

**Shopfronts and
Advertisements
Supplementary Planning
Document
2018**

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1. Purpose of the Guide

Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide guidance to owners and occupiers of shops and other commercial premises who are considering external alterations to premises or new build projects. This SPD will also apply to other buildings within town and local centres that provide a principal active frontage to the surrounding street scenes.
- 1.2 The changes in retail methods and standardisation of shop design now means local distinctiveness is at risk of disappearing, to be replaced with inappropriate shopfronts and unsympathetic signage
- 1.3 Once adopted, this SPD will form part of the decision making process and will be a 'material consideration' when considering planning applications, Listed Building Consent applications and enforcement issues. The objectives of this SPD are:
 - To provide clear guidance on the design of shopfronts to encourage good practice in shopfront design and redesign;
 - To assist in determining new applications for development;
 - To ensure that shopfronts are sympathetic to the character of the Borough's Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings;
 - To ensure that new development does not compromise the vibrancy of the Borough's shopping areas.
- 1.4 This SPD is split into the followings sections:
 - Section 2 addresses alterations to shopfronts and advertisements as part of designated Heritage Assets either to a Listed Building or buildings in Conservation Areas;
 - Section 3 provides advice on advertisements in conservation areas or on listed buildings
 - Section 4 provides guiding principles to contemporary buildings; and
 - Section 5 provides guidance on shop front security and other elements.
 - Attached at Appendix A is a description of Shopfront Components; Appendix B provides the adopted Local Plan Policies; Appendix C provides details of useful contacts and links; and Appendix D details the range of Permissions and Consents.

Planning Policy Context

- 1.5 The development plan for Stafford Borough consists of the Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031, The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 and the 'made' Neighbourhood Development Plans. This SPD provides additional guidance to the documents which form the Stafford Borough Development Plan and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications. Therefore, this SPD will provide assistance to anyone seeking to change or replace shop frontages and/or make use of advertisements and signage.



The Picture House in Stafford has changed from a cinema to a public house. The front of the building has been kept the same with a slight change in the lettering which is still in keeping with the character of the building.

2 Alterations To Shopfronts and Advertisements To Designated Heritage Assets

Key Design Principles for Shopfronts

- 2.1 Operating from commercial premises designated as a Heritage Asset, either as a Listed Building or being located in a Conservation Area, does not mean that you cannot make alterations to these properties, but it does mean that the changes that you may wish to make must sustain and enhance the character and appearance of both the existing building itself and the Conservation Area within which it is located.
- 2.2 There are 30 Conservation Areas in Stafford Borough. The designated boundaries and Conservation Area Appraisals for each can be viewed via the following link: <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/conservation-areas-list>. To find out whether a property **is** listed, please go to the National Heritage List for England <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>.
- 2.3 Where the decision has been made to replace or alter an existing shopfront, or insert a



new shopfront, it is essential that any new or altered shopfront is not designed in isolation but is considered as part of the street composition and harmonise with its neighbours.

2.4 Set out below in Guidance 1, are the key principles for consideration when looking at repairing, restoring or re-using a shopfront.

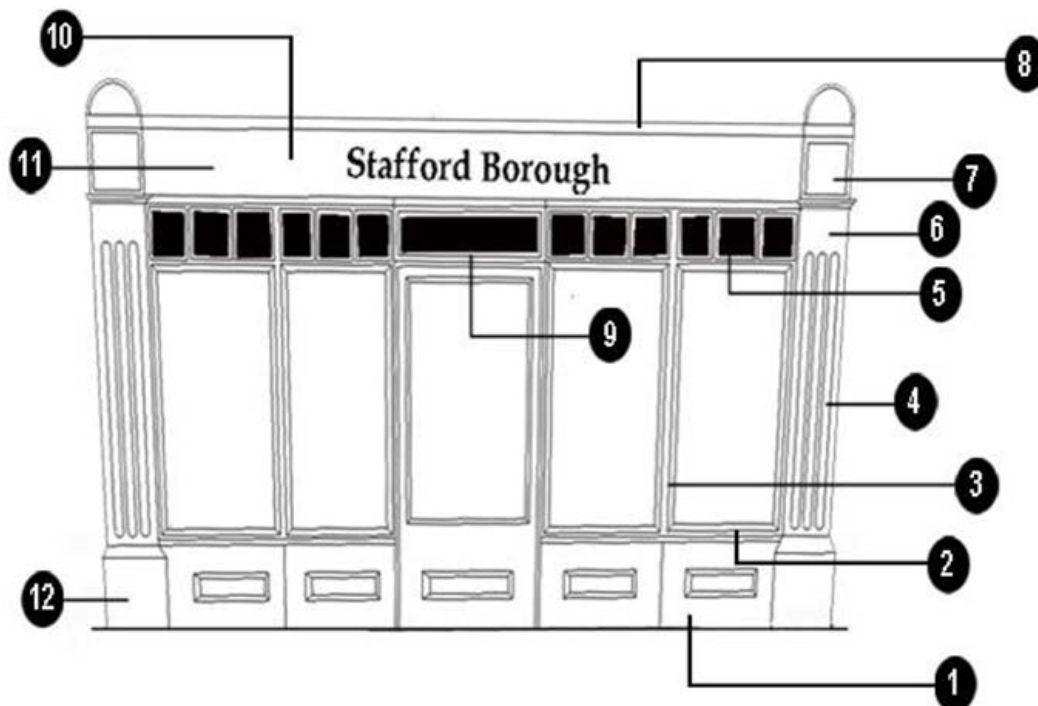
Guidance 1: Key Design Principles for Shopfronts

- The shopfront should respect the architectural composition of the shop's upper floors and neighbouring buildings, and should harmonise with the streetscene. This will be assessed in terms of scale, proportion and colour as well as the profile of the window frames, glazing bars and door locations.
- The shopfront should be designed as an integral and harmonious part of the whole building.
- Where businesses are composed of adjacent multiple buildings of different architectural styles, the shopfront should be subdivided in a manner that reflects the individual architecture style and character of each building.
- The principal elements of the shopfront detailed in Appendix A should be in proportion to each other. This is particularly true for the horizontal elements, such as the stallriser lining up with the door panel and the transom lights lining up with the fan light.
- Careful consideration should be given to the entire design, including finishes and colours to ensure harmony of composition, scale, proportion and appearance.
- Materials should be considered in terms of quality, longevity, ease of maintenance and should be predominantly matt or non-reflective. The use of UPVC, acrylic sheeting, Perspex will not be acceptable in Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings.
- Security features should be unobtrusive and integrate into the whole design.

