemed consent meaning they can be installed accordingly and do not require the benefit of formal consent from the Local Planning Authority. Whether a sign benefits from deemed consent or requires formal advertisement consent depends on the purpose of the sign, height of the sign, size of the lettering, whether it is illuminated or if it is in area of special advertisement control. Further advice on signage can be obtained from the Communities and Local Government guide – Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers.

3.5 Building Regulations

In addition to planning and advertisement consent, certain works to shop fronts need to comply with building regulations legislation. For example, if work involves structural alterations, alterations to access and approach, or if there are implications for fire escape.

4.0

Basic Elements of a Traditional Shop Front Design

Shop fronts consist of functional components, which together form a cohesive visual composition. These components (as described below) are commonly found within traditional, historic designs but can be equally applied to a shop front of any period, including a contemporary design.

4.1 Cornice, Fascia, Architrave & Console Bracket [Entablature]

The fascia board spans across the shop front in between the console brackets, at the top of the pilasters. Traditionally the fascia was a sloping sign, angled towards street level to be more easily read and displaying the shop's name.

Above is a cornice which provides a distinctive horizontal divide from the upper floors. A projecting moulded cornice protects the fascia and shop below from rainwater runoff.

Decorative carved console brackets form 'bookends' to the fascia between the cornice and pilaster. They help frame the fascia and add vertical rhythm to the shop front.

4.2 Pilasters and Stall Riser

Pilasters are shallow, vertical, classical style columns forming the uprights either side of the shop front. They provide multiple visual advantages such as: framing of the shop front, supporting the fascia, creating visual separation from neighbouring properties and giving vertical framing. Pilasters usually comprise of a low level plinth, a column to the height of the window, and a console, as described above.

A stall riser originally housed grills or windows for the basement and supported the main shop windows. It establishes a solid visual base to the shop front, and protects the glazing above. A stall riser may typically be constructed using timber panels (often exploited for further advertisement), masonry, render or tiles.

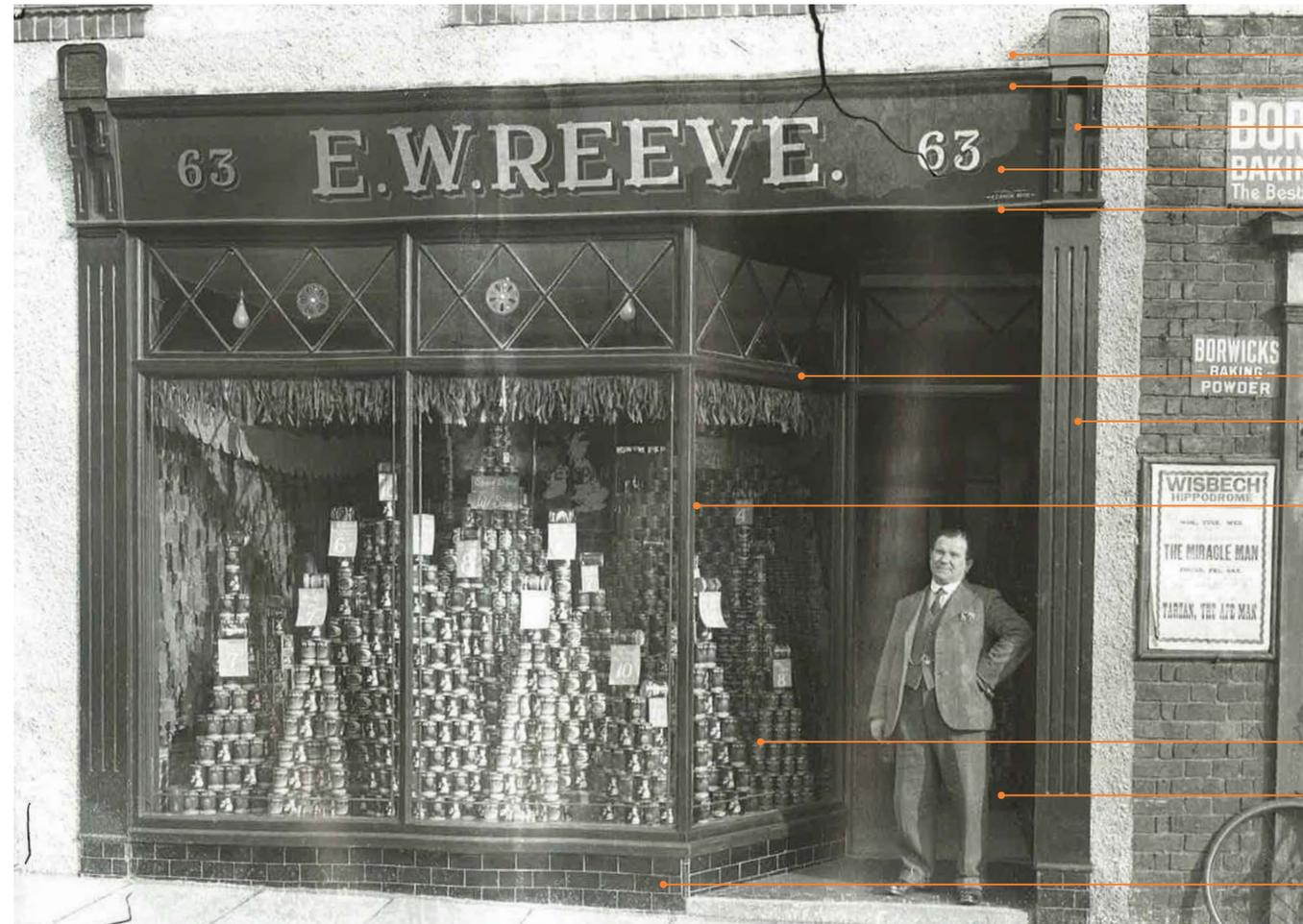
4.1.3 Windows

Windows are subdivided by transoms and mullions to form horizontal and vertical divisions. Vertical divisions often reflect the vertical division of the upper floors. The cill supports the windows and, like the stall riser, provides protection. To the same effect, windows are typically set back from the pilasters.

4.1.4 Entrance

The entrance would typically have been centrally located where larger shop frontages permitted and from the late 19th century often became recessed to give visual interest, shelter and maximum window display.

Traditional stepped entrances and historic materials are often unfortunately lost following modern requirements for step-free access.



Edward W Reeve outside his shop front in Norfolk Street, 1932

5.0 Design Principles

Benefits of a successful shop front can be recognised on multiple levels:

Shop owner: It is in the shop owner's interest to make sure that the shop front is well designed, displays goods effectively and attracts customers.

Adjacent and local businesses: Attractive shopping streets that provide a pleasing shopping experience will lead to higher custom overall.

Heritage and history: Shop fronts, which are refurbished should complement and retain as much of the building's historical heritage and fabric as possible.

Local residents: On a wider level, a vibrant and well-regarded shopping area will typically engender well-used surrounding public spaces and in turn will contribute to a sense of civic pride.

5.1 Street Scene and Local Context

A shop front should be designed to sensitively respond to its surrounding architectural context. Proportions, materials and details should reflect and uphold the variation of the surrounding buildings and no one shop front should dominate its surroundings.

5.2 The Building as a Whole

Historically most shop fronts were designed as an integral part of the building and based on classical proportions, with the various elements forming a balanced composition with the building. Consequently the design of the shop front can affect the entire building, and its neighbours positively or negatively. A well proportioned shop front that is sensitive in both materials and form to its surrounding context will compliment the building as a whole and should emphasise its individual character.

Surviving historic fabric and early photographs or illustrations remain key tools in determining original features and advising on a sensitive design approach.

5.3 Individual Details

Individual details should reflect the architectural period from whence the building was constructed. Where possible and practicable, original features should be preserved and protected.



Photomerge of historic and contemporary Wisbech, at the junction of High Street and York Row

6.1 Design Principles

The following approach should be undertaken when repairing, replacing or installing a shop front:

- An appraisal of the building and surrounding architectural context should be conducted. Original photographs and early illustrations should be referred to, in order to best understand the history of the building.
- The planning status of the building in question should be determined. The removal of a traditional shop front that is part of a listed building or within a conservation area will not be permitted if it is appropriate to the building or is of architectural or historic interest in its own right.
- Where an existing shop front is sympathetic to the building or of historic interest it should be refurbished and repaired rather than replaced. Traditional detailing and original features should be retained and conserved.
- Where an original shop front has been altered, any modern, incongruous signage should be removed and careful investigation should be undertaken to reveal potentially remaining original base structure and signage. Much of the architectural framework, such as pilasters or fascias boxed in and hidden by later work often survives, and these should be revealed.
- Where practicable and appropriate to the surrounding context, particularly within a conservation area or in adjacency to listed buildings, original details should be re-established using traditional materials and details.
- When all original details have been lost or an entirely new shop front is being proposed, the design should be well proportioned in response to the surrounding architectural context, and of high design quality. Specific consideration should be made towards the traditional shop front elements, as described in Section 4.0.

