

Bourne Shopfront Design Guide



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BOURNE SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDE

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1. INTRODUCTION

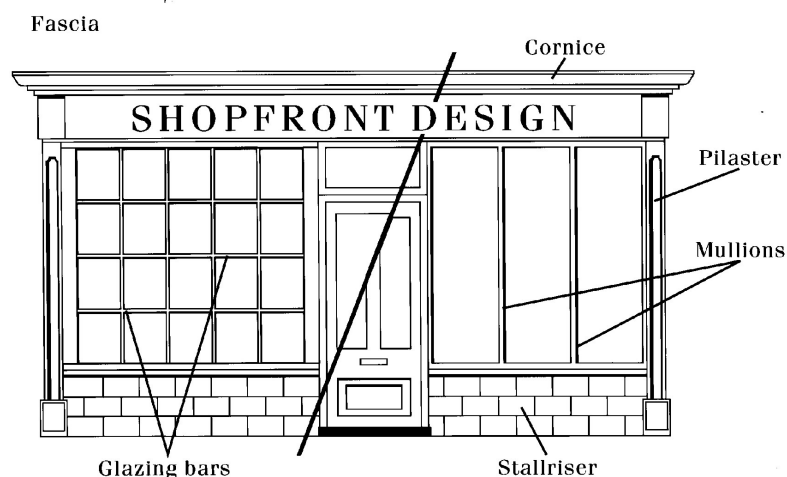
Retail activity in Bourne has historically been centred on the Market Place and its radial roads. This is still the case today, and attractive and well-designed shopfronts can help to retain the character and improve the appearance of the historic town centre, making it a more attractive place for both visitors and shoppers. The purpose of this guide is to offer practical advice on the approach which should be adopted when alterations to shopfronts at Bourne are being considered, with a view to preserving and enhancing the character of the town

2. TRADITIONAL SHOPFRONTS

2.1 Traditional shopfronts generally conform to a basic pattern which has proved to be successful over a number of years, both in allowing the shopkeeper to present an attractive display of goods and helping to create a unique 'sense of place'.

The component parts of such shopfronts may vary greatly in size and proportion from building to building. Each has a role to play, however, in relating the shopfront to the remainder of the building, whilst helping the property to operate successfully as a shop.

The cornice and fascia mark the point at which the scale and design of the building changes from domestic to display. The cornice projects from the face of the building, giving a strong and definite line, and providing weather protection for the remainder of the shopfront.



- ❖ The fascia also provides a logical space for advertising.
- ❖ Pilasters, together with the cornice and fascia, provide visual support for the upper part of the building, and act as a frame for the display and entrance.

- ❖ Stallrisers provide a solid base for the display of goods at a suitable level, and dictate the vertical proportion of the shop windows.
- ❖ Mullions and glazing bars reduce the scale of the display windows, relating them to the smaller windows normally present on the upper floors.

2.2 The mere inclusion of these features, however, does not in itself make a shopfront design successful. A fresh approach needs to be taken to each new shopfront, and a design created which is right for the particular building concerned.

3. EXISTING SHOPFRONTS

3.1 The town centre still retains a number of traditional historic frontages which are attractive in the local context, either individually or as a group, and contribute to the character of the town centre. In addition, several existing and former bank premises in and around the Market Place still retain the formal facades traditionally associated with this use. Frontages which fall within this category are listed in section 12. They should be maintained substantially in their present form and carefully repaired as and when necessary.



3.1 good traditional shopfronts and unique historic facades should be retained

3.2 A few properties have been adapted for retailing from other uses, yet still retain much of their original appearance. New purpose designed shopfronts are unlikely to be permitted on such properties, or on similar properties for which a change of use to a shop might be approved in the future.



3.2 a purpose designed shopfront is not appropriate

4. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.1 A shopfront is usually part of a much larger building, and therefore needs to be considered as part of its overall appearance, taking account of the design and scale of any elements which are common throughout the building.

4.2 Each shopfront should be approached individually. Uniformity should be avoided, especially where a business occupies adjacent buildings of different design.

4.3 A traditional form of shopfront is likely to be most suitable for Bourne's older buildings, but a different, and possibly unconventional, approach may be considered for other buildings if it can be shown to better complement their design.

