



# Draft Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

for consultation

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Guide

This document aims to provide developers and retailers with design guidance and good practice examples for the alteration or installation of shopfronts and shop signage. It applies to all buildings with a ground floor frontage in non-residential use.

The Borough includes four main centres (Godalming, Cranleigh, Farnham and Haslemere), as well as many smaller village and local centres, many of these have distinct and strong characters. The design of shopfronts and their influence on the shopping street are important to the preservation and enhancement of these towns and villages and reinforce their local distinctiveness.

Shopfront design has always been strongly influenced by fashions and prevailing architectural trends. As such, within Waverley there is a variety of historic and modern shopfronts that contribute to the character of shopping streets. However, there is increasing pressure for traditional shopfronts to be replaced by 'standard' frontages with large plate glass, plain aluminium surrounds, oversized fascias and excessive advertising which is not encouraged. As such, the retention of traditional shopfronts is important within Waverley. However, this does not restrict the installation of modern shopfronts that demonstrate an

understanding of the context of the building and streetscene and follow this guidance.

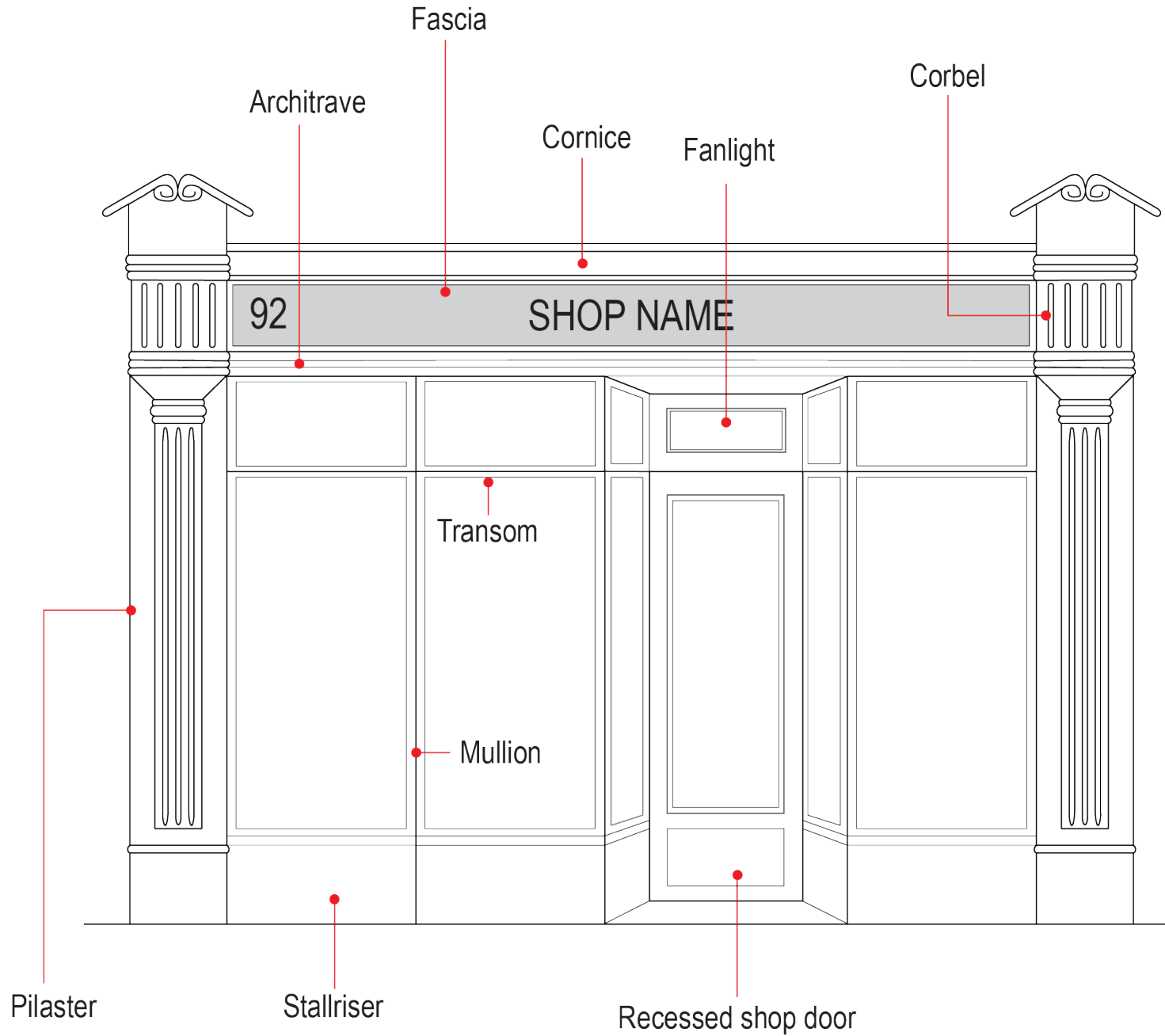
This guidance should be used whether planning permission or relevant consents are or are not required. This will help to ensure that development is respectful of the surrounding area and of a high quality design.

