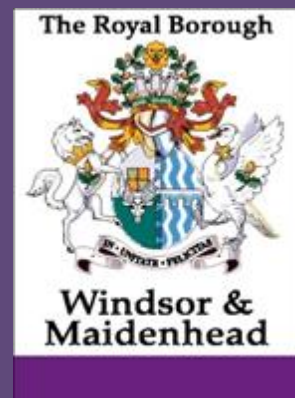




Maidenhead Business & Shop Front Design Guide



August 2013

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Contents

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Growing recognition that Maidenhead town centre is in need of rejuvenation prompted an assessment of its shop fronts. This Shop Front Design Guide is a result of that review. It will be used in decision making associated with planning applications for shop fronts in Maidenhead town centre. The guidance will apply to all shops including pop up shops and those in the charity sector.

Good quality design and sensitive use of colours and materials do not necessarily cost more but can add significantly to the attractiveness of your business. High quality shop fronts do not have to be expensive.

Maidenhead Town centre Area Action Plan (AAP)⁽¹⁾ was adopted in September 2011 (http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_mtc_aap.htm) provides a sound policy driven vision of what we want Maidenhead to be in the future.

“The AAP will help bring about:

- *A vibrant, visually attractive town centre that will excite and surprise;*
- *A memorable place with striking architecture, spaces and waterways;*
- *A much larger shopping area with a host of new shops;*
- *A strong local economic focus;*
- *A centre for community art and culture;*
- *Improved accessibility, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists;*
- *A town centre that residents can relate to and be proud of.*

In addition to the AAP, the council's saved policies from the adopted Local Plan are also relevant.⁽²⁾ This is available at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_adopted_local_plan.htm.

This Shop Front Design Guide will complement both the AAP and saved policies from the adopted Local Plan in driving forward a coordinated approach to improving shop front advert design for all types of premises. Ultimately improving the experience of people who shop, live, work and visit the town centre.

The National Planning Policy Framework enacted March 2012 specifically identifies “Ensuring the vitality of town centres” as a key initiative in setting policies. It identifies that (the following is an extract of relevant paragraphs [2.-23.]):

“Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:

- *Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;*
- *Define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes;*

1 Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan – Adopted September 2011 – Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Development Framework

2 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (incorporating alterations adopted 2003)

Introduction

- *Promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;*
- *Where town centres are in decline, local planning authorities should plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.⁽³⁾*

In developing this guidance document the local planning authority has taken into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation of the historic environment can bring.⁽⁴⁾

Whilst this guidance assist those considering the design of business and shop fronts and advertisements, it is advisable to take up the council's pre-application advice service to discuss specific plans before submitting any formal application. Particular care should be taken when putting forward proposals for schemes within the Conservation Area where there is a presumption that the features of special architectural or historic interest that should be preserved and enhanced. Further information on the conservation area can be found at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_conservation_areas.htm.

Objectives

In order to achieve an overall improvement in the appearance of Maidenhead town centre, the following objectives have been identified:

1. Retain and refurbish existing traditional shop fronts and fascias (including any features of the shop front surround; pilasters; console brackets; cornice; blind boxes; stall-risers; recessed doors and any other important features, or special characteristics applicable to the building).
2. Encourage the use of traditional materials and design elements, whilst allowing for imaginative design principles and avoiding the use of "replica" shop fronts in modern shop units.
3. Encourage creative and imaginative modern shop front designs for modern buildings where the case has been made that a traditional shop front will not work successfully.
4. The use of corporate house styles and colours must not detract from the identity of individual buildings and commercial centres.
5. Ensure that all shop front design takes account of the building in which is it situated and fits into the context of the whole street.
6. Ensure that the access requirements for all are made with the appropriate provisions.
7. Ensure that the level of advertising does not adversely impact on the street scene by complying with the design guidelines e.g., restrictions in the levels of luminance and types of illumination of signs.
8. Protect important views in and out of the Town Centre, from inappropriate and intrusive forms of advertisements e.g., the use of large projecting signs, which could detract from views of important listed buildings, landmarks and spaces.
9. Ensure that all advertisements respect the character of their surroundings and that any display should not be obtrusive when viewed by the public.
10. Encourage active shop fronts which enable a clear vision into the shop without obstructions from internal features or adhesive adverts on the windows.
11. Ensure that advertisement/promotional signs do not obscure the view of users of the streetscape or distract their attention, to the detriment of safety. Nor should the colours or illumination of advertisements obscure or reduce the clarity of any traffic signs.

