

# Rotherham local plan

## DRAFT Shop front design guide

### Supplementary Planning Document



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[www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk)

Rotherham  
Metropolitan  
Borough Council 

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# Introduction

## Background and purpose

- 1** This document has been produced to act as a borough wide guide to encourage good quality shop front design. The design of shop fronts has a major role to play in creating a quality environment. It is important that they should not compromise the local character, scale and architectural quality of the individual buildings.
- 2** The local planning authority is keen to encourage both the reinstatement of historic shop fronts and the provision of contemporary designs with flair. This is a guide for designers and applicants as to how best to achieve this.
- 3** This document aims to secure improvements to the visual quality of shop frontages. It promotes good shop front design that celebrates the character and architectural detailing of the original buildings to improve the townscape which will benefit all the traders and the community as a whole.
- 4** The Council is committed to creating town centres that will be welcoming and attractive, projecting an image of quality and friendliness that will bring shoppers back into centres. It is also keen to encourage quality shopping environments where developments take place outside of Rotherham's centres.

## Status

- 5** This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared in line with national planning policy and relevant legislation and regulations. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that SPD add further detail and guidance to the policies in the development plan. They are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 6** As required by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) consultation on a draft of this SPD took place between xx and xx. The accompanying Consultation Statement sets out further detail on this consultation, including who was consulted, a summary of the main issues raised and how these have been addressed in the SPD. It also contains an adoption statement, confirming that this SPD was adopted by Rotherham Council on xxxxx.

## Planning policy

### National planning policy

- 7** The NPPF makes clear that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, creating better places in which to live and work and helping make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 124). It also supports development in town centres which reflects their distinctive characters (paragraph 85).
- 8** Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of proposals. NPPF (paragraph 127) also states that development should, amongst other things:
  - add to the overall quality of the area;

- be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; and
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

### Local planning policy

**9** Rotherham's Local Plan consists of the Core Strategy (adopted in September 2014) and the Sites and Policies Document (adopted in June 2018), alongside the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (adopted in March 2012). These are available from our website: <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan>

**10** This guidance provides additional detail to, and should be read in conjunction with, the following policies:

CS28 Sustainable Design	which sets out a range of design considerations to which proposals should have regard.
SP55 Design Principles	which sets out detailed design principles to which proposals should have regard.
Policy SP59 Shop Front Design	which sets out detailed policy regarding new and replacement shop fronts.
Policy SP60 Advertisements	which sets out detailed policy regarding the design and placement of advertisements.

**11** As set out in the above Policies, the Council will have regard to a range of issues when considering planning applications involving new or replacement shop fronts, including:

- that design should respect the character of the building and take all opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions;
- that development proposals are responsive to their context and visually attractive as a result of good architecture;
- the setting of the site, including the size, scale, mass, volume, height, orientation, form, and grain of surrounding development;
- the type of building materials, their colour and architectural detailing, including maximising the use of transparent glazing ;
- whether proposals reinforce and complement local distinctiveness and create a positive sense of place;
- the creation of safe, secure and accessible environments including the use of lighting and the appropriate design and location of shutters;

- the design and layout of buildings to enable sufficient sunlight and daylight to penetrate into and between buildings, and ensure that adjoining land or properties are protected from overshadowing; and
- that advertisements are of the highest possible standard and contribute to a safe and attractive environment.

## Legal requirements

### Planning permission

**12** Planning permission is required for all shop fronts which are to be altered or replaced. This includes altering the glazing, changing facing materials, installing blinds or external shutters or enlarging the size of a fascia. The list is not exhaustive and in each case the Council should be contacted for advice prior to commencing any work.

### Listed building consent

**13** Listed building consent is required for any alterations which would affect the character of the listed building. This includes re-painting a shop front in a different colour, installing blinds or shutters, or installing a security alarm or extractor fan.

### Conservation Areas

**14** Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest and stringent controls are in place to protect buildings within those areas. Consent is required for the proposed or substantial demolition of any building in a Conservation Area including the removal of a shop front.

### Advertisement consent

**15** Advertisement consent is needed for illuminated signs or fascias, projecting signs and extra large signs above ground floor level. Detailed guidance is available in the Government publication 'Outdoor Advertisements and Signs' leaflet available at:

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

### Building Regulations

**16** Building Regulation approval is required for new shop fronts when any alterations affect the buildings structural stability, means of escape or the position of the entrance approach and or doorway.



