

ADDITIONAL ADVICE NOT ILLUSTRATED

Existing frontage lines should be retained

A recessed frontage along most of the unit breaks the ground floor building line, presents a weak appearance and (except for entrances) should not be considered.

The use of discordant colours should be avoided

Modern “standardised” shop fronts and house signs will not necessarily be acceptable

The corporate image approach of some of the national firms should be subservient to the elements of local quality and character.

Avoid boldly projecting box-like fascias

Traditionally fascia signs have been flat or slightly angled to the frontage. Modern box-type signs can be out of character and produce an over-prominent appearance.

Hand painted fascia signs are fully recommended

This is the traditional method and can still be the most pleasing and effective. Stick-on letters, preferably made of wood, cast aluminium, bronze or brass, are the most acceptable form of fascia lettering after hand painting. Plastic is not ruled out but if accepted must be matt finished and of sufficient thickness so as not to wrinkle or become wavy in appearance.

Security grills are a particular problem

You are advised to obtain a copy of the Council's Advice Note 10 on this subject.

Period shop fronts must be preserved

The few remaining traditional old shop fronts form the mainstay of the Angus town centre Conservation Areas and it is essential that they are retained. It is not accepted that it is necessary to rip out these characterful shop fronts and replace them with “anywhere” plastic and glass frontages in order to have a profitable trade. In fact a period type shop front can be a considerable asset in the attraction of custom.

ILLUMINATED SIGNS

Possibly the biggest threat to town centre Conservation Areas comes in the guise of illuminated signs. If Conservation Areas are to be taken seriously it will be essential to restrict illumination of shop signs and to ensure and insist upon good design where such illumination is to be allowed. All illuminated signs in Conservation Areas require Advertisement Consent. In dealing with these applications Angus Council will pursue the following policies.

Businesses Not Open Late at Night: Businesses that are not open late at night on a regular basis (i.e. after 6.30 p.m.) will be allowed fascia illumination only by means of individually illuminated letters where the illumination forms an integral part of the fascia. This will require a subtle and quality approach and will only be approved if the Council is fully satisfied that the proposal is respectful of the building's status. Applicants should be aware that the number of properties that could acceptably accommodate this type of illumination is likely to be limited.

Listed Buildings Open Late: Where the business is located within a listed building and is regularly open after 6.30 p.m., trough lighting of the fascia may also be

acceptable. These comprise fluorescent tubes shielded by a pelmet and fixed above the fascia. On a listed building they need to be carefully sited, taking advantage of any architectural detailing - tucked under a string course or moulding for instance with the pelmet coloured to tie-in and illuminating the name of the business only.

Non-Listed Buildings Open Late: The greatest scope will be accorded to businesses that open late at night on a regular basis and are located in non-listed buildings. The policy will be extended to include individually illuminated letters, trough lighting, spot lamps (maximum of two) and logo signs of a restrained but quality appearance and finish. A series of lamps projecting from above the fascia and mounted on stalks are contrary to Historic Scotland advice and will not be acceptable.

All Applications: Floodlights that provide a wash of light down the front of a building will also be permissible subject to their location (e.g. immediately under the eaves), style etc. being acceptable to the Planning Authority.

Illuminated Projecting Signs: Projecting signs are an unnecessary appendage to most building frontages and when permitted in quantity can produce a cluttered appearance. Illuminated projecting signs, therefore, will only be permitted on properties regularly open outwith normal hours, offices with cashline machines or located down a side street. Where permitted, illuminated projecting signs must be of ‘traditional’ single hanging board style with overhead spotlamps or pelmet lighting.

Note: Eligible businesses will be permitted to choose between fascia illumination or a projecting illuminated sign at one per frontage but not both.

NON-ILLUMINATED PROJECTING SIGNS

Non-illuminated projecting signs, whilst not as onerous as the illuminated variety in Conservation Areas, can nevertheless mask views or mar buildings and be visually obtrusive in a historic street setting.

Projecting signs should only be contemplated under exceptional circumstances.