3 National Planning Policy Framework – Department for Communities and Local Government - March 2012

4 National Planning Policy Framework

How to Use this Guidance

This guidance is divided into two principal sections: Section 2: General principle and good shop front design and Section 3: Detailed design considerations. The first focuses holistically on the design of business and shopfronts and provides case studies of good examples within Maidenhead town centre. The latter provides guidance on specific aspects of design.

Within each section text within a coloured box outlines the related requirement.

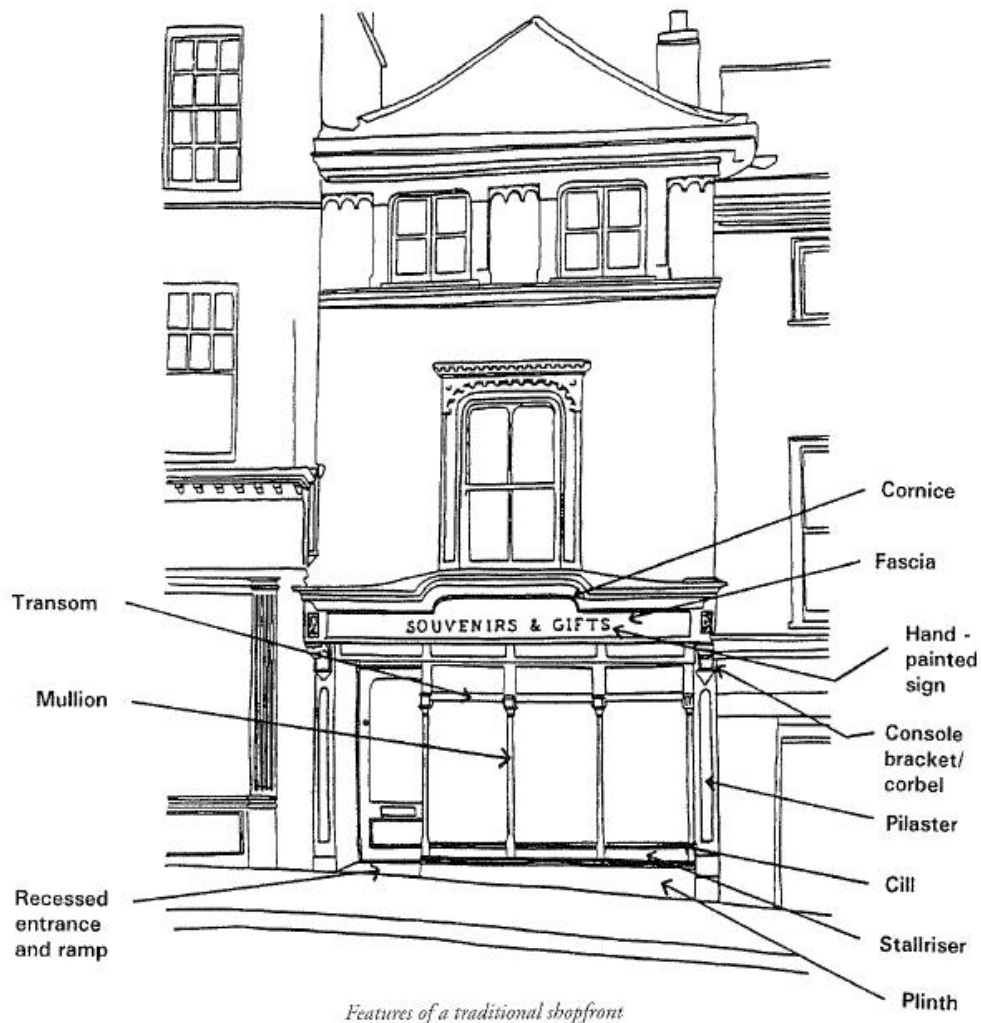
Requirement	Page No.	Your Notes
Requirement MSF1 – Quality Design Proposals will be required to be of a high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture. The Town Centre should be able to adapt in light of any change in future needs.	11	
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Table 1

Introduction

General principles and good shop front design

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND GOOD SHOP FRONT DESIGN



2.1 Retention of existing old shop fronts

Traditional shop fronts are inviting and attractive in themselves. They add to the shopper's experience and help to give the town centre character, quality and vitality. With this in mind, there is a presumption in favour of the retention and restoration of traditional older style shop fronts in this guidance. In many cases traditional features such as pilasters or fascias survive, sometimes hidden under later work, so the shop front would benefit from exposing these aspects of original detailing. Maidenhead has a variety of existing shop fronts spanning more than a hundred years of retail history. The aim of this guide is to build on the best and reduce the number of inappropriate shop fronts.

