



Rother District Council

CONSERVATION + DESIGN ADVICE

Bexhill-On-Sea Town Centre Conservation Area: Shopfronts + Signage Guidance





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Bexhill–On–Sea Conservation Area: Shopfronts + Signage

Adopted by Rother District Council
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Contents

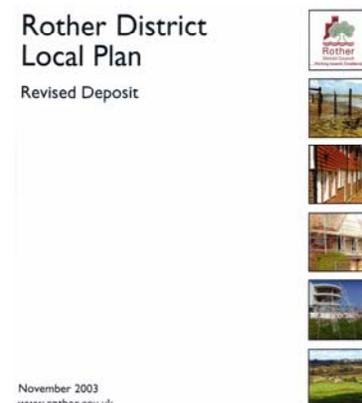
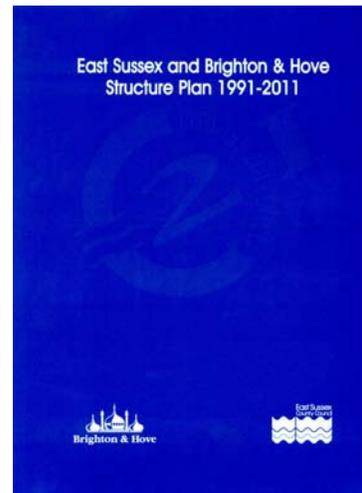
- 1 Introduction
- 2 Policy background
- 3 Bexhill Heritage & Economic Regeneration Scheme
- 4 The historical development of Bexhill's shopfronts
- 5 The components of an historic shopfront
- 6 The design of new shopfronts
- 7 **Constructional details**
 - Fascia and cornice
 - Console brackets
 - Pilasters
 - Mullions
 - Stallrisers and cills
 - Transom lights
- 8 **Lobby Entrances**
- 9 **Blinds and canopies**
- 10 **Materials and colour**
- 11 **Security**
- 12 **Advertisements and Signage**
 - Fascia signs
 - Hanging signs
 - Alternative forms of advertisement
 - Materials
 - Lettering
 - Corporate Identity
- 13 **Cash Machines**
- 14 **Illumination**
- 15 **Disabled Access**
- 16 **Shopfronts and Signage – Do's and Don'ts**
- 16 **PLANNING PERMISSION, LISTED BUILDING CONSENT & EXPRESS CONSENT FOR WORKS TO SHOPFRONTS, ADVERTISEMENTS & SIGNAGE**
- 17 **Map of Bexhill Town Centre Conservation Area**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Shopfronts and advertisements form an integral part of every commercial street throughout the country. They also play an important role in helping to create an attractive retail environment and as such make a major contribution to economic vitality. Traditional shopfronts are important because they make a very positive contribution to the character and appearance of historic town or village centres. Where shops or other commercial premises lie within conservation areas or other places of historic significance, it is particularly vital that shopfronts, signage and advertisements are well designed and detailed, and relate to their surroundings.
- 1.2 Following a successful Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme in Bexhill-on-Sea, within which a substantial amount of grant funding was directed to the repair and reinstatement of historic shopfronts and associated architectural features, Rother District Council has a continuing commitment to ensuring a high quality town centre environment to boost the attractiveness of the town and fulfil economic regeneration objectives. This guidance has been developed as part of the management proposals for the Bexhill-on-Sea Conservation Area, to ensure that recent successes of restoring streetscape and architectural integrity in the town, and re-establishing good practice in shopfront design, are built on.
- 1.3 This guidance describes how traditional shopfronts are constructed and detailed; the use of materials and colour; and how modern problems, such as the need for security and lighting, can be overcome with careful specification. It will provide developers, retailers, shopfitters and their agents with positive guidance on how to design new shopfronts and advertisements within the Conservation Area, or to repair or reinstate an original shopfront, to ensure that surviving historic designs, fabric and detailing are retained where practicable. The document also includes a “Do’s and Don’ts” checklist for shopfront and advertisement design, however, this should be read in conjunction with the document as a whole.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this guidance, “shopfronts” should be read as a generic term of reference to the built frontage of all commercial uses including shops, building societies, banks, cafes and restaurants.