## Planning application checklist

**17** The guidance below sets out a range of issues which should be considered in preparing design proposals and planning applications. More detailed guidance on the principles of good shop front design are set out in the following chapter.

### Existing streetscape

Has the relationship of the proposed development to the adjoining buildings been taken into consideration?

### Building elevations

Is the scale of the shopfront in proportion to the facade of the building?

### Shopfront design

Is the design and materials employed in the scheme of good quality?

### Signage

Are the graphic design, advertisements and illumination appropriate to the scheme?

### Canopies and blinds

Have they been considered within the overall design of the shopfront?

### Shutters

If shutters are required are they of a type and location that does not obstruct any architectural features on the building or have an adverse environmental impact?

Are external shutters perforated and painted with the shutter box sited behind the fascia?

### Access

Does the design allow access to all, including people with disabilities, in accordance with the Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005?

## Drawings required

- An existing elevation of the shop front and the building in which it is located, together with the adjoining properties - 1:50.
- A proposed elevation of the shop front - 1:20.
- Cross sections of the building - 1:20.
- Details (e.g joinery profiles, signs etc) - 1:5.
- Information on materials, fittings and colours.
- An access statement, setting out how the needs of disabled people have been taken into account.



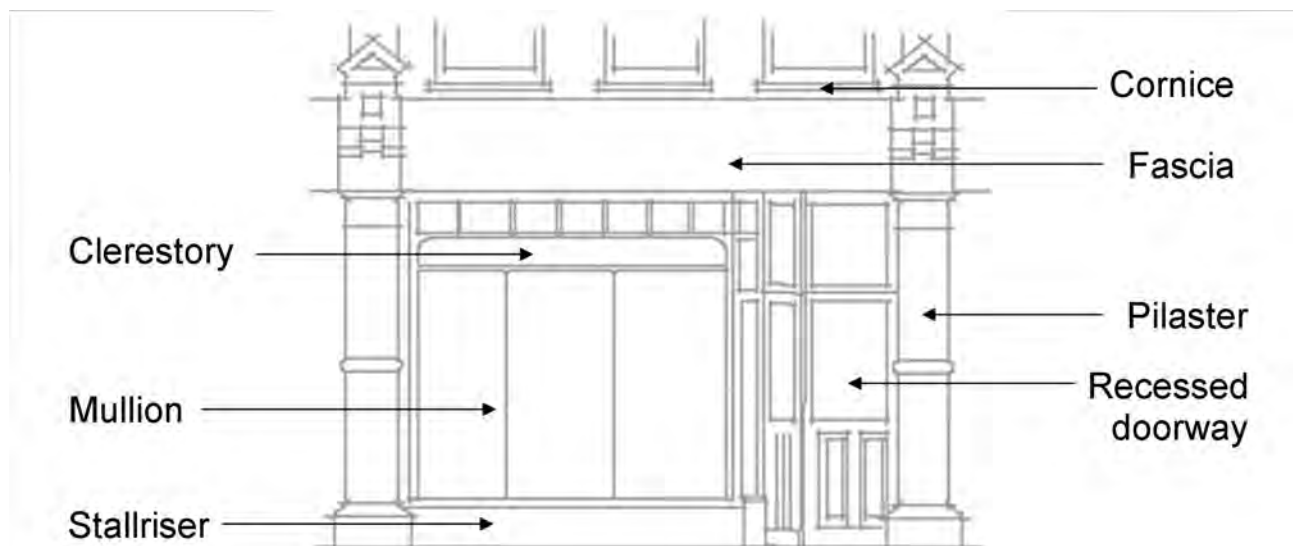
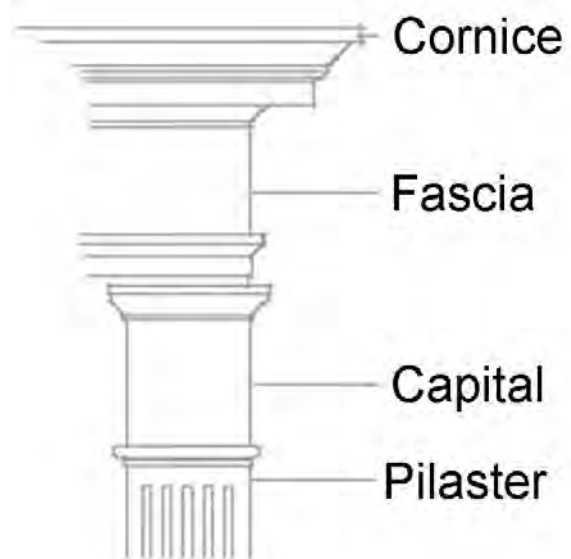
## The principles of good shop front design

