

Salisbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020 to 2036

Class E “Shopfront” and Class MA Development Design Guide

(November 2021)

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Introduction and planning context

10. Salisbury is perhaps the best surviving example of a mediaeval planned city in England. It has a special character and "sense of place" created by the buildings, local building styles and materials and the mediaeval pattern of the streets and Chequers. Within this context, shopfronts and advertisements have an important contribution to make to the character of the area and the quality of the environment.
11. In this guide, "shop" is defined as including all E Class premises including retail in all locations and all commercial premises, including banks, betting offices, restaurants, public houses, estate agents and building societies.
12. Whilst it is acknowledged that shopfronts and advertisements are designed to attract attention, it is important that care is taken to ensure that the design and materials of individual shops do not clash with, or detract from, existing attractive features of the building or the area. It should be possible to create attractive, individualistic eye-catching shopfronts which enliven the street-scene, without introducing discordant elements.
13. It is recognised that busy and vibrant shops and businesses are vital to Salisbury's economy.
14. The Wiltshire Council planning policies in the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2017) are designed to support and promote the role of the town centre by taking a positive approach to growth, management and adaptation. The emphasis is on providing an appropriate mix of retail, commercial and leisure uses which provide a good choice of shops and services for local people and visitors.
15. Residential uses are an important element of a diverse and vibrant centre, providing increased activity. However, the location of such uses must be appropriately sited and designed to not impact on the street scene or create conflict between users. The Salisbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) considers that retail should form the principle uses within city centre.
16. A significant number of changes to the Planning Regulations, permitted development rights and the Use Classifications were introduced during 2020 and 2021. Principally, these changes were designed to promote the opportunity for conversion of commercial properties to residential.
17. Saved policies from the Salisbury Local Plan 2011 have to some extent been made out of date by this recent secondary legislation which introduces new permitted development rights under Class MA development¹. For the purposes of this design guide, Saved Policy S1 (Primary frontages in Salisbury and Amesbury) and S2 (Secondary Shopping Areas in Salisbury and Amesbury) are now out of date.
18. The matters raised by Class MA Development of most relevance to this Shopfront Design Guide are those relating to changes of use for from Class E (Commercial, business and services) to Class C3 (dwelling house) for proposals affecting part of a listed building or land within its curtilage and the impact of the development for safe access.
19. Core Policy 38 (Retail and leisure) indicates:

¹ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.)(England)(Amendment) Order 2021.

All proposals for retail or leisure uses on sites not within a town centre in excess of 200 sqm gross floorspace, including extension of existing units, must be accompanied by an impact assessment which meets the requirement of national guidance and established best practice, and demonstrates that the proposal will not harm the vitality or viability of any nearby centres. All such proposals must also comply with the sequential approach, as set out in national guidance, to ensure that development is on the most central site available.

20. Core Policy 57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping) states that:

A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire.

21. This design guide sets out local detail for delivery of these relevant Core Strategy policies as well as gives guidance on how to approach prior approval applications for Class MA development.
22. This guide therefore sets out the SNDP policies in respect of shopfronts, advertisements and conversions. It applies equally throughout the city and aspires to the highest standard of design and materials especially for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.
23. The guide includes examples of actual shops in this guide as we feel these best illustrate the issues discussed. The inclusion of the 'negative examples is not intended as a criticism of the occupiers as these shopfronts were approved by the authority. They are included rather so that we can benefit from past experience.
24. This document is substantially based upon the Creating Places: A guide to achieving high quality design in new development, Adopted 2006².

² <https://pages.wiltshire.gov.uk/creating-places-design-guide-spg-adopted-april-2006.pdf>



Fig 1: “Watsons”
Queen Street, Salisbury.

General principles

25. These General Principles apply to modifications to existing Class E and change of use.
26. Where the existing shopfront or shop sign contributes to the character of the building and the surrounding area, it should be retained. Where the property is converted to residential, it should nonetheless retain signage where this will not interfere with the new use.
27. Other shopfronts which, although altered, still retain much of their original character and which contribute to the historic ambience of the area, should also be retained. Permission will normally only be granted for their repair or restoration.



Fig 2:
An attractive glazed tiled historic shopfront, somewhat spoilt by the contemporary signage.

28. Historic adverts, features or signs which have a long association with the building, should be retained where possible. For example, where a sign has been painted on to a wall - this should be retained, or where glazed tiles have been used in the design of the shopfront, these should be retained and a scheme developed around such features.
29. Where an existing shopfront or shop sign that is unsympathetic to the character of the building is proposed for renewal, the proposed alteration should aim to improve significantly the appearance by integrating it into the building in terms of its design, appearance and scale. Existing features of historical or architectural interest should be retained and integrated into the new overall design.
30. Shopfront design and conversions to residential use should take into account the age and architectural style of a building, and should deal with the building as a whole. For example, a shopfront must not attempt to visually separate the ground floor from the rest of the building, or to over-emphasise a fascia. Where residential conversions are implemented, as many of the historic features as possible should be retained.
31. New shopfronts will only be supported where the design is of high and fitting quality.
32. Replacement shopfronts or shop signs for historic buildings should generally reflect the historic details of the building with a traditional style of shopfront and by utilising traditional materials.