## 1.2 Policy Context and Permissions

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide detail on the interpretation and delivery of national and local planning policy. This guidance will be adopted as a SPD to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and Waverley Borough Council's Local Plan 2002. The saved policies which this guidance supports are identified in Appendix 1.

Alterations to shopfronts or the installation of new signs may need planning permission, advertisement consent and / or listed building consent. Please see Appendix 4 for further information.

## 2.0 Elements of a Shopfront



## 3.0 Good Practice

### 3.1. Restore not replace

Waverley encourages retention and restoration of historic and traditional shopfronts over replacement, particularly where the original shopfront or detailing still remains. This can often be a more cost-effective and sustainable way of improving a shopfront, and helps to retain the character of the building and streetscene.

With respect to listed buildings, the Council must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Therefore it is considered that original shopfront features which remain in listed buildings should be restored not replaced, unless there is exceptional justification for such removal or replacement. This is also an expectation for Buildings of Local Merit.

### 3.2. Minimise signage

Signage above the fascia should be avoided as it can make the shopfront too busy. Where businesses occupy the upper floors, advertising should be limited to lettering applied to windows. The exception to this would be for hanging signs, which can be suitably placed both in line with the fascia and between the fascia and the cill of the first floor windows (see Section 5.7.2).

## 4. Key Design Considerations

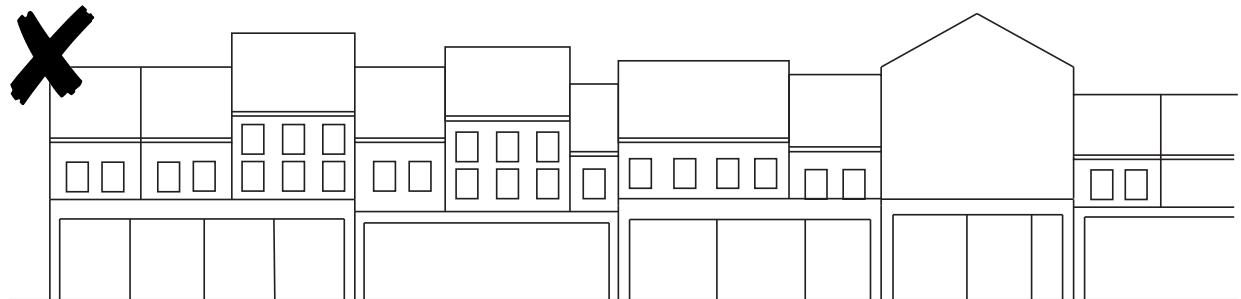
### 4.1. The Street

Consideration should be given to the effect of the shopfront design on the wider streetscene. Poor or overbearing designs can have a negative impact on the appearance of the neighbouring shops and wider shopping street, and reduce the appeal for shoppers to visit and spend time within the area.