6.2 Traditional Design

Wisbech is known as the 'Capital of the Fens' and is arguably the finest Georgian market town in the East of England. The Conservation Area reflects the historic core of the town and contains 227 of the 265 listed building's within Wisbech, including the original 'Old Market Place' and the current large Georgian Market Place. As such, the preferred design approach is to respect and complement the existing historic fabric and heritage of the town by pursuing traditional shop front design where appropriate. The area retains a strong Georgian character with Victorian interventions and retaining these existing features and characteristics is strongly encouraged.

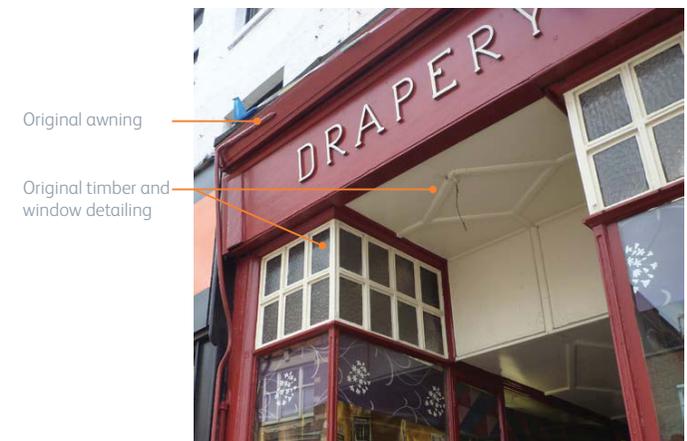
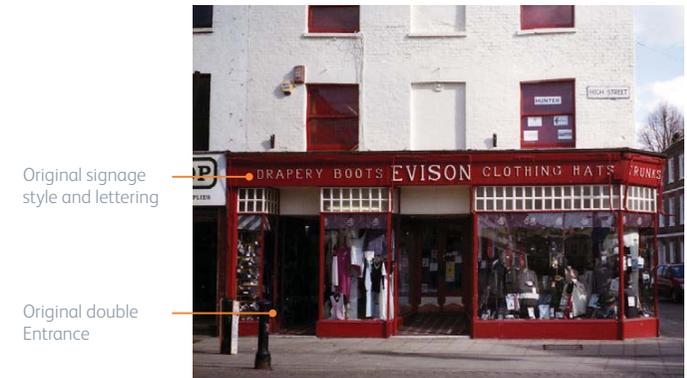
In comparison to Victorian or later shopfronts, Georgian shopfronts typically have very individual outer frames and window details. Common features include: fascias extending the full shopfront width, glazing divided into smaller panes, pilasters with capitals or consoles below the fascia, bow windows often supported by struts or brackets, and elaborate tracery over the door. Further conservation details should also be retained, such as: classical styles pilasters, corbel or console brackets, entablature with fascia and hand painted sign.

Any replacement work should be an accurate historical interpretation of the building's architecture and character.

6.3 Modern Design

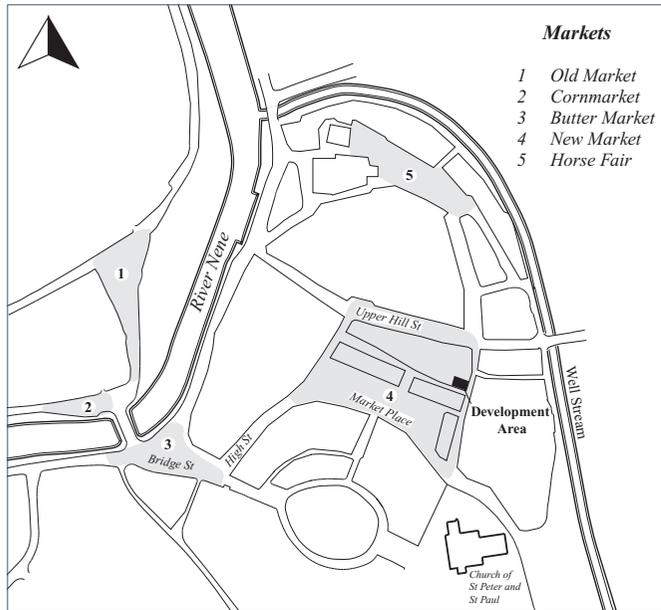
Modern developments have negated the requirement for some original shopfront design features (e.g. efficient artificial lighting can now replace the need to large front bow windows designed to bring maximum light in). In some locations, or where necessary, a modern shop front design may be preferable to a traditional approach. Indeed Wisbech exhibits several examples of 20th century architecture which complement the surrounding architectural context without attempting to replicate a traditional style.

Modern design should nevertheless consider proportions and scale as a priority. Successful modern designs typically emulate classical proportions and reinterpret the conventional forms and scale of adjacent shop faces and buildings. Sympathetic materials and detailing and high-quality craftsmanship should be used with due consideration to surrounding fabric and context.



Conservation of traditional shop front design:
Evisons, Wisbech High Street, 1930s & 2015