2.2 Replacement shop fronts

When considering replacing a shop front, it is important to take account of the context of the shop, looking to pick up the rhythm, style and quality of the most vibrant and inviting shop fronts. For example:

In some cases it may be desirable to replace shop fronts with one more appropriate to the rest of the building or street. Replacement shop fronts should incorporate traditional features and should avoid large areas of plate glass, aluminium, plastic and tropical hardwood frames and fascias. The important principle is that the

General principles and good shop front design

new shop front should be designed within the context of the building and as part of the whole architectural composition of the building. The design should take account of the period and style of the building above and of buildings in the immediate vicinity.

If the premises is in a modern development, there is an opportunity to consider a more innovative and attractive approach to a shop front. This may involve the use of non traditional materials, but would not encourage poor quality. Shop front design in this instance should be imaginative and appropriate to the style of the building, utilising a high standard of materials.

Corporate designs of multiple shops may need to be adapted to respect the individuality of buildings and respect the overall character of the area.

2.3 Relating the shop front to the overall building

The design of the shop front should take into account the age and architectural detail of the building as a whole and special attention should be paid to:

- Ensure shop fronts do not cut through or obscure the cills of first floor windows.
- Fascia panels, if required, should be flush with the wall of the building above or recessed and not project.
- Shop fronts should be subdivided to relate to the proportions of the windows in the building above.
- Where a shop runs through more than one building, each building should contain its own shop front.
- Where a building contains a separate access to an upper floor this should be separate from the retail frontage.
- When a shop forms part of a group or terrace of similarly proportioned/designed buildings, opportunities to reflect the character of the whole terrace or group should guide the design.
- The design of the shop front should reflect the architectural style of the remainder of the building.
- Appropriate scale and proportion of sign to fascia and projecting/hanging signs.

2.4 Relating the shop front to the street scene

Maidenhead Town Centre has a rich variety of different styles and periods of buildings, many of which are reflected in shop front designs. It is therefore important to incorporate newly designed shop fronts that are individual in style. The design of shop fronts should also take account of rhythm and local characteristics of the street, reflecting the width of the plot and the vertical and horizontal elements within the street frontage.

The design of new shop fronts should create more space for pedestrians, where this can be achieved without affecting the architectural character of the building as a whole and is sympathetic with the public realm. This might be achieved by recessing the entrance to allow people to stop and look into the shop window. Existing traditionally tiled floors could be a character of recessed entrances and where appropriate such details and materials should be incorporated into the shop front design, particularly in the Conservation Area.

2.5 Good signage graphics and advertising design

Good quality signage is essential to the successful design of a shop front. Positive promotion of a business relies on sensitive displays. Careful selection of materials, colours and font size will support this.

2.6 Lighting

Use lighting to highlight entrances and shop front displays

External illumination of fascias preferred

Lighting can be used to improve security and deter anti social behaviour at any time of the day or night.

General principles and good shop front design

2.7 Case Studies

Good Examples of shop fronts, signage and displays

Case Study 1:

Boville Wright Art Shop- Traditional features have been successfully maintained.

General principles and good shop front design



Picture 1

General principles and good shop front design

Case Study 2:

Toni&Guy, - Smaller fascias, substantial stall risers, attractive shop fronts.



Picture 2

General principles and good shop front design

Case Study 3:

Co-operative Funeral Care- sympathetic corporate colours and proportions to building above.



Picture 3

Detailed design considerations

DETAILED DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Design quality

Requirement 1: Quality Design

Proposals will be required to be of a high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture. The Town Centre should be able to adapt in light of any change in future needs.

Proposals will:

- Use an appropriate choice of materials and colour
- Be visually attractive from all angles
- Enhance streets and spaces through quality design and architecture
- Provide a high quality environment for future all users
- Be suitable in terms of crime prevention, community safety and security
- Respect the environment, heritage and function of existing landmarks

The design of shop fronts and signage for Maidenhead Town Centre should be of a high quality both in design and detailing. Shop fronts contribute to the character and vitality of an area and the quality of the surrounding public realm.

