DESIGN SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE – APPENDIX 3

SHOP FRONT DESIGN

1. PURPOSE OF APPENDIX 3

This appendix provides shop front design guidance for all commercial properties within East Ayrshire. It should be read in conjunction with Appendix 4 of the Design guidance, which focuses specifically on advertisements. The design of the built environment can impact upon the perception of an area formed by both its residents and visitors. A coordinated, sympathetic approach to shop front design enhances the appearance of urban areas and contributes positively to the character of a place.

There are numerous examples of high quality, well-designed buildings within East Ayrshire, in which a diverse range of shop front designs can be seen – from traditional style shop fronts to more modern designs. This document aims to build on the best elements of the built environment found in East Ayrshire and to provide design guidance that will help make East Ayrshire a more attractive place in which to live and invest.

The intention of this document is not to restrict development, but to encourage and inspire high quality shop fronts that are of a high quality, in keeping with and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area in which it is proposed. The guidance is not prescriptive, but it does represent the Planning Authority's view on the aspects of shop front design that it will consider when determining planning applications, and the types of shop front design that will and will not be acceptable.

Photographic archive records can be a useful source of information when designing replacement shopfronts for traditional buildings and helping to demonstrate how the historic character can be captured in new shopfront design. Below is King Street, Kilmarnock in the 1960's.



(ABOVE) – Archived Photo of King Street, Kilmarnock. Source: http://www.threetowners.net/forum/viewtopic.php?t=11743&start=48

2. POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Purpose and key principles

Well-designed shop fronts can make a positive contribution to the character of the street and area they are located in, and play an important role in determining their success. It is therefore essential for the health of town centres and other shopping areas that a high standard of shop front design is realised and thereafter maintained.

This guidance forms parts of, and supplements the policies of the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2, and will be used by the Council in its assessment of all related planning applications. All shop front developments will require to comply with the relevant policies of the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2.

The key objectives as detailed in Local Development Plan 2 are:

- To encourage a better quality of design and enhance the character and appearance of retail frontage.
- To enhance the traditional character and appearance of individual Listed Buildings, conservation areas and prime frontages within traditional shopping areas.

All shop front planning applications must comply with:

- SS2: Overarching Policy
- DES1: Development Design

Shop front development within conservation areas and affecting listed buildings, must additionally comply with (where applicable):

- Policy HE1: Listed Buildings
- Policy HE2: Conservation Areas

This Supplementary Guidance provides a broad set of design principles, but all proposals for shop fronts will be considered on their own design merits and also in regards to how they relate to the surrounding streetscape.

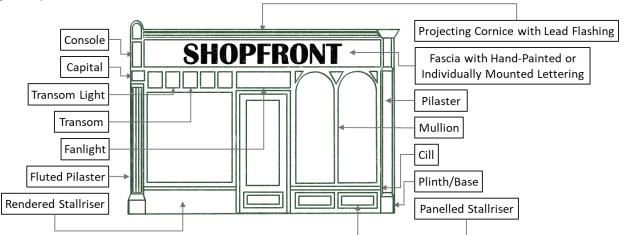
3. TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY SHOP FRONTS

3.1 Traditional Shop Fronts

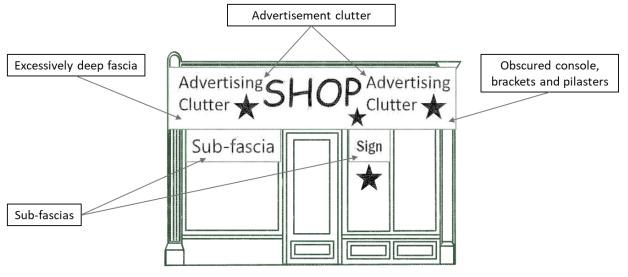
Efforts should be made to retain and conserve any existing traditional shop fronts and their architectural features. Careful restoration and repair work to retain traditional detailing, is encouraged. The Council also supports the reinstatement of traditional detailing on shop fronts where the historic design elements have been previously obscured, modified or replaced by a poor quality or unsympathetic modern design.