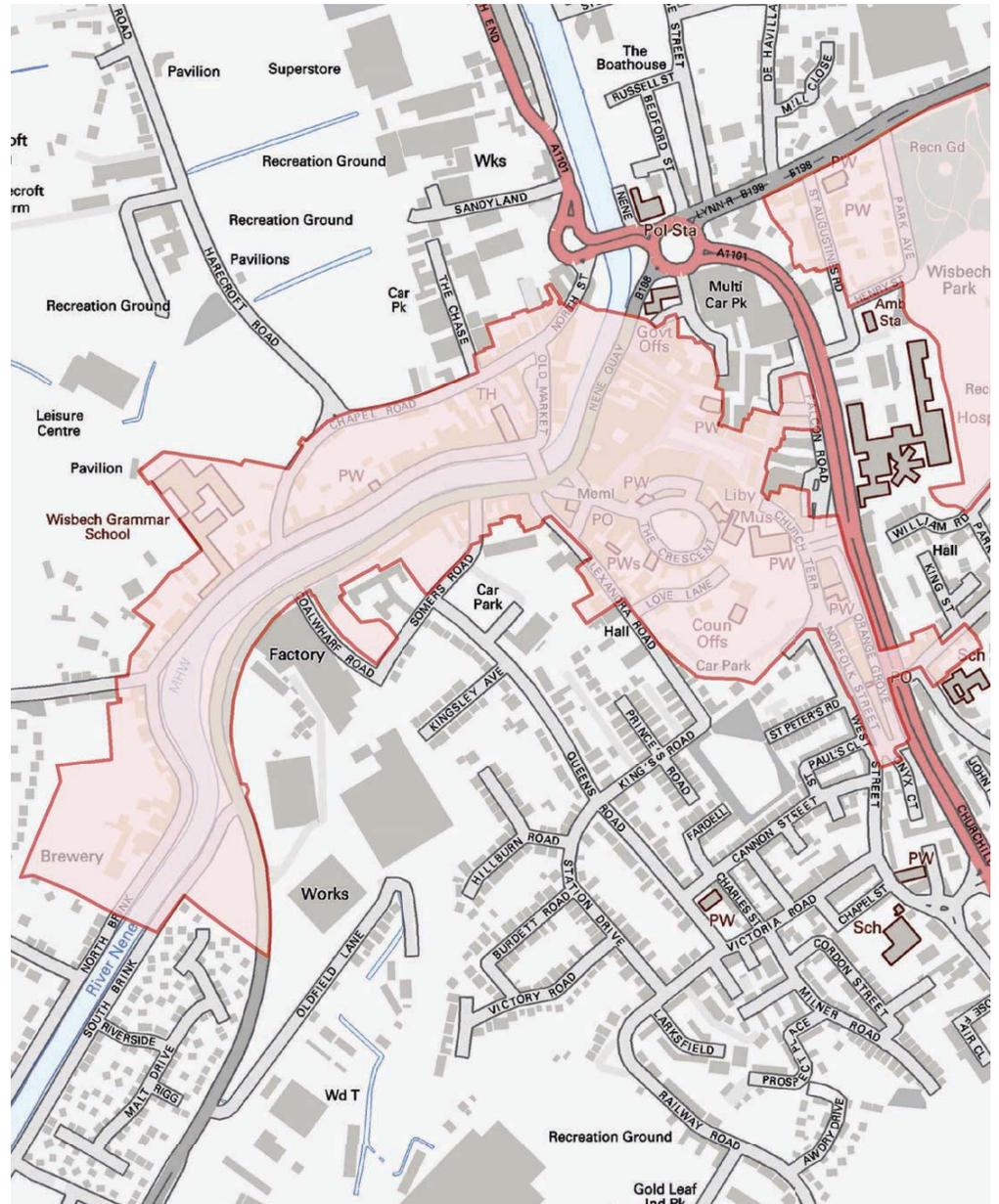
6.0 Design Approach



Wisbech Markets

Refer to Archaeological report commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council ('Deeply Stratified Medieval and Post-Medieval Remains at Market Mews, Wisbech', 2002) for detailed history of Wisbech's markets.

Created on: 03/03/2015	Wisbech Conservation Area	  Fenland District Council
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Wisbech conservation area extent

6.4 Scale, Height and Proportions

6.4.1

The scale and proportions should be the first point of reference in shop front design, both with regards to the individual building and the entire street elevation. The building's upper floors, windows and character should dictate the scale of the shop front below and, to some extent, its detailing and style. Similarly, a building's ground floor should support, reference and compliment the floors above.

The following examples suggests how the above guidance might be interpreted with reference to particular examples. This list is non-exhaustive, and each building should be assessed in its own right and within its own context:

- A smaller building will dictate narrower fascia, pilasters and detailing.
- Elements of an 18th century design would be considered incongruous below a 19th century building above.
- Glazing and cornice details on the upper facade may be reflected in the shop front details below.
- Siting of the entrance door and associated window framing should carefully consider the fenestration rhythm above.
- The scale of the adjacent buildings on the street elevation should be considered when determining the height and depth of the fascia and pilasters.

6.4.2

Where a shop front covers multiple façades, the vertical subdivisions should nevertheless be retained. The fascia should echo the rhythm of each unit of the facade above, using framing or pilasters as subdividing elements in order to reflect the scale and pattern of the original buildings.

6.4.3

Where multiple shop fronts exist beneath a single facade, the overall whole should still be considered as a unified form with corresponding materials and colour schemes.

Where only one appropriate shop front exists it will be sensible to preserve it and to base the replacement of an adjacent shop front under the same facade on its design. Where no existing shop fronts are appropriate, any replacement will be considered as the first step towards reaching a satisfactory design for the whole building.



Vertical proportions, scale and alignment of the facade. Wisbech



Shop front not appropriate in scale and proportion to above building façades

Shop fronts appropriate in scale and proportion to above façades

6.0 Design Approach

6.5 Fascias

The fascia provides the primary advertising space of a shop front and is consequently often considered the most important visual element. The size, scale and style of the fascia therefore takes on greater importance, as any incongruity is more readily noticeable within the overall street scape. The following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Fascia signs should not extend beyond more than one neighbouring shop unit, and should align with neighbouring fascias in order to keep a pleasing street scape.
- The Fascia proportions should be determined by the proportions of the building as a whole and should not be disproportionately large in comparison with the rest of the shop front. It should typically be no deeper than 1/5 of the height of the shop front.
- Architectural elements such as a cornice or architrave should be retained and/or properly detailed at the top of the fascia with detailed lead (or equivalent) flashing for weather protection. This both frames the shop front below, and

protects the frontage from water damage or staining. The cornice should not be visually obstructed by fascia signs.

- The top of the fascia should typically be at least 3 brick courses below the cills of the first floor windows (not above the perceived first floor level) and the bottom should not extend below the head of the pilaster. Typically the flanking corbels / consoles determine the fascia height. Care should be given so not to obscure or cover any original detailing, such as brick string courses at this level.
- The fascia should be recessed, shallow, angled towards street level and not a projecting box design, which is usually regarded as unsympathetic and intrusive to the street scene. They are not permitted in conservation areas or on heritage buildings.
- Awning boxes and security shutters should be sensitively integrated into the fascia/cornice design where applicable.

Historically the awning or blind box often formed part of the cornice detail and should be retained where details survive.

- The materials used should be sensitive towards both the building and the entire street elevation. Georgian and Victorian shop fronts, as typical of Wisbech's retail area traditionally used timber, tiles, stained glass and masonry. Plastic and illuminated fascias are not appropriate.
- Colours and lettering cannot be considered in isolation and each shop front should consider both the evolution of the store and the history of overall street when determining an appropriate aesthetic.
- Lighting, when incorporated within a fascia, should be sensitively approached and recessed within cornices where possible.

Sections 7.0 & 8.0 discuss signage, materials, colour and lighting in greater detail.



Fascias and surplus advertising inappropriate in scale and proportion to above building façades and adjacent buildings



Fascias appropriate in scale and proportion to above building façades and adjacent buildings

Example_ Wisbech High Street

Overly large fascia disproportionate size and obtrusive to first floor window



Fascia not recessed or in proportion with neighbouring property



Contemporary recessed fascia sympathetic in style, detail and proportions to facade.



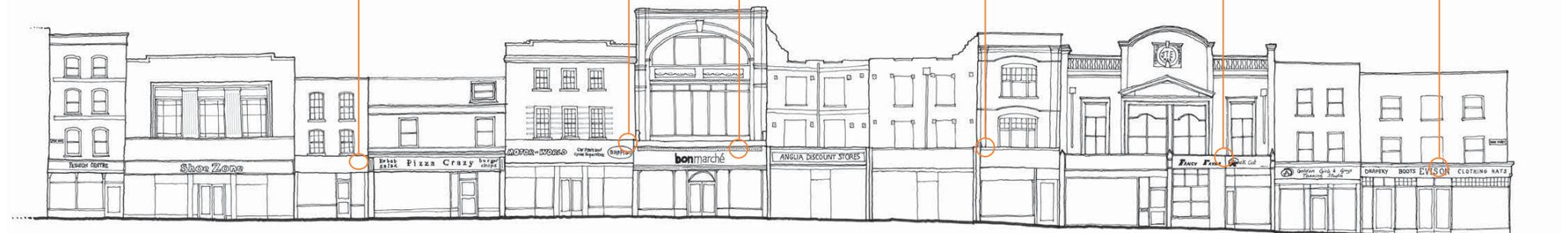
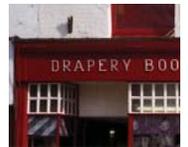
Oversized lettering distorts fascia's scale and proportions



Unsympathetic fascias to surviving shop front detailing and original facade above



Original fascia style, lettering & proportions



Wisbech High Street, South side, 2015

6.6 Doors and Access

Access to shops must consider the proportions of the building and its historical features alongside more recent regulations concerning inclusive access for all potential users. For this reason, many historic entrances may require sensitive refurbishment in order for them to meet current requirements.

- Entrances should comply with the Building Regulations 2010 and the Equality Act 2010.

Primarily this concerns clear opening door widths and access from the pavement either via a level access, non-slip ramp (max. gradient 1:12) or easily manageable steps (with handrails and contrasting nosing strips) to allow access for people with limited mobility and visual impairments, including elderly people and customers with pushchairs.

Existing buildings may sometimes struggle to comply and should be discussed individually with Building Control and the local Planning Department.

- The location of the door must be carefully considered. Whilst doors are preferably be located centrally to give visual interest and to clearly define the entrance, the overall facade proportions should be considered and it may be more suitable to align the entrance with corresponding fenestration above (refer to Section 6.4.1).
- Door panels should be in proportion with the shop front and match the height of the stall riser.
- Recessed doorways are a traditional feature of shop fronts and add interest to the street scene. They provide an increased window display, protect customers from rain and can help to provide a level access by ramping up from street level. A suitable floor finish such as paving or tiles in the recessed entrance can enhance the character of the shop front and reflect the historic origins of the shop. Any existing recessed entrance door opening should be retained and original tiling reinstated where possible.
- Doors, fanlights and windows should be made of the same material and painted the same colour.
- Traditionally doors were part glazed. This is still preferable.
- Ironmongery should complement the style of the shop front and be heritage fittings where appropriate.
- Creation and treatment of independent access to upper floors, where applicable should be considered as part of any refurbishment scheme. (Discussed further in Section 12)

Historic Entrances_



Historic tiled entrance to shop front (J. W. Nurse)



Historic stepped entrance to shop front (Foster Bros) would no longer be accessible under current regulations and would require sensitive modernisation.