2 POLICY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This guidance is based upon the policies and guidance in a number of documents, which generally seek to ensure that, in the granting of any planning permissions or advertisement consents, the special character and appearance of the area will be maintained.
- 2.2 Following the designation in 1992 of Bexhill-on-Sea as a Conservation Area, in 2003 the Council adopted the Bexhill Town Centre Conservation Appraisal which analyses the character of the town and identifies areas for improvement.
- 2.3 The East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan (adopted December 1999) outlines the County's aims in Chapter 9 – The Environment, and highlights the importance of protection of the setting of Conservation Areas and historic towns. The Plan also contains policy EN1, which relates to design in the environment, and policy EN23, which relates specifically to development affecting sites and features of historical importance, including Conservation Areas.
- 2.4 The Rother District Local Plan (revised deposit draft) recognises that the pattern, form and appearance, and use of buildings contribute to the unique sense of place and cultural identity. It advises that good design should respect the character of its setting and can make a positive contribution to reinforcing local distinctiveness. Where an area has a well-defined and distinctive character, particular care should be taken to maintain it. The Plan also contains policy GD1 of which section (viii) relates to development affecting Conservation Areas. In relation to Bexhill-on-Sea specifically, the Plan recognises that the underlying environmental quality of the town is high, and that the buildings provide an unusually complete early Edwardian townscape. The Plan contains policy BX1 of which section (iv) relates to the requirement for development in Bexhill to reflect its unique character and cultural assets.
- 2.5 Meanwhile, central Government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance note 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment - advises that wherever shopfronts of merit, or features of value, survive, they should be retained, and that new shopfronts should be designed in sympathy with the rest of the elevation, and gives specific advice on new design and detailing.



3.0 BEXHILL HERITAGE & ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME

3. The seaside resort town of Bexhill-On-Sea, to the south of the historic settlement of Bexhill, was largely constructed within a 20 year period at the turn of the 19th century by the 7th Earl De La Warr and his son, Viscount Cantelupe. The majority of the main shopping terraces; Devonshire Road, Western Road, St Leonards Road and Sackville Road, were constructed between 1895 and 1905, and together form a substantial part of the town's architectural character.

A number of shopfronts within the town centre have retained a high degree of original Victorian and Edwardian fabric and detail, though in some instances this is more visually obvious than others.

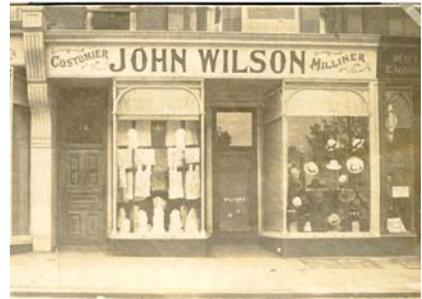
However, shopfronts in Bexhill have suffered during the twentieth century as throughout the country. Changes in design trends and retail habits have led to the removal of many historic shopfronts and their replacement with bland, poor quality modern versions, often not responding to the wider context of the building as a whole, or the rhythm of the streetscene, and often of lightweight material with stuck-on box fascia boards obscuring original details. Meanwhile, declining economic prosperity in the town and high labour costs has resulted in a lack of ongoing maintenance of shopfronts, and the consequential fall into disrepair of historic stallrisers, pilasters and console brackets in particular.

In 2002 Rother District Council was successful in its bid for a grant programme under the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) – a joint funding initiative between Local Authorities and English Heritage for the repair and improvement of buildings and spaces in Conservation Areas - for the enhancement of the commercial areas in Bexhill town centre, where detrimental features included vacant shops, lost architectural features, altered or modern shopfronts, and a lack of building repair.

HERS grants were awarded to redress these problems by providing funding for reinstatement and repair works for architectural features on shopfronts, and for new replacement and shopfront works, in order to improve the attractiveness of both the individual grant recipient shops themselves, and the character and aesthetic appeal of the townscape as a whole.



Publicity poster for Sackville Road c1914



24, Sackville Road circa 1910



24, Sackville Road today retaining much of its historic form and detail



52, St Leonard's Road before (above) and after (below) HERS assisted repairs and shopfront reinstatement works



4.0 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BEXHILL'S SHOPFRONTS

4.1 The shopfronts in the main planned shopping terraces of Bexhill-On-Sea originated within a very short period of time at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. Shopfront design at this time often followed architectural pattern books, which provided examples of designs together with drawings showing a range of architectural details which could be combined to create a variety of frontages.