Elements of Traditional Shopfront Design

Typical Shopfront Components

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Stallriser | 7. Console |
| 2. Sill | 8. Projecting Cornice with Lead Flashing |
| 3. Mullion | 9. Fan Light |
| 4. Fluted Pillaster | 10. Fascia with hand painted lettering |
| 5. Transom | 11. Blind box concealed behind the Fascia |
| 6. Capital | 12. Plinth / Base |



- 2.5 For new shopfronts in Conservation Areas / Listed Buildings, the traditional elements of shopfront design such as stallriser, mullions, pilasters and recessed doorways should be utilised where appropriate. The use of each of these elements should be carefully considered in terms of detailing, proportion and appropriateness to the building, in terms of age and style to ensure that the shopfront is in synergy with both the host building and the architectural composition of the streetscape.

Pilaster

2.6 The use of pilasters is of critical importance as it frames the shopfront as well as contributes to the vertical emphasis of the building by dividing the shopfront from adjacent shopfronts, and suggests support for upper floors.

Guidance 2: Pilasters

- Historic or traditional pilasters and corbels must not be altered or removed. Where they are missing or partially missing their reinstatement may be sought.
- Pilasters should be wide enough to separate one shop from another and project beyond the plane of the shopfront and the upper floors, and should be either architecturally sympathetic to the building or, where appropriate, be composed of the prevailing material of the building.
- The corbel brackets should project well forward of the fascia. Original corbels vary in design so it is important to reflect typical local types.
- A traditional pilaster should have a base, shaft and capital. The junction between each of these sections should be clearly demarcated. At the top this often takes the form of a corbel.



An example of a shopfront which is not 'in keeping' or sympathetic to its historic setting. The Colour schemes are too bold and distract from the buildings character. The Pilasters have been obscured by blue panels

Stallriser

2.7 Stallrisers provide horizontal emphasis at the base of the shopfront and reduce the prominence of the glazing, whilst providing protection against kicks and knocks.

Guidance 3: Stallrisers

- Where stallrisers exist they should be retained and where they have been removed, they should be replaced.
- Stallrisers vary in height according to the shopfront, but in most cases they are between 300mm and 700mm high and have a moulded projecting sill to provide a strong junction between the glass and stallriser. In many instances it will be appropriate to line up the stallriser with those on adjacent buildings to unify the streetscene.
- Excessively low stallrisers are unlikely to be acceptable.
- Stallrisers should be constructed of substantial materials that are hard wearing. A variety of materials may be appropriate. Stallrisers can be either rendered, painted timber panelling or facing brick. However, advice on which material to use should be sought from Stafford Borough's Planning Department. The use of thin laminates on stallrisers should be avoided.
- Where a timber panelled stall riser is proposed this should have properly detailed panels. The use of applied surface beading to create a panelled appearance will not usually be acceptable.



Shop Windows

2.8 The use of appropriately designed shop windows that utilise quality materials, appropriate colour schemes, and lively window displays can enliven the shop window and add vitality to the streetscene, whilst also producing a distinctive individual shop unit.

Guidance 4: Shop Windows

- The detailed design of glazing bars and window frames should respect the architectural detail and the period of the building. This helps break up the large expanses of plate glass. Typically traditional shopfront window frames and glazing bars were painted softwood and this will normally be the most appropriate material and finish.
- The use of unpainted hardwoods for entire shopfronts is uncommon within the Borough, but there are many examples of hardwoods being used for decorative features.
- Modern framing materials such as extruded or milled aluminium and UPVC, are unlikely to be acceptable on historic buildings. In some instances powder-coated cast aluminium or steel can suit contemporary designs.
- If a building is Listed, large undivided areas of plate glass with poor quality detailing will not normally be acceptable as they present a stark characterless surface.

Door Entrances

2.9 Many traditional shops had recessed entranceways to increase the amount of display space. It also helps modulate the scale of the shopfront and has the effect of inviting people into the shop.

Guidance 5: Door Entrances

- Where a recessed entrance is present it must be retained. Where a new shopfront is required and a recessed entrance is typical of the area, the Council will normally require its reinstatement in the replacement shopfront. Recessed entrances should typically be set back from the building frontage by at least 850mm.
- The entrance surface or ramp may be laid with stone or geometric tiles but care should be taken to ensure a slip-resistant finish. The Council will also encourage the incorporation of one-off designs relating to the shop use in the entrance surface, good recent examples of this exist, using mosaics for example. This contributes towards the aim of local distinctiveness.
- The shop door should be designed using quality durable materials, with timber panelling (kick plate) that is of similar height to the stallriser, unless the stallriser is absent, excessively low or high. The door should normally be two-thirds glazed, painted softwood to match the stallriser, and designed as an integral part of the façade.



The Old Fire Station in Eccleshall has been converted into shop but has kept the large doors at the front of the building which are also used for security

Painting and Finishes

2.10 The choice of colour should complement the character of the building and the street scene rather than conflict with them. In many cases, companies will want to use their own corporate image and style to enable the consumer to identify their business.

2.11 Retailers will be required to modify their corporate or standard house styles where they are not compatible with the individual character of the buildings or their wider context. In most cases modifications to house styles to facilitate the local context can create a good shopfront design that strikes a balance between the need to have corporate identity and a design that respects the character of the building and its wider context.