Example Entrance_ Bonmarché, No.9/10 Wisbech High St.

Positives

- Entrance echoes the original central door location
- Recessed entrance to reflect original / traditional shop front design, increase window display and shelter customers.
- Doors and windows are made of same material and painted same colour (throughout entire front elevation)
- Doors and window fenestration considers the symmetrical elevation of the entire building and reflects fenestration to elevation above. Arched frame element above entrance door hints towards original arched entrance and reflects large arched window at second floor above.
- Doors are part glazed to reflect traditional shop front design.

Negatives

- Door kick plate panel should preferably match the height of the stall riser.
- Mullions preferably more slender to reflect original detail.
- Original floor tiling has been lost and Georgian heritage tiles should be reinstated in order to enhance the character of the shop front and reflect the historic origins of the shop

Note: Console brackets have been lost and should preferably be re-introduced with sloping fascia, and traditionally coloured sign. Stall riser is also beginning to suffer due to inappropriate materials / protection at low level against pavement.



Original celebrated entrance detail to No.9/10 High Street, Wisbech



Contemporary entrance detail to No.9/10 High Street, Wisbech, which considers traditional elements without reproducing as a pastiche.

6.0 Design Approach

6.7 Stall Risers

Stall risers are normally required to provide a visual base to the shop front and support and protect the glazing. They also add a sense of security and are visually important in the street scape.

- Appropriate stall riser depth should be set by the design and proportions of the shop front, although an up-stand of at least 450mm is typically expected.

Traditionally the stall riser depth was determined by the requirements of the trader and his goods. For example large items required a lower stall riser allowed items to be viewed from above whilst smaller goods were preferably located at eye level. Upper sections were often ornamented, as not required for goods display. Ventilating panels may have been included for stores trading in perishable goods.

- The materials used should respect and enhance the building and shop front. Wisbech vernacular typically observes timber panelled, tiled or masonry stall risers. Stall risers can be capped with engraved metal stall plates. Where these still exist, they should be retained (as at No.5 Market Place, Wisbech).
- Stall risers should be properly primed, finished and regularly cleaned, as they are prone to splashes and scuff marks.
- Contemporary designs should also include some form of stall riser to complement the more conventionally framed examples across Wisbech.

Some contemporary stores have large expanses of plate glass, down to ground level, which can produce a dramatic and effective shopfront. However, such minimalist design is not suitable in traditionally framed parades of shops.

- A plinth of stone or brick (perhaps rendered) is recommended to protect a timber stall riser from abutting the pavement and being susceptible to rot.
- A suitable cill should be appropriately detailed to throw water away from the stall riser and for visual effect. (Refer to Section 6.9 for further cill and window recommendations.)

Historic Stall Risers_



Tiled stall riser (Jeary's, Stationers)



Grated stall riser with advertising above (Foster Bro's, Clothing)



Stall riser with glazed bricks to basement (R. J. Glass, Drapers)



Timber stall riser capped with engraved metal stall plate (International Stores)



Brick stall riser (Evisons)

Example Stall Riser_ No.31 Wisbech High Street

Positives

- Echoes original timber panelled stall riser.
- Door panels align with stall riser height.

Negatives

- A brick plinth has been installed beneath the stall riser for weather protection and increased durability. The brick plinth in itself is reasonable, however the brick colour and type should be sympathetic to the building elevation above. In this case the plinth appears incongruous with the overall building.

Note: Console brackets have been lost and should preferably be re-introduced. Window mullions are chunky and preferably to be more slender, as original detailing.



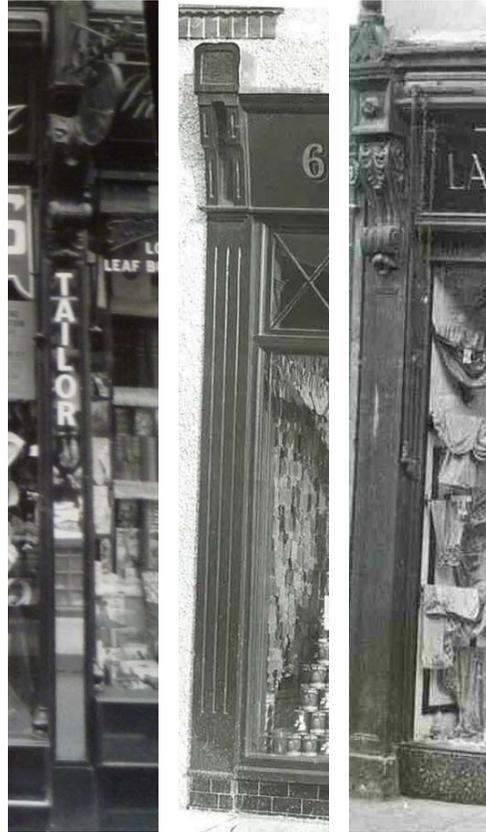
Original surviving timber panelled stall risers to be retained. No.31 Wisbech High Street

6.8 Consoles and Pilasters

The pilaster is the most widely used form of shopfront topped with several variations on the classical theme of cornice, fascia and architrave. The depth, variety and sculptural interest of the mouldings is often what gives shopfronts their character. A corbelled feature at the top of the pilaster typically serves to frame the fascia. Consoles can be used to support the cornice and frame the fascia without necessarily the support of the pilaster below. Sometimes door pilasters may also have matching consoles. Wisbech exhibits examples of both console and corbel techniques. Both adding diversity and vitality to the street scape.

- Visually, pilasters, corbels and consoles should preferably be used to provide vertical emphasis and enclosure to the shop front. Where traditional examples survive, these should be retained.
- Pilasters should project beyond the shop front itself, typically in line with the bottom of the fascia.
- Pilasters should be free of fixtures such as signs, alarm boxes and blind fittings.
- Materials for pilasters should be considered with respect to the overall building and shopfront. They are traditionally timber, stone or render (which is usually incised to look like ashlar stonework).

Historic Pilasters_



Mirrored pilaster supporting signage lettering and timber panelled pilasters with ornate console brackets.



Example Console & Pilaster_

No.13 Wisbech High Street

Positives

- Original brick corbelled pilaster survive, including original entrance and side panel formed by pilaster. Timber framed signage panel is faintly visible.

Negatives

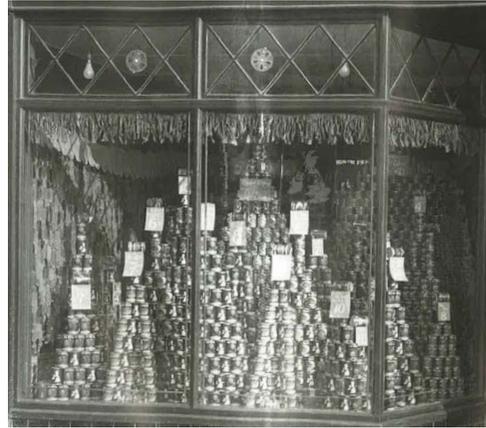
- All brick, timber and detailing has been painted the same colour in a glossy paint. This gives no definition between different materials and can cause materials to retain excess moisture if a non-breathable paint is used. The paint should be removed from the brick pilasters as a minimum.
- Conduit and shoe runs almost the length of the left-hand pilaster. This should be removed and cables relocated so as not to interrupt the shop frontage.
- Felt roof covering has been applied to shop front roof, wrapping round the front of the pilaster. This should be removed and preferably lead flashing to roof reinstated.

6.9 Windows and Glazing

Glazing should preferably be appropriate to the age and style of the overall building. Typically the Georgian or early Victorian styles in Wisbech, which would be smaller panels divided by mullions and transoms rather than large expanses of plate glass (which was introduced in the late Victorian era and is not reflective of Wisbech's Georgian heritage). The framing divisions should reflect the proportions of the shop and the building facade above. They may also be decorative.

