

The lettering should be either sign written directly onto the fascia or applied as individual letters, preferably in timber or metal.

Fascia signs should not extend above the bottom of the cill of any first floor window and not extend, as a continual fascia, across more than one shop unit.

Projecting Signs - There should be no more than one projecting sign per building and it should generally be fixed at the fascia height or at the very least below the cill of any first floor windows.

Any projecting signs should be in scale and in keeping with the building on which it is fixed and as a general rule should project no more than 700mm from the outer face of the building. Signs which obscure highway visibility or affect the free passage of pedestrians will not be allowed.

On the whole traditional hanging signs hung from decorative wrought iron brackets are usually the most appropriate forms of projecting sign. They can also be sculptured into shapes which relate to the business use of the building. The use of projecting, internally illuminated, box signs and signs forming a projecting part of a fascia will be resisted.

The design of any bracket to support the sign should be carefully considered and precisely illustrated as part of any application for advertisement consent.

Corporate Images - The Council recognises that most chain or national store groups have a corporate image which they wish to be identified with and use in advertisements and shop fronts on each of their properties.

The Council, will endeavour to accommodate such an approach, wherever possible, subject to any such proposals respecting the visual amenities of the building and surrounding area.

Business above ground level or with no street frontage - It is often difficult to provide businesses, located above street level, with suitable signs. The most appropriate way of advertising the business is to provide window lettering. In certain circumstances small wall mounted panel signs or small projecting signs may be permitted where they would not be detrimental to the appearance of the street scene.

Where there are a number of businesses which have no, or very limited, street frontages, these businesses should cooperate to organise a composite display of advertisements, consisting of a co-ordinated but interchangeable signboard, to prevent clutter.



CANOPIES AND BLINDS

In general if a canopy or blind is required for practical reasons to screen goods displayed in a shop, they will be allowed provided that they are of a retractable nature, their fixing box is properly integrated into the shop front and they are made from materials appropriate to the visual amenities of the streetscene.

The use of 'Dutch' blinds or 'balloon' canopies, which are fixed in place, is generally not appropriate in Ormskirk or other areas, and will therefore be resisted.

SECURITY SHUTTERS

The Council wishes to promote its shopping areas, and in particular Ormskirk Town Centre, as attractive and interesting places to visit. Whilst the Council recognises the need for shop security, it believes that in most cases adequate security can be achieved without the installation of external roller shutters. The following guidance should therefore be followed:-

- Any proposed external security shutters should have the shutter box fully recessed into the shopfront. Shutter boxes projecting more than 200mm forward of the shop front will not normally be permitted.
- The preferred method of shop security is via the use of strengthened or laminated glazing or by the installation of lattice shutters located behind the shop windows. Planning permission for these methods of security will not be required.



- Externally located lattice shutters or grilles including those containing polycarbonate panels will normally be permitted. The use of anti-shatter films may also be appropriate in conjunction with these shutters.

- The use of solid shutters, across shop windows, will generally only be permitted in circumstances where evidence of 'high risk' can be demonstrated and where other security measures have failed. In such cases, the use of screens or shutters with a higher proportion of 'open' lattice to solid shutter will be preferred. Where external shutters are provided the Council would normally expect the shutter to be surface coated in a colour appropriate to the shopfront.

- Solid shutters will be permitted across the entrances to shops provided the shutter box does not project forward of the shutter of building face, and the entrance does not constitute the bulk of the shop frontage.

- The Council supports the Police concept of 'Secured by Design', and asks that all applications should comply with these principles. For further information on 'Secured by Design' contact the Police.

CONSERVATION AREAS AND LISTED BUILDINGS

The District of West Lancashire has a wealth of historic buildings and places. The Council takes seriously its duty to preserve its built heritage and requires that additional care and attention is given to proposals relating to a listed building or within or close to one of the District's 28 conservation areas.

Work to either alter or provide a new shopfront and/or display new shop advertisements should always respect the special historic character and appearance of the particular building or conservation area. Any proposals, which harm the character of a listed building or do not preserve the character or appearance of a conservation area, will not be permitted.

The Council's Conservation Officer and/or a Planning Officer is available to discuss proposals for new shopfronts or shop signs, prior to submission.