When designing a shopfront, you should look to neighbouring buildings for inspiration and identify the character of the shopping street so that the proposal blends in with the streetscene,

whether this is a consistent uniform style, or a variety of styles which add interest and individuality. The proportions, materials and detailing should not seek to dominate unnecessarily.

Where a shop occupies more than one unit, the shopfront should seek to retain the appearance of each individual unit to promote the vertical emphasis and retain the rhythm of the buildings. These may be linked visually through the use of a consistent fascia design on each unit.



*Continuous fascias which extend across several buildings weaken the rhythm of the streetscape and create a horizontal emphasis.*



*Subdividing the street into individual shopfronts and varying the size and height of the fascia to suit the scale of the building reinstates the rhythm of the streetscape.*

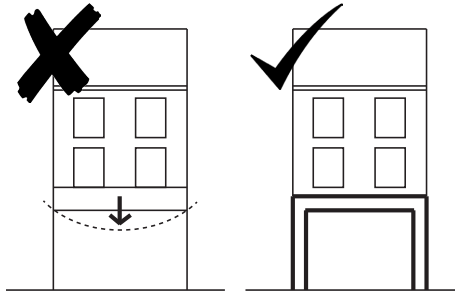


## 4.2. The building as a whole

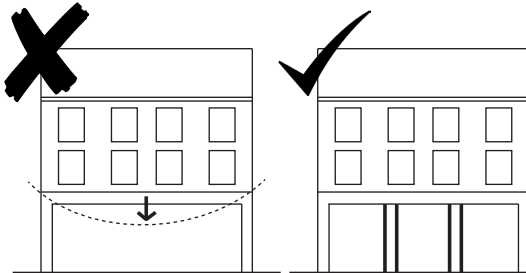
As well as considering the design of the shopfront within the wider streetscene, the design should reflect and enhance the historic fabric and nature of the building within which it will be located. The shopfront should not work in isolation from the rest of the building, and the design should consider the building's scale, proportions, architectural style, vertical alignment and materials. Thought should be given to how the 'Elements of a Shopfront' in Section 2 can be designed to fit appropriately within the building as a whole.

As a general rule, the shopfront should not rise above the floor level of the first floor as this can obscure part of the upper elevation and result in an unbalanced façade.

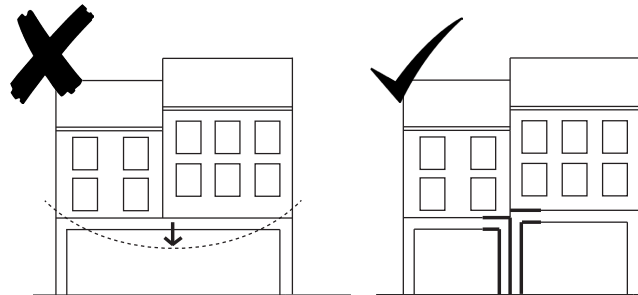
The actual and perceived structural support and strength of a shopfront is an important factor in the design of the facade. The retention of individual shopfront units or the use of mullions will emphasise the vertical lines of a building, and can provide visual and structural strength to the shopfront.



*A shopfront with a lot of glass, thin window frames and no pilasters makes a building look weak (left). A strong shop frame provides greater support (right).*



*In a wide building a shopfront can still look weak, even with a frame (left). Therefore, columns or mullions can provide visual support (right).*



*A lack of support underneath the party wall makes these two buildings look unstable (left). Subdividing the shopfront overcomes this and reinstates a vertical rhythm (right)*



*The Borough, Farnham: This shopfront, whilst attractive and traditional, does not follow the vertical lines of the building. The position of the shop windows in relation to the first and second floor windows creates an unbalanced or 'wonky' facade.*

## 5. Detailed design considerations

### 5.1. Doorways and Access

Recessed doorways are an important traditional shopfront feature within Waverley which help to break up the streetscene and create interesting and easily identifiable entrances. These features should be retained and are strongly encouraged in new installations.