Devonshire Road c1900

4.2 Shops of this period benefited from the revolution of shopfront design some half a century earlier, when, with the lifting of excise duty of glass and the introduction of plate glass in the early 19th century, the use of large areas of glass became fashionable. This was complemented by changing technologies enabling the mass-production of timber elements. Most shopfronts at this time were built from softwood, and painted, but for more prestigious shops, stained or polished hardwoods, such as teak, oak, walnut or mahogany, were chosen. More elaborate shopfronts, with ornate pilasters and console brackets, modillion cornicing and heavily moulded fascias, became common. However, at the end of the 19th century there was a return to more modest designs, with delicate moulded mullions and tiled stallrisers. Many of these shopfronts are notable for their simple, almost austere details and for the use of black and white tiling in the recessed entrance hallways. A number of examples of shopfronts of these periods remain in Bexhill today.



historic Bexhill shopfront

4.3 Shopfronts in the later part of the 20th century included a period of poorly detailed, plate glass frontages in the 1960s and 1970s, while modern shopping practices have in some instances led to the removal of whole shopfronts to provide larger unified internal spaces, resulting in blank street-frontages which lack visual interest and vitality.



historic lobby tiling

4.4 Further erosion of the character of the commercial street-frontages and historic shopfronts has been caused by unsympathetic alterations including the introduction of over-deep, stuck-on fascias, internally illuminated signage, the incremental loss of historic details such as moulded stallrisers, decorative tiling, original mullions and transoms, and by the use of corporate signage and colours which do not respond well to the individual character of the building or its setting.



inappropriately designed modern shopfronts, now replaced under the HERS programme

5 THE COMPONENTS OF AN HISTORIC SHOPFRONT.

5.1 The various architectural elements of a traditional shopfront provide visual interest and enhance the appearance and vitality of shopping areas. Such elements provide a formal framework, giving structure and rhythm to the street-scene, while within this framework, variations in design at a detailed level add individual interest to shopfronts.

5.2 Historic shopfronts were based on the legacy of Georgian architecture, using details and proportions based on classical Greek temple architecture. The shop window was usually framed by recessed pilasters or columns supporting an entablature, comprising a cornice, fascia and architrave. These elements were exploited in the late Victorian period of shop-building to create more exuberant details including lavish over-sized console brackets, with very heavily moulded fascias and cornicing. The front door was usually recessed in a lobby to allow greater window area for display of goods. This arrangement still forms the basis for traditional shopfront design today.

5.3 The illustration below shows the basic components of a traditional shopfront. These comprise a narrow fascia, often surmounted by a moulded cornice and contained within another moulded architrave; side pilasters which support the fascia using corbels or console brackets; mullions and transoms, which divide the glass into sections; and a stallriser, which can be faced with moulded timber, tiles or another material such as brick or render.