They should be designed to respect the period and style of the building and the form and proportions of the superior shopfronts or shop signs in the local area.

33. Refurbished and new shopfronts should be contained within the space originally designed for the shop unit.
34. Refurbished and new shop signs should be in proportion with the building and should not unduly dominate any elevation. Generally, signs should be contained within any space originally designed for them and should not obscure the surrounding façade or traditional elements.



Fig 3: *An example of a traditional recessed doorway. Decorative Victorian floor tiles survive in the entrance 'foyer'.*



Fig 4: Another example of a recessed doorway. The glass of the shopfront is divided by the Arts and Crafts style leaded lights, which also reflect the style of the building above. There is no fascia so the lettering is applied directly to the building in the fascia position.



Fig 5: An attractive shop in mainly residential area. The ‘low key’ commercial approach suits the setting.

Shopfront Design

35. Traditional shopfront design relies on a set of principles based on proportion, balance and the right relationship of the parts to the whole. These principles are still valid today but it is the creative interpretation of traditional features that leads to good new design. Each building and site is unique, and a good design should add to the vitality of the street scene without resorting to pastiche.

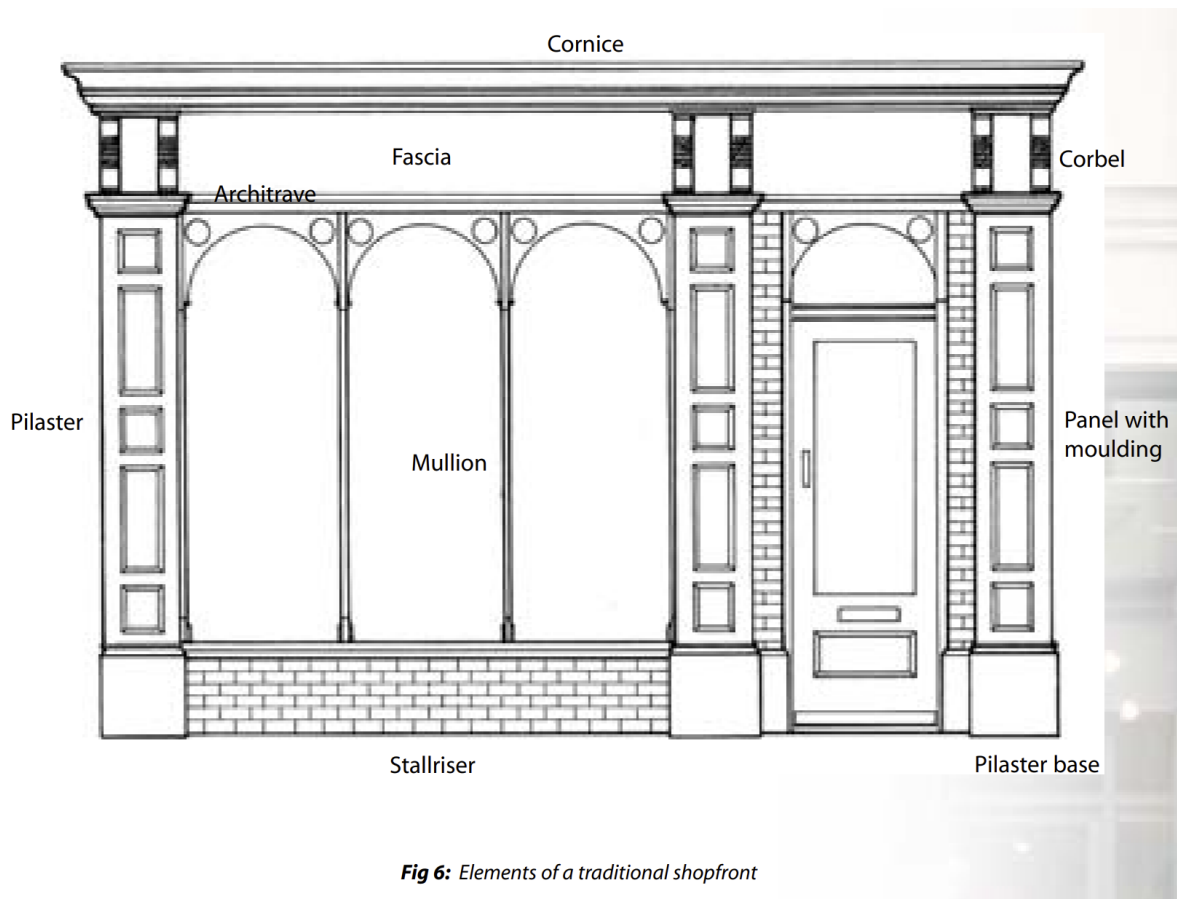


Fig 6: Elements of a traditional shopfront

The traditional shopfront

36. A traditional shopfront is made up of a number of elements, which form a frame for the shop entrance and shop window. Each element has its own practical and visual function.