It is important that alterations to the entrance of the shop enable access for all, including wheelchair users and push chairs. This may be achieved through the creation of a level threshold (where possible) and easy to open doors that have an open width of 1m.

Doorways and access should conform to Part M of The Building Regulations 2010. For further information please contact the Council's Building Control team (details in Appendix 2).

Where required, the Council will ensure that access to residential accommodation located on upper floors is also improved and is secure. Doors which lead to upper floors should harmonise with the shopfront and should be provided at the front of the premises to ensure greater safety and encourage street activity.



High Street, Haslemere: Traditional recessed doorway.



High Street, Cranleigh: The access door to first floor accommodation complements and is inkeeping with the shopfront and encourages vitality.



### 5.2. Shop windows – design and arrangement

Large plate glass windows within historic shopfronts are not considered to be suitable, and are not acceptable on Listed Buildings. They have an adverse effect on the relationship between the proportion and scale of the ground and upper floors. In such cases, to retain the traditional shopfront glazing bars, mullions and transoms should be used to divide the windows.

Within modern shopfronts, large plate glass windows can be acceptable such as in Figure 7 where they do not weaken the rhythm of the streetscene and are proportionate to the building. As identified in section 4.1 and 4.2, where a business occupies more than one unit/building, large plate glass windows that span across all units are not considered acceptable.

Building Regulations should be considered where large plate windows are proposed, such as the use of toughened glass and 'manifestation' (incorporating features in transparent glazing which make the glass apparent). For further information regarding building control regulations please contact the Council's Building Control team, details can be found in Appendix 2.

High Street, Haslemere: The large modern shop window here is successful as it respects the proportions and detailing of the building. The retention of the brick pilaster in line with the end of the gable provides visual strength to the shopfront. The fascia could have been split in line with the retractable awnings to retain visual rhythm of the original shopfronts.



### 5.3. Security shutters and grilles

Many modern security shutters are generally not suitable for use in retail areas. Solid, or almost solid, external roller shutters have a negative effect on the shopping street which can outweigh the perceived security benefits. They can also create a forbidding appearance which gives the impression that the area is susceptible to crime and attract graffiti and flyposting and conceal important architectural features of the premises.

Security measures which could be used, if it is felt that there are security issues, are:

- Use of toughened glass or anti-shatter film (though this may not be appropriate in listed buildings, conservation areas or where historic glass is in situ);
- Good lighting, CCTV cameras and alarms (usually these will not require planning permission).

Traditional shopfronts with classical principles of design such as stall risers, mullions and glazing bars, are generally more secure than modern designs with extensive panes of glass as smaller areas of glass are harder to break.

### 5.4. Stall risers

The stall riser protects the shopfront from accidental knocks and enables the shop window to be raised to eye level. This creates a more balanced and proportioned shopfront. Stall risers should relate to the height of the pilaster base, be of appropriate materials which respect the main building, and should be robust.

Although a stall riser is not necessarily required, if the shopfront is located within a 'parade' of shopfronts where there is a tradition of stall risers, the tradition should be maintained and the stall riser retained. Where a stall riser has been removed in the past, it is encouraged that it be re-installed.



*West Street, Farnham: The use of a brick for the stall riser respects the character of the building. The stall riser is proportionate to the building and elevates the window to eye level.*

### 5.5. Materials

The choice of materials used for a shopfront should reflect the materials and architectural style of the building within which it is situated, and pay regard to the character of the area. Use of local materials is preferred including brick, tile and plaster, with stained or painted wood. Materials which have good weathering characteristics are also preferred. It may be appropriate to use decorative cast iron work in a new design.