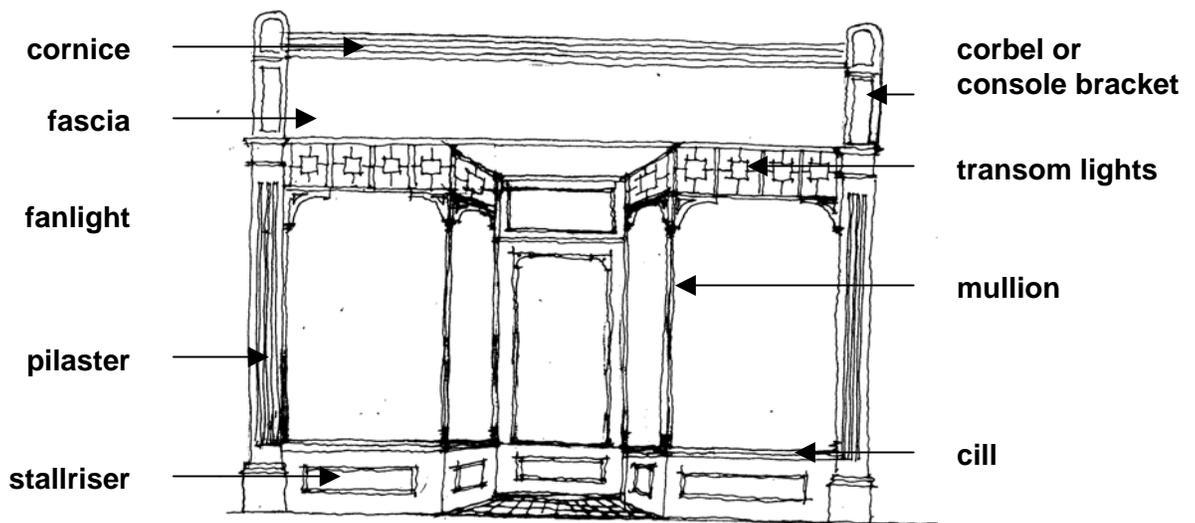


historic shopfronts in the town centre



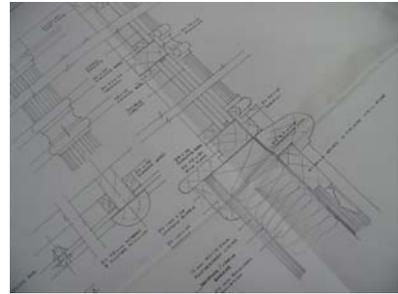
Historic detailing still surviving today

Components of a Traditional Shopfront



6 THE DESIGN OF NEW SHOPFRONTS

6.1 A good quality new shopfront needs to be carefully detailed and constructed. It is therefore advisable to employ a knowledgeable architect or surveyor, who can produce detailed drawings for the joinery workshop, who will in turn provide working drawings, often with full size sections through components such as mouldings and glazing bars.



joinery details for a new shopfront

6.2 Historic shopfronts retaining a reasonable amount of original fabric or detailing should always be retained and carefully restored rather than demolished and replaced. Historic details may often be concealed below modern accretions such as new, deep fascias or plywood plinths. New work can often be carefully incorporated into existing fabric and details to recreate the original design.



Historic fascia hidden under modern boarding

6.3 Any new shopfront within the Conservation Area must relate well to the building in which it is located and to its overall setting in the street scene. The new shopfront must reflect prevailing historic precedents at all levels of detail, including proportion, elevational design, relationship to upper storeys, fascia height and width, mullion treatment, materials, and colour. The robust construction of a traditional shopfront provides structural strength which can visually and literally support the mass of historic upper floors above. This can be difficult to achieve using modern lightweight detailing.



traditional shopfront relates well to whole building

6.4 Where a new shopfront is required to two adjoining but architecturally distinct buildings, the two shopfronts should be treated as separate, complementary elements, with dividing pilasters and console brackets, rather than as a single entity, in order to maintain the visual integrity and legibility of the individual buildings, and to reinforce the strong vertical rhythm of the street. This is the traditional treatment for separate shop frontages. However, matching shopfronts might be appropriate in a formal terrace where the individual buildings conform to a single design.

6.5 In certain circumstances, a completely modern shopfront might be acceptable within the Conservation Area. High quality modern shop-front design which respects principles of elevational proportion, rhythm and mass, can again greatly contribute to the visual character and vitality of the street scene. However, such work must not require any new structural openings or result in the loss of the building's architectural or historic interest.



matching shopfronts; each relates well to the adjoining property but retains its own identity.

7 CONSTRUCTIONAL DETAILS

7.1 New shopfronts should generally be composed of the elements identified in Section 5.3. The principal elements are a cornice, fascia, consoles or brackets, pilasters, mullions, deep cill and a stallriser.

Fascia and cornice

7.2 Traditional fascias are contained within the width formed by the pilasters or console brackets, and are usually set at an angle to the main shopfront, facing downwards for better visual impact. They are often finished with a deep moulded cornice to the top, weathered traditionally by a lead flashing. This helps to throw the rain off the top of the fascia and provides a visual termination to the shopfront. Cornices are often highly moulded in Edwardian designs, or decorative dentil or modillion courses. Sometimes, a traditional fabric roller blind is located within the fascia (see section 8: 'Blinds & Canopies').

7.3 New fascias should follow this historic precedent and be in proportion to the shopfront and the building in which the shopfront is set. They should not obscure, either in part or totally, existing features of interest such as windows, string courses, cornices, or friezes.