They they appear in the most visually prominent parts of buildings in centres, Their design plays a critical part in setting the scene for a quality environment and is an essential part of the shopper's experience.

3.2 Access

Requirement 2: Access

Accessible to all - Consider

- width of entrance
- gradient of entrance
- dimensions of recess

To ensure that retail business are accessible to all their customers the considerations of those with mobility issues, young and old, those with sight impairments and people who struggle with the written word should be considered during the design stage. Shops need to be easily identifiable and welcoming. In general, steps should be avoided; doors should open automatically or be lightweight. It should be noted that the access should be DDA compliant.

Listed buildings and properties in the conservation area may have steps which are part of the original architectural features. In these cases, access requirements may be relaxed. However, in order to ensure all customers can access the premises alternative or temporary measures should be considered to secure a level access. This might include portable ramps.

Detailed design considerations

3.3 Fascia

Requirement 3: Fascia and hanging/projecting signs

Integral part of the shop front

- Keep within the shop front area
- Keep below the corbel
- Keep between 600 and 800mm depth
- Use timber
- External illumination
- Hanging signs should be below first floor windows and double sided
- Hanging signs should not exceed 0.75sqm and must comply with the Town and Country Planning Control of Advertisement Regulations 2007
- Height above the highway to underside of hanging/projecting sign to the ground, to be no less than 2.7m

Fascias are an integral part of the shop front. In most cases new fascias should be designed to fit the space available immediately above the shop front. This is often framed by pilasters and topped by corbels and cornices marking the boundary between the shop front and the upper floors. This boundary may be further marked by the installation of a retractable canopy.

The height and depth of fascia boards should respect the proportions of the building. As a general rule fascia boards should be between 600mm and 800mm high (measured from top of cornice to window frame below).

Where there are existing suspended ceilings within the building, deep fascia boards should not be used to conceal these, as this leads to incongruous deep fascias. This issue can be resolved by using an obscure glassed panel at the top of the shop window.

Fascia boards should have a matt finish to reduce reflection and glare and ensure that shop fronts can be easily read. The preference is for painted timber fascia boards with external illumination.

3.4 Advertisements

Requirement 4: Advertisements

Design advertisements to enhance business by

- Careful selection of size
- Careful consideration of colours to match shop front and complement the building.
- Select font and sizes to ensure clear display of information
- Use external lighting to highlight business and identify shops entrance.

Projecting signs must ensure that they respect the character of the building and its surroundings and takes particular account of views into and out of the town. For example the use of large projecting signs, which could detract from views of important listed buildings and landmarks.

Detailed design considerations

Free standing advertisements and advertisements located in prominent locations need to avoid causing highways safety issues. Advertisements displayed alongside highways should be related to the scale of surrounding buildings and when displayed on buildings they should have regard to the symmetry and architectural features of the building upon which they are sited. They should be designed and positioned so as to be seen as an integral feature of the building.

3.5 Canopies & blinds

Requirement 5: Canopies and Blinds

Consider canopy or blind to provide shading

- Refurbish existing if possible
- Use canvas
- Retractable box set below cornice

Existing original canvas blinds and blind boxes should be retained and refurbished. Blinds should normally be housed in the cornice area above the fascia board and will not normally be acceptable in a position above the level of the shop front cornice.

New external blinds should be of the traditional canvas retractable flat roller or fan type. Plastic, "Dutch" or fixed blinds will not be acceptable.

3.6 Window and doors

Requirement 6: Doors and Windows

Consider your shop window as the main advertisement for your business

- Divide window to create frames
- Use timber
- Create stall-riser
- Recess doorway
- Remember kick-plate for your door
- Don't forget door furniture
- Design in security measures

The shop front provides a window into your business. For many shoppers this space advertises the activity within and is the invitation into the shop. To develop interest it is necessary to provide the shopper with a framed view into the shop. Windows should be subdivided into a series of frames using timber transoms or mullions reflecting the character and proportions of the shop front and the rest of the building. Timber window frames, mullions and transoms should be painted and have appropriate moulded profiles. Elevating the window display helps to maximise the shoppers view. A stall-riser is effective in hiding any platform or staging; in addition a stall-riser provides a neat visual break for the shop front. Wherever possible the frontages/windows should not be blocked or covered, they should be open so that shoppers can see into the establishment.