An example of a national chain who has taken into consideration the existing fabric of the shop front whilst still maintaining the brand identity.

3. Advertisements in Conservation Areas and to Listed Buildings

- 3.1 Where permission is required for signage or advertisements it is important that the design, materials, colour and positioning are appropriate in relation to the building and area.
- 3.2 Inappropriate and unsympathetic signage can have an extremely detrimental effect on the character of an area or building if not carefully considered.



An example of a shopfront which has been incorporated into the setting of the existing historic fabric of the building . the lettering of the sign is in style of the host building, at suitable scale and is positioned in an appropriate place.

Listed Buildings

- 3.3 New or altered signage on a Listed Building <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list> will always require Listed Building consent and may require Advertisement Consent. These buildings are extremely sensitive to inappropriate signage and will be protected against development that would visually or physically harm the building. Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent may be required for any advertisement that attaches to or otherwise physically affects a Scheduled Monument.

Designated Areas

- 3.4 The character of a Conservation Area <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/conservation-areas-list> can be seriously eroded through the installation of inappropriate signs. Whilst these areas do not have any increased protection under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, other than for illumination, any development that does require formal consent will nonetheless be required to be designed to be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the street scenes within which it is located and in accordance with National and Local Plan Policy (N9 - Historic Environment).
- 3.5 The following principles apply both to Listed Buildings and those within a Conservation Area:

Design

- 3.6 It is important to consider the building as a whole, using colours, materials and design that compliment the existing and surrounding buildings, and that respect the character of these designated areas. A proliferation of inappropriate signs can have a highly detrimental impact on the character of an area.



A symmetrical shop front in like materials and colours helps to 'anchor' the shopfront and tie the ground floor back to the upper storeys

Projecting and hanging signs

- 3.7 There should be no more than one projecting or hanging sign per building (with the exception of a shop which has two street frontages). Where a building has been subdivided into separate uses, care will need to be taken that a proliferation of signs does not detract from its character.
- 3.8 Projecting and hanging signs should normally be positioned at or above fascia level and should not obscure architectural or historic features. Care should be taken to hang signs in a position which would not obscure neighbouring fascias. Bracket design should be simple, and where an original bracket survives, it should be reused.
- 3.9 Projecting box signs are not considered appropriate on Listed Buildings or in Conservation Areas.

Materials

- 3.10 Within a Conservation Area it is important to use materials that respect the character of their surroundings. Modern, shiny finishes such as acrylic and applied vinyl are rarely appropriate and can have a very detrimental effect on an area.
- 3.11 Timber and metal are the most appropriate materials to use in a Conservation Area, as these traditional materials respect the historic character.



An example in York where the signage has been limited but the brand is still identifiable.

Colour

- 3.12 Colour can be an important factor, when considering a proposal. Garish and fluorescent colours are very unlikely to be approved, as too are those that clash with the existing signage of adjacent buildings.

- 3.13 Although it is recognised that many companies have specific corporate colours, if these are considered inappropriate for the area, it may be necessary to tone down the colour.

Lettering

- 3.14 Individual timber or metal lettering is often appropriate.



An example of individual lettering to a fascia

Positioning

- 3.15 It is important that the position of a sign does not interfere with or disguise the buildings features which are part of the character of the building or area. Care should be taken to position wording and logos so that they compliment the building above.
- 3.16 An off centre logo positioned below symmetrical upper floors can be visually detrimental to the rest of the building.

Illumination

- 3.17 The use of external illumination or individually illuminated applied lettering including halo lighting may be acceptable in certain circumstances, subject to regard being given to the amenities of occupants of adjoining properties. Preference may be given to premises which trade at night e.g. pubs, restaurants, night clubs etc.
- 3.18 Open neon tubing and intermittent illumination should be avoided. Illuminated signs should present a neat appearance during the daytime, with switch gear and wiring

properly concealed. The intensity of illumination should not cause glare, especially in areas where they could create a highway hazard.

4 Key Design Principles for Contemporary Shopfronts

- 4.1 Good quality modern or contemporary designs can contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of the Borough's shopping parades in modern buildings or for new retail developments. New shops or the addition of modern shopfronts on existing modern buildings offers the opportunity to produce a high quality individually designed shopfront that harmonises with the building and enhances the streetscene.



An example of a contemporary shopfront in which the sign is in keeping with the building through being at an appropriate scale, position and design.

- 4.2 For new developments or the refitting of shopfronts onto modern buildings, good modern design, careful proportioning, the selection of good quality materials and respect for surrounding buildings are essential. When considering a contemporary design for a shopfront, careful consideration must be given to the following principles:

Guidance 6: Contemporary Shopfront Design

- The rigid application of traditional shopfront design elements to modern buildings will result in a pastiche design that is often inappropriate. Instead, modern shopfront designs should seek to adapt and interpret traditional design principles in a modern and creative way to produce imaginative shopfronts that are appropriate to the street and building that they front.
- The shopfront should be designed as part of the building, with a strong emphasis on design quality, having regard to the age, style and local architectural traditions in a manner that reinforces local distinctiveness.
- New units should not be designed in isolation, but should be carefully planned to integrate into the area in terms of scale, massing and form, utilising vertical and horizontal emphasis where appropriate.
- The design of any shopfront must aim to create activity and interest at pedestrian level and the chosen design should not visually cut itself off from the building above.
- Any new retail development should utilise high quality design, good quality materials and appropriate detailing.
- All designs must make the appropriate provisions for advertisements, security, canopies and accessibility in accordance with this guidance to avoid unnecessary changes to the design at a later date.