7.4 The design of the new fascia should also be appropriate to the age and architectural detailing of the building. Modern applied box fascias which project from the face of the building and the addition of new fascias over the top of an existing fascia represent a clumsy and bulky addition which sits uncomfortably on the shopfront, often obscuring existing historical detail, particularly the visual relief of the console brackets and cornice, and therefore will not be accepted within the Conservation Area.

7.5 The depth of a fascia should not be increased to cover internal features such as a modern suspended ceiling – this can be achieved by either stepping the new ceiling back or else by the inclusion of an obscured glazed transom light.

Console Brackets

7.6 Console Brackets were commonly used in Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts to surmount the pilasters and give a cantilevered support to the fascia above. Their often ornate design gives visual closure to the fascia and strong articulation to the streetscene, as well as being of aesthetic interest in their own right.



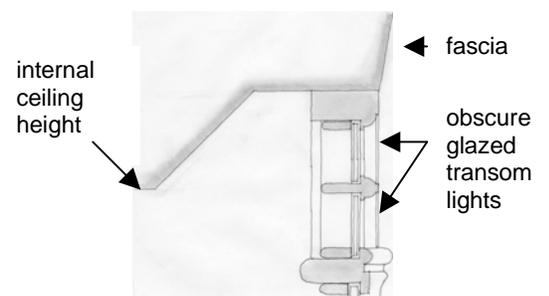
bulky projecting box fascias obscure detail



traditional fascia panel, historic angled fascia



historic blind incorporated in fascia



section detail of obscured transom light



elaborate Edwardian console brackets

Pilasters

- 7.7 The pilasters form the two enclosing edges of a traditional shopfront and provide visual closure. Their detailing varies but for timber shopfronts they are typically decorated with reeded mouldings or elegant recessed panels.
- 7.8 Pilasters can also be provided in a variety of other materials including marble, stone, render (often banded or otherwise incised to create the appearance of ashlar stonework), and brick.



decorated historic pilasters

Mullions

- 7.9 Mullions are usually moulded and can be composed from two sections to turn corners. Increasingly, they need to be fairly robust to provide sufficient support to plate, toughened or laminated glass, but this can be achieved by careful detailing.



carved historic mullions

Stallrisers and cills

- 7.10 The stallriser protects the base of the glass window from damage as well as raising the internal display to a convenient level.
- 7.11 Stallrisers in Edwardian shopfronts were typically between 300 and 800mm high, and usually made from either panelled timber or rendered stonework. Applying modern mouldings to a flat marine plywood base does not satisfactorily replicate the intricacy of traditional timber details, nor does it provide sufficient visual weight, and is not usually acceptable.
- 7.12 In late 19th and early 20th century shopfronts, glazed tiles were often used for stallrisers too, and a number of good historic examples survive in the town centre. These should be retained and carefully repaired in-situ. Tiled stallrisers remain an appropriate treatment for buildings of this period.
- 7.13 From the mid-19th century cills became far more rounded and generously sized. Cills on new shopfronts should be slightly sloping, with a concealed drip, so that any rain water is thrown off. Sometimes the inclusion of additional mouldings is appropriate, to provide better visual relief.



historic stallrisers; glazed tiles and timber



ornate historic cill details

Transom lights

- 7.14 High level glazing, originally for ventilation, and often in ornate patterns or featuring coloured glass, is a traditional characteristic of Edwardian shopfronts and new shopfront designs should incorporate such features.



examples of transom light glazing

8 LOBBY ENTRANCES

8.1 Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts usually had deep recessed entrance lobbies, to allow greater window display area for goods, leading to a glazed shop door, while the panelled timber entrance door to the properties in the upper stories of the building would be recessed too. These recesses provide strong visual element in the streetscene, and create an important characteristic of the town centre, and new shopfronts should normally retain and incorporate this feature.



deep recessed entrance lobbies

8.2 The floors of these entrance lobbies were tiled with unglazed geometric tiles, in earlier examples in classic buff and terracotta colours and later, and more commonly, with diamond set black and white patterns. The tiles were laid close-butted, with an extremely narrow line of grout between. Examples of historic tiling should be retained in-situ, and new shopfronts should incorporate such traditional details.