CONTACTS

For further information or advice please contact the:

**Heritage and Environment Section
Planning and Development Services
WLDC
PO Box 16
52 Derby Street
Ormskirk
L39 2DF**

**Tel: 01695 585167 or 585102
Email: ian.bond@westlancsdc.gov.uk
Website: www.westlancsdc.gov.uk**



WEST LANCASHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DESIGN GUIDE

For Shop Fronts, Advertisements & Shop Security in West Lancashire

INTRODUCTION

West Lancashire District Council wishes to improve the appearance of our streets and promote an attractive shopping environment, which will benefit both the customers and traders alike. In doing so a high standard of design will be required for all new or altered shopfronts, including advertisements.

The Council recognises that shopfronts and advertisements are an essential part of the streetscape within our town and village centres. They announce the presence of the shop or business and provide for the display of the goods and services on sale. Attractive shopfronts can also enhance the shopping experience and promote the local identity of an area.

The purpose of this leaflet is to provide shop-keepers and business owners advice on the design of shop fronts, advertisements and shop security and importantly to promote positive changes to the appearance of the District. The guidance, in conjunction with the Policies of the West Lancashire Local Plan will provide the basis on which applications will be assessed.

Whilst the focus of the guidance is in relation to Ormskirk Town Centre it should be noted that this guidance is intended to cover the whole District.



THE NEED FOR PERMISSION

The Council promotes the use of good design in all aspects of development. It is essential that full details of any changes to shop fronts or advertisements, including the proposed and existing elevations, are included in any submission to the Council. It will help us in dealing with your application if images/photographs of the building are also included.

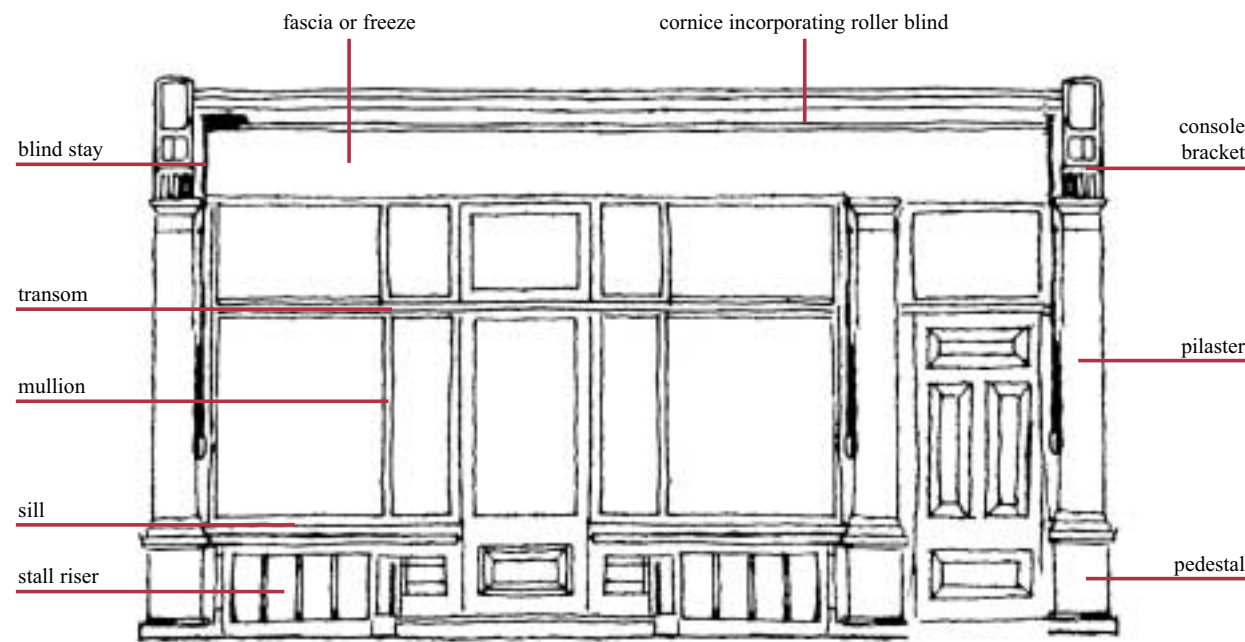
The Council's Planning and Development Services are located at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, L39 2DF. Should you need help of further information please contact either the Development Control Team on 01695 577177 or the Conservation Officer on 01695 585167 or 585102.