There are a number of decorative shopfronts which incorporate ceramic tiles that should be maintained and retained. Whilst not a prevalent material, these shopfronts add variety, and demonstrate how uncommon materials can, if used appropriately, be beneficial to the streetscene.

Materials such as granite or marble are generally not suitable, and the use of modern, highly reflective materials such as plastic and metals should be avoided. In the case of Listed Buildings the use of aluminium, plastic and mosaics is not acceptable, and they should be avoided within a conservation area.



*Ewhurst Road, Cranleigh: An example of marble shopfront which is not considered best practice.*

## 5.6. Colours

Colours should be carefully considered, and an appropriate colour and tone should be chosen which respect the character of the street and enhances the streetscene. Generally, muted traditional colours are preferred and are more likely to maintain the existing character of the town or village, however, this does not preclude companies from using their logos if they are not detrimental to the wider character or appearance of the streetscene.

Some large companies have alternative logos and fascias for sensitive areas, such as on a listed building or within a conservation area. These are encouraged and preferred within such sites.

## 5.7. Signs and shopfront adverts

This section refers to all signs and adverts which are related to the shopfront. It does not intend to cover all types of advertisement. A link to further information on all types of advertisements can be found in Appendix 3.

### 5.7.1. Fascias and Lettering

Fascias are often the most dominant and eye-catching element of a shopfront. It is thus most noticeable, and often detrimental, when the fascia sign is out of proportion with the building and shopfront. Therefore, it is imperative that the fascia sign is not too prominent and respects the proportions of the overall building and adjoining shopfronts.

The general rules for fascia signs are:

- They should not extend below the top of the pilaster or above the cills of first floor windows;
- They should not obscure, damage or project forward of the architectural features;
- Where a shop occupies more than one unit, each unit should have a separate fascia sign. A continuous fascia is contrary to the principle of promoting vertical lines and can be too dominant;
- Fascia sign material should not be shiny or acrylic. Matt-painted fascia signs are most appropriate;
- Box fascia signs should be avoided as they are often too large and bulky and unsympathetic to the style of most buildings;

- Standard designs of national retail chains may not always be appropriate, especially within conservation areas, and therefore may need to be adapted to be suitable for a location.

Fascia signs on a listed building or within a conservation area will be expected to be traditional, and use traditional materials; the use of plastic fascia signs is not considered acceptable in these cases.

Lettering should be large enough to be seen by shoppers, but should not dominate the fascia or shopfront. Each shop should have the street number clearly displayed on the fascia or on the glazing above the door.



*Poor fascia sign sizes and design can overbear the shop front and obscure architectural detailing. Fascia signs should seek to work with the building and existing features.*



### 5.7.2. Projecting and hanging signs

Projecting or hanging signs are a traditional element to a streetscene. They should be simple and of a proportionate size in relation to the rest of the shopfront. They should be placed either at fascia level or in line with the first floor window cills and should not obscure any architectural details.

Projecting box signs or internally illuminated projecting signs are generally considered to be inappropriate, especially on a listed building or within a conservation area. Policy HE8 of the Local Plan 2002 precludes internal illumination in conservation areas.



### 5.7.3. Illuminated signs and shopfronts

Subtly lit window displays or fascia signs can be effective at promoting and advertising a shop and make a positive contribution to the streetscene at night.

Internally illuminated signs are not recommended as they reduce the appeal of a shopping area and dominate a shopfront. These will not be permitted on a listed building or within a conservation area.

Externally illuminated signs are considered to be more acceptable as they are sympathetic to and help to preserve the character of towns and villages. Sympathetic ways of lighting a fascia sign, or projecting and hanging signs, include the use of small spot lights, halo lighting or a compact strip light.

The intensity of the illumination should be considered; the sign should be easy to read when illuminated whilst not causing a glare or adversely affecting nearby homes. Flashing signs should not be used where they may distract traffic.

Advertisement consent is required for illuminated signs and some non-illuminated signs. See Appendix 3 for suggested guidance for advertisement consent.