9 BLINDS AND CANOPIES

9.1 Traditional roller sun blinds have a practical purpose in that they provide protection from the sun to the displays inside the shop as well as shelter for shoppers. Such blinds can be successfully integrated into a traditional shopfront if carefully detailed. They are traditionally stored in a box located on the top of the fascia, or else below the fascia in a recessed which fits flush with it, and operate with iron arms rather than modern aluminium concertinas. The blinds should be made from canvas, rather than glossy plastic materials which would sit uncomfortably with the materiality and character of shopfronts and historic buildings in the Conservation Area.



a variety of historic tiled lobbies in the town centre today

9.2 Dutch blinds or balloon canopies, which concertina out from the façade, are a modern feature largely employed to increase advertising space. They tend to introduce a dominant shape which is out of character with the street and obscure the fascia. They are also usually constructed from modern plastic materials. Such blinds will not usually be acceptable within the Conservation Area.



traditional roller blind housed in the fascia

9.3 Shading can alternatively be provided by the use of tinted glass or an applied film to the shop window, or by natural shading on shops which face north or are over-shadowed by other buildings.



roller blinds along Devonshire Road, c1900

10 MATERIALS AND COLOUR

- 10.1 Historic shopfronts were usually constructed from softwood and painted. Occasionally, a hardwood might have been used which would be finished with a glossy varnish.
- 10.2 Modern materials, such as acrylic sheeting, perspex, aluminium or plastic, will usually have a shiny reflective surface which is not an appropriate finish for historic buildings in the Conservation Area.
- 10.3 The most appropriate colours for the 19th century shopfronts of Bexhill are rich dark colours such as dark green, navy blue, royal blue, dark red and black. Some schemes, either as a result of the specific colour or area or quantity of colour proposed, may appear bright and garish in conjunction with the overall elevation of the building on which they are proposed, and will be unacceptable on buildings within the Conservation Area.



good modern shopfronts constructed in timber with traditional paint colours



11 SECURITY

- 11.1 Solid external roller shutters, which often stretch across the whole property, obscure the shopfront and have a deadening effect on the shopping street and are therefore usually unacceptable within the Conservation Area.
- 11.2 The most appropriate security measure for shops within the Conservation Area is the use of an internal lattice shutter, suspended just inside the shopfront window. These have the advantage of allowing views into the shop window and possibly the shop beyond, providing a much more attractive street frontage and also encouraging “window shopping” after hours, thereby contributing positively to the economic vitality of the area.
- 11.3 Laminated glass is another security measure which is easily incorporated into a new traditional shopfront. The heavier glasses can still be used with traditional shopfront design and quite delicate glazing bars can be achieved.
- 11.4 The positioning of an alarm box should be considered during the design of a new shopfront. It should be sited carefully so as not to obscure or damage architectural features. If the box is placed on the shopfront itself, aesthetically the best position is usually on the corner of the fascia itself.



internal lattice shutters



sensitively sited burglar alarm box

12 ADVERTISEMENTS AND SIGNAGE

12.1 Advertising and by definition, signage, can make a significant contribution to the appearance of the environment. Within the Conservation Area it is therefore especially important that all new advertisements and signage are carefully designed, to appropriate scale and detail, and use sympathetic materials and colours.

12.2 Fascia signs

12.2.1 Shop signs, i.e. fascia signs are the most common form of advertisement. These should be designed as an integral part of the building and their height, size, design and materials must relate to their setting. Usually, the name of the shop will be on the fascia and the use of traditional sign writing in the form of painted lettering, in a variety of styles to suit the building and the shop function, will be encouraged.

12.2.2 The information on the painted sign should state only the name or trade of the shop, restaurant or business, and not be cluttered with extraneous advertisements or duplication of information. Visual clutter, created by a multiplicity of signs and other forms of advertising, will be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area and should be avoided.

12.2.3 Generally, all signage should be kept at or below fascia level but occasionally, where the upper floor is in a separate commercial use, additional signage might be acceptable provided it does not unduly clutter or dominate the front elevation of the building.

12.3 Hanging signs

12.3.1 Hanging signs, made from timber and painted, are a traditional feature in some historic High Streets but they need to be carefully designed so that they relate, in size, shape and siting, to the building on which they are located.