- **Architrave:** moulded frame around a door or window.
- The **pilasters** separate each shop from its neighbours and define the width of the shopfront.
- **Pilaster heads** often project to form a bracket or corbel. These can either be a decorative feature or a means to allow the fascia to be fixed at an angle looking down to the pavement.
 - The **fascia** provides the space within which the name and business of the shop can be displayed.
 - The **cornice** defines the top of the shopfront and gives protection from the weather.

- **Mullion:** a vertical post or upright dividing a window or opening into two or more lights.
- The **stallriser** gives protection at ground level and provides a solid base to the shopfront.
- Good design will integrate these elements in a way that presents a pleasing relationship between them, and between the shopfront and the building as a whole.



Fig 7: This fascia is too large for the shop and is made of shiny modern materials. The red is garish and too much text is crammed onto the fascia so that it has a confused and 'busy' appearance. The modern aluminium shop front is not in keeping with the building above. A deeper stallriser would also have been preferable.



Fig 8: The fascia is the correct depth for the shopfront and the lettering sits well within the frame. The colour scheme is subtle and unifies the whole front - including the door. The stallriser is an appropriate depth.

Elements Of The Shopfront

Fascia And Contemporary Fascia Design

37. The fascia is probably the most important element of the shopfront both in terms of its function as a shop's display board and in terms of its significance to the overall design. The existence of a former unsuitable fascia (or shopfront) should not be allowed to influence the design of a replacement
38. The fascia should not dominate the shopfront or the building above.
- Facias should be kept well below first floor windowsills, leaving a suitable margin.
 - Bottoms of fascias should not extend too far down in proportion to the rest of the shopfront. As a rule of thumb, fascias should be no greater than one quarter the depth of the shopfront below the fascia.
 - The fascia must be part of the shop front, separated from the adjacent fascia by pilasters and should not extend uninterrupted across a number of buildings.

- Where an excessively deep fascia has been introduced in the past, the overall height of the fascia should be reduced to expose the wall surface above.
- The fascia on a historic building should be painted timber. Glossy plastic, Perspex, or large areas of highly polished metal finishes, or illuminated signs, are unlikely to be acceptable.

Fig 9:

A traditional shopfront utilising a traditional and subtle colour palette. The large glass timber-framed window is divided by a mullion. Lettering has been applied directly to the upper wall of the building to advertise a first floor business in such a way to reflect the symmetry of the front elevation



Stallrisers

39. Stallrisers are an integral part of the shopfront and need to be part of the overall design. They vary in height according to the style adopted, but should be at least 500mm high. They give protection to shop windows and should therefore be constructed of substantial and hardwearing materials. Panelled painted timber, brick, stone, rendering or other non-reflective materials are preferred. Where Victorian glazed tiles survive, these should be retained.

Windows

40. Large expanses of glass present a blank aspect and should normally be avoided. Shop windows should be divided into vertically proportioned sections with glazing bars or mullions so that together with the entrance, they relate to the upper part of a building
- 41.



Fig 10:

Two potentially large windows are broken up by glazing bars. The glazing bars also echo the glazing pattern of the upper floors. Note the painted lettering applied directly to the building at second storey level.



Fig 11: A shopfront with a wide expanse of flat glass. The fascia is made of modern materials and is overly large, impinging on the first floor. The shopfront does not reflect the architecture and the rhythm of the upper floors and the fascia is overbearing.

Doors

42. Doors to shops, or premises above a shop, should be designed as an integral part of the facade. Where recessed doorways exist, they should be retained and reinstated on older shopfronts where appropriate.



Fig 12: Although in this case the letters are shiny metal, due to the brevity of the word and the simplicity of the style - a subtle, attractive fascia is achieved.

Colour

43. The colour palette should reflect the context of the area, i.e. a modern colour palette will be acceptable in a modern shopping precinct although garish 'day-glow' colours are unlikely ever to be acceptable. Where shopfronts and signs are within a historic street, a 'traditional colour palette and finish should be used. Rich, dark colours with a matt finish often look very good, leaving window displays and lettering to provide accents. Whatever the context, colour schemes adopted should be subtle and blend harmoniously with the environment.
44. Corporate organisations should not assume that their corporate colour scheme will be acceptable and variations may be required.
45. Listed building consent may be required for the repainting of shopfronts on a listed building, where a colour change would affect its character (please check with the Conservation Officer).