- The transom should be in line with the division between the door and the fan light.
- Mullions should echo the placing of windows or architectural detail of the building above. They must also be suitable for the specification of glass (modern glass types such as toughened or laminated can be increasingly thicker and heavier)
- Cills should preferably be flat to reflect the Georgian heritage. However rounded cills (indicative of the Victorian era) should be retained where they exist.
- The glazing type and specification should be carefully considered. Historic glass reflects the surrounding context differently to modern glazing. Dependent on the historic nature of the building and its listing status, heritage glass may be required.
- Laminated or toughened glazing should be used for safety and security below 800mm to respond to current building regulations.
- Large expanses of glass may be considered in a contemporary frontage or in a sensitive refurbishment of an existing shop front. However each case should be considered in isolation in order to best respond to the individual proportions of the facade and the street elevation. Smaller panels are typically more in keeping with the surrounding historic context.

Historic Glazing_



Diagonal Georgian leaded glazing (E.W.Reeve, No.63 Norfolk St)



Decorative arched glass frontage at entrance (R. Blood, outfitter)



Glass panels divided by mullions (J.Kennerrel, photographer)



Original decorative glazing detail to be retained. No.20-26 Hill Street, Wisbech.



Surviving original timber framing detail, No.16 Wisbech High Street.

Example Window & Glazing_

No.16 Wisbech High Street

Positives

- Retains original timber frame joinery detailing.
- Divides glazing into smaller panels.

Negatives

- New timber mullions do not align with original upper window mullions.
- Timber repairs are required.
- Security tape has been fixed to glazing internally, visually interrupting glazing panel. This should be removed.

7.1 Design Principles

- High quality materials should be used within the design.
- Traditional materials should be used in correlation with listed buildings and buildings within a conservation area.
- The colour scheme should be similar to the surround buildings and the building itself.
- The finish should embroider and enhance the final design.



Timber detail requiring repair, No.16 Wisbech High Street.



Typical timber spliced repair prior to finishing.

7.2 Timber

Historically timber has been used as the traditional material for shopfront construction and is commonly used within contemporary designs. However the species and treatment of timber should be considered with regards to quality, durability and appearance, as each will have an effect on the character and the maintenance of the shop front over its lifetime. Typically painted timber should be the basis of new designs in conservation areas and listed buildings. A traditional approach favours a painted finish. However the local vernacular should be considered, as modern varnishes and wood stains may be more appropriate.

7.2.1 Timber principles

As a foundation, the following basic principles should be followed when specifying timber (hardwood or softwood) for a shop front:

- It is suitable and durable for external use
Where Plywood is used, particularly in the construction of stall risers, it is essential that a suitable grade for exterior use is specified and that it has received an appropriate preservation treatment prior to priming and painting.
- It is readily workable and able to meet the detailed specification.
- Its moisture content and likelihood of movement is low or accounted for.
Where tolerances are critical, low movement qualities are advisable. As a rule of thumb, a moisture content between 13-20% is usually considered acceptable
- It is able to take a painted or varnished finish
Due to natural oils within some timber and/or large pores, it can sometimes be difficult to achieve a good finish. Plywood in particular is susceptible to fine cracks which can reduce paint durability if not adequately treated.
- It is environmentally sourced.
Advice on sustainable timber sourcing is available from 'The Good Wood Guide', 'TRADA' and various other organisations.
- It is suitably protected at junction with pavement or avoids touching the pavement entirely (e.g. using brick plinth)

Technical information on timber within this section has been extracted largely from 'English Historic Towns Form: Book of Details & Good Practice in Shopfront Design' (1993).

7.2.2 Timber adhesives

Typically good joinery details require little additional strengthening, however where adhesive is used, it should be sufficiently flexible to allow for natural movement in the timber, and should not cause any build up or pockets of moisture.

Two types of adhesives are commonly used in shop front construction: PVA and resins. PVA's allow some movement but will be ineffective if the joint is put under strain. Resins will form a stronger bond but will allow no movement and are often impervious. Care should be taken to properly understand adhesive specification and how it will perform.

7.2.3 Timber finish

The main finishes available are:

- **Preservatives**
These are not usually expected to double as exterior finishes but are typically used in conjunction with paints or wood stains to prolong the life of the timber. Their primary function is to penetrate and be retained in a shell of the outer few millimetres of timber to guard against stain, decay, mould growth and insect attack. Surface treatments such as paints and stains will not alone give this protection and susceptible timbers in particular ought to be given adequate preservative treatment prior to the application of the finish. Some treatments may be applied directly after the timber is cut to size, whilst many (including cuts or joints) are applied in situ.
- **Paint**
Traditionally lead paints were used for exterior woodwork, however their toxicity has effected a decline in their use nowadays and legislation prohibits their use on all but certain historic buildings. Exterior quality paints are available in solvent borne and waterborne types. Some of these have a higher level of moisture permeability and are described as 'microporous', 'breathing' or 'ventilating'. These are typically better for resisting the passage of moisture whilst still allowing it to escape more freely from the wood as vapour, and aiding in maintaining a low moisture content in the wood. Satisfactory paint adhesion and durability lies predominantly in ensuring adequate preservative treatment, using aluminium primers and understanding the qualities of the species of timber used (e.g. common softwoods such as pines, spruce and fir contain natural resins in knots which can exude and mar painted surfaces. Other woods such as teak may contain oils which interfere with drying, hardening and adhesion of

paint) The final appearance of painted hardwood is often more irregular than that of softwood due to its larger pores which absorb the paint and it may be preferable to stain or varnish instead.

Priming is a principle in reducing timber staining and surfaces should be primed prior to glazing beads or window putty being applied to timber. Typically primed timber should be given at least two coats of undercoat and depending on the depth and gloss of finish required, one coat of top coat.

Many modern paints give a glossier finish than original paint finishes and may wish to be lightly sanded to produce a more traditional finish. Alternatively semi-gloss or matt finish paints may be more appropriate.

- **Varnishes**
Traditionally varnishes have been used for small timber components where a high gloss natural finish is required - they are essentially paints without pigment. Maintenance and durability should be carefully considered, as varnishes may require more regular reapplication to prevent the exposure and degradation of the timber behind.
- **Wood stains**
Exterior wood stains have been widely used throughout the UK since the 1960s. They work primarily by shedding liquid water from a water repellent surface whilst allowing moisture vapour to pass into and out of the timber, allowing it to breathe. They are more suited to a vertical surface than horizontal and therefore horizontal surfaces such as cills will usually require additional coats to ensure evenness of weathering. Ancillary components such as glazing beads and putties must also be considered in relation to the type of stain used so as not to have a negative chemical effect. Aluminium and stainless steel components are also preferable to avoid discolouration from metal corrosion.

7.2.4 Timber repairs

Care should be taken to ensure the conservation of traditional timber shopfronts and there should be a presumption for repair instead of replacement. A traditional joinery repair is always preferable to repair using modern fillers, and where a new piece of timber needs to be patched or 'let in' to an existing shop front, it should match the old timber in appearance and performance.

7.3 Stone

The use of stone for shopfronts varies on a regional bases with its most popular usage generally in areas where stone is the traditional building material, and as such Wisbech has few examples. It is important, where stone is used that it is coursed and bedded using a traditional approach and is harmonised with the upper floors including all dressings and detailing.

Polished granite is occasionally used in stall risers and pilasters. In Victorian times, granite stall risers would tend to be broken up with decorative grilles or etched lettering. In modern use, it may be more appropriate to use granite between the stall riser and the pavement only, as a means of weather protection. This would avoid vast expanses of granite, which has the potential to appear incongruous with the surrounding facade.

Reconstituted stone, also known as “engineered stone” is composed of natural marble/granite granulates and powder combined with a highly specialised polyester resin. The resulting product has physical properties similar to those of marble/granite. Other ground aggregates such as stones, mirror flecks, coloured glass and shells are also added to some batches. It is occasionally used as an alternative to natural stone in shop front design but it should be noted that this material weathers differently to stone and it is inadvisable to mix the two. Reconstituted stone should be fully cured before its use on site, as under-cured stone can be soft and easily damaged.

7.4 Tiles

Glazed ceramic tiles were often used during Victorian times to clad the front of a shopfront, and several examples of both tiles and glazed bricks (giving a similar finish) exist within Wisbech. These should be retained. Often it is only the stall riser which is tiled, as it provides a durable and easily cleanable finish and can be very decorative with bespoke patterns or even pictures.

