

If you own or run a business, from a shop or other commercial premises in Linlithgow High Street, or are thinking about changing your shopfront and/ or signage, then this guide applies to you.

Most of the High Street lies within the Linlithgow Palace and High Street Conservation Area, which is recognised as being outstanding because of its particular historic interest and value. (As can be seen from the map **below** the Conservation Area stretches from the Low Port in the east to the High Port in the west).



Many buildings in the High Street are 'listed' by the Scottish Government as being of special architectural or historic interest.

Well-designed shopfronts enhance the character and the appearance of the town centre, which in turn enhances its commercial success.

Shopfronts and shopfront signs should make a positive contribution to the appearance and character of Linlithgow High Street, and never detract.

Linlithgow Civic Trust has prepared this leaflet, in association with West Lothian Council, as a short guide to help retailers, commercial operators and their agents ensure that any changes in Linlithgow High Street are of high quality and appropriate in their historic setting. The Council's full Planning Guidance can be found on West Lothian's website.

Most shopfront changes will require planning permission and/or advertisement consent and possibly listed building consent where applicable.

As the regulations around planning permission, advertisement consent and listed building consent are complex, it is strongly recommended that any business proposing to make changes to shopfronts or signs should consult the Council's Development Management Team for guidance, before going ahead. (Contact details below).

Shopfront Design

- Where possible the original shopfront should be retained, including the 'stallriser' - the area between the window and the external footway, and a 'fascia' - usually a fairly narrow strip for the shop name, above the window.
- The design of fascias should preferably be made as found in traditional shopfronts. Materials such as acrylic, vinyl, Perspex, aluminium or plastic are not considered appropriate.
- Quality modern materials for lettering may be permitted. Shopfront signs should not exceed the area of the original fascia. If too wide or deep, they look out of proportion to the original shopfront.

- Painting shop fronts will require planning and where applicable listed building consent.
- The choice of colour that a shopfront is painted has a major impact on its appearance in the street. A traditional colour palette is preferred. See the Council Planning Guidance for further information.
- Illumination of fascia signs should be achieved by means of concealed top light tubes painted to match the background.
- Internal illumination, large spotlights or 'swan neck' style lights are not acceptable.
- Shiny, highly reflective and fluorescent colours and materials are also not acceptable.

Shopfront Signage

- All projecting signs require advertisement consent.
- Preference will be given to projecting signs which are hand-painted and made from traditional materials. There should be only one projecting sign on any shop frontage. Advertisement consent will be required.
- Internally illuminated, flashing or moving displays are not acceptable.
- Blinds and canopies require detailed consideration. 'Dutch' blinds, (that curve over the frontage) can hide parts of traditional shopfronts and are not favoured.
- Advertisements such as flags, banners or tethered balloons also require consent in the conservation area.
- Large scale posters or semi-permanent adhesive 'vinyls' on the inside of windows require advertisement consent if they cover more than 10% of the display area.

Signage

Where a fascia board is not present, the presumption is in favour of displaying a company name by individual letters painted or fixed directly to the face of the building.

Shop front cornices should be preserved or reinstated. Fascia width should be restricted within the pilasters and corbels, or line up with the window frame below where corbels are not present.

Illuminated signs in CAs are permitted only in a limited set of circumstances.

Please refer to the diagram below for advice on some elements of traditional shopfronts:



- 1 Projecting Sign: 400 x 500 x 50mm, metal bracket and suspension rod. Traditional symbols e.g. chemist pestle and mortar are supported.
- 2 Individual Letters: metal or wood fixed directly to building face. Light coloured letters on dark background preferable.
- 3 Original stone frontage should not be painted.
- 4 Facia board is in line with the window.
- 5 Decorative corbel bracket retained.
- 6 Facia board is max 450mm in height and under 20% of the total shopfront.
- 7 Cornice retained.

'Advance/Remote' Signs

- Advance or remote signs, including 'A' boards, located on pavements outside properties, can lead to a cluttered appearance and create a hazard for pedestrians, particularly people with disabilities. Such signs also include signs/flyers on lampposts, roundabouts and banners on buildings as well as on the main road approaches to the conservation area.
- As a general rule, there should be a two-metre minimum clearance to allow pedestrians and wheelchair users space to pass comfortably. All such advance/remote signs require planning consent.

Security

- The use of externally-mounted roller security shutters is not acceptable.
- Planning permission, and where applicable listed building consent, is required for the installation of CCTV cameras.

Scaffolding Adverts

- Adverts covering scaffolding, particularly if they may be in place for some time over a large frontage, will generally be acceptable providing they are of high quality netting on the building and display an image of the completed building.

If you have any queries about development in the Conservation Area, please contact the Council's Development Management Team on 01506 28000 or e-mail planning@westlothian.gov.uk

A Short Guide to Shopfront Design and Advertisements in Linlithgow High Street

