

The Royal Borough



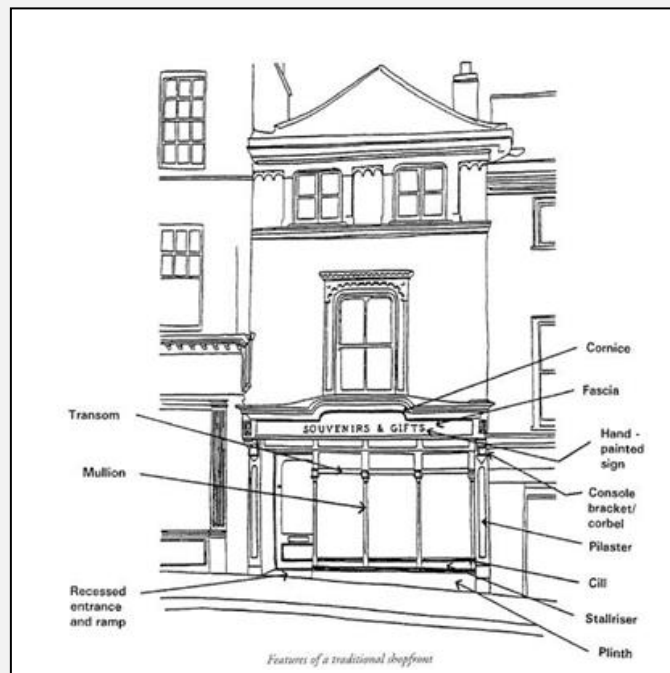
Windsor &
Maidenhead

SHOP FRONT QUICK START GUIDANCE

What exactly makes up a 'shop front'?

Take a look at the diagram below and you will see that your shop front can include: cornices, fascias, corbel brackets, fan lights, entrance, stall risers, plinths, pilasters and mullions. These are all the aspects you will need to consider when thinking about updating or changing your shop front.

Beyond the actual architectural features of a shop front, other important additions to consider are lighting, projecting signage, fascia signage and advertising.



Why are shop fronts so important?

They paint a picture of the town and the type of people who live/shop/work there. Attractive and enticing shop frontages draw in customers.

We already have some beautiful, contemporary and interesting shop frontages in

Maidenhead. These frontages have benefited from the owners/designers spending a little time and effort on ensuring they are well thought out and add to the overall look of the town, whilst retaining their own identity and attracting shoppers.

How to get information on changing your shop front.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have produced a 'Business and Shop Front Design Guide' which will be used by the planning department when considering applications to update/improve/change shop fronts in the town.

It is recommended that you download the complete guide and take this on board with your shop front proposals before you submit any applications to the Council regarding your shop front. In the meantime, this Quick Start Guide will give you an overview of the process.

How to start your new/updated shop front design.

You may already have ideas and a great design of your own that you wish to implement. For more comprehensive ideas and depending on the extent of your works/budget you may wish to employ architects, shop fitters, signage companies or general builders with experience in shop fronts. The internet is a great place to start looking for local companies who may already have a good understanding of what is appropriate for the town centre.

For more ideas why not take a walk around the town centre to see what looks attractive or search the internet for images of shop fronts. You'll be amazed at what you can find.

What to consider when applying to alter/replace a shop front?

Your first question should be "Can my existing shop front (or aspects of it) be retained? Does it have features that are worth keeping?"

Just because a shop front is old does not necessarily mean it has any historical value. Really consider if the design of the shop front is traditional and attractive rather than just aged.

Whether you go for a complete replacement shop front or if you are just updating your current shop front you will need to take into account the following aspects which the Council will be looking at when they review your application:

- Incorporation of traditional features where and if possible.
- Avoidance of large areas of plate glass, aluminium, plastic and tropical hardwood.
- Material usage is very important – traditional materials are preferred but non-traditional materials can be used. ALL materials must be of high quality.
- Low maintenance materials are recommended but these must still be of good quality.
- Main fascia boards should generally be between 600 and 800mm high with a matt finish to reduce reflection and glare – timber fascia boards are preferable.
- Consider how your shop front looks in the context of the building overall.

- Carefully thought out signage that complements the rest of the shop front.
- Well positioned and sympathetic lighting both inside the shop window and/or externally.
- Good access to your shop (which must be fully DDA compliant if changes are made).
- Projecting signs and free standing signs should not cause highways or visibility safety issues or block out views that would otherwise be attractive.
- Existing original canvas canopies and awnings should be retained and refurbished where possible.
- Window framing should complement the overall look of the shop front and invite shoppers into the shop. Keep a clear view into the shop without obstruction from internal features or window stickers.
- Recessed doors are preferable to allow shoppers to pause and enter without causing obstruction on the pavement.
- Security shutters are not acceptable except in extreme cases. Out of hours security shutters do not look enticing – especially during the summer months when visitors are more likely to be strolling through the town during the evening.

These aspects will all be carefully considered as part of your application to alter/replace your frontage. If you have any questions or queries on any of these aspects please speak to either your own design consultant or the RBWM planning department.

Also, be aware that if you are in a conservation area you may be obliged to retain certain elements of your existing shop front.

What permissions are needed to alter/replace a shop frontage?

For the majority, planning permission WILL BE required for alterations that materially affect the external appearance of a building. However, you may also require other permissions as well, eg., Conservation Area consent.

Our planning department at RBWM will be happy to help you with advice on what permissions you need as well as assisting with the detail of your application.

And finally, when you've received planning permission for your lovely new shop front, don't forget to employ experienced fitters and signage companies. Make the most of your new shop front and avoid cluttering it up with unnecessary stickers and signs in the windows.

This guide is designed as an overview of the RBWM shop front policy. A full version of the policy can be downloaded at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_shopfront_advertisement_guidelines.htm