Alterations to any shop front that forms part of a listed building will require planning permission, and additional planning controls will also apply for shop fronts located within Conservation Areas (see 3.3).

(BELOW) – The components of a traditional shop front – a description of each can be found in the glossary.



(BELOW) – A poorly designed shop front with excessive signage and advertising clutter obscuring traditional details.



3.2 Contemporary Shop Fronts

For any new developments including shop fronts, the suitability of the proposed design will largely depend upon the location of the development and the character of the surrounding streetscape. Shop fronts should be considered as part of the overall architectural composition of the building. New shop fronts which are located on existing high streets should avoid looking like a pastiche of the pre-existing units, but should relate to the proportions and building lines of the property and their neighbours.

High quality materials, such as traditional timber or more contemporary structural glazing, should be used for all types of shop front and the colours used should be sensitive to the palette of surrounding buildings. Suitable materials will depend on the style and design of the building and on the surrounding buildings and environment. Fenestration should be included to create an open frontage, and fascia boards and other signage should be well-proportioned.

Section 4 of this document sets out more detailed guidance with regards to the various elements and features of shop fronts – although modern buildings which are not in conservation areas may not require planning permission for all types of shop front alterations, the Council will encourage good design in line with this guidance. All development proposals, including those for entirely new retail units, will be reviewed against the relevant LDP2 policies, such as DES1: Development Design, and the guidance provided in this document will be used where applicable to support the delivery of high quality shop fronts which enhance East Ayrshire's streetscapes.

3.3 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

The design of shop fronts which form part of listed buildings or are located in conservation areas is particularly important.

Listed building consent is required from the Council for any alteration that may change the appearance or character of a listed building, including restoration and renovation of shop fronts.

Changes to a shop front, including its paint colour, decorative features, windows, doors, signage, or the addition of security features, could all require planning permission if it is part of a Listed Building.

Conservation Area appraisals are available for Kilmarnock (John Finnie Street/Bank Street and Piersland Park), Cumnock, Galston, Dalmellington, Waterside, Mauchline and Catrine on the Council's website and provide further, more detailed guidance on the characteristics of these areas. Appraisals should be used to inform shop front designs.

Per 3.1, any surviving traditional shop fronts which form part of historic streets or buildings should be retained and protected as part of the built heritage. Where the appearance of a traditional shop front has already been altered in a manner unsympathetic to the character

of the Listed Building or Conservation Area, careful restoration of its former traditional features would be supported.

In cases where no evidence of a traditional shop front remains, or it is otherwise not feasible or appropriate to reinstate it, a high-quality contemporary design may be appropriate, provided that is sympathetic and of an appropriate scale to the original building. All shop fronts on listed buildings or in conservation areas should respect the character and proportions of neighbouring traditional frontages, the building itself, and its surrounding streetscape. The incorporation of traditional materials and colours is encouraged for both traditional and contemporary designs.

4. DESIGN ELEMENTS AND EXAMPLES

4.1 Fascia Board

Well-designed shop signs coupled with pleasing and appropriate shopfronts can add visual quality to an area, whereas poor design can damage its overall appearance.

The fascia board should be of a material and colour that matches or compliments the design and colours of the shopfront; it should not obscure any architectural details of the building (i.e. if the shopfront has a cornice, consoles, etc., the fascia sign should not overlap these features).

The scale and height of the fascia should be appropriate to the character, height and period of the building and in proportion with the shop front. There will be a presumption against fascia boards which appear excessively deep and/or tall (generally, a proportionate fascia should be no more than 600mm deep). Additionally, fascia boards should sit as flush as possible with the external face of the building – they should not project outwards or take the form of a box sign.

Traditional, handwritten lettering on timber fascia is encouraged, with lettering and graphics not taking up more than two-thirds of the height of the fascia.



The fascia should align with those of neighbouring properties as far as possible. Linking two different buildings with a common fascia is generally discouraged, but there are some instances where this could be appropriate; for example, where there is an existing traditional shop front which spans two or more units that have since been sub-divided internally, it would be preferable to allow the shops to share a frontage in order to keep the existing design elements of the traditional shop front. The picture below, is another example, where the shared fascia is more respectful of the architectural symmetry of the rest of the traditional building. The renovated frontage also shows transoms and mullions on the windows, a method of subdivision which is in keeping with the character of the building and area. An example of this is illustrated below.