4.4 Whenever possible, a degree of physical separation should be maintained between neighbouring shopfronts. Any separating panels should take into account the appearance of the whole building, and the colour and texture of the upper facade.



4.3 a non-traditional design is needed

4.5 Where a shopfront extends for the full width of the building, it must be seen to effectively support the upper floors. The scale and proportion of the various solid elements should be substantial enough to provide an adequate base for the remainder of the façade. More slender and refined elements may however be used where walls already exist forming part of the original building and supporting the upper floors.



4.5 where the upper floors are supported, slender elements can be used

4.6 A shopfront should normally be flush with the façade of the building. A well-proportioned recessed doorway however, can add interest, facilitate good balance and increase display space, as well as providing potential customers with shelter from the rain whilst looking at goods.



4.6 a recessed doorway can add interest

4.7 Pilasters, fascias and stallrisers should be seen as separate elements within a shopfront. Surfaces which merge these features usually result in a shopfront devoid of character and unrelated to its parent building. Fascias which are boxed or project excessively can be equally discordant as they tend to dominate the lower part of the building.



4.8 terraced properties benefit from co-ordinated design

4.8 Where larger buildings contain two or more shops, continuity in shopfront design should be maintained. For new schemes, a comprehensive approach involving all the shopfronts should be considered. If this is not possible, a well-designed shopfront to one unit can and should set the pattern for the remaining frontages as and when they are renewed.

4.9 Individual display windows with a horizontal emphasis should normally be avoided. The use of mullions to sub-divide such areas will enable a shopfront to relate more comfortably to the rest of the building, and can be effective in helping to give a shop its own unique character.



4.9 mullions can add character

4.10 Where an existing shopfront already features access to the upper floors of a building, this should be retained and acknowledged in any new scheme. The need for and desirability of providing such access should always be considered in the design of new shopfronts, as it might enable the re-use of abandoned upper floors, and thus contribute to the overall maintenance of the whole building.



4.10 separate access can allow independent use of upper floor

4.11 Attempts to copy historical styles from one building to another are unlikely to be successful, and should be avoided. Each new shopfront should be approached separately, with a view to creating individual solutions based on good design principles consistent with the scale and appearance of the building.

5. MATERIALS AND FINISHES

5.1 When a new shopfront following traditional principles is proposed, timber will be the best choice. It can be finely detailed, moulded to different profiles, and by simple repainting, can be freshened up or changed in image without detriment to the character of the whole building.

5.2 Rich dark paint colours are usually best for traditional shopfronts, especially where the shopfront extends across most or all of the building, or has wide pilasters, as they help to emphasise its perceived function of supporting the upper floors. White or light/neutral colours may however be suitable on smaller shopfronts of more slender proportions where areas of walling already extend from the upper floors to the ground.



5.2 darker colours can add substance to the appearance of a shopfront

5.3 A single colour should be used for all the major elements. A secondary colour can, however, sometimes be used to highlight decorative or architectural features within the shopfront provided it complements the main colour, and is used selectively.

- 5.4 Stained or treated timber is not a particularly suitable finish for traditional shopfronts, but may be appropriate where a different approach is required involving good modern design.
- 5.5 Alternative materials may well be acceptable for non-traditional shopfronts in a well-designed scheme appropriate to the building and its locality. The use of such materials must not, however, be seen as an excuse to overlook the need for good quality design and attention to detailing.
- 5.6 Glazed fanlights and pelmets should not be obliterated by painting out the glass panels. As well as obscuring an attractive detail, overpainting in this way alters the appearance of a shopfront by creating an additional awkward 'solid' area below the fascia.

6. BLINDS AND CANOPIES

- 6.1 If a blind is likely to be needed to protect goods from damage by sunlight, it should be included as an integral part of the shopfront design. It should be fully retractable, and located within or below the cornice, although immediately below the fascia can be an acceptable alternative in appropriate cases. Shiny fabrics and vivid or stridently contrasting colours should be avoided.

- 6.2 Dutch blinds and plastic or similar window and door canopies should be avoided. They usually bear no relationship to the appearance of the building to which they are fixed, and can obscure and sometimes destroy part of the existing shopfront.