5. Shopfront Security and Other Shopfront Elements

Shopfront Security

- 5.1 The threat of crime and vandalism in towns and cities has led many retailers to consider the installation of security measures ranging from laminated glass to security shutters. In cases where security shutters are considered necessary, a balance must be struck between the need for security and the overall visual impact on the street scene. It is critical to recognise that a number of measures can be deployed to provide protection for shopfronts without compromising the character of the building or the area. Various security features are detailed in order of preference



Internal shutters can be successfully integrated with the character and design of the shopfront

security measures is considered necessary, they must fulfil the following criteria:

- Must be well designed so as not to obscure or impact negatively any architectural features or mouldings
- The grilles must fit within each individual window frame and only cover the glazed area.
- The mesh must be open and provide good visibility to the shopfront.
- The grilles must be stored inside or out of sight during opening hours.
- Grilles and their associated fixtures should be painted to match the shopfront

Internal Grilles

- 5.2 The use of internal grilles does not require planning permission, unless the building is listed, with Listed Building Consent being required. The roller housing of such grilles should be concealed within or behind the fascia. Perforated internal grilles combined with internal illumination allows window shopping after trading hours, and helps maintain a lively street scene.

Removable External Security Grilles

- 5.3 In certain instances external removable grilles composed of metal mesh or lattice work may be appropriate. Whilst these have the advantage of allowing the shopfront and display to remain visible, they can be unsightly additions to the streetscene. Where the addition of such

- 5.4 Bespoke shutters or artist designed shutters are preferable to standard designs as they give the shop a unique appearance as well as making a positive contribution to the streetscene.

External Roller Grilles

- 5.5 In exceptional circumstances, where more robust security measures are required, then external lattice (with open grilles) shutters will be acceptable provided the following criteria are adhered to:

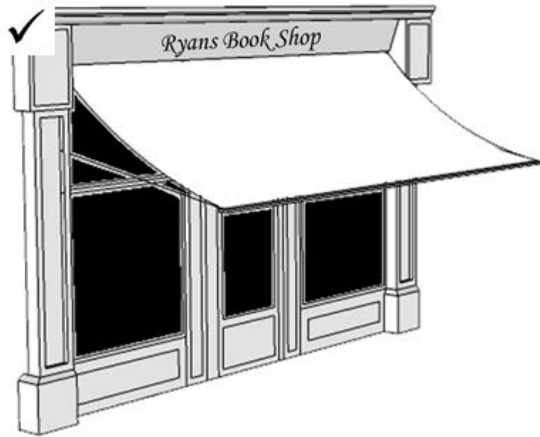
- All of the grill and associated external components (including guidance channels) should be self-coloured to match the colour of the shopfront or bronze anodised;
- Shutters should achieve a minimum of 55% transparency to ensure that adequate light penetrates from the shop to the street; thus ensuring that passers by feel more secure.

External Roller Shutters

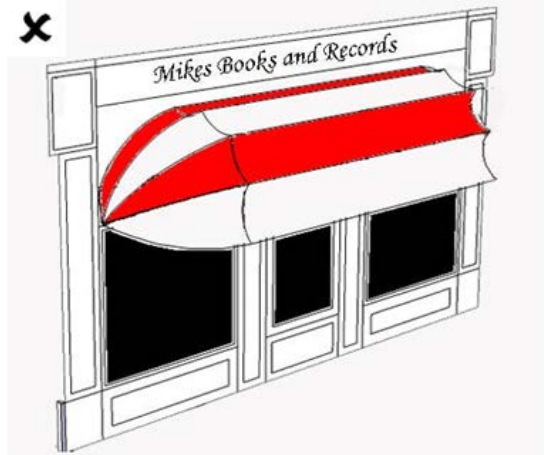
- 5.6 Solid external roller shutters will not be supported in Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings. They have a deadening effect on the character of shopping streets as they prevent window shopping, attract high levels of graffiti and convey the image of an unsafe environment. Where security poses a particularly onerous issue their use may be permitted. However, in such circumstances the design and surface finish of the shutters must be such that they are specifically sensitive and responsive to the defining characteristics of the street scenes which they face.

Blinds and Canopies

- 5.7 The addition of blinds and canopies can add interest and vitality to a shopping street. Permanently open ‘Dutch style’ canopies can spoil a shopfront by masking its features and will be resisted.



Good example of a traditional canvas awning that can be retracted into the fascia when closed.



Bad example of an unsympathetic Dutch

- 5.8 There is an increasing interest in the addition of blinds to traditional shopfronts, and often historic brackets survive though the awning has perished. In certain instances they may be acceptable but on north facing elevations or in narrow streets, robust justification will be required for their addition.

Guidance 7: Canopies and Blinds

- New blinds should respect the character of the building in terms of scale, design, width, colour and material, and should be considered as an integral element of the overall shopfront design.
- Existing original/traditional canvas blinds and blind boxes should be retained and refurbished. Where new blinds are being installed the blind box should be positioned between the pilasters, but below the fascia level and not obscure any important architectural features.
- Roller blinds with flat awnings that retract into a timber ‘blind box’ located in the fascia or cornice will normally be the most appropriate solution for Listed Buildings and for buildings within Conservation Areas.
- Blinds should be composed of a canvas or woven acrylic fibre material that is matt finished to match the shopfront and fascia colour. This is particularly important in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings. Plastic blinds and blinds that have gaudy colours in fluorescent or glossy material will not be acceptable.
- Where corporate colours on blinds are inconsistent with the local context, modifications will be required to suit the local character of the building and the area.

- Dutch blinds or balloon canopies are primarily erected to increase advertising space. They tend to obscure the fascia and are not a traditional feature of Stafford Borough and therefore will not be acceptable.
- Blinds advertising brand names will not be acceptable on Listed Buildings or within Conservation Areas;
- Under the Highway Regulations blinds should be at least 2.4 metres above the footway level.

Accessibility

5.9 Shops and commercial premises must comply disability discrimination legislation and Building Regulations.

5.10 On Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas, the needs of disabled people should be taken into account as far as possible, commensurate with the need to preserve the character of a building or area.