(ABOVE) – Multiple shop fronts sharing a frontage, John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock.



(ABOVE) – The renovated shop front better suits the overall design of the building, compared to its previous appearance (see below).



(ABOVE) – The same frontage on John Finnie Street in 2010, pre-renovation. The overall aesthetic of the building is negatively impacted by the varying design and poor condition of the shop fonts below.

4.2 Sub-fascia Signage

Sub-fascia signage is any signage displayed beneath the building's original fascia level – this is discouraged as it tends to not respect the original shop front design.

Shop windows provide an opportunity for potential customers to stop and look, helping stimulate activity on a street; if a large portion of this has been taken up by advertising, this can have a detrimental effect on the vitality of shopping areas. Discrete sub-fascia signage may be acceptable in limited circumstances depending upon the total amount of advertising on the shopfront.

Internally illuminated cabinet style signs are acceptable in some cases. This type of sign is a light box with 2 fluorescent bulbs that light up the slide-in advert face. These types of signs should only take up a small proportion of the total window space. They should not be excessive and should not add to visual clutter. Decisions on these types of internally mounted illuminated signs will be taken on a case by case basis, although they are unlikely to be deemed acceptable in conservation areas or on listed buildings.

Further details on acceptable styles of illuminated signage can be found in section 4.13 of this document. No more than one illuminated fascia sign and one illuminated projecting/hanging sign will be allowed on any one frontage of a Listed Building or building in a Conservation Area.

4.3 Projecting or Hanging Signs

Projecting and hanging signs should be made from high quality materials. Properly maintained signs can promote a good image for a shop, and local area, whereas signs

which show signs of neglect can be off-putting and reduce the visual amenity of the premises/area.

Extra thought and care should be given when attaching the brackets and fixings to listed buildings or buildings in conservation areas, to ensure no damage is incurred to architectural features or original stonework. On stone fascias, where possible, fixings should be into mortar joints between stones or in existing brickwork holes. They should be high quality traditional signs rather than fixed electronically illuminated signs.

The following guidelines apply to projecting signs. Projecting signs should:

- Be fixed securely to the building
- Be carefully mounted to avoid damage to architectural features or obstruction to pedestrians or traffic
- Generally be at fascia level and should be the same height as the fascia. In the absence of a fascia, a minimum of 2.2m above ground level
- Normally be positioned at the end of a fascia
- Harmonise with the design of the shopfront and the overall design of the building

Projecting signs should not:

- Be made of a material which may quickly corrode onto or have an adverse effect on the building fabric
- Be fitted where it obscures or conflicts with existing architectural detail
- Project more than 1000mm from the building on which it is proposed

The maximum permitted area of any projecting sign is 600mm x 600mm. Projecting signs, including illuminated projecting signs should not exceed a depth of 10cm.

A proliferation of projecting or applied signs on any one particular building, which contributes to (or causes) a cluttered appearance, is discouraged. A maximum of 1 projecting sign per elevation will be permitted.

(BELOW) – Examples of Acceptable Projecting Signs





4.4 Advertising on Upper Floor Commercial Premises

Upper floor shops and businesses do not have the same advertising space as a traditional ground floor shopfront, including not having fascia to advertise the name of the business. Although this may be seen to be a disadvantage, there are many other ways that upper floor units can advertise, including internal window blinds, and vinyls.

There are various types of designs which are suitable for upper floor windows, including:

- Etched effect window graphics, which are a modern way of advertising the business name. A percentage of the window can be etched and light still gets in.
- Transparent window film, which is another good way of using the window space to advertise without blocking out sunlight.

Where vinyls are used, these should be applied on the inside of the window only.

Additional signage may be required at the ground floor entrance to access the upper floor to help to advertise the property above. This should be a small traditional plaque providing details of the business and contact information. Acceptable materials for a plaque include brass, stainless steel, stone, wood, and transparent acrylic.