6.2 modern canopies can obscure the building

- 6.3 Retailers who are likely to display goods susceptible to sunlight damage should take extra care to ensure that the premises they intend to occupy are suitable for their purposes. It should not be assumed that approval will be forthcoming for a blind or canopy simply on the grounds that it is necessary or desirable for the type of shop proposed. It may be helpful to remember that they will not normally be necessary where the shop window faces northwards, or receives little or no direct sunlight.

7. ADVERTISEMENTS

7.1 The advertisements displayed on a building can have a profound effect on its appearance, and should be considered as an integral part of the overall design of a shopfront. The use of discreet and well-designed advertisements on business premises will not only improve individual buildings, but will also enhance the overall appearance of the town centre.



7.1 well proportioned and simple advertisements are clearly attractive, whereas . .

7.2 On traditional frontages, lettering should be signwritten onto the fascia in a single style. It should be easily readable, and adjusted in size and content to suit the detailing of the fascia. Prefabricated individual letters, symbols or panels are a less desirable alternative to painting, as the 3-dimensional effect it produces makes the advertisement over-prominent.



. . . too much advertising dominates the building and the street

7.3 External illumination is the only acceptable option for traditional shopfronts. Strip lighting concealed within a projecting cornice can be both effective and unobtrusive when included in the design of a new shopfront, but is less easily added to existing designs. Downlighters, small floodlights or bracket lamps could be acceptable alternatives provided they are sparingly used and sensitively located.

7.4 Fascia advertisements to modern shopfronts should be designed as an integral feature, rather than added later as a separate box. If internal illumination is proposed, it should be confined to the letters and symbols. Large expanses of bright illuminated panelling should be avoided as they are extremely harsh in appearance, and tend to unduly dominate the street scene.

7.5 On buildings with no purpose-designed fascia, the form and scale of advertising will be dictated by the design and detailing of the façade. Alternatives could include individual letters fixed direct to the wall, sign writing or transparent transfer on a window, a small well-designed plaque, or a simple projecting sign. Prefabricated panels, are unlikely to be acceptable on such buildings.



7.5 where there is no solid fascia, suitable alternatives must be considered

7.6 Temporary advertisements fixed to the inside of doors and windows can spoil the appearance of a building. They are mostly designed in very bright colours to draw attention to a special event, usually a sale. Such signs should be kept to a minimum (no more than one per window should be necessary) and removed as soon as possible. Similarly, an excessive number of stickers and notices on windows and doors will give the shopfront a cluttered appearance, and should be avoided.

8 PROJECTING SIGNS

8.1 Hanging signs in the form of decorated boards suspended from metal brackets, are equally comfortable on both older and more recent buildings. Ideally a pictorial feature should be included, perhaps illustrating the trade being undertaken. Alternatively, a hanging symbol relating to the business could be very effective. As with shopfronts, the use of rich, dark colours or neutral shades will ensure that a sign is not over-dominant.

8.2 Lighting schemes for hanging signs should try to ensure that the light source is as inconspicuous as possible. Concealed strip lighting is an effective means of achieving this. The bulb housing should be the same width as the sign, and can form part of the design of the board itself, or a separate element located above the sign and coloured to match the supporting frame. Simple small lamps on short projecting brackets or spotlights fixed to the building can also be acceptable.



8.2 concealed lighting is effective and inconspicuous

- 8.3 Other forms of projecting sign, such as rigidly fixed boards or internally illuminated boxes, are often produced to a standard size and format, with little account being taken of the scale of the building or overall appearance of the area. Within the Conservation Area, where character and appearance are important considerations, such signs are best confined to the more modern shop premises off the main street frontages, although even here hanging signs are to be preferred.
- 8.4 The overall design of a building should be the major influence in the positioning of a sign on its façade. A projecting sign should not obscure important features of an attractive shopfront, and generally speaking, not more than one should be displayed on a building. Not every frontage may be suitable for such signs, however, even though they may be present on nearby facades. The merits of each case need to be considered individually.