**18** The starting point when contemplating a new or replacement shop front will always be a study of the whole building facade and adjacent elevations, including any existing shop fronts.

**19** Shop fronts for many people are the most visually important feature of a streetscene. It is therefore vitally important that they are of good proportions, details and materials.

**20** Nineteenth century shop front design was based on a set of principles which achieved a satisfactory relationship between the shop front and the building as a whole.

**21** The pilaster, stallriser, cornice and fascia combine to enclose the shop window and the entrance door within a frame constructed to proportions which suggest a method of support for the building facade above. The main elements are in proportion to each other; the height of the stallriser should not exceed 20% of the overall shop front height, nor should the height of the entablature. These basic principles applied to traditional or contemporary shop fronts will result in an elevation which is visually pleasing.



**22** Standard and corporate shop fronts have in the past had little regard for individual buildings and it is recommended that a modest interpretation of the corporate image is adopted that relates better to the building. It is particularly important that poor quality pastiche reproduction shop fronts are avoided. New shop fronts of an imaginative and creative design are encouraged which may be complimentary in proportion, scale, quality of materials and detailing to the building itself.



- ✓ The style of the shop front should harmonise with the age and character of the building as a whole.
- ✓ The scale of the shop front should be in proportion with the rest of the building.
- ✓ An existing shop front which contributes to the character of a building or area should be retained and refurbished rather than replaced. Any original features such as pilasters and fascias that have been concealed by later additions should be exposed and restored in order to enhance the appearance of the shop front.
- ✓ It is important that the replacement shop front respects the period and style of the building in terms of proportion and quality of materials and relate well to neighbouring properties.
- ✓ Where adjacent shop fronts are to be operated as a single concern then each shop front should be individually expressed by retaining or reintroducing pilasters between them.
- ✓ Signage and security precautions should not exceed what is reasonably necessary to advertise the business and give protection against burglary and vandalism.
- ✓ Illumination of shop signs should be external rather than in the form of internally illuminated box signs.
- ✓ Any canopies should be incorporated within the overall design.
- ✓ Doorways and entrances should be accessible to people with disabilities.
- ✓ In general, door recesses should not be deeper than 600mm.

### Successful shop front design

Design respects the character of the whole building, with each element being of appropriate proportion.

Fascia for signage is of an appropriate size; not too large.

Sign details are in keeping with the character of the building, and of an appropriate size.



## Shop front design elements

### Signs

**23** Shops are normally limited to one fascia sign and one hanging sign. The sign should be well designed to project a quality image. Multiple signage clutters the facade and must be avoided. Some signs require 'Advertisement Consent' from the Council.

### Fascia Signs

**24** Fascias should be no deeper than 20% of the shop front's overall height. They should not impinge on the original details of the shop front.

**25** A traditional fascia comprising of a painted timber background with hand painted lettering is particularly appropriate for traditional shop fronts. Raised metal or timber letters are acceptable but garish shiny plastics are best avoided.

**26** Lettering and graphics should be moderately sized and should be in proportion to the dimensions of the fascia. Clear well spaced letters are as easy to read as larger oversized letters. The sign should be limited to the name of the shop with a simple graphic logo and the street number. Too much information creates visual clutter which will not be acceptable.

**27** Surface mounted box signs attached to the front of fascias detract from the appearance of the shop. They will not be permitted and alternatives should be considered.

**28** Where there is a small fascia or none at all, individual letters may be applied to the face of the building. Professional lettering may also be applied to hanging clear panels inside of the display window.