No more than 20% of the total window space should be taken up with advertising, dependent on the windows or property. Multiple posters, banners or advertisements which take up the full area of the window will not be accepted. Transparent film will be allowed to take up ½ of the total window space, but this be reduced in certain locations and depending on the character of the building and area. This may not be acceptable on a listed building or a building located within a conservation area.

Discreet alternative signage may be acceptable in limited circumstances if individual lettering is affixed directly to the building frontage. Suitability will be assessed on a caseby-case basis. It will be preferable in many cases to have these sitting proud on a bar, so only two locators are directly affixed to the building, rather than each letter being affixed.

4.5 Pilasters and Stallrisers

Pilasters give a building the appearance of being well-supported, providing framing for the shop front, and visually separating it from neighbouring properties. They differ in style between buildings, with a plain or fluted design, and are variable in width. Usually, pilasters will project slightly from the shop front.

Both traditional and contemporary shop fronts should incorporate pilasters into their design and they should not be obscured by signage or other external fittings.

Stallrisers function as baseboards for the exterior of the shop front, below the windows, and should be constructed from high quality timber panels or masonry. The depth of stallrisers can vary, but should be at least 400mm, and they may include inset ventilation grilles.

Traditional stallrisers which form part of existing shop fronts should be retained and the design of renovated or new shop fronts should generally include a well-proportioned stallriser.

4.6 Windows

Replacement windows and doors of properties of a traditional design within conservation areas and listed buildings should match the original proportions, appearance, materials, and opening method. Appropriate timber sealed unit double glazing will normally be considered acceptable. Alternative materials such as uPVC will not be acceptable.

Windows should ideally be framed and subdivided vertically if appropriate, as most buildings will have a vertical emphasis.

Any method of subdivision should be in keeping with the character of the building and the shop front.

In order to maintain the sense of an active frontage, clear glazing which offers a view of shop interiors from the street (and vice versa) is encouraged, and advertising in display windows should obscure no more than 20% of the window's surface.

(BELOW) – Good examples of subdivided windows. First image Lainshaw Street, Stewarton.





4.7 Doors

Existing original doors and panelled doors on traditional shop fronts should be retained where possible.

Doors should be centrally located unless originally located elsewhere. As part of a traditional frontage.

Doors can be recessed to reinforce visual interest, provide shelter and a non-slip access ramp into shop. To comply with accessibility standards, shops should not have steps at doorways and where possible, doorways should be of an acceptable width to allow for safe, convenient and unassisted access.

The door should generally have a kick plate or bottom panel of a height to match the stallriser.

The door and window frame should usually be constructed of the same material and painted the same colour and the design of new shop doors must reflect the design of the shopfront and windows.

(BELOW) – an excellent example of a traditional shopfront entrance –shop opening central, door recess, stallriser, good use of colour, period fixtures and fittings. A kick plate would be ideal to protect the bottom of the door, however still a very well kept, inviting shopfront. John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock.



4.8 Awnings, Blinds & Canopies

Canopies were traditionally on food shops to stop food spoiling in the sun and add to the character of the building and area. Where canopies are new introductions, they are classed as shop front alterations and will require planning permission.

Canopies should be retractable. Traditional canopies are generally preferred to nonretractable 'Dutch' canopies, especially within conservation areas or listed buildings where Victorian awnings are preferred. Any advertisement on canopies will be restricted solely to the name or subtle logo of the business located within the property and should relate to the design of the shopfront. Very occasionally, a Dutch canopy can be sympathetic to a building. The example below illustrates this.