Guidance 8: Accessibility

- Entrance to commercial premises should be at pavement level, otherwise ramped to ease access;
- Surfaces should be non-slip without any grilles that may trap walking sticks or wheelchair wheels;
- Adequate internal space within the premises should be provided to allow for easy movement of wheelchairs and pushchairs;
- Easy opening doors with grab handles should be provided;
- Door bells and door handles should be installed at roughly at a height of 1 metre or easy access;
- The width of the entry opening should be 850mm at least to allow wheelchairs and twin buggies. (double door access: 1 opening minimum 850mm);
- In Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings suitable access arrangements should be provided in a manner that respects the integrity of the building and the character of the shopfront.

Appendix A – List of Shopfront Components

Pilaster

- A1 These are columns built into traditional shopfronts that define the width of the shop and demarcate it from adjacent buildings. Pilasters usually provide both physical and visual support to the fascia and in certain circumstances are integral components of it. At the base the pilaster usually terminates with a plinth block, whilst at the head, it has a plain or decorated head. Often the capital is crowned by a console which defines the width of the fascia.

Fascia

- A2 The fascia board carries the name of the proprietor and is the most prominent feature of the shopfront. The appearance of the shopfront will be affected by the material, colour, design, width and length of the fascia. Earlier shopfronts had vertical fascias, whilst later designs often had signs that canted or sloped downwards to make them more visible from street level, protect it against the weather, and provide the option of concealing a retractable blind housing behind.

Stallriser

- A3 The stallriser or undersill occupies the gap between pavement and the shop window. It plays an important part in protecting the front of the shop from damage as well as improving the proportions of the shop front. They usually have a moulded projecting cill that demarcates the stall riser from the glazing above. In certain circumstances they may include a grill to light and ventilate the basement. Stallrisers can include relief panels and are composed of a variety of materials including timber, stone and render, and later marble and vitrolite. Where stallrisers exist they should be retained, and where they have been removed from older shopfronts, they should be replaced.

Shop Entrance and Doors

- A4 Many traditional shop fronts of the Edwardian and Victorian period have recessed entrances and these must be retained. They provide visual interest, modulate the scale of the shopfront and act as an invitation to the customer. Doors were usually composed of timber utilising designs that typically reflected the overall design of the shopfront. Typically the door is part glazed with a lower panel or kick plate, with height, colour and design similar to that of the stallriser. Original features commonly found on doors include metalwork fittings made of brass or cast or wrought iron. In certain instances doorways have decorated fan lights and / or an ornate grill or frieze

above the door. Such features, where present, should be repaired or retained where possible.

Windows

A5 The shop window is the centrepiece of any shopfront and is a critical element of the streetscene. As well as allowing natural light to permeate into the interior, it provides a public showcase for displaying goods. They are typically divided by mullions that support large vertical glass panes, which provide vertical emphasis. Transom lights at the top of the shop can be decorated with stained glass or plain glass inlaid with decoration. Window framing, mullions and transoms should normally be painted timber and be profiled to respect the architectural style and period of the premises. Gold, silver or powder coated aluminium frames are generally not acceptable. New shopfronts with large areas of glass are generally unacceptable alongside traditional shopfronts or within a Conservation Area, as they have a dominating and disruptive effect on the streetscene. Additionally, the introduction of mullions to modern shopfronts can save on glazing costs where vandalism occurs.

Materials

A6 The materials chosen for shopfronts are very important as they have a direct impact on determining the character of the shopfront and by extension the shopfront's impact on the streetscene. The materials used should be durable enough to withstand weathering and be easily cleaned. Traditionally the material of choice for shopfronts was timber. Its versatility and durability along with its ability to reproduce fine traditional detailing is unrivalled. The use of non-traditional materials such as fiberglass, uPVC, Perspex and acrylic sheeting will not be permitted where they detract from the character of the area.

Appendix B – Local Plan Policies

Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031

- Policy Stafford 1 - Stafford Town
- Policy Stone 1 - Stone Town
- Policy N1 - Design
- Policy N9 - Historic Environment

and;

Neighbourhood Planning Policies if applicable.

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 relevant policies are provided below:

Policy Stafford 1 – Stafford Town

POLICY STAFFORD 1 – STAFFORD TOWN

Reflecting its role as the County Town at the head of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy set by Spatial Principle SP3, the strategy for Stafford town will seek to enhance its role by increasing both the range and quality of services and facilities. The strategy will comprise the following elements:

Housing

Continue to meet the housing requirements for Stafford Town by providing a total of 7,000 new market and affordable homes, as well as additional provision for Ministry of Defence personnel:

- i. Increasing the range and type of housing including a greater number of specialist houses and extra care provision for the elderly;
- ii. Providing a range of development locations for new homes over the Plan period to 2031 including for affordable housing. This will include new housing development at the following Strategic Development Locations identified on the Policies Map:
 - a. North of Stafford including highway and transport improvements through the Northern Access Improvements
 - b. West of Stafford linked to delivery of the Western Access Improvements from Martin Drive to Doxey Road
 - c. East of Stafford linked to delivery of the Eastern Access Improvements from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane
- iii. Sites within the urban area of Stafford town will have good accessibility to services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport;
- iv. Strategic Development Locations adjacent to Stafford's urban area will minimise the impact on surrounding landscapes, be fully accessible by public transport with facilities to encourage walking and cycling;

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification by:

- i. Supporting the Science and Technology park at Beaconside as a high quality location for knowledge based industries;
- ii. Supporting further development of Ministry of Defence land at Stafford as a military base in the West Midlands;
- iii. Supporting the continuing retention and growth of existing public and private sector employers as well as targeting new businesses through the provision of a range of premises, support and advice;
- iv. Providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by allocating new employment sites with good transport links that contribute to sustainable development. New employment sites will be included in the following Strategic Development Locations identified on the Policies Map:
 - a. North of Stafford

b. East of Stafford

v. Providing facilities and sites for new start-up businesses, particularly business incubation units for knowledge-based and creative industries.