Materials

46. Materials used in shopfront construction should be of good quality, durable and in keeping with a building's existing character. In general, the number and type of materials and colours used

should be kept to a minimum. Materials traditionally used in Salisbury are wood, glass, brick, stone, and brass. Good quality modern materials for lettering will sometimes be permitted where appropriate, but fascias made of acrylic sheeting, Perspex, aluminium or plastic will not generally be permitted.

47. Timber is the most versatile of materials and was the standard shopfront material of previous centuries. Painted timber is preferred to stained hardwood and tropical hardwoods are discouraged as their use is environmentally questionable.

Zero Carbon

48. Sustainability, especially the prudent use of natural resources, should be addressed in all shopfront designs, refurbishments and conversions and the overall impact of the development on the environment should be taken into account in all modifications. Wherever possible, development and redevelopment of shopfronts should seek to be carbon neutral.
49. Materials should be carefully chosen with energy efficiency, durability, security and maintenance requirements in mind. Natural materials like timber products are usually a more sustainable option than uPVC and aluminium, which need a lot of energy to be produced and harm the environment when disposed of. When undertaking refurbishment works opportunities to reuse and recycle materials should be taken to reduce construction costs.

Lettering

50. Lettering upon the fascia should preferably be traditionally sign written. In some circumstances applied lettering will be considered, for example, gilded lettering with a half-round section is particularly suitable for pubs and hotels. Flat applied lettering on minimal pins will sometimes be acceptable.
51. Lettering should normally be easily contained within the fascia - a ratio of 60% fascia height for lettering, with 20% spacing above and below is a guide. Generally, the length of wording should not be greater than 75% of the fascia length.



Fig 13: Batemans - an example of lettering that sits comfortably within the fascia.

Fig 14:

The lettering for Superbuys is very large and uncomfortably fills the fascia. The fascia is plastic and lacks mouldings. The colours are modern and do not relate sympathetically to the shop next door or the building above.



52. Where no fascia exists, lettering can be applied either directly to the wall between the ground and first floor level, or on the ground floor windows. Lettering applied directly to the wall should be of a design and material that is sympathetic to the building.

Signs and Advertising

53. Advertisements situated within a building (i.e. in or on the shop window) may also require consent (advertisement and listed building consent where appropriate).

Corporate image

54. National or regional retailers will be asked to modify their standard designs if they are considered to be out of character in a particular location.

Illumination

55. The illumination of shopfronts and signage within well-lit town centres is generally considered unnecessary. In certain circumstances, for example where the business is open in the evening, modest levels of discreet lighting (the purpose of which is to light the lettering and not bathe the whole façade and pavement in a pool of light) may be permitted.

56. External lights to illuminate facias should be carefully sited to minimise their visual impact and should be designed to provide highlighting to the lettering only. Small spotlights or thin trough lights illuminating the lettering may be considered acceptable; rows of swan neck lights rarely will.

57. Light fittings should be discreetly located, painted the same colour as the fascia and concealed under cornices or architectural profiling. On listed buildings, the design of the light source and the number of light fittings will be considered for their effect on the character of the building.

58. Internally illuminated facias **are not** acceptable.



Fig 16: A traditional shopfront with the windowpane divided by glazing bars. The effect is spoilt by the addition of large swan neck lights.



Fig 18: Detail of a discreet spotlight.



Fig 17: Spotlights, painted the colour of the wall, highlight the signage without being obtrusive.

Hanging Signs

59. Normally, only one modest hanging sign per shop is appropriate and generally the style and size of the hanging sign should complement the fascia and be located at fascia level. Guidance already given on lettering, colour and materials also applies to hanging signs.
60. If the fascia is illuminated, the illumination of the hanging sign is unlikely to be acceptable. Internally illuminated hanging signs will not be acceptable. The formal consent of the Local Planning Authority is required under the Highways Act for anyone wishing to erect a sign or similar structure which overhangs a highway or footpath.

Additional Shopfront Features

Cash dispensers

61. Cash dispensers must be treated as an integral part of shopfront design. They must be located without damaging historic fabric. Generally, they are best placed within a recess or doorway and should be at a height convenient for the disabled, no higher than 1 metre above floor level. They should be of a simple design with a minimal amount of display material.

Access

62. New shopfronts should allow convenient access for all, including those with disabilities. All new work must comply with relevant standards; however, where an historic shopfront is involved, great care must be taken to avoid erosion of the appearance and character of the listed building.

Burglar and fire alarms

63. Burglar and fire alarms are necessary but can often be unsightly and, if possible, should not be placed on front elevations. On listed buildings, the smallest available size of alarm boxes should be used, painted an appropriate colour to match the background. On new shopfronts, alarms should be considered as part of the overall shopfront design. This also applies to residential conversions.



Fig 20: Disabled access

"A" boards

64. Consent to display "A" boards is needed from the Local Planning Authority. In general, "A" boards are not encouraged as they inhibit pedestrian movement.