Detailed design considerations

Doors should be recessed to allow shoppers to pause and enter without obstructing the pavement. This can also break up an otherwise flat frontage introducing additional views into the shop. The design of new shop doors should reflect the design of the shop front and should have a “kick plate” or bottom panel which should match the height of the stall-riser and the colour and material of the rest of the shop front. Good quality door furniture, completes the shop front.

Any entrance to a shop should be surfaced in a non-slip material, and the dimensions of the recess must accommodate wheelchair access.

3.7 Pilasters and corbels

Requirement 7: Pilasters and Corbels

Add interest by using pilasters and corbels to separate out the shop front from the rest of the building

Traditional pilasters and corbels or console brackets enhance the interest to the shop front. Modern shop units may achieve an interpretation of these features and add interest. Traditional shop fronts are often constructed from timber.

3.8 Stall-risers

Requirement 8: Stall-risers

Use stall-risers to help frame the display

- Should be between 450 and 700mm high
- Should have a cill
- Protection for the window from dirt splashing during inclement weather

The stall-riser is a vital element of a traditional shop front. It gives protection to the shop window and provides a visual frame to the base of the shop front.

Where they are appropriate, they should measure between 450mm and 700mm high and should have a moulded projecting cill to provide a strong junction with the glass.

Stall-risers can be made from a variety of materials, depending on the materials used on the surrounding buildings and the shop front. Painted timber panelling, rendered finishes, marble, or facing brick may all be appropriate finishes. Traditional ceramic tiles may be acceptable in particular cases.

In times of heavy rain, dirt splashed from the pavement will not mark the window display but will be caught by the stall riser. If painted appropriately this will remain looking clean and reduce the need for daily window cleaning.

3.9 Security

Requirement 9: Shutters

Security shutters should be an open style grille or lattice design and internal only wherever possible

Security shutters should be avoided unless a case is made by the applicant that they are needed. Where it is agreed that they are needed they should be designed to be internal and of a light mesh grille or lattice roller style, to allow views into the shop.

Detailed design considerations

Laminated glass should be used, this offers protection without adversely affecting the appearance of the shop front. Other features should meet industry standards for security and safety.

3.10 Materials and maintenance

Requirement 10: Materials

Fascia and hanging signs

- Durable and easily maintained
 - Painted timber
 - Sign writing/style lettering
 - Externally illuminated

Window

- Durable and easy to clean
 - Simple glazing
 - Reinforced glass
 - Timber painted frame
 - Clear view into the shop

Stall-riser

- Durable and easy to clean
 - Painted timber, stone, brick, rendered or tiles
 - Colours to blend with fascia

Entrance

- Inviting entrance for shoppers
 - Non slip surface
 - Active window display
 - Recessed if possible

Durable and easily maintainable materials are encouraged; however these should be traditional materials such as painted timber, moulded plaster and non reflective glass. Alternative materials that may be acceptable include:

- Fascia area – matt finished material, stone or render
- Stall-risers – stone, render or tiles.

Detailed design considerations

Regular maintenance is essential if shop fronts are to remain attractive.

3.11 Colour scheme

Corporate colour schemes on fascias are acceptable as they allow the shopper to easily identify their preferred shopping experience.

3.12 Hanging signs

Hanging or projecting signs are traditional forms of commercial advertisement. These signs contribute towards an attractive shopping environment provided they are designed sensitively. They should be a single board illustrated on both sides to match the fascia with external illumination only.

Living above the shop

LIVING ABOVE THE SHOP

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead encourages the residential use of space above shops. This normally requires a separate entrance to be incorporated within the shop front. Rear access to the premises above the shop(s) is encouraged wherever possible. Care should be taken so that the entrance:

- does not detract from the shop window, and
- is consistent with the shop fronts elsewhere in the town centre.

To maximise the shop window area, narrow frontages may benefit from the shop and residential entrances being incorporated together as a double entry point in a single recess within the shop front.

Living above the shop

Planning requirements

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Many alterations to shop fronts require consent under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 2007 (as amended), and sometimes, more than one type of consent may be required.

a. Do I need Planning Permission/Advertisement Consent?

