



Planning Permission and Shopfront improvements

This is intended to be a guide for high street businesses in Rushcliffe seeking to improve their shopfront. It is not an exhaustive list of planning requirements, and the Council would encourage businesses to contact the Planning Team to provide more detailed guidance to their specific enquiry using the [Pre-Application Advice](#) service.

Planning permission will be required in any of the following situations:

The General Permitted Development Order grants automatic permission for a variety of common work to property. However, in the majority of cases this is subject to restrictions and conditions. In respect of works to shops and business premises (Part 7, Class A of the GPDO) the following limitations are particularly relevant to shopfronts, in that permission is not automatically granted, and therefore an application for planning permission is required, if:

(g) any part of the development would extend beyond an existing shop front;

This would be the case for proposals which include adding canopies or awnings.

(h) the development would involve the insertion or creation of a new shop front or the alteration or replacement of an existing shop front;

Therefore, the replacement of a shopfront or alteration of an existing shopfront will require planning permission. This would include works such as changing the design, materials or size of display windows, fascias, stall risers, or relocating entrances, etc.

(i) the development would involve the installation or replacement of a security grill or shutter on a shop front.

External shutters or grilles will require planning permission. There is usually a reluctance to grant permission for such installations because of the 'defensive' appearance they give to buildings and the impression of disorder that they give in large numbers. The use of laminated glass or internal perforated shutters are examples of alternatives which do not require planning permission and avoid harmful impacts to the character of an area.

Please note Listed Building Consent will likely be required for alterations to shop fronts on listed buildings. It is recommended that you contact Rushcliffe Borough Council for a degree of free informal advice for listed buildings by contacting planningandgrowth@rushcliffe.gov.uk.



Rushcliffe
Borough Council

When considering applications for planning permission the Borough Council will typically apply the following considerations:

Alterations to Traditional Shopfronts

Traditional shopfronts are made up of a number of typical architectural features – please see the illustration below.

- Where a proposal seeks the replacement of a traditional shopfront those which preserve surviving traditional features are likely to be acceptable. However, proposals which seek to retain what survives and also reinstate any lost traditional features will be actively supported.
- For schemes which benefit from public funding the assumption would be that the work will result in some positive improvement, such as reinstating or repairing lost or damaged traditional features .
- Proposals which result actively in the loss of traditional features are unlikely to be supported.



Traditional shopfront features

Alterations to modern shopfronts inserted into older buildings

Where an older property has previously had a modern shopfront inserted, particularly where this replaced an earlier, more traditional shopfront and the modern shopfront conflicts with the architectural character of the building, or results in an unsympathetic relationship with neighbouring retained traditional shopfronts:

- Steps to reintroduce traditional features (as shown in the illustration above) to be more sympathetic to the building and its settings would be seen as positive and would be supported through the planning system. Where a scheme is in receipt of public funding some degree of traditional feature reinstatement would be expected.
- The replacement of a modern shopfront with a similar modern shopfront would likely not be refused. However, on a scheme receiving public funding some betterment that better incorporates traditional features would be



expected, which a simple like-for-like modern shopfront replacement would likely fail to achieve.

Alterations to shopfronts on modern buildings

On modern buildings, unless they have been designed to be sympathetic to a historic area, traditional design features are likely to look out of place. But where a parade of modern shops do consistently have features such as stallrisers these should be retained for consistency. Some traditional features can also be beneficial - for example, incorporating stall risers can make a frontage less attractive to attack.

Signage on shopfronts

Signage plays an important role in advertising premises. The most pleasing and sympathetic approach to signage is the use of individual letters either painted or fixed to the backdrop of the fascia. The size and style of the lettering will mainly be determined by the depth of the fascia and the proportions of the building, as well as its age. Traditional hand painted signs will be encouraged. Plastic, aluminium and non-traditional materials do nothing to enhance or preserve the character and appearance of a conservation area or traditional shopfront and should be avoided. Projecting box signs, internally illuminated fascias and 'halo' lighting will be resisted where inappropriate to older properties or in a Conservation Area, with preference given to the use of reflected light from discretely positioned external lighting units where it is essential for signage to be visible at night. As almost all illuminated shop signage requires advertisement consent careful consideration of illuminated signage designs is important to ensure that the necessary consent is likely to be forthcoming.

Other signs like projecting and hanging signs may be appropriate to traditional buildings where these are of a historically sympathetic design and not located above fascia level. Where upper floors premises are used for a different business, sympathetic lettering on the glass of upper floor windows or wall plaques in traditional materials at ground floor level may be appropriate.

For further information and advice, contact the Planning Team at Rushcliffe Borough Council

For advice prior to undertaking changes to your shopfront to ensure you and the council have a clear understanding and to receive confirmation of any required application(s) for planning permission, you are advised to make use of the [Pre-Application Advice](#) service. You may wish to also consult guidance on [Conservation Areas](#) in Rushcliffe and the [Historic England's National Heritage List for England register of listed buildings and sites](#). Photographic archives for Nottinghamshire are also valuable resources for historic photography of shopfronts in local areas.

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