### Hanging and Projected Signs

- As a general rule only one sign will be allowed per shop with an area no larger than 0.75m<sup>2</sup>.
- Timber or cast metal signs are particularly appropriate on traditional shop fronts.
- The sign should be mounted:
  - on a console at fascia level;
  - on a pilaster below fascia level;
  - below first floor cill level.
- Projecting box signs will not be acceptable.
- Any illumination should be external not internal.
- Large scale detail drawings of proposed signs at a scale of 1:5 will be required with advertisement applications, clearly showing construction, lettering and graphic design.

### Successful hanging signs



### Doors and thresholds

**29** The Equality Act 2010 helps achieve equal opportunities in the workplace and in wider society. It includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments to physical features to ensure that a disabled person is not put at substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person.

**30** Part M of The Building Regulations Access to and use of buildings establishes that reasonable provision must be made for people to access and use a building and its facilities. It provides very specific guidance details for level, ramped or stepped access, and for dimensions, characteristics and layout of doorways, including aspects of material finishes to be used, so as to enable access for people with limited physical dexterity and who are visually impaired.

**31** These standards apply to all new buildings, extensions and building works to and about entrances, including historic buildings such as listed buildings.

## Security

**32** Local authorities have a responsibility under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their activities, and to do all that they can to reduce opportunities for crime and fear of crime in the exercise of their functions. Through its policies the Local Plan seeks to help achieve this by ensuring that developers and planning applicants consider security issues in developing proposals.

**33** Developments are encouraged to meet the principles set out in current good practice guidance. 'Secured by Design' is an initiative operated by the Association of Chief Police Officers and includes the prevention of crime with regard to commercial premises and promotes the use of security standards for a wide range of applications and products. See their website for further information:

<http://www.securedbydesign.com/>

**34** The Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB) has produced standards to ensure that fire and security products and services perform effectively. See their website for further information:

<http://www.redbooklive.com/lps.jsp>

## External Roller Shutters

**35** The addition of solid steel roller shutters is not acceptable. They can attract graffiti and create an undesirable hostile environment. Shutters will only be acceptable as a security measure if it can be demonstrated that there is no other alternative, and the shutter box is located behind the existing fascia and not protruding out onto the street; and if the shutter itself is perforated and either powder or plastic coated in a colour to match the shopfront.

## Internal Shutters

**36** Internal shutters are preferred as a visible form of security without destroying the character of the original shopfront. They should be perforated lattice grilles, powder or plastic coated. Planning Permission is not required for internal shutters.

## Toughened and Laminated Glass

**37** Windows without shutters create a more welcoming street scene as illuminated window displays are maintained at night. Security is provided without compromising the appearance of the property, by the use of laminated glass (6.8 mm thick is recommended).

## Reinforced stallrisers

**38** The reinforcement strengthens the shop front frame and reduces the risk of ram raiding.

## Steel framed shop fronts

**39** This is an unobtrusive way to strengthen the shop front and reduces the risk of ram raiding.



Examples of successful shop front designs





## Burglar alarms

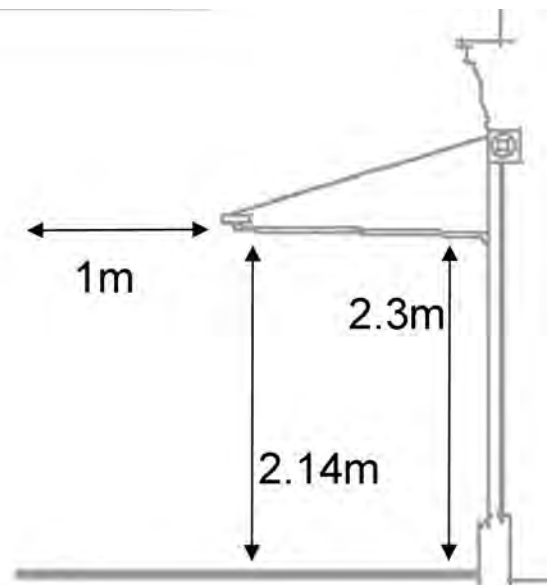
**40** Burglar alarm boxes should not conceal architectural features or be positioned too conspicuously. Associated wiring should be hidden or at least neatly fixed. All fixings should be made of non-ferrous materials.

## Canopies & Blinds

**41** Blinds serve to protect perishable goods from deterioration due to strong sunlight and help to keep the interior cool. Projecting roller blinds are the preferred option as they form an integral part of the shop front and are retractable when not required.