Planning permission will be required for all new shop fronts, or alterations that materially affect the external appearance of a building. This includes alterations to the fascia, windows or doorways, changes to materials or the installation of blinds. For more information follow this link:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/dc_article_3_and_4_directions.htm

b. Advertisement Consent

Signs and advertisements are controlled by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 2007. For more information follow this link:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/applications>

c. Listed Building Consent

Any alterations to a listed building which affects its character and appearance as a building of special architectural or historic interest requires listed building consent. The extent of the legislation includes the repainting of an elevation of shop front in a different colour, the removal of architectural features such as decorative string courses, rubbed brick arches, original window frames, traditional blinds or decorative tiles and most internal alterations. Listed building consent is also required to fix advertisements on to listed buildings.

d. Conservation Area Consent

This is only applicable to non listed buildings within the Conservation Area and will be required for the demolition of any building or substantial demolition. This includes the wholesale removal of shop fronts within buildings.

e. Building Regulation Approval

May also be required for certain works, including fire precautions, and where ventilation and noise controls are required the Environmental Health Unit should be contacted.

f. Pre Application Discussion

The Borough offers a pre-application advice service and it is advised that it would be worthwhile contacting the Planning Development Control before an application is submitted. However there is a small fee for this and we will advise you of this when you contact us. For more information please follow this link:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/dc_pre-application.htm

g. Submitting an Application

When submitting a planning application, an application form and an Ordnance Survey location plan will be required, along with 4 copies of the following scaled drawings:

- Front elevation of existing shop-front and building
- Elevation drawing of proposed shop-front and building
- Horizontal and sectional drawings to a scale of at least 1:10
- An indication of materials and colours to be used

We encourage you to submit your application on line using the planning portal. Please follow this link:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/dc_planning_portal_link.htm

5 Planning requirements

What to do next

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

- Appraise requirements of building and consult an architect. In consultation areas and for listed buildings, it is best to use a heritage specialist
- Find out if permission is required; discuss initial ideas with Planning Development Control using the pre-application advice service
- Prepare design
- Submit planning application, preferably on line at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/dc_planning_portal_link.htm
- Obtain Building Regulations approval at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/bc_consultancy.htm
- Once planning permission is received obtain tenders from builders
- If you need working space you may need to obtain licences from the Highways Authority, for more information go to http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/licensing_boards_goods.htm
- Install new shop front/commence repairs or alterations to shop front

What to do next

Useful documents

Useful documents

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

The following are documents that you may find useful:

Maidenhead Town Centre AAP

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_mtc_aap.htm

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_adopted_local_plan.htm

Maidenhead Town Centre Conservation Area Statement

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_conservation_areas.htm

Outdoor Advertisements and Signs: a guide for advertisers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outdoor-advertisements-and-signs-a-guide-for-advertisers>

Thames Valley Police Compendium of Crime Prevention and Reduction in the Planning System

<http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/crprev/crprev-cpdt/crprev-cpdt-compen.htm>

Glossary

B

Glossary

GLOSSARY

Fascia and Signs	
Applied Letters	Individually fixed letters to fascia panel where the letters stand proud of the background panel.
Cut Out Letters	Lettering formed by cutting into the fascia panel and infilling the spaces with letters made from a contrasting material to the surround panel.
Fascia	Area of shop front, normally for advertisement display situated above shop windows and framed by pilasters or corbels at each end and a string course of cornice with lead flashing above and mouldings below. Height of fascia boards should be kept to a minimum and respect the proportions of the building and original fascia. Fascia boards, as a general rule, will be about 600mm to 800mm high (measured from top of the cornice to window frame below).
Hanging Signs	Advertisement normally suspended from a single bracket from the face of the building, comprising a single panel with design on two faces. These are normally expected to be positioned at or just below fascia level or occasionally below first floor window sill level. Not normally expected to project more than 900mm or exceed 0.2sqm in size.
Projecting Signs	Similar to hanging sign (one panel with two faces), but will not hang freely – may be attached to shop by means of two separate brackets or alternatively one central bracket.

External Illumination	
Cowl lights	Dome-shaped light fixtures normally on projecting arms and usually made of brass.
Striplights	Fluorescent strip-lights normally concealed by a compact hood or pelmet.
Spotlights	Variety of different styles including narrow or medium angle flood-lights, normally with a rounded head, or else small tungsten-halogen flood-lights which are square headed angular shaped lights.