Canopies and blinds

65. Boxes and housing for any shutters, of whatever design, should be designed to minimise their



Fig 19: A modern Dutch canopy in plastic and a fascia in garish colours. The fascia sits uncomfortably close to the first floor windows with a bank of visible swan-neck lights. A retractable blind with the business name written on the blind would have been preferable.

impact on the shopfront. They should avoid obscuring architectural features and be designed as part of the overall scheme.

66. Blinds are acceptable so long as they are fully retractable on a daily basis and do not permanently obscure the fascia. The blind box into which the blinds retract should be integrated within an overall design so that architectural features are not obscured. Blinds should be no wider than the fascia.

67. Fixed blinds, such as curved Dutch type of canopy, are out of character in historic streets and are not acceptable. The use of plastics, wet-look or stretch fabrics for blinds or canopies is strongly discouraged. Canopies and blinds should not be fitted above ground floor level.

Commercial upper floors

68. Where upper floors of buildings are used for business, any lettering should be applied directly to the window and be not more than 100mm high. Windows should be screened if goods are stacked on upper floors. Any lettering on the first floor should ideally relate only to the business carried out on that floor.

Security shutters and grilles

69. Shop owners naturally wish to protect their property and stock. In Conservation Areas, the most appropriate security methods are those which do not require external shutters or grilles. As a rule, solid metal shutters or shutter boxes will not normally be permitted on shop and commercial premises within Conservation Areas and on listed buildings, but in exceptional



Fig 20: A traditional retractable blind that reflects the character of the shop and does not detract from the upper stories of the building. Because the fascia is covered when it is open, the business name is printed on the blind.

circumstances roller grilles may be accepted with spindle boxes recessed behind the fascia board.

70. There are three main alternatives to external shutters or grilles - toughened glass, additional glazing bars or internal grilles.

- Toughened glass incorporates a plastic interlayer and can remain intact even when broken.
- Additional glazing bars reduce glazing size, thus strengthening glass area and reducing opportunities for theft.
- Internal open-mesh window grilles, fixed inside shop windows behind glass, allow views into the shop even after hours and give a less fortified appearance than external grilles.

71. Design approval is required for the installation of any permanent security shutter on the external face of an existing shopfront. Listed Building Consent will also be needed if the building is listed (both for external and internal shuttering).

Pubs

72. The character of historic and attractive public houses can be detrimentally affected by a plethora of lights and signs. Signs should be kept to a minimum and should reflect the character of the building. Breweries should avoid the repetition of the brewery name and logo - perhaps limiting this to a hanging sign or a small logo on the wall near an entrance.

73. It is accepted that some lighting will be required, however, the lighting should be kept to a minimum. Discreet spotlights will be preferred. Swan-neck lights or trough lights are rarely acceptable.

Garages (petrol filling stations, car showrooms etc)



Fig 22:
An attractive pub with discreet signage. The curved stallriser and brown glazed bricks are particularly attractive.

74. Garages can potentially require a large amount of signage which often includes pole or totem signs, and are usually modern in design. Many garages are located on principal roads and support separate businesses. As such the potential for an excessive number of incompatible signs on a garage forecourt is great. In order to protect and enhance the appearance of an area,

the SNDP requires new signage to be approached in a co-ordinated way. Lighting should be kept to a minimum, illumination kept to a discreet level and pole signs kept to a minimum height (lower than the main building).



Fig 23:

A example of a well-designed modern car showroom. This site is outside the conservation area and on a road with comparable businesses. The building, signage lights and totem pole are all contemporary, reflecting the nature of the business.

Shopfronts and Planning Law

75. In general, alterations to shopfronts will normally require planning permission, and alterations affecting the character of listed buildings will probably need listed building consent. Adverts on listed buildings will almost always require listed building consent.

Design Approval

76. Planning permission is required for any material change in the external appearance of a shop. This could include altering the glazing, changing facing materials, installing blinds and shutters or enlarging a fascia.

Listed building consent

77. Any alteration affecting a listed building will require listed building consent. This can include such detail as repainting a shopfront in a different colour, installing a security alarm, altering the shop interior, or installing shutters, blinds and advertisements.

Prior approval for permitted development

78. Before beginning development under Class MA, the developer must apply to the Local Planning Authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required.

Conservation area consent

79. Conservation area consent is required for the substantial demolition of any building in a conservation area. This could include the removal of a shopfront.

Advertisement consent

80. Advertisement consent is required for the display of most signs, although there are exceptions. The Regulations in respect of advertisements are complex and not easily summarised. All applicants are strongly advised to contact the Development Management section of the Local Planning Authority to establish whether advertisement consent is required. An area of Special Control for Advertisements covers part of the City, and within this area particular care is taken over the control of design and type of advertisements.