7.5 Other materials

Laminates, plain sheet metals, UPVC and other plastics should be avoided as they are unsympathetic to the traditional architecture of the building.

Other materials, such as metal frames, bronze and brick, may be appropriate if the building design and age lean towards the use of these materials. Cast iron is traditional in shopfronts design and detailing but is relatively rare nowadays due to the high cost. Any surviving examples should be retained and suitable specialist advice sought for restoration techniques.

7.6 Colour Selection

Carefully selected colours may enhance each building as well as the whole street on an aesthetic level. More recent research and legislation now recognises the effect colour can now have on people with a particular disability or visibility impairment.

Corporate colours should be adapted to the local street scene. A simple range of colours is preferable to maintain coherence across the overall street scene.

Typically black, white, cream, buff and rich dark greens, blues and reds were the traditional colours. However modern advancements have enabled a much wider palette from which to choose. This can be advantageous but must involve greater care and consideration with regards to complementing the surrounding buildings. Colours also cannot be considered in isolation, as natural material finishes can be enhanced or blighted by shop front colour schemes.

The following principles should be considered:

- Use a single colour for main shopfront elements
- Consider use of a contrasting colour to enhance key details.
- Dark, primary, rich colours are typically preferred for historic buildings or buildings within conservation areas, to reflect traditional colouring.
- White and cream may become discoloured easily. Their use is not prohibited by any means, but the shop owner should recognise that this finish should be regularly cleaned and maintained in order to keep a high quality appearance.
- Colours should be sensitive to colours and materials used elsewhere on the facade / street.
- Sufficient contrast in finish to be provided to suit building regulations.



Period photograph of Wisbech High Street suggesting traditional colour scheme.



Example Materials & Colours_ Wisbech Market Place

Positives

- Follows some original timber frame joinery detailing.

Negatives

- Colour scheme is entirely incongruous with rest of building facade and adjacent shop fronts.
- Stall riser and pilasters should be painted a single colour as opposed to severely contrasting colours.
- Plastic material of fascia and sign is not appropriate or sensitive to original building.

Note: Console brackets have been lost and should preferably be re-instated.



Example Materials & Colours_ Wisbech High Street

Negatives

- Shopfront materials used are entirely unsympathetic and non-complimentary to the building and adjacent buildings.
- Colours used are unsympathetic and draw singular focus to this shop. The street scene should read as a whole.
- No stall riser exists. Some contemporary shopfronts have large expanses of plate glass, down to ground level, which can produce a dramatic and effective display area. However this design is not suitable in parades of shops, such as Wisbech High Street where the adjacent traditional shops are more conventionally framed.
- Consideration should be given to window display without blocking entire frontage with vinyl graphics.



Example Materials & Colours_ Wisbech Market Place

Positives

- Traditional timber frame joinery detailing.
- Colour scheme has a bold simple palette which does not unduly detract from the building itself or the overall street scene.
- Brick stall riser conforms to adjacent proportions and reflects the brick of the surrounding buildings



8.1 Design Principles

The function of a shop sign is to advertise the shop and attract customers. It is important that signage is considered as an integral part of the design of a shop front. Lettering, materials, size, colour, location and illumination all need to respect the character of the building and its surroundings. Good and effective signs are simple, uncomplicated and uncluttered. The following design principles should be considered:

- Signage should not obscure architectural detailing
- Signage should typically be located at fascia level and be suitably clear of the below walkway and adjacent carriageway.
- Lettering should be in proportion to the fascia board and the building itself and should be clear and easy to read.
- Lighting design should be sensitively incorporated into the shopfront composition and should enhance the overall building facade without being detrimental to the surrounding area.
- Advertisements should comply with local planning requirements.
- Signage placement, styles and graphics should consider people with a particular disability or visibility impairment

Advertisements

Under planning policy, restrictions apply with regards to the display of advertisements. These are more stringent in conservation areas. (Refer to Section 3.2.2. further details are available from the Local Planning Authority).

The shop sign should only advertise the name of the business and/or the service being provided. Non-essential information, such as website address or phone number should not be located at fascia level with the main sign, but should be placed at door / window level in a less obtrusive place.

Advertisements for individual products such as brands of cigarettes, photographic film or ice-cream, will not be approved.

8.2 Signage

8.2.1 Fascia Signs and Lettering

Materials

In conservation areas and on traditional shop fronts fascias should be of timber, painted to a matt finish with hand-written lettering. Transfer lettering may be a suitable alternative to hand painted lettering in some instances. In some instances individual cut out lettering to a painted timber fascia may be acceptable where the letters project no more than 10mm off the fascia. Plastic letters on historic buildings or buildings within a conservation area are not appropriate.

Graphics

Lettering fonts and graphics should be clear and simple and should (preferably) relate to the architectural style of the building without dominating it. Lettering should also be in proportion to the size of the fascia board. As best practice, lettering should not be more than 65% of the height or 75% of the width of the fascia and should be centrally placed.

Traditional trade symbols such as striped barbers pole and chemists mortar and pestle can be used and should be retained where possible.

The increased use of corporate styles has led to a loss of individual identity and harmed the character and appearance of many retail areas. There is a need to balance the requirements of national multiple retailers with a respect for the character of local areas. Standard house styles should be adapted where possible to respect historic areas and buildings.

Heights and scale

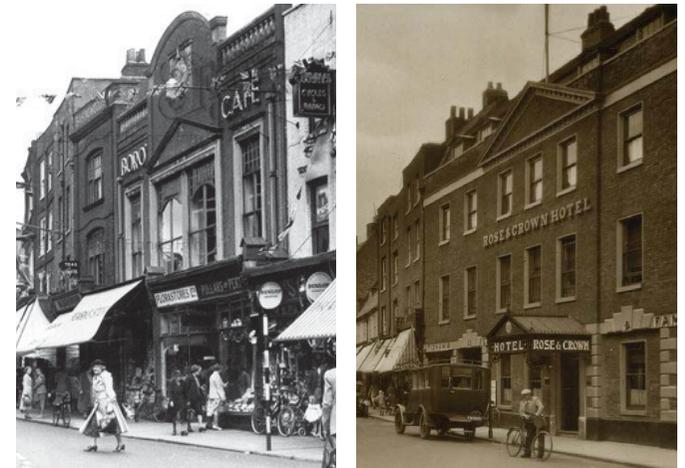
Signs above fascia level will not normally be permitted. However historic examples on pubs and restaurants can and should be retained where they exist and may be recreated in some situations (e.g. the Boro Cafe sign on No.13-17 Wisbech High Street).

Where there is no proper shop front, individual letters fixed directly to the wall without causing damage, or to window glass, can be used.

Historic Signage and Lettering_



Various historic examples of hand painted lettering to fascias, and additional low level signage plaques to granite stall riser.



Historic examples of facade mounted signs to Wisbech High Street to be retained. The Boro cafe sign, now lost, could benefit the building by being reinstated due to the communal value embodied by its memory and previous use.

Example Signage and Lettering_ Nene Quay

Positives

- Retains original timber joinery detailing above.

Negatives

- Fascia signage obliterates original shopfront detailing.
- Signage is overly cluttered with various advertisements.
- Signage is entirely incongruous with original architecture.
- Roller shutter box is not suitably located with regards to architectural features and appears bulky and 'tacked-on'.
- Window display is non-existent, with glazing entirely blocked out.



Insensitive signage display to traditional architecture



Sensitive examples of contemporary lettering to fascia and building facade reminiscent of historic signage

8.2.2 Window Display Signage

Window stickers, poster displays and illuminated box signs in shop windows are often unsympathetic to the building and the area, and will generally be discouraged. However lettering to glazing can reflect historical hand painted techniques and can enhance the shop front if carried out appropriately.

- Window stickers should be restrained and cover no more than 20% of the total window area.
- Window signs in upper floors will only be permitted for a business operating solely on the upper floors.
- Lettering on windows using gilded paint in an appropriate style and size is very appropriate.

Example_ Market Street

Positives

- Lettering and colour scheme sensitive to traditional design and surrounding timber frame.