9 SECURITY

- 9.1 The need to provide adequate security for shops is widely recognised, and a number of alternatives are now available to retailers. Some will have a greater effect on the appearance of a building than others, and the use of surveillance cameras, may well reduce the need for more conspicuous means of protection, which can disfigure otherwise attractive buildings. Retailers should always ensure that the security requirements of their particular business can be adequately met without detracting from the character and appearance of the building. Approval will not be given for unsympathetic additions to attractive shopfronts, and enforcement action could be taken to remove unauthorised security fixings or poorly sited alarm boxes on listed buildings.
- 9.2 Retractable shutters should be located inside the building. The shutter box can normally be accommodated behind the fascia, where it would not be readily visible when the shop is open. Fixed external shutter boxes can be very ugly, and external shuttering will only be considered when it forms an integral part of a new shopfront design. Solid lath shutters can create a security risk, as they make the inside of the shop invisible from the street, and any criminal activity within would therefore go unnoticed.
- 9.3 Removable wrought iron or similar grilles can be particularly suitable for traditional shopfronts provided they are well designed and purpose made to fit neatly into the shop window. When in place, they still allow a good view of the display inside the shop, need not necessarily extend for the full height of the window, and can be taken off completely and stored within the building when the shop is open. The grilles and supporting mounts should be painted to match or complement the shopfront.

- 9.4 Burglar alarm boxes are normally required to be located in prominent yet inaccessible positions, but a balance must be achieved between the need for adequate security and the need to respect the character of the building. Careful forethought needs to be given to the siting, appearance and colour of any new installation proposed, and all the possibilities reviewed before a decision is made.
- 9.5 Wherever possible, wiring from security devices should be taken inside a building rather than along the façade. If surface wiring cannot be avoided, it should match the colour of its background, be securely fixed, and mounted as inconspicuously as possible. This can often be achieved by following existing lines and features on the frontage.

10 IS APPROVAL REQUIRED?

- 10.1 Planning permission is needed for any alteration to a shop or similar property which materially affect its external appearance. This includes changing windows or doors, using different materials on any part of the shopfront, enlarging the fascia or adding canopies or blinds, as well as the installation of an entirely new shopfront.
- 10.2 Separate consent is required for the display of advertisements, even where the sign proposed has been shown on the planning application drawings. Some signs on shops and business premises can be displayed without the need to obtain advertisement consent, depending on their size position and content. If in any doubt, it is always best to seek advice as to whether or not an application is needed.
- 10.3 If the property is a listed building, any alteration affecting its character or appearance will require listed building consent. This could include exterior painting, advertisements or projecting signs, security grilles, blinds, alarm boxes and internal alterations. It is required in addition to any planning permission or advertisement consent which may be necessary.
- 10.4 Before undertaking any alterations to a shopfront, it is essential to ensure that all the necessary approvals have been obtained. Enforcement action may be taken against unauthorised work, and this can lead to the need for further alterations or reinstatement, and unauthorised work to listed buildings can result in prosecution.

11. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

- 11.1 Application forms can be obtained from the council offices, or may be downloaded via the council's website at www.southkesteven.gov.uk. Applications may be submitted either in paper format or online.
- 11.2 Plans accompanying applications must show clearly and accurately what is proposed to be done and how the finished product will look. Schemes which seem to be satisfactory on a small-scale drawing can easily be spoiled by poor detailing and finishing when a builder has to rely on guesswork and assumption in the absence of clear illustrations and instructions.
- 11.3 Applications for planning permission or listed building consent to alter or replace a shopfront should be accompanied by:
- ❖ Accurate detailed drawings to a suitable scale showing the proposed alterations within the context of the building.
 - ❖ Where necessary, a sectional drawing of the shopfront showing its profile and position relative to the upper part of the building, and large-scale details of architectural features, including pilasters, cornices and window details.
 - ❖ A precise indication of the materials and colours proposed to be used, either by the submission of samples or photographs.
- 11.4 Drawings accompanying applications for advertisement consent should include accurate details of the size and design of all letters and symbols, together with the proposed colour scheme. If individual letters are to be used, sections or samples should be submitted showing the profile and thickness of the letters, as well as details of materials and the method of fixing. The source and nature of any illumination should be clearly shown.
- 11.5 Where a projecting sign is proposed, detailed drawings should be submitted which show accurately the size, materials and shape of the sign and supporting bracket, the size and design of all letters and symbols, and the colours to be used. The position of the sign on the building should be clearly illustrated.

12 FRONTAGES TO BE RETAINED

Address

1 West Street



21 West Street



27 West Street



29 West Street



31 West Street



6 West Street



3 North Street



9/11 North Street



Address

25 North Street



8/10 North Street



50a North Street



50b North Street



3 South Street



5 South Street



7a Spalding Road



4 Market Place





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