Residential Conversions

81. Subject to certain criteria, the conversion of a Class E unit to Class C3 residential is permitted development (Class MA development) and therefore planning permission may not be required. However, there is a requirement to submit an application for Prior Approval, which only takes into account certain matters such as transport impacts, safe site access, contamination, flooding risks, impact on the character or sustainability of the conservation area, provision of natural light, or loss of a registered nursery or health centre.
82. It is therefore important for all applicants to contact the Local Planning Authority to understand whether their proposals meet the Permitted Development criteria.
83. Where a the proposal involves a building located in a conservation area and involves the change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of the proposal should be in keeping with the character and sustainability of the conservation area. Salisbury’s main shopping precinct in the Central Area is designated as a conservation area for these purposes.

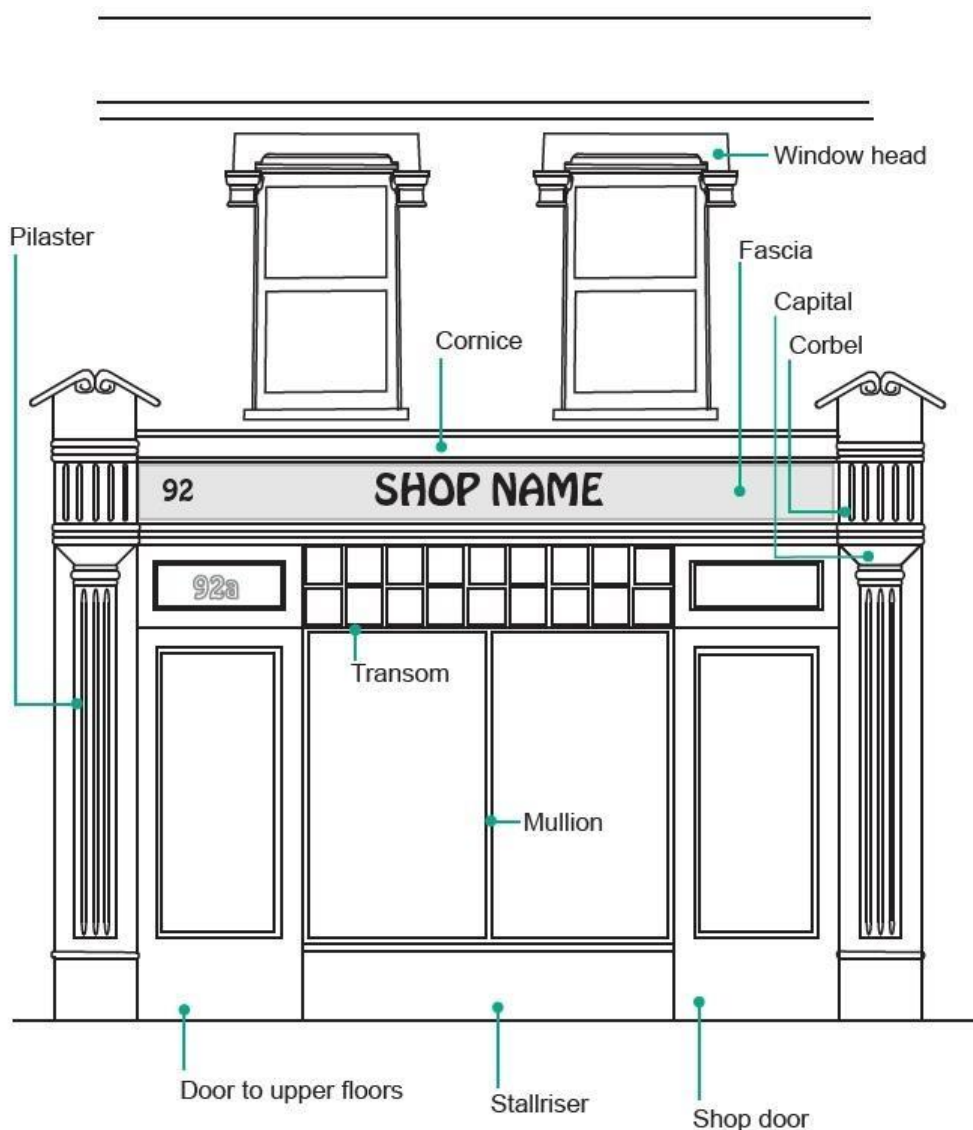
Definition of “character and sustainability” in Salisbury’s town centre conservation area

84. Conversions may be appropriate dependent on the following criteria:-

Character:	The level of retail activity (including concentration and clustering) and the general nature of the area would be considered, and conversions that harm the character of the area will not be permitted.
Community:	The conversion would need to leave a reasonable range of shops within walking distance for local residents.
Design:	Shops by their nature are usually in highly visible locations often on main routes, particularly corner shops. It is therefore essential that the design of the conversion is of the highest quality to ensure it makes a positive contribution to the street.
Amenity:	The quality of the living environment will be considered. Issues such as the level of activity both during the day and evening; noise; traffic congestion; proximity to a bus stop; and width of footway in relation to residential privacy will be used to determine whether ground floor living accommodation would be appropriate.

What detailed design issues should be considered?