(ABOVE) - Good example of use of Dutch canopies at Café da Vinci's, Strand Street, Kilmarnock



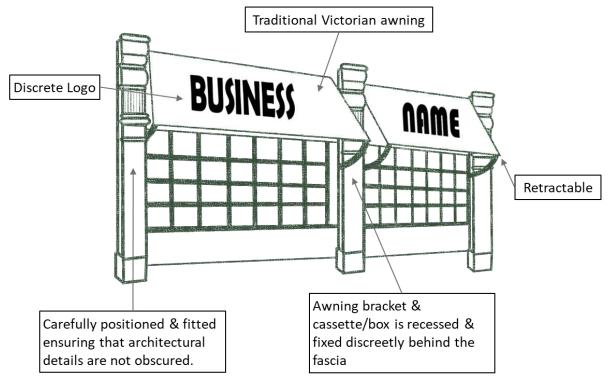
(ABOVE) - Victorian awnings at The Duke, John Finnie street, Kilmarnock

Canopies should be well designed, carefully positioned and fitted above or below the fascia. A canopy/awning should not be positioned where it will obscure columns/pilasters or other architectural details, or where it will protrude beyond the shopfront.

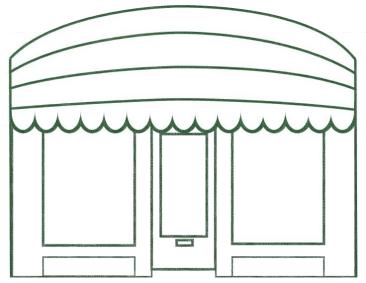
The awning bracket and cassette/box should be recessed and fixed discreetly behind the fascia; it should not protrude beyond the shopfront.

Blinds should usually cover the whole width of a shopfront and be the same width as the fascia.

Colours used for canopies, awnings and blinds should match or compliment the fascia and garish colours should be avoided.



(ABOVE) - An example of what will be accepted when installing a canopy.



(ABOVE) - An example of a Dutch style canopy which is not encouraged as they conceal the fascia

and mask a large degree of the shopfront.

4.9 Materials

Use materials which respect those of the original building and, where suitable, neighbouring buildings.

High quality, traditional materials are encouraged; timber is an attractive and cost-effective material to use on both traditional and contemporary shop fronts. The use of aluminium and stainless steel, including powder coated, is also acceptable including on listed or traditional buildings and in conservation areas if the form and dimension is sensitive to the existing building.

Avoid the use of low-quality materials for the fascia board and signage. Acrylic, uPVC and other plastics are discouraged but may be acceptable in limited circumstances where they are of a high-quality finish, appropriate to the shopfront.



(BELOW) – Example of good modern shop front design, using quality materials and incorporating the basic principles. Main Street, Stewarton.

4.10 Colour

Shopfronts should be painted in appropriate colours that add to the character of the area and are consistent with the period of the property and the street. Take into consideration the colours of adjacent and neighbouring shopfronts, as these should complement each other. Muted primary colours are the most appropriate background colours for shop fronts on historic buildings and within conservation areas. The range of colours used should blend into the predominant palette of the surrounding townscape. Strong, bright colours can be used, but should be carefully considered and only applied in limited areas. The selection of colour should be closely related to the architectural styles and character of the Conservation Area. Garish colours are discouraged on both traditional and contemporary shop fronts.

(BELOW) - Example of effective use of a bright colour from a traditional palate of colours. John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock.



(BELOW) - Example of effective, sensitive, use of contrasting colours. Bank Street, Kilmarnock.



(BELOW) – The picture below shows inappropriate use of colour for fascia signage, as well as the fascia being excessively deep. These two attributes coupled with steel security roller shutters result in a poor shopfront.

Excessively deep fascia	BAD DESIGN	Garish colour
		Solid security shutters

Solid security roller shutters like the example above are also discouraged as they have a detrimental effect upon the character and amenity of an area (see 4.12, below).

4.11 Security

Use the least visually intrusive measures of security, which meet the needs of the shopfront. Scissor gates, or open bonded shutters are preferable.

In Conservation Areas, it is a requirement to use open lattice, or brick bond type of internal security shutters rather than solid external roller shutters.

Use security shutters which do not obscure window displays.

The use of internal lattice shutters and re-enforced glass is encouraged.