Development or conversions must not result in the loss of employment land to non employment generating uses unless either:

1. There is overriding evidence to demonstrate that the current use is presently causing and has consistently caused significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not have been mitigated; or
2. The loss of jobs would not result in a reduction in the range and diversity of jobs available within Stafford Borough; and
3. There is substantial evidence provided by applicants to show the premises or site has been marketed both for its present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative employment-generating uses; and
4. The benefits arising from the development outweighs the retention of the site in its existing use.

Where it is established that existing employment sites have no realistic prospect of development under prevailing market conditions within the plan period, careful consideration should be given in priority order to:

- 1st. What remedial action / infrastructure works will be required to ensure the retention of the site;
- 2nd. Identification / re-allocation of the site for mixed uses; and
- 3rd. Identification / re-allocation of the site for an alternative use

New development to facilitate the needs of higher / further education institutions and research facilities to grow and expand will be supported through the provision of sites, premises and supporting infrastructure addressing:

- a. The locational and operational requirements of the businesses;
- b. The anticipated scale and rate of growth;
- c. Local employment opportunities;
- d. Existing or proposed sustainable forms of transport including good quality public transport; and
- e. The opportunities to develop previously developed land and the need to protect and enhance the environment.

Stafford Town Centre

Strengthen Stafford town centre's role for the Borough to support the County Town of Stafford within the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy (Spatial Principle SP3) over the Plan period by:

- i. Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide an increase of 14,000 square metres (net) of non-food (comparison) retailing and 3,400 square metres (net) of food (convenience) retailing and improve the level and quality of the offer as well as establish new development opportunities;
- ii. Ensuring that there is 45,000 square metres of new office space and commercial premises within Stafford town centre;

iii. Promoting mixed use development on larger development sites, particularly those that are within the town centre, through a phased approach for the major regeneration plan on the following sites:

a. Kingsmead

b. Riverside

iv. Strengthening the retail and service function of the primary retail core / shopping area as well as protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness, vitality and viability including the night-time economy;

v. Supporting an enhanced range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town centre;

vi. Improving accessibility to the town centre, particularly by public transport, from the rest of the Borough.

vii. B1 (a) office development should only be permitted on employment sites outside the town centres if it can be proved, through a sequential assessment, that proposed development cannot be located within the town centre or edge of centre sites.

Within Stafford town centre support will be given to bringing upper floors back into use, particularly for C3 residential purposes and B1 business uses. Proposals should provide safe access, not lead to any significant loss of ground floor retail space or street frontage and must not prejudice the amenity and conversion of adjoining properties or other floors in the same property.

Infrastructure

Strengthen Stafford Town's role as the principal transport hub in Stafford Borough by:

i. Supporting the introduction of better bus services, by increasing service levels, frequency and punctuality of services between Stafford town centre and other parts of the Borough;

ii. Deliver the full Western Access Improvements, including the Western Access Route, between Martin Drive and A34 Foregate Street, the Northern Access Improvements and the Eastern Access Improvements, from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane;

iii. Extend existing and create new, cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments in the town;

iv. Improve access to the rail station for all users and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;

v. Ensuring there is adequate provision for taxis through extending existing or creating new appropriately placed taxi ranks;

vi. Ensure that new developments are capable of providing safe and convenient access by foot, cycle, public and private transport that addresses the needs of all, particularly those with disabilities.

Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stafford Town at Stafford Common and west of Wildwood Park together with local area schemes that respond to the characteristics, local needs and opportunities for improved GI provision and biodiversity assets of the town.

Increasing and improving the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities through new green infrastructure and by addressing specific qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. New development will support the provision of the following, through Policy 11 and Policies Stafford 2 – 4:

- New indoor swimming pool

- New indoor multi-use and specialist facilities including opportunities for joint use of educational / community establishments

- Increased number and quality of allotments across the town
- Improved safety and accessibility of children's play areas
- High quality and adequately sized green spaces
- Adequate access to natural green spaces
- Improved access to multi-sport courts
- High quality range of facilities for teenagers

Tourism

Promote Stafford as a tourist destination with its unique visitor attractions and qualities by:

- i. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, the context and character of its buildings and streets, its rich heritage, archaeological interest and historic street pattern, and encouraging the sustainable use and management of heritage assets;
- ii. Ensure new developments are well designed and of high quality whilst respecting the character of the townscape and skyline, and conserving sight lines to historic buildings and their setting;
- iii. Increasing tourist opportunities for visitors through additional high quality accommodation, promoting links with the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Staffordshire County Showground, the Shire Hall Gallery, Ancient High House, Stafford Castle, St. Chad's Church and St Mary's Church by facilitating the development of innovative new tourist attractions;
- iv. Improving access into the countryside by means other than by the private car, such as public transport, walking and cycling including the use of green links and the canal network.

Environment

Promote Stafford's unique character and heritage by:

- i. Ensuring that development does not damage the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nature conservation interests and Local Nature Reserves, as detailed in Policies N4 to N6;
- ii. Ensuring that development is not located in areas of flood risk or contribute to flooding elsewhere;
- iii. Ensuring that development does not harm the significance of the town's heritage assets;
- iv. Development is sympathetic to the landscape character;
- v. Ensuring that new development does not harm but enhances watercourses in the town.