12.3.2 Modern projecting box signs, illuminated or not, sit uncomfortably as clutter on shopfronts, and disrupt the rhythm of the streetscene in historic areas. They are therefore unacceptable within the Conservation Area.



disproportionately sized fascia signs which relate poorly to the elevation of the buildings



Appropriately proportioned fascia signs for these specific buildings



good, simple information, clearly displayed



poorly positioned and sometimes extraneous signage clutters historic elevations



good slender timber hanging signs

12.4 Alternative forms of advertisement

12.4.1 In some circumstances, more imaginative forms of advertising can be appropriate, including names picked out in lobby or forecourt tiling, or etched lettering on glass, both of which are appropriate for the Victorian and Edwardian period.



ingenious alternative forms of advertising

12.5 Materials

12.5.1 Within the Conservation Area, matt materials, usually painted timber, should be used for shop fascia signs or hanging signs. Shiny metal or plastic finishes will not be acceptable.

12.6 Lettering

12.6.1 Lettering on fascia signs within the Conservation Area should be restrained, simple, and appropriately sized for the elevation and fascia on which it sits. It should follow traditional form and be hand painted or individually fixed lettering. Bulky block lettering will clutter the shopfront and be disproportionate to its scale, and will therefore not be acceptable. Hand painted lettering, with dark colours enlivened by the use of gilding, or the use of shading or blocking to emphasise individual letters, are often successful.



printed and shaded signwriting, and individually fixed lettering

12.7 Corporate identity

12.7.1 Where the standard signage and logo used by shops, financial institutions and restaurants to promote a corporate identity are considered to be out of character with the particular location, these will need to be adapted in accordance with the guidance contained in this document in order to successfully respond to the individual architectural character of the building and the street.



successful non-standard corporate signage

13 CASH MACHINES

13.1 The modern design and external lighting of cash machines is often not sympathetic to the character of Conservation Areas or historic shopfronts, and, as such, should be located in either internal lobbies, or on less sensitive elevations, to reduce their impact on the street scene. Where their siting on a main elevation is unavoidable, they should be of compact and simple design, with associated advertising kept to a minimum, and should not disrupt the architectural character of the building



unobtrusive cash machine with minimum impact on building's character

14 ILLUMINATION

14.1 Within the Bexhill-On-Sea Conservation Area, some night-time illumination of shops and other commercial premises is desirable to promote a vibrant and safe night-time economy. However, consideration must be given to the amenity of any residential areas. Internal lighting on a shop display may be an alternative to external illumination.



vibrant, lit shopping street

14.2 Where external illumination is allowed, it should be restrained in its quantity and brightness and should be cleverly designed and discretely located on the building. The provision of lighting by projecting swan necks, spotlights and troughs can result in a cluttered appearance which obscures historic detailing and adversely affects the character of the historic shop-front. Likewise, the use of internally lit individual box letters is unlikely to be achieved without detrimental effect to the character of the Conservation Area, due to their bulky appearance. Such schemes are unlikely to be granted permission. Alternatives include the design of cornices on new fascias to incorporate the hidden fixtures of small spotlights or downlighters, and, in certain cases, the use of halo illumination, where fret-cut lettering is raised from the fascia with the light source concealed behind the letters.



internal shop illumination

14.3 The illumination of hanging signs within the Conservation Area will normally only be permitted where it relates to a late opening premises such as a public house, restaurant, chemist or similar.



Successful forms of lighting incorporated into historic shopfront types

15 DISABLED ACCESS

15.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places a duty on owners and tenants of commercial premises to take reasonable steps to prevent disabled persons from being substantially disadvantaged as a user of such premises. Within a Conservation Area, aesthetic and historical considerations may be relevant in determining what constitutes such reasonable provision. Ultimately, the degree to which such issues, and others, are relevant, will be determined in the courts. However, it is unlikely that planning permission will be granted for any physical alterations to a building that neither preserve nor enhance the character of the Conservation Area. Instead, more imaginative and flexible solutions, including call buttons with dedicated staff, internal platform lifts and appropriate signage and labelling should be considered.



call button in a historic shopfront (left) and level entrance threshold in a new shopfront (right)

16 Shopfronts & Signage: Do's and Don'ts

16.1 Shopfronts

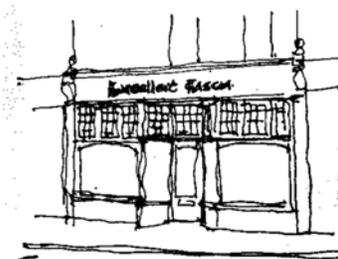


Do include stallrisers, pilasters and console brackets, glazing broken up with moulded timbers, and recessed doorways.



