

# HEREFORDSHIRE SHOP FRONT DESIGN GUIDE

Report By: Head of Planning and Transportation

## Wards Affected:

County-wide.

## Purpose

1. To report the results of the consultation on the agreed draft document, agree amendments and recommend the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) formally adopt The Herefordshire Shop Front Design Guide as guidance.

## Financial Implications

2. Minor costs for printing and publicity to be met from existing budgets.

## Background

3. Prior to Herefordshire becoming a Unitary Authority two shop front guidance documents were in place; one for Hereford City and the other for South Herefordshire. These documents were amalgamated and augmented to produce draft guidance that might be relevant throughout the county.
4. Planning Committee considered the draft shop front guide in 2008 recommending that the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) publish it for consultation.
5. Consultation was undertaken with parish and town councils, statutory bodies, and a range of local groups and organisations including amenity societies, business organisations, disability groups and agents. In addition to asking for general comments, a number of specific questions were asked upon which views could be expressed if wished. These were:

Q1 Have the design principles and their application been explained clearly enough?

Q2 Are there any additional design issues you think should be covered?

Q3 Are the explanations sufficient to allow you to understand the terminology used within the guide?

Q4 Have the issues involved, including the need to balance the need to retain buildings of interest and ensure accessibility for all, been explained in sufficient detail?

Q5 Are the planning controls and requirements affecting works to shop fronts explained sufficiently to give a clear understanding of them?

- Q6 Are there any additional measures you think are required to meet the needs of the city centre?
6. A summary of the comments received and your officers' response to these are set out in Appendix 1. Although only 12 responses were received they were all positive in terms of approving the principle of the document and a number made some positive suggestions. In particular changes are suggested in relation to the section on accessibility, and this has been expanded in line with the general concerns raised.
  7. The Shop Front Design Guide will be used as guidance by officers assessing planning and listed building consent applications and will be available to encourage good practice. It will be relevant throughout the County from Hereford city centre to individual shop fronts in villages. It will promote a consistent approach in shop front design.
  8. The revised text for the Shop front Design Guide is included in Appendix 2 to this report and the principal features are summarised below.
  9. When the matter was brought before you before it was advised that the document would not have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Decisions on whether Listed Building Consent should be granted are not covered by the requirement to take Local Development Framework (LDF) policies into account. It will however apply to planning applications where improvements to shop fronts may be sought through negotiation. In this context it will be a material consideration with the same weight attributed to it as to Parish plans. However, it is proposed to prepare a Design Code for Herefordshire SPD covering a range of design matters. In addition the procedure for preparing SPDs has recently changed and consideration might be given to the inclusion of this guidance within the Design Code SPD at the stage when it is being prepared.

### **Shop Front Design Guide Executive Summary**

10. The introduction outlines the requirements for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent (where applicable) and available financial assistance from Shop Front Grant Schemes.
11. The history of shop fronts from the medieval period to the present is outlined.
12. The basic design principles including guidelines for restoring shop fronts, respecting the building, symmetry, street rhythm, visual support and scale are outlined. The importance of using appropriate materials and a sensitive choice of colour scheme is also explained.
13. Other design considerations are also detailed including fascias, signs and hanging signs, window posters, lettering and colours, corporate identities and illuminations. Other important considerations such as blinds, security grilles and screens and accessibility for all are dealt with in this section.

14. The importance of correct detailing in a successful shop front design is explained. These include the fascia, pilaster, cornice and stallriser, each of which has its own visual and practical functions.
15. The guide then outlines the relevant legislation and Planning Policies and the guidance that augments the Planning Policies.
16. Appendix 1 to the Guide outlines the specific needs of Hereford City including its character and pressures for change as well as the Article 4 Direction covering the painting of shop fronts within parts of the city centre.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT            Planning Committee recommend that the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) agree the amendments proposed to the Herefordshire Shop Front design Guide and formally adopt this as planning guidance.**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None Identified