8.2.3 Projecting signs

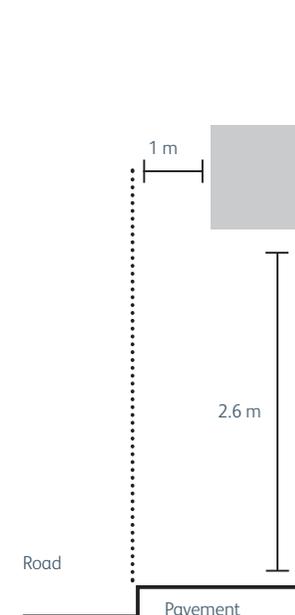
Traditional style projecting or hanging signs on a decorative metal bracket can add interest to a building and the street scene. Where appropriate, these should be small and compact and complement the business and shop front. A well-designed, traditional symbol representing the business can be an eye-catching alternative to lettering.

- Only one hanging / projecting sign will be permitted per building
- Projecting signs should be positioned at fascia level. It may be appropriate to locate a sign above the fascia level only if this is to avoid obscuring architectural detailing. Projecting signs at fascia level should be a maximum of 0.2 sq. metres, e.g. 500mm x 400mm. Hanging signs above fascia level where appropriate, should not exceed 800mm high by 600mm wide.
- The sign should be a minimum of 2.6m above the foot-way and the outer edge should be a minimum distance of 1m from the kerb.
- Projecting signs should be made of wood or metal only.

Example_ Bridge Street & North Brink

Positives

- Decorative historic signage bracket supporting historic sign designs and traditional iconography.



8.5 Lighting

Traditional gas lighting is now outdated. Therefore modern illumination of the shop front needs to be given careful thought and be sensitively incorporated into the shop front composition. It can often help to create a safe and visually vibrant elevation at night. Where external lighting is proposed and is appropriate, it should be subdued, discreet and sympathetic to the building and its surrounding context.

- Only the lettering to a sign, and not the whole fascia, should be illuminated.
- Wiring should be concealed.

8.5.1 Fascia Lighting

The preferred choice of lighting is external lighting of the fascia. This should be by means of concealed lighting or fittings which consider the age and style of the building. The following may be appropriate examples:

- Slimline LED trough lighting, preferably recessed into a projecting cornice.
- Carefully positioned small spotlights.
- Heritage fittings to suit the history of the building.
- Individual internally lit letters and halo lit letters can be a subtle form of lighting, providing the letters have a small projection off the fascia.

8.5.2 Hanging Sign Lighting

On hanging signs, if illumination is required and appropriate, this should be through discreet slimline LED lights attached a short distance, such as 80mm, off the bracket arm.

8.5.3 Window Display Lighting

Lit window displays and carefully illuminated windows displays using discreet light fittings can be attractive outside of trading hours. Where a shop is lit overnight for security, the shop window should be illuminated from inside, and not the fascia.

8.5.4 Inappropriate Lighting

- Full internal illumination of fascia box and hanging signs will not be supported, as this is almost always visually dominant.
- Large spotlights or heavy canopy lights should be avoided, as they can clutter a building and be over-bright.
- Neon and coloured lighting unsympathetic to the building or surrounding context is not appropriate.



Heritage fittings to light signage, sensitive to original building



Example Lighting_ Bonmarché, 9/10 Wisbech High Street

Positives

- Lighting is recessed under a projecting cornice.
- Window display lighting is discreet and recessed.

9.1 Design Principles

Canvas awnings and blinds were an integrated element of many traditional shop fronts, specifically those dating from the Victorian era. They were typically housed within a blind box in the cornice or shopfront architrave with the function to protect both goods and customers from the weather. From a visual perspective, canopies added vibrancy to the street. However they were fully retractable so as not to obscure the architecture of the building. Based on this traditional approach, the following principles should be adhered to:

- The canopy should be appropriate to the period of the building and designed as an integral part of the shop front
 - The canopy should cover the width of the shop front fascia
 - The canopy should preferably be sensitively incorporated into the fascia, either flush with, or behind it, and it must not obscure any architectural detailing.
- NB. Where original blind boxes survive, there is unlikely to be any objection to the reinstatement of a traditional blind.*
- Colour, material and style should complement the shop front, building and street and should not be intended as a means of further advertising.
 - The outer edge of the canopy must be a minimum of 1m from the kerb and be no less than 2.4m above the pavement (as dictated by Highways regulations).
 - Within the conservation area or for a heritage asset building, only fully retractable canopies will be permitted.

Free-standing or fixed forecourt canopies will not usually be acceptable within a conservation area. Where proposed they will require planning permission and should be first discussed with the local planning authority. The below principles should be followed:

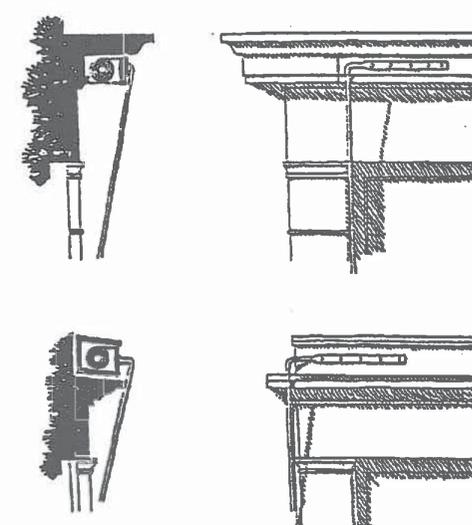
- The canopy should be of a style in keeping with the age, character and architectural detailing of the building and have limited impact on the street scene and residential amenities.
- e.g. shaped continental style canopies (dutch blinds) are not appropriate to the predominantly Georgian frontage of the town centre.*

- The canopy should extend over the shop front only, including the shop door, and remain clear of any separate residential entrance or adjacent properties.
- The structure should be formed by a metal frame with posts located into the ground and without permanent side panels or shutters.
- The roof pitch should not be less than 35 degrees and formed of clear or 'wire' safety glass without rainwater goods.
- The outer edge (including supports) should be set back a minimum of 500mm from the edge of the foot-way and should be a maximum of 3m from the face of the building.
- Where a shopfront fascia does not exist, or has been removed to accommodate the canopy roof, a 150mm high non-illuminated fascia can be designed as part of the structure to advertise the name of the shop and street number.

Historic canopies and awnings_



Example Blinds_ Evisons, No.19 High Street



Traditional roller-blind boxes



Positives

- The original blind box concealed within the fascia and original ironmongery has been retained. (If the canopy itself has been lost, this could be easily re-instated)
- Canopy is integrated into the shopfront.

10.1 Design Principles

Security for shop-owners and retail areas has become an increasingly important issue, with three target areas of concern:

- Theft
- Vandalism
- Ram raiding (driving a vehicle through a shop window)

The risk however must be balanced against an objective to ensure streets remain attractive, welcoming and safe places outside of trading hours. Shop front security should therefore be considered during the design stage and the physical solution should be integrated within the design in a restrained and sensitive manner.

10.2 Security by Design

The primary approach to security should be carried out at a street wide level; a retail area, which remains lively into the evening or that contains residential contingent will be less susceptible to crime than one which becomes deserted after trading hours; well lit streets with security cameras are less inviting to criminals; pedestrianised areas are far less susceptible to ram raiding.

Individual design can benefit from opening up the view into the shop from the street to create a less concealed environment should a thief manage to get inside. High risk or high priced stock can be located within the store at night, as opposed to in the window display within easy reach of the street.

10.3 Physical Deterrents

Shutters themselves are not a modern conception, with demountable wooden shutters held in place by iron bars in existence from the late 17th century, and wooden or metal rolling shutters integrated into shopfronts in the 19th century. However many contemporary shutter designs can appear fortified and visually intrusive. The below principles should be followed to ensure that any shutter is minimally intrusive to the surrounding street scene, whilst providing a high level of security:

Internal grilles

- Internal lattice or brick bond roller type grilles set between the display and the glass, and with concealed shutter boxes above ceilings, are preferable.

External grilles

- Lattice grilles should be provided. Solid shutters, which can 'deaden' the street frontage and are vulnerable to graffiti, are not appropriate.

- Shutter boxes should be concealed within the fascia or installed flush beneath it.

NB. Consideration may be given to locating it within a recessed floor box and with the grille being pulled upwards and fastened.

- Shutters/grilles should not cover the pilasters, stall riser or fascia when in the down position.

- Side runners should be concealed and recessed into the shopfront. They should be 50-60mm deep to avoid shutters/grilles simply being pulled out of them.

- All fixings should be securely fixed, concealed where possible, and of suitably durable materials (e.g. stainless steel). The grille is only as secure as its fixings.