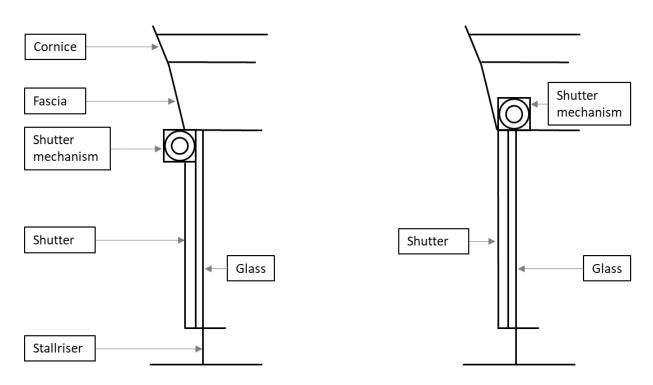
Try to provide practical and attractive alternatives to solid roller shutters.

Outer storm doors, window shutters and demountable mesh grilles are encouraged and can be incorporated into the design of the shopfront.

Carefully position external alarm boxes to avoid obscuring architectural details and paint to blend into the background.

In cases where roller shutters are used, shutter boxes should be fully recessed, flush with the frontage. Solid roller shutters which obscure window displays are strongly discouraged – at night time, these can make an area feel abandoned and unsafe.

Bad practice	Good practice
Projecting shutter box	Recessed shutter box behind fascia



(BELOW) – Examples of alternative security measures – internal lattice shutters & external shutters that allow natural light into the shop.



Source: http://www.lbsgroup.co.uk/retail-2/

4.12 Lighting

Position lighting is best used internally to illuminate the goods for sale and to allow light to spill out onto the street, making an area feel safer after dark.

Lighting proposals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Internally lit individual letters or unobtrusive light fittings of high-quality design will be considered.

Allow for one illuminated fascia sign and one illuminated projecting sign.

Don'ts

Illuminated box signs, strip lighting or multiple swan neck lights should be avoided. The positioning of illuminated signs should not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.



Note: Applications which include the use of swan neck lighting will be decided on a caseby-case basis. The proliferation of multiple lights on a single shopfront can clutter it. The number of lights should be kept to the minimum necessary.

There should be no more than one illuminated fascia sign and one projecting sign on each fascia of a building. Any additional illuminated signs should be located in a position, whereby, when operative, they will not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.

Illuminated box signs, strip lighting and swan neck lighting are not encouraged. There are many alternative lighting features for fascia signage which are more complimentary and sympathetic to the surrounding environment including halo illumination.

Halo illumination creates a soft glow of light around a built-up metal or acrylic letter as LEDs are positioned to shine out from the reverse of the letter. It is often selected for signage with a shallow depth.

(BELOW) - An example of halo illumination



The use of an illuminated medical sign as a deemed sign for medical supply establishments will be accepted.

Strip lighting will be acceptable if kept small, narrow and concealed within a projecting cornice. It should be unobtrusive. Strip lighting which is unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the area will not be accepted.

4.13 Air Conditioning Units

Locate air conditioning units out of public view, on the rear/side elevation of the building, or concealed on a roof or in a back yard.

Carefully consider the impact on amenity of neighbouring properties, including residential uses, and ensure that the unit is positioned somewhere that it will not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.

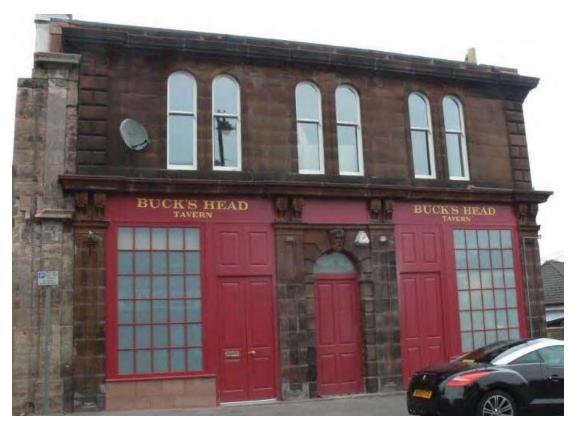
5. MORE EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

(BELOW, LEFT)- Bucks Head pub in Galston before the new shop front was designed and fitted. Note the deep facia boards, and letters on signage have fallen off over the years and that have not been replaced. The building itself had suffered from long-term neglect and was poorly maintained. Generally, it is not very inviting for customers and passers-by.