85. Once a conversion is considered acceptable in principle, the Local Planning Authority will look at the design of the conversion. Elevation drawings will be required as part of any application, together with details of the materials to be used in the conversion.
86. Shops by their nature are usually in highly visible locations often on main routes, particularly corner shops. It is therefore essential that the design of the conversion is of the highest quality to ensure it makes a positive contribution to the street.
87. There are some key design principles that will lead to a visually successful conversion. The following diagram shows the location of the main features of a traditional shop front.



(Image taken from Waltham Forest Guide for Converting Shops to Homes)

Retention of original shop front features

88. Where an original shop front that retains most, if not all, its original features exist, the SNDP encourages its retention, in particular where it makes an important contribution to the character

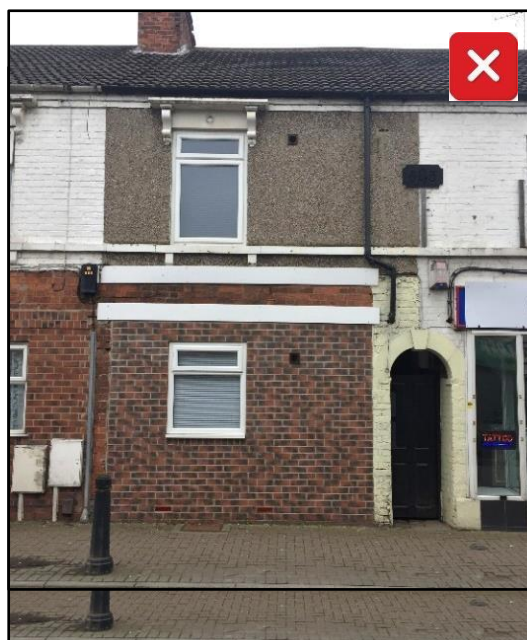
of the area. In these instances and where privacy is an issue, the lower section of the shop window could be covered by blinds, internal shutters or louvres.

89. The use of frosted/ etched glass is discouraged.

90. In some cases only the cornice, fascia, corbels and pilasters of traditional shop fronts should be retained, particularly where the ground floor projects out from the upper floors. This will bring a natural divide between the old and the new, and reference the building’s heritage.

Materials

91. The choice of materials is of vital importance to any design. Where the conversion forms part of an existing building, particular care should be taken to ensure that the materials chosen match or complement the existing ones. Where materials cannot be matched, it may be necessary to re-treat the whole building frontage, for example through rendering, however this will only be considered favourable if this is typical of the area.



- Poor match of brick.
- Poor match of mortar.
- No consideration of how to treat fascia – UPVC cladding.
- No direct front access.
- Poor window alignment and proportions.
- Poor consideration of rainwater goods/services.

Relate ground floor features with the upper storeys

92. In order to achieve a balance in the building façade, it is important to relate the ground floor features with those above. The following images show how this can be achieved.



Existing arrangement



Preferred arrangement. Lower-floor windows are aligned with the upper floor and window heads are replicated



Existing arrangement



Preferred arrangement. Lower-floor windows aligned with upper floor and window heads are replicated

Treatment of corner shops

93. Corner shops are by their nature in prominent locations. It is therefore essential that the conversion is of the highest quality.
94. Corner buildings also provide a good opportunity to bring natural surveillance to the street and therefore should have ground floor windows on both elevations where possible.



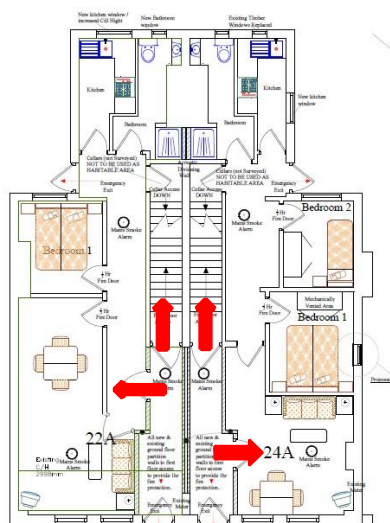
Existing arrangement



Preferred arrangement. Lower-floor windows are aligned with the upper floor and window heads are replicated.

Access

95. To encourage street activity and give greater security for residents, doors should be provided at the front of the property (or side of the building in the case of corner shops) rather than from the rear.
96. Where there is more than one residential unit, a decision may need to be made on whether to install one or two doors. Private entry for each unit is preferable, however some facades are too narrow and will look out of balance with more than one door. Where this is the case, a single shared external door should be provided with internal private doors to each flat.



This conversion follows the basic principles, with 4 apartments accessed by 2 front doors.

97. Doors should open out to ensure easy exit in the case of fire. Thresholds should be level and doors should have a clear open width of no less than 900mm to enable easy access for wheelchair users and those pushing a pram or trolley.