- Shutters should be sensitive in colour and material to the building and surrounding street context. Metals should be sufficiently treated to avoid rust and staining of adjacent materials.

Removable external shutters

- Consideration may be given to external demountable mesh grilles fixed to integrated fittings within the shop front at night.
- Recessed entrances may be secured by further hinged and demountable gates or brick bond style external roller shutters as above.

Any application to install external shutters or grilles will be expected to evidence the crime history or future crime risk assessment for the property (particularly within a conservation area).

10.4 Security Glazing

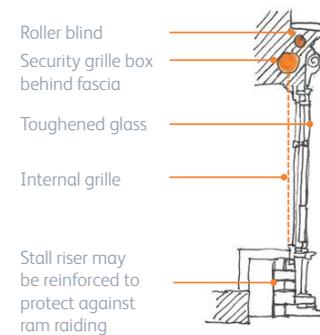
Toughened and laminated glazing can provide very high levels of security nowadays, with wide ranging specifications available (such as bullet proof glass) and without compromising the character of the building. This further avoids the ongoing maintenance issues associated with roller shutters.

- Laminated glass holds the glazing intact after impact with only cracking or crazing around the point of impact.
- Toughened glass is far stronger than ordinary glass and will shatter entirely upon impact into small fragments which are safer than jagged glass shards.

Traditional shop fronts with smaller panels of glass divided by transoms and mullions can be cheaper, easier and quicker to replace should any damage occur. Window frames and mullions can be further reinforced with metal sections to strengthen them against attack.



Visually harsh and unsympathetic external roller shutter with intrusive shutter boxes



Preferred: internal grille set between window & display

Large sheets of glass easy to damage and expensive to replace

Sub-divided glazing cheaper and easier to replace. Strengthening bars can be added throughout

Stall riser protects glass and defends against 'ram raids'



11.0 Other Fixtures

11.1 Name Plates

Name plates and low level plaques can be used both for more detailed information about a ground floor shop, such as website address and opening hours or as an indication of a separate business located on the upper floor. In both instances the following should be considered:

- The size of a nameplate should be modest, and at a suitable height for all persons. Typically between 1000mm and 1800mm from ground level.
- The nameplate should be of a material and colour suited to the character of the shop front.
- Illumination should be provided for easy reading but the nameplate should not itself be illuminated.

11.2 Wires and cables

Technology is now a fundamental part of shop security, lighting and operation. It must therefore be carefully considered in order for it to be successfully integrated into the traditional or contemporary shopfront design. Associated wiring, fittings and switches must also be considered alongside the primary fixtures.

- External wiring and fixtures should be as discreet as possible. Wiring should be preferably internalised and otherwise follow building edges, recessed where possible. Wiring and fixtures should not cut across decorative features of the building.
- Burglar and fire alarms and CCTV should be integrated into the shopfront design and sited in least obtrusive positions.
- Any redundant fixtures should be removed to avoid clutter.

11.3 ATM (Cash Machine)

Where a new ATM (cash machine) is to be installed, it should be sensitively sited in a well lit area where the machine can be surveyed by passing pedestrians to minimise risk of crime. It should be installed flush with the wall and accompanied by a bin for discarded receipts to avoid littering. New ATMs should be in accordance with the ATM Best Practice Guide document prepared by the ATM Security Working Group.

11.4 Rainwater goods

Gutters and rainwater pipes are a necessary feature to any building and any protruding shopfront. Their location, material and fixings must be carefully considered within the design so as not to be at risk of breakage or of obstructing elements of the design. The following should be considered:

- All rainwater goods must be sized appropriately to serve the area of roof to avoid blockage, flooding and water damage.
- Rainwater downpipes should be located to minimise obstruction of any architectural features and also for their own protection. Preferably they should be internalised or recessed within or adjacent to pilasters. This severely reduces the risk of impact damage or breakage.
- Horizontal gutters should be concealed behind shopfront cornices / upstands where possible.
- Gutters may connect between several shopfronts and be served by fewer downpipes to minimise the amount of rainwater goods, both for visual and maintenance purposes.
- Gutters should be of suitably durable materials and should complement the other materials of the building. (e.g UPVC guttering will not be appropriate on a heritage building) This is true even if the gutter is concealed from view from street level, as it may still be visible from upper windows.
- Outlets and downpipes should be regularly checked for blockages (Refer to Section 12)
- Shopfronts which only extend a minimal distance from the front facade of the building will not require a gutter but should be adequately flashed.



Downpipes recessed or located to suit architectural features



Example Fixtures_ Wisbech High Street

Positives

- Gutter is shared along entire facade to reduce downpipes.
- Lead gutter suits building age and materials

Negatives

- Trailing wires across facade are not acceptable.
- Service boxes on front facade are not discretely located and are incongruous with building character.
- Cast iron rainwater goods have been replaced with plastic, unsympathetic to building character.

12.1 Residential above a shop

Residential occupation above shops is encouraged, as it creates greater diversity and increased occupation of the street outside of trading hours. Access to the upper levels can either exist via a rear entrance from the street behind or via a second entrance in the front facade. When the latter, it is important that this secondary entrance remains an integrated part of the shopfront.

- A secondary entrance should not detract from the shop window or retail function.
- A considered approach should be taken when locating a second entrance within the shopfront. It should not impede shoppers' movements or confuse the shop's own entrance.

Narrow frontages historically may see two entrances incorporated within a single recess.

12.2 Residential conversions

Sometimes former shops or pubs are converted to residential use due to changing demands in the area. Where this occurs, each circumstance is considered individually so as to best consider the character of the overall street. If conversion to residential is appropriate, the following should be considered:

- Original fenestration, framing, cornice details and entrance location should be retained where possible.

Privacy can be achieved via frosted glass or internal blinds/shutters



- Painted surfaces should be regularly washed or dry-brushed and, dependant on location and exposure, will likely require re-painting every 3-5 years.
- For full paint stripping, a solvent based stripper is usually preferred so as not to damage the timber beneath.
- Cleaning of masonry can be undertaken in various ways such as:
 - Washing
 - Mechanical (e.g. Dry abrasive)
 - Chemical
 - Steam (e.g. Doff cleaning)
 - Special cleaning techniques (e.g. Poulticing)
- It is imperative that materials are assessed by a specialist to ensure the correct cleaning method is adopted for the type, strength and porosity of the surface.
- Rainwater outlets and gutters should be regularly checked to ensure they are free of blockages and vegetation and free from cracks. (As a minimum twice per year)
- Damaged elements should be repaired as quickly as possible to avoid further deterioration or risk of crime. Holes, cracks and staining can act as a perceived weak point to thieves or an actual weak point with regards to water ingress. Suitable protection (e.g. such as sheet waterproofing or fixed boarding) should be applied in the interim period before the element is fixed.

Architrave the lowest part of an entablature, the lower edge of a fascia (or frieze).

Capital an ornamental feature at the top of a pilaster

Cill the lowest member of a window frame (also sill)

Clerestory the high level glazed panel above the transom

Conservation Area an area designated for protection because of its special historical or architectural interest

Console / corbel a decorated bracket to support a horizontal feature, may be carved

Cornice the upper projecting decorative portion of an entablature

Downlights lighting typically recessed into a projecting cornice to light a fascia board

Entablature in the context of a shop front, this forms the top of the shop front and normally comprises of three or four elements, cornice, fascia, architrave and console.

Facade is the exterior of a building

Fanlight a glazed panel over the door

Fascia the flat surface above a shop window and below the cornice

Halo lighting a glow of light around lettering by illuminating the fascia from within the letters (back lit-letters)

Heritage Asset a building, monument, site, or area identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of heritage interest (including listed buildings and locally listed buildings)

Moulding a continuous projection or groove used decoratively to throw shadow or rainwater off a wall

Mullion the vertical supports for glass dividing a window into two or more lights

Pilaster a vertical rectangular column, projecting slightly from a wall forming division between bays of a building or a stop to a shop front

Plinth a moulded projecting base at the foot of a pilaster

Stall riser the area below the cill, provides protection and decoration

Transom the main horizontal bar dividing the upper part of a window

Trough lighting an enclosed lighting unit that is supported on brackets and shines light externally – typically onto a fascia board below

Swan lighting curved single metal lights that shine light typically to the fascia board

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For further advice refer to the Planning Act 1990; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990), National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), Control of Advertisement regulations 1992 and the Building Regulations.

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