(BELOW, RIGHT) – Archived photo of the Bucks Head.



(BELOW) – Newly fitted shop frontage carried out under the Galston CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme). The developers have replicated the original design as seen in the above archived photo. The result is a sympathetic shop front which compliments the entire building. Good quality materials have been used, and the design incorporates traditional sign-written lettering, subdivided windows, and a new door in the centre of the building, in keeping with its original design. The colour also compliments the building and this results in a visual improvement in contrast to what the front of the building was like before renovation.



(BELOW) – Pharmacy in Galston pictured in 2010, before renovation. There is little in the way of traditional details and the signage is in need of maintenance.



(BELOW) – Pharmacy in Galston pictured in 2022, after renovation. Traditional design details have been restored, along with hand-painted signage and a better use of colour.



(BELOW) – Hanging baskets, Lainshaw Street, Stewarton.



Good quality cornice, which has a protective layer of lead for weather proofing, Bank Street, Kilmarnock.



Hanging baskets can add colour to the shopfront.

(BELOW) – An example of traditional floor detail of door recess which can enhance the character of the shop, Lainshaw Street, Stewarton.



6. GLOSSARY

Fascia Board – The fascia board is the horizontal board below the cornice on which lettering is normally located advertising the business.

Cornice - The top section of the fascia which marks a division between the shop and the building above. It may be decorated or plain. Usually of timber or stone, it may have a protective layer of lead for weather-proofing.

Console Bracket - A decorative feature used to mark the determination of one shop and beginning of another. Although purely decorative they often add character to an otherwise plain shop front and should be retained or reinstated if appropriate.

Columns & Pilasters - An applied decorative feature in the form of a column, shaft and base which projects slightly from the wall but is generally not structural in nature. May be decorative or plain. Columns are either round or half round and are plain or fluted, whilst pilasters are flat and panelled or fluted.

Stallrisers - The vertical built up area between the window sill and ground level which may be decorated or plain. It allows for ventilation into the shop and provides the glazed area with protection and security. This can be constructed of stone, brick, render or panelled timber. Any surviving stallrisers should be retained and restored. If lost or altered, they should be reinstated to the original height and materials.

Plinth – Base of a pilaster which may be constructed of timber or stone.

Air Conditioning Units – A system for controlling the humidity, ventilation, and temperature in a building, typically to maintain a cool atmosphere in warm conditions.

Blind/Canopy – A protective and decorative cover usually made of canvas or plastic for above a shopfront. They provide a basic level of weather protection against sunlight and rainfall for customers to continue browsing the window display.

Retractable Awning/Canopy – A blind or canopy attached to a frame which allows it to be extended out or rolled tight back against the building façade.

7. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

It is important that shop and property owners obtain the necessary planning consent to carry out works to shopfronts. Planning permission is required for any changes to the external appearance of a shop front which materially affects its external appearance as well as for replacement shopfronts. Shop and property owners should also be aware if the shop is listed, alterations and new signage might require Listed Building consent.

7.1 Where to get pre-planning application advice

If you would like further advice on shopfront improvement in East Ayrshire, including advice on shopfront proposals and planning permission, then please get in touch with the development management team on:

Planning applications · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Phone Number - 01563 576790

Email – submittoplanning@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Pre-application advice is available, subject to a fee and can be sought in advance of submission of any planning application. This is particularly important for alterations to listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas. Please note that for non-householder applications, this service is chargeable. Information can be found a <u>Planning pre-application advice · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u>t:

For advice on listed Buildings and conservation Areas, and limited sources of grant aid, please contact the Development Planning and Regeneration team at: localdevelopmentplans@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

For advice on Building Regulation Approval and access for all: <u>Building standards · East</u> <u>Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u>

Planning applications for alterations to shopfronts should be made to East Ayrshire Council – the local planning authority.

You can apply via the eplanning portal at: <u>http://www.eplanning.scot/</u>

Further Information:

Historic Environment Scotland also provide guidance on traditional shopfronts: <u>Managing</u> <u>Change in the Historic Environment: Shopfronts and Signs</u>