Planning Permission is needed for any material change in the external appearance of a shop or business premises. This includes altering the 'shop window', changing the facing materials, installing external blinds and/or security shutters and enlarging the size of the fascia.

Advertisement Consent is required for nearly all types of illuminated signs, including those signs which have external methods of illumination, for example spot lights. There are some types of advertisements, which can be displayed with 'deemed consent' and therefore are exempt from control. The regulations are however very precise about which signs require advertisement consent and which do not. Advice should therefore always be sought from the Planning Service on whether Advertisement Consent is required before any new advertisement signs are displayed. You should be aware that anyone who displays an advertisement, without first obtaining consent, is acting illegally. In such cases the Local Authority can prosecute the person responsible for the offence.

Listed Building Consent is required for any works to alter or extend, a listed building, in a way that would affect its character. The controls apply to all works both internal and external and would include, for example the provision of a new shopfront or advertisements, the painting of the building in an unsympathetic colour and/or the removal of historic features or architectural detailing. It is essential that before starting any work, on a listed building, you check with the Council's Conservation Officer that listed building consent is not required.

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Shop Front Terminology

Enforcement - The Council prefers to settle disputes by negotiation and agreement. However if unauthorised work takes place, which is inappropriate to the visual amenities of the streetscene the Council will, where it is expedient to do so, take enforcement action to secure its removal.

Building Regulations - alterations to shop fronts or the formation of new openings which affect the structure, fire safety or access to the building may require approval under Building Regulations. For further details or advice please contact the Building Control Section on 01695 585136.

SHOP FRONTS

Existing Shop Fronts - Very few shopfronts in our shopping streets and commercial centres have survived unaltered through time. The very nature of selling goods and services means that changes are often rapid and dictated by the styles and tastes of the particular time. Where older shopfronts have survived, special care is needed to ensure that they are preserved and restored in a sensitive manner with careful attention to detail. Even where only fragments of older, historic shop fronts remain, it makes sense to base the work around them and to reproduce as closely as possible the original design, using photographic evidence for accuracy where it is available.

Sometimes, original features such as pilasters, fascias or tiles survive hidden under later work and can be revealed. Incorporating such details can greatly enhance the appearance of the shop front.

The Replacement of Shop Fronts - In many cases it will be desirable and probably necessary to completely replace the whole shop front. When designing a new shop front there are a number of basic principles to consider:-

- The shop front should not be designed in isolation but should be considered as part of the architectural composition of the building and that of the immediate street scene. Applications for new shop fronts should always show the proposed shop front in relation to its surroundings.
- If the shop front is to be treated in a traditional style, then it should be as historically accurate as possible and appropriate, in design terms, to the building.
- The design of the shop front should take into account the age and architectural design of the building as a whole. The shop front should not attempt to divorce the appearance of the ground floor from the rest of the building.
- A good shop front will normally incorporate a number of elements which combine to effectively 'frame' the goods on display. Traditionally they include pilasters, a fascia (with a cornice) and a stall riser, each of which has its own visual and practical function; the pilasters identify the vertical division between the shop fronts and give support to the walls above; the fascia provides the space for advertising; the cornice gives a strong line at the top of the shop front and protection from the rain; and the stall riser gives protection at ground level and provides a solid base on which goods can be displayed inside the shop. These elements need to be understood and accurately detailed at a scale, which allows them to be defined.

- In certain circumstances modern solutions and designs can add to the vitality and vibrancy of shopping areas. So long as new shopfronts respect the context in which they are located the use of more innovative designs and materials need not necessarily be inappropriate.

Fascias - In all cases, excessively deep fascias should be avoided. They should be kept well below the first floor window cills and the bottom of the fascias should not extend below the level of the ground floor ceiling nor view out of proportion to the rest of the shop front. Generally the overall fascia depth should be no greater than 600mm.

The end of each fascia should generally be clearly defined with a termination feature such as a console bracket or box. In some cases the whole fascia can be canted forwards, so that it angles down towards the pavement or roadside.