Policy Stone 1 – Stone Town

POLICY STONE 1 – STONE TOWN

Reflecting its role as the key market town in the Borough and the second settlement of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy set by Spatial Principle SP3, the strategy for Stone town will seek to enhance its role by increasing both its range and quality of services and facilities. The strategy will comprise the following elements:

Housing

Continue to meet the housing requirements for Stone Town by providing a total of 1,000 new market and affordable homes:

- i. Increasing the range and type of housing available including a greater number of semi-detached and terraced properties and a greater number of affordable housing;
- ii. Providing a range of development locations for new homes over the Plan period to 2031 including for affordable housing. This will include new housing development at the Strategic Development Location west of Stone identified on the Policies Map;
- iii. Sites within the urban area of Stone town will have good accessibility to public transport, services and facilities;
- iv. The Strategic Development Location adjacent to Stone's urban area will minimise the impact on surrounding landscapes, be fully accessible by public transport with facilities to encourage walking and cycling;

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification in Stone by:

- i. Supporting the continued retention and growth of existing public and private sector businesses, as well as targeting new businesses through the provision of a range of business premises, support and advice;
- ii. Providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by allocating new employment sites with good transport links, as well as support and facilities for new start-up businesses. The Strategic Development Location for a new employment site is south of Stone Business Park, identified on the Policies Map;

Development or conversions must not result in the loss of employment land to non employment generating uses unless either:

1. There is overriding evidence to demonstrate that the current use is presently causing and has consistently caused significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not have been mitigated; or
2. The loss of jobs would not result in a reduction in the range and diversity of jobs available within Stafford Borough; and
3. Applicants will need to provide substantial evidence to show the premises or site has been marketed both for its present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative employment-generating uses; and
4. The development outweighs the retention of the sites in its existing use.

iii. Where it is established that existing employment sites have no realistic prospect of development under current market conditions within the plan period, careful consideration should be given in priority order to:

1st. What remedial action / infrastructure works will be required to ensure the retention of the site;

2nd. Identification / re-allocation of the site for mixed uses; and

3rd. Identification / re-allocation of the site for an alternative use

Stone Town Centre

Strengthen Stone town centre's role as a Market Town within the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy (Spatial Principle SP3) by:

a. Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide a vibrant place where people can meet, shop, eat and spend leisure time in a safe and pleasant environment;

b. Provide for 1,700 square metres (net) of new convenience (food) retailing and 400 square metres (net) of new comparison (non-food) retailing at Stone town centre;

c. Increase the levels of office space and commercial premises within Stone town centre;

d. Enhancing different uses in the primary shopping area as well as protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness, vitality and viability through a greater diversity of independent specialist and niche retailers;

v. Improving and strengthening both the range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town;

e. Facilitating improvements to the streetscape and the public realm through the enhancement of public spaces that are locally distinctive and strengthen local identity;

f. Ensuring that new development around the railway station is reserved for employment uses.

B1 (a) office development should only be permitted on employment sites outside the town centres if it can be proved, through a sequential assessment, that proposed development cannot be located within the town centre or edge of centre sites.

Within Stone town centre support will be given to bringing upper floors back into use, particularly for C3 residential purposes and B1 business uses. Proposals should provide safe access, not lead to any significant loss of ground floor retail space or street frontage and must not prejudice the amenity and conversion of adjoining properties or other floors in the same property.

Infrastructure

Strengthen Stone's role as a key transport hub in Stafford Borough by:

i. Improving accessibility to Stone town centre, particularly by public transport, from the surrounding villages through better bus services with increased service levels, frequency and punctuality of services;

ii. Reducing the levels of traffic congestion on A34 and the A520 road through the town centre including improvements in traffic management and public transport;

iii. Extending the existing and creating new cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments;

iv. Improving access to the rail station and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;

v. Ensuring there is adequate provision for taxis through extending existing or creating new appropriately placed taxi ranks;

vi. Ensuring that new developments are capable of providing safe and convenient access by foot, cycle, public and private transport addressing the access needs of all, including those with disabilities.

Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stone Town through the River Trent area as well as local area schemes for improved GI provision and biodiversity assets within and around the Town. Facilitate upgrades to Pirehill wastewater treatment works.

Ensure that there is adequate provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities by addressing the following requirements identified in the local evidence base with reference to Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator. New development will provide high quality facilities by ensuring:

- a. Increased and high quality of allotment provision in the town;
- b. A floodlit Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) is provided;
- c. Improved quality of play areas;
- d. Increased size of green spaces;
- e. High quality multi- use indoor sports facilities in association with community and educational establishments;
- f. Adequate range of facilities for teenagers.

Tourism

Promote Stone as a tourist destination with its unique architectural character and heritage by:

- i. Conserving and enhancing the character of Stone town centre, its historic buildings, street patterns and rich heritage;
- ii. Supporting canal based regeneration initiatives in Stone town centre that enhance the context and character of the canal as a focal point and tourist attraction;
- iii. Increasing tourist opportunities for visitors through additional high quality accommodation, promoting links with the surrounding countryside via the Trent and Mersey canal, the River Trent and by facilitating the development of innovative tourist attractions;
- iv. Improving access to the surrounding countryside by means other than the private car such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Environment

- i. Ensure that new developments adopt sustainable drainage techniques (SUDS) in order to reduce surface water flooding;
- ii. Development is sympathetic to the natural landscape;
- iii. Ensure new development protects and enhances the significance of Stone's many heritage assets;
- iv. Ensure that development does not damage the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nature conservation interests and Local Nature Reserves, as detailed in Policies N4 to N6.