The traditional hand painted trade sign is very appropriate in Conservation Areas and their retention and reintroduction, where applicable, will be encouraged. Projecting signs may also be appropriate when a shop is heavily overshadowed or when sited down a minor, narrow side street.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Signs and shop fronts are an essential yet constantly changing part of the commercial activity of a town centre. This is accepted but it is also the local Planning Authority's duty to conserve the character and traditions of its historic town centres. Otherwise the unnecessary removal of older shop fronts, the insertion of incongruous modern, standardised fronts and fascias and the creation of clutter caused by projecting signs will quickly erode the special character that makes these town centres special.

Although intended primarily as advice, **the guidance given in this Note will be insisted upon by the Council in coming to decisions on appropriate planning applications.** This is not to say that NO alterations will be permitted but there are still shop fronts (but getting fewer all the time) that contribute so much to the character of a place that the Planning Authority has a duty to safeguard them as an integral part of our heritage for future generations to enjoy. A balance between commercialisation and conservation can

be obtained. The recommendations given here leave much scope for interpretation by GOOD DESIGNERS.

In dealing with planning applications the Planning authority will grasp any opportunity to achieve more extensive improvements or restorations, such as the replacement of excessively deep or inappropriate fascia panels. To assist this objective and other improvement works, grants will be made available. Further information can be obtained from the Conservation Officer within the Planning & Transport Department.

In determining planning applications affecting shop fronts in Conservation Areas, the Planning Department may require more detail to be provided in planning applications, particularly elevational plans showing the full façade of the building and outline details of adjoining premises, etc. Although this Advice Note applies primarily to shops AND OTHER COMMERCIAL PREMISES in Conservation Areas, the same policies will be applied to Listed Buildings outwith Conservation Areas and many of the recommendations are just as applicable elsewhere.

Angus Council



ADVICE NOTE 2

SHOPFRONTS AND SIGNS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

For further information and advice contact:

Planning & Transport
Angus Council
County Buildings
Market Street
Forfar
DD8 3LG

Telephone 01307 461460

INTRODUCTION

The Angus Towns have managed to retain a varied architectural heritage but because of the rapid rate of change now being experienced this heritage is in danger of being lost forever. Some years ago the need to safeguard and enhance these areas was recognised and led to the designation of five of the Angus town centres as Conservation Areas.

Such areas are attractive not only to locals but can also be a positive asset in attracting visitors. Despite the designation of Conservation Areas, their character is still being unacceptably eroded due primarily to the many alterations and works that are outwith the scope of planning controls.

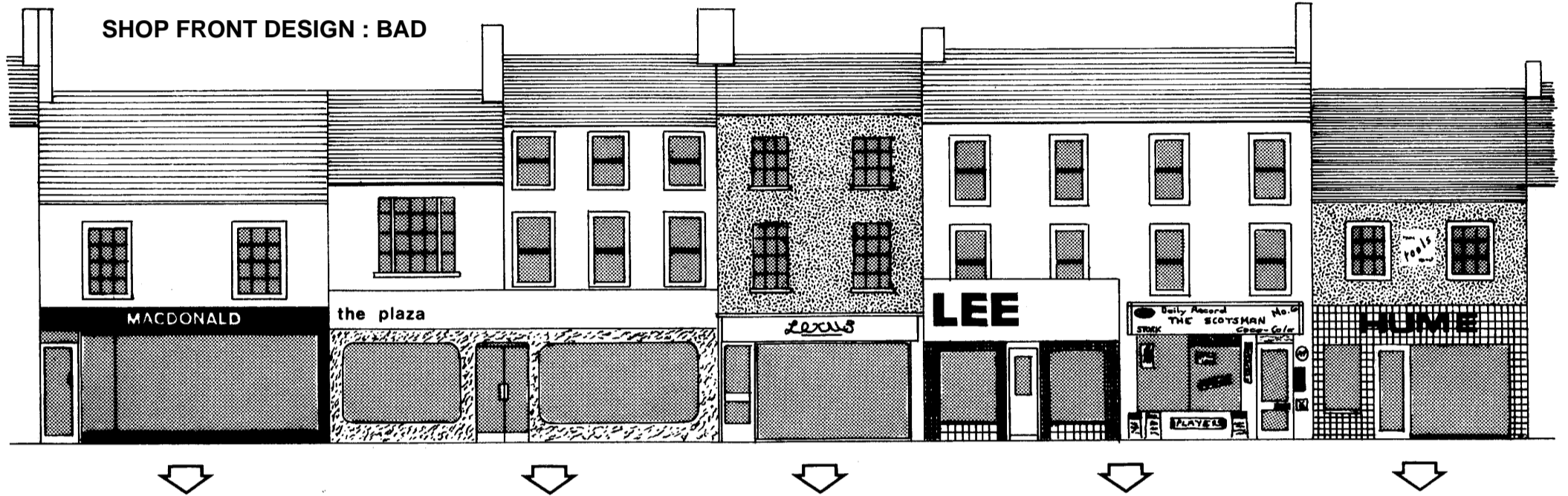
Unsympathetic changes to shop fronts, as they are to be found at ground floor, pedestrian level, have the most impact on the person in the street. Indeed it is the concentration of traditional shop fronts in certain Angus towns that does most to produce the character required for designation as a Conservation Area. These towns have been fortunate in retaining many period shop fronts and are the envy of many less fortunate areas.