It is usual for the fascia to have a projection above it, which is normally in the form of a moulded cornice. In appropriate circumstances down lighting or traditional roller blinds can be incorporated within the cornice. The coping should be weathered with a properly detailed lead or other metal sheet.

Fascias should normally be in painted timber, although painted glass or metal fascias may be acceptable in certain circumstances. The use of plastic perspex or acrylic fascias should be avoided.

It should be noted that any sheet material, whether plywood, metal or plastic, etc., can distort or bulge if not securely backed and fixed. Care should also be taken to ensure any exposed timber work is suitably treated and maintained to ensure its appearance is preserved.

Stall Risers - these provide a solid base to shopfronts and offer practical protection from kicks and knocks at a low level. Traditionally the height of stall risers varies between 450 and 600mm.

Stall risers should normally be in panelled timber, although in appropriate circumstances tiles, marble, stone or brick may be employed. Doors should be part-glazed with a timber panel to reflect the height of the stall riser.

In cases where stall risers are to be omitted, the overall design of the shopfront should reflect the different approach taken.

Pilasters - Pilasters should ideally give the impression of being

structural and extend from the ground right up to the termination of the fascia.

Timber either painted or stained remains the most appropriate and versatile material for pilasters, although in appropriate cases stone or marble may be allowed.

Windows - Large undivided areas of glass should, in the majority of cases, be avoided. The method of glazing subdivision should suit the character of the shop front and relate wherever possible to the pattern and style of the upper floors of the building.

Doors and especially recessed doorways can be used to break up the window area and can also provide interesting window display space opportunities.

Window Displays - Imaginative and frequently changed window displays which are attractive and visually stimulating can attract passing trade and improve custom.

In the case of building societies, banks, betting shops etc., it is particularly important to give thought to providing some visual interest by the use of varied displays.

Windows on Secondary Elevations - The Council is keen to bring life and interest to many of the secondary elevations to shops which abut alleyways and border the town's car parks. Suitably designed new shop windows in those areas will therefore generally be encouraged.

Colour Schemes - the sensitive use of colour offers much scope for improving the appearance of the street scene. There however is no standard formula. Generally, rich deep colours for example dark green, red and blue often look good, particularly when used on traditional shopfronts. The use of gilt to highlight details can also be effective.

Access for People with Disabilities - New shop fronts should accommodate the needs of disabled people. Steps into and out from the shop should be avoided. Doors should open easily and handrails should be incorporated to assist access wherever possible. The use of frameless glass doors should be avoided.

From the 1st October 2004 the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 require shops and businesses to remove, alter or avoid physical barriers that prevent access.

For further information contact the Council's Access Officer on 01695 585136.



ADVERTISEMENTS

General - Applications for advertisement consent should clearly show the proposed sign(s) and in particular show its size, the materials to be used, the type of illumination to be used (if any), its colour and the size and appearance of any lettering or logo. Any applications for advertisement consent will be judged against the policies of the Local Plan.

Internally illuminated 'box' signs are generally resisted as they rarely contribute to the visual amenities of the District's streets and shopping centres. Where illumination is necessary it should be subtle and form an integral part of the fascia and/or shopfront. Individually lit letters or a logo and the use of halo illumination may be acceptable where this compliments the design of the shopfront.

Forms of external illumination, for example trough lighting, will only be allowed where they are fully integrated into the design of the advertisement. The use of external spot lighting or swan neck lights will not normally be allowed.

Any illuminated advertisement which is allowed should comply with the following standards:-

Area of illuminated advertisement (sq.m.)	Maximum luminance (candelas/sq.m.)
Less than 0.5	2,000
0.5 ----- 2.0	1,600
2.0 ----- 5.0	1,200
5.0 ----- 10.0	1,000
More than 10.0	800

Illuminated signs should not obscure or reduce the clarity of any traffic sign or cause undue distraction to users of the highway to the detriment of highway safety.

Fascia Signs - The principal way of providing an advertisement on a shop is to display a sign on the fascia above the shop window. Ideally fascia lettering should relate directly to the name of the retailer and/or to the goods sold on the premises.