Policy N1 - Design

Policy N1 Design

To secure enhancements in design quality, development must, at a minimum, meet the following principles:

Use

- a. Ensure that, where relevant the scale, nature and surroundings, major applications are comprehensively master planned or, where appropriate, are accompanied by a development brief;
- b. Be designed, sited and grouped in order to provide access for all;
- c. New development of ten dwellings or more should demonstrate compliance with the Building for Life 12 assessment and any successor documents, unless it makes the development unviable or it has been sufficiently demonstrated, through a Design & Access Statement, that each of the twelve Building for Life questions has been optimally addressed, or conversely why it is not practical or appropriate to do so;

Form

- d. Incorporate sustainable construction and energy conservation techniques into the design in accordance with Policy N2;
- e. Require the design and layout to take account of noise and light implications, together with the amenity of adjacent residential areas or operations of existing activities;
- f. Retention of significant biodiversity, landscaping features, and creation of new biodiversity areas that take into account relevant local information and evidence;
- g. Include high design standards that make efficient use of land, promote activity and takes into account the local character, context, density and landscape, as well as complementing the biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- h. Designs must have regard to the local context, including heritage assets, historic views and sight lines, and should preserve and enhance the character of the area including the use of locally distinctive materials;

Space

- i. Strengthen the continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space;
- j. Development should clearly distinguish between public and private space, and provide space for storage, including for recycling materials;
- k. Streets and public open spaces are designed to be usable, easy to maintain and productive for the amenity of residents by being overlooked to create a safe environment;
- l. Require the design and layout of new development to be safe, secure and crime resistant, by the inclusion of measures to address crime and disorder through environmental design and meet “Secured by Design” Standards;

m. Development should be well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and be well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly;

n. Where appropriate, development should ensure that there is space for water within the development layout to facilitate the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs).

Movement

o. Ensure that places inter-connect using important routes and linkages, including Rights of Way, which are pedestrian, vehicle and cycle friendly, whilst allowing for ease of movement, legibility and permeability through a clearly defined and well structured public realm;

p. Ensure car parking is well integrated and discreetly located.

Policy N9 - Historic Environment

Policy N9 Historic Environment

Proposals that would affect the significance of a heritage asset will not be accepted for consideration unless they provide sufficient information for that impact to be assessed.

Development and advertisement proposals will be expected to sustain and, where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting by understanding the heritage interest, encouraging sustainable re-use and promoting high design quality. All potential loss of or harm to the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, will require clear justification, taking into account:

- i. Settlement pattern including street patterns, orientation of buildings and sites, boundaries and density of development;
- ii. The scale, form and massing of buildings and structures;
- iii. Materials, including colours and textures;
- iv. Significant landscape features including open spaces, trees and planted boundaries;
- v. Significant views and vistas;
- vi. Locally distinctive architectural or historical detail;
- vii. The setting of heritage assets;

viii. Archaeological remains and potential;

ix. Traditional permeable building construction.

Development proposals must conserve and protect the significance of heritage assets by avoiding unnecessary loss of historic fabric and detail of significance. For listed buildings this includes internal features, floor plans and spaces.

Where harm to significance is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures will be put into place, including archaeological investigation (including a written report) or recording. This information should be deposited at the County Record Office and be available to the general public.

Heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced by:

1. Identifying heritage assets that are considered to be at risk of irreversible harm or loss;
2. Encouraging owners to maintain their heritage assets;
3. Where necessary the Council will use its statutory powers to serve Urgent Works or Repairs Notices to arrest the decay of its listed buildings;
4. Enabling development proposals will only be supported where it is shown that alternative solutions have failed and where it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is the minimum necessary to protect the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with national advice;
5. The use of Article 4 directions where the exercise of permitted development rights would undermine the aims for the historic environment.

Appendix C – Useful Contacts and Links

Useful Contacts

For general planning enquiries:

Development Management
Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ
Tel: 01785 619337
Email: planning@staffordbc.gov.uk

For Listed Building and conservation enquiries:

Conservation
Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ
Tel: 01785 619000
Email: conservation@staffordbc.gov.uk

For building control enquiries:

Building Control
Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ
Tel: 01785 619340
Email: buildingcontrol@staffordbc.gov.uk

Useful Links

The Plan for Stafford Borough

<http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/lp>

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

National Planning Practice Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advertisements>

DCLG guidance: Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/11499/326679.pdf

Historic England: The National Heritage List:

<http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/thelist>

SCC clearance heights guidance:

<http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadmaintenance-and-cleaning/trees-grass-andvegetation/trees-and-shrubs-near-roads/ownersresponsibilities-for-trees-on-their-property>

SCC Advertising on the highway guidance:

http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/30803/Advertising-on-the-highwayguidance-Nov12.pdf

AONB Unit

AONB Management Plan: http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/Publications/Management_Plan/

Appendix D – Permissions and Consents

Planning Permission

D1 Planning permission will be required for any material changes to the external appearance to shopfronts including the installation of a new shopfront. This includes alteration of the shop window size, installation of security shutters, canopies, blinds or grilles as well as increasing the size of a fascia. General repair work and routine maintenance that does not change the external appearance of a shopfront does not require planning permission. For further advice and information please contact Stafford Borough's Planning Department.

Advertisement Consent

D2 Advertisement consent is required for the majority of advertisements and signs. Advertisement Regulations **are** complex and you are advised **to review the DCLG guidance: Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers** https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/11499/326679.pdf **in the first instance** and contact Stafford Borough's Planning Department **for any further queries**. If the shopfront or proposed advertisement is within a Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, then advertisement consent will be required for all illuminated signs and there are stricter controls on all advertisements.

Listed Building Consent

D3 As well as planning permission, Listed Buildings are afforded higher levels of protection due to their special architectural or historic interest. Listed Building Consent will be required for works that affect the special interest of a Listed Building. This includes alterations to the internal character of the building and alterations to the historic fabric. Therefore, any alteration to, or insertion of a new, shopfront in a Listed Building will require consent. In addition, consent will be required for minor works such as the removal of architectural features, the erection of new signage or changing the colour scheme. For further advice and information please contact Stafford Borough's Conservation Officer.

Conservation Areas and Buildings of Local Merit

D4 If the shop is in a Conservation Area but not Listed, you can also apply for alterations under the normal planning process. However, the Council will seek to ensure enhancements do not harm the character of the area, are sympathetic to the original

building and are of a high standard of design. Proposals should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

Buildings Regulations

- D5 Building Regulations are statutory instruments that seek to ensure that development complies with the relevant building codes. These Regulations are important to ensure that your shop satisfies its functional requirements and the building provides reasonable health and safety for shoppers and staff. This is different to Planning Permission but the application process is similar and is required for any new or replacement shopfront irrespective of structural alterations.