However, as these disappear through modernisation, those town centres designated as Outstanding Conservation Areas are threatened with the loss of their status (and special grant aid) and eventually could lose all recognition. This Advice Note provides guidance for anyone intending works to shops (including restaurants, offices, etc.) located within a Conservation Area. Where planning permission is required, the "guidance" will be regarded as policy and compliance will be insisted upon.

SHOP FRONTS

A great deal of damage is being done to old, characterful town centres by the insensitive renewal of shop fronts. Not only does the "blanket" introduction of modern shop front designs and materials destroy the traditional character of the town centre, it can eventually lead to all shopping streets looking the same, becoming boring and monotonous and losing their sense of individual identity.

The major elements of good and bad shop front design in town centre Conservation Areas can be seen in the following illustrations:-



The shop front should not be designed in isolation from the rest of the building or adjoining frontages.

The insertion of shop fronts with a strong horizontal emphasis is doing much to destroy the harmony of the traditional Angus High Street.

Modern shop fronts containing large, continuous areas of plate glass appear weak and incapable of supporting the solid structure above.

Non-traditional or gimmicky features and architecture should not be introduced into Conservation Areas.

Fascia layout should be balanced - avoid crowding the lettering to one end.

Where the ground floor of two buildings is occupied by the same user the individuality of the two should not be destroyed by taking a fascia or the shop front, as a single design across both frontages.

Stallrisers are a feature of all traditional shop fronts and should not be omitted.

Avoid complex or gimmicky lettering - they are often unreadable.

Excessively deep fascias should be avoided. Fascias should not ignore or obscure upper floor windows.

When two or more shops are located in the same building there is often no relationship between the fronts. This can destroy the character and balance of the building.

Too much advertising both defeats its purpose and creates an eyesore.

Fascias are intended to indicate the shop name, proprietor or type of business, they should not be cluttered with general advertising thus losing their individual identity.

Modern materials are generally out of character in a Conservation Area and, if essential, must be used with discretion. Exposed brick or tiling will rarely be acceptable.

Plastic fascias can look particularly cheap and produce a "stuck-on" appearance. High level signs disfigure a building.

There should be a consistency of style between shop front, the floors above and its neighbours.

A vertical emphasis should be demonstrated by making windows greater in height than in width. Retain the traditional pattern of solid to void. This can be done by retaining areas of stone work, the use of vertical framing features etc.

The individuality of two buildings can be retained whilst displaying a common occupancy by a consistency of detail design, colouring, lettering, etc.

Traditional materials should be used whenever possible - stone, timber, brass, or at least materials with a matt finish. Stone pilasters, dividing walls, stallrisers, and even fascias are very much part of the traditional Angus shop front and should be retained. If fascia lettering has to be at one end balance it with a motif or street number.

Stallrisers should be retained to a minimum height of 6000mm (2ft).

Simple clear lettering is the most effective and pleasing.

The application of lettering direct to the stonework can be particularly appropriate in Angus and adds variety to the scene.

Fascias should be in proportion with the scale of the building. A depth of 750mm (2'6") will rarely be acceptable with 450 - 600mm (18" - 2') being preferred. Lettering should generally be restricted to 450mm (18") maximum.

Two or more shop fronts in the same building should relate to each other and this can be done without a loss of individual identity.

Shop fronts with a definite period quality such as illustrated here, must be preserved