**42** Dutch canopies are made from canvas or plastic over a metal frame. They hide architectural details and interrupt the building elevation. Shops have a tendency to leave them open which results in deterioration of the fabric and a scruffy appearance which is not acceptable.

**43** Highway regulations require the outer edge of the blind to be set back at least 1m from the kerb and the outer and inner ends of the supporting arms not less than 2.14 and 2.3m above the pavement.



## Lighting

**44** Lighting should be considered as part of the overall design rather than ending up as a later ad-hoc addition. Subtle lighting can add vitality to the night-time street scene but poorly designed bulky illuminated signs can look brash. Over illumination must be avoided as it can upset the balance of light and conflict with street lighting.

## Fascia Illumination

**45** Fascia illumination, where it is required, should be considered as part of the street scene. Internally illuminated fascias are not acceptable as they create excessive glare. A variety of subtle lighting styles will add interest.

## External lighting

**46** Ideally light sources should be concealed, and carefully directed at the sign, avoiding glare. Lamp types include tungsten halogen floods, tungsten spotlights, low voltage tungsten spotlights, swan-necked metal arms, and concealed fluorescent tubes.

## **Backlit lettering**

**47** Translucent plastic letters or graphics are inset into an opaque panel which is illuminated from behind. The light box must be fully recessed behind the fascia.

## **Individual halo letters**

**48** Individual letters stand proud of a surface and are lit from behind to produce a halo effect; a treatment which is suitable for fascias or wall mounting. Plastic lettering is not acceptable for old or listed buildings, quality individual letters in a suitable font and size are preferred.

## **Cool Cathode Tubes**

**49** Graphically elegant neon signs may be acceptable if they are of moderate size, single colour and limited palette.

## **Illumination of Hanging and Projecting Signs**

### **Internal lighting**

**50** Old fashioned box illuminated signs are not acceptable. However, well crafted, elegant signs making use of thin fluorescent tubes so only the lettering or graphic is illuminated may be considered.

### **Alternative lighting**

**51** Tungsten lamps, backlit lettering or neon signs can prove acceptable alternatives. Careful design will be given consideration.

## **Building Illumination**

**52** Shop window display lighting contributes towards a safe night-time environment. Discrete spotlighting to highlight architectural features of a shop front or building is welcomed. Permission is not required unless the building is listed.

## **Materials and Decoration**

- Use traditional materials such as painted timber wherever appropriate.
- Carefully chosen modern contemporary materials can be acceptable whilst still adhering to the principles of shop front design.
- Avoid the use of acrylic sheeting, perspex, plastic, standard natural finish aluminium and unpainted softwoods.
- Avoid garish or lurid colour schemes.
- Traditional oil based paints and pigments should be considered for historic buildings.
- Monotone paint combinations can result in a stylish high quality scheme.
- Painted timber is preferable to stained or varnished hardwoods.
- Refer to paint manufacturer's specialist historic colour charts for properties of a specific period.

- Ensure the colour scheme does not jar with its' neighbours.
- Colour contrast should be employed to assist those with disabilities and visual impairments. Critical surfaces, such as doors, door edges and handrails should have sufficient visual contrast to background areas such as walls, ceilings and floors.

## Glossary

**Entablature:** The combination of cornice, fascia and architrave.

**Cornice:** Decorative moulded projection above the fascia providing weather protection and giving a strong line at the top of the shopfront.

**Fascia:** The wide board over the shopfront which provides the advertising space.

**Architrave:** A recessed plane of one or more horizontal mouldings whose function is to 'finish off' the bottom of the fascia.

**Window:** Glazing of a size appropriate to the design of the building as a whole. Avoid overlarge expanses of glass which are expensive to replace.

**Stallriser:** Vertical surface giving protection at ground level to the shopfront, providing a solid base. They are made of polished granite, marble, tile or wood and provide a cill for glazing.

**Pilaster:** Traditional shopfront dividing column between adjoining properties, designed with a base and capital, which supports the console and fascia.

**Console:** Bracket which frames or contains the end of the fascia panel. Provides a key element in maintaining the vertical rhythm of the streetscape.

**Fanlight:** A window above a door.

**Doors and doorways:** Recessed, in keeping with other elements with a return which matches the stallriser.