Standards

Privacy, Daylight and Sunlight

98. Ensuring all homes are built with adequate privacy, daylight and sunlight (internal and external) is important for the wellbeing of residents. Equally impacts on neighbouring residential properties must not result in their loss of privacy.

Internal space standards

99. Residential conversions will conform with the *Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard*.

Outdoor amenity space standards

100. Design approval will only be granted for dwellings that have direct and convenient access to an area of private open space in addition to bin or bike storage space), to meet the following specifications where this is possible within the constraints of the existing building:
- a) 1 or 2 bedroom flats and maisonettes should provide either a private balcony that is large enough for a small table and chairs and has provision for outdoor clothes drying, or terrace of usable level space, or direct access to a private or shared garden;
 - b) flats and maisonettes of 3 or more bedrooms must provide either a private balcony that is large enough for a small table and chairs and has provision for outdoor clothes drying or terrace of useable level space with a minimum dimension of 1.5 metres depth by 3 metres length, or, in the case of ground floor flats, direct access to a private garden or shared garden with some private space. These private outdoor areas should allow space for outside dining and/or clothes drying, with reasonable circulation, which will require a minimum dimension of 1.5 metres depth by 3 metres length.

Refuse and recycling storage

101. All residential development will provide adequate storage space for waste and recycling bins that will be discrete and will not cause visual or hygiene harm to neighbouring developments. Poorly sited or designed recycling and refuse storage has the potential for considerable adverse impact on the visual appearance and general amenity of an area, for both residents and the passing public.

102. It is unacceptable for the scheme to require bins to stand permanently on the street because this can obstruct the footpath. This can be particularly problematic for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs.
103. Unpleasant odours emanating from bins and storage areas can blight the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
104. In some instances, forecourts can be converted to front gardens (see section 4.8 below) and designed to accommodate bins. However, where this is not feasible, consideration should be given to a store inset into the facade, or internal storage where appropriate.
105. The Local Planning Authority may refuse designs for conversions that have inappropriate refuse and recycling storage.



Privacy, parking and the treatment of forecourts

106. Privacy of residents should be considered when drawing up proposals for a conversion. Where the shop has a forecourt, the area should be separated from the pavement by a low wall or other appropriate boundary treatment and landscaped to create a front garden. This will bring greater privacy for the resident and enhance street quality.
107. The uses of rooms next to the pavement also have an impact. For example bedrooms and bathrooms require greater privacy than a lounge or kitchen, and so should not be positioned at the pavement edge of the building.
108. Some forecourts are used for parking. This can often spoil the appearance of the street and cause conflict between cars and pedestrians. Where this applies to a proposal, parking may not be appropriate.
109. Secure cycle storage should be provided in all conversions.

Paraphernalia

110. Paraphernalia such as meter boxes, gases pipes, satellite dishes etc. can have an adverse effect on both the individual property and the street scene as a whole. Paraphernalia must not proliferate on the front elevation and should be well considered at an early stage in the design and conversion process.
111. The colour of additional paraphernalia can be important. For example, white apparatus may blend in with a white background but may be more obvious against darker backgrounds, such as brick or stone.
112. Poorly sited and designed meter boxes can spoil the appearance of the street and the property its self.



Building Control

113. The Local Authority Building Control team should also be consulted, at which time consideration of the effect of the proposals on means of escape, glazing and the disabled will take place. Alterations to buildings that reduce the existing means of escape provisions, or those for the disabled, are not permitted.

Check List of Basic Conversion Principles

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Retain as much of an original, traditional shopfront as possible, remembering the general rule of "cornices, corbels and pilasters should be retained". | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ground floor windows and doors should normally be aligned with upper windows, using centre lines and window edges. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The shape and style of upper floor windows should be followed. This will include window heads which can be used above windows and doors. Window heads are particularly important as they are often dominant features of the façade. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Window reveals (how deep the window is sunken into the façade) should be the same at ground floor as they are at upper floors. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The door should be recessed at least as much as the window reveals. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ground floor materials (such as brickwork) should be 'matched' to upper floors. Many brick suppliers provide a 'matching' service that can help with this. The builder should also be instructed to follow the brick arrangement (usually referred to as bonding pattern) and mortaring style of upper floors. Rendering will not be considered favourably unless this is typical of the area. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Limit the number of doors on the front elevation, a single door is usually the ideal. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Refuse and recycling storage should be integral to the design. Where there is a forecourt, this may be converted to a front garden and designed to accommodate bins. Where this is not possible, consideration should be given to a store inset into the façade, or internal storage where appropriate. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Resident privacy and parking should be considered at an early stage. Where a shop has a forecourt, the area should be separated from the pavement by a low wall or other appropriate boundary treatment and landscaped. Bedrooms and bathrooms should not be positioned at the pavement edge of a building as these rooms require greater privacy. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Paraphernalia such as meter boxes, gases pipes, satellite dishes etc. do not proliferate the font elevation and have been well considered. | <input type="checkbox"/> |