Don't remove or obscure historic detail, install large plate-glass windows or use plastic or metal materials.

16.2 Fascia Boards



Do span the fascia between console brackets, sit it under the cornice, and construct from timber.



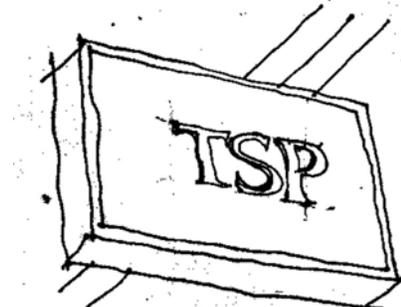
Don't over-size the fascia, or extend above the cornice line. Don't construct fascia of chunky depth, nor sit fascia proud of console brackets.

16.3 Hanging Signs



Do hang slim, appropriately-sized signs from existing or new brackets.

Do rationalise signage and lettering, and use discreet illumination.



Don't construct bulky, projecting box signs.

Don't clutter shopfront with a multitude of advertisements and signs, bulky blinds, lighting fittings, and other paraphernalia.

16 PLANNING PERMISSION, LISTED BUILDING CONSENT & EXPRESS CONSENT FOR WORKS TO SHOPFRONTS, ADVERTISEMENTS & SIGNAGE

16.1 Alterations and improvements to shopfronts will normally require Planning Permission. Further consents might also be required.

Planning Permission

16.2 Planning Permission will be required for any works which materially affect the external appearance of a shop. This could include the demolition, removal or alteration of the glazing, the fascia, stall risers, the doors or their position, changing facing materials or installing blinds or shutters.

Listed Building Consent

16.3 Any alteration affecting the character or appearance of a listed building as a building of special architectural or historic interest requires a separate application for Listed Building Consent. This can include such work as re-painting a shopfront in a different colour, installing a security alarm or extractor fan, altering the shop interior, installing shutters, blinds and advertisements, or the fixing or displaying of new signage, lettering and advertisements.

Advertisements – Express Consent

16.4 Under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (Amended 1994), many advertisements and signs require express consent from the Council before they can be lawfully displayed.

16.5 There are exceptions in that certain types of advertisements may be displayed under ‘deemed consent’ without the need to apply for express consent. However, the Local Planning Authority does have powers to serve a discontinuance notice requiring the removal of a sign displayed under deemed consent where it considers the sign is inappropriate for reasons of amenity (including design) or highway safety.

16.6 Please contact the Development Control West Team in the Planning Division at Rother District Council for advice on whether or not express consent is needed for a particular advertisement, and on submitting an application. Illuminated advertisements within the Conservation Area will always require express consent.

Submitting an Application

16.7 When submitting an application, five copies of the following scaled drawings will normally be required in addition to the form and the Ordnance Survey location plan:

- Front elevation drawing of existing and proposed shopfront and building, normally at a scale of 1:50.
- Horizontal and sectional drawings to a scale of at least 1:10, including sections through existing and proposed fascias, mouldings, glazing bars and other features.

Additionally, for signage:

- Front elevation of existing shopfront and building – a photograph is useful here to indicate existing signage on the building
- Details of the proposed location, positioning and dimensions of any signage and its height above ground. Also, where a sign would project from the building, the extent of the projection.

You should also submit details of materials, fixings, colours and style of construction of proposed new signage, and, if the sign or other advertisement is to be illuminated, details of the type of illumination (e.g. external, floodlighting etc.) with details of the luminaires and their position.

Please contact the West Team in the Development Control Section in the Planning Division at Rother District Council if you require further advice on submitting an application.

Bexhill Town Centre Conservation Area

Shopfront + Signage Guidance

Key

- Conservation Area
- Boundary line



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