*Examples of historic and modern projecting and hanging signs which are appropriately located on the shopfront. The subtle external illumination used for the ASK Italian hanging sign is sympathetic to the streetscene and a more appropriate form of lighting than internally illuminated box signs.*

### 5.7.4. Advertising boards (A-Boards)

Surrey County Council has provided guidance which specifies conditions on when A-Boards will be permitted on the highway. This is to ensure that the number, size and positioning of advertising does not create hazards for the highway users (particularly those with impaired vision, mobility problems, the elderly or those with young children). All A-Boards should follow this guidance.

As a general rule, A-Boards should not clutter or obstruct the street and should be sympathetic in terms of colour and materials to the wider streetscene and character of the town or village. Where a shopfront has a projecting sign, it is not expected an A-Board is required for the shop. Projecting signs, subject to advertisement consent, are considered as preferable to the use of an A-Board.

Please see Appendix 3 for a link to the Surrey County Council guidance.

## 5.8. Awnings and Canopies

Although canopies and awnings can provide interest on the streetscene, and provide protection for shoppers from the sun and rain, care should be taken when choosing design, materials, patterns and location.

Considerations which should be taken include:

- Ensuring the size, shape and position of the awning/canopy is in keeping with the character of the building;
- Ensuring the materials and colour are in keeping with the character of the building and streetscene, as discussed in Section 5.5 and 5.6;
- Integrating the boxed housing within the shopfront, preferably within the pilaster and in line with the fascia;
- Where a shop occupies more than one unit, each unit should have a separate canopy/awning ;
- The use of retractable, not fixed, awnings and canopies. Retractable awnings are preferred as they allow for greater flexibility so that the awning may be used, or retracted, as is appropriate for the weather and/ or season;
- Ensuring the awning/canopy is sufficiently high to allow pedestrians to pass easily beneath them. Canopies and awnings which overhang the public highway may require a highway licence (contact Surrey County Council for further information) and should conform to Surrey County Council recommendations for clearance heights (Table 1).



*West Street, Haslemere: The incorporation of a retractable awning on this shopfront does not dominate over the overall frontage and allows for flexibility of use. The awning blends into the shopfront in terms of colour and is of a traditional style that complements and enhances the shopfront.*

Road type	Minimum height to underside of canopy/awning
A	7m
B and C	6m
D	5.4m
Footways, pavements and pathways	2.3m

## 5.9. Wiring and other features

Wiring, burglar alarms or surveillance systems, for example, can detract from the quality of a shopfront. Where possible, wiring should be internal and it should not be visible if it is external to the building. Surveillance systems or burglar alarms should be designed into the shopfront and should not interfere with architectural details.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Waverley Borough Council Local Plan 2002 Relevant Saved Policies

#### *Development*

- D1 Environmental Implications of Development
- D4 Design and Layout
- D9 Accessibility
- D10 Advertisements

#### *Historic Environment*

- HE3 Development affecting Listed Buildings or their Setting
- HE5 Alteration or Extension of Listed or Locally Listed Buildings
- HE8 Conservation Areas

#### *Shopping*

- S7 Shopfronts

#### *Town Centres*

- TC9 Town Centre Enhancement

### Appendix 2: Useful contacts

For general planning enquiries:

Planning Services  
Waverley Borough Council, The Burys,  
Godalming, GU7 1HR  
Tel: 01483 523583  
Email: [planningenquiries@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:planningenquiries@waverley.gov.uk)

For Listed Building and conservation enquiries:

Planning Projects  
Waverley Borough Council, The Burys,  
Godalming, GU7 1HR  
Tel: 01483 523583  
Email: [conservation@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@waverley.gov.uk)

For building control enquiries:

Building Control  
Waverley Borough Council, The Burys,  
Godalming, GU7 1HR  
Tel: 01483 523323  
Email: [buildingcontrol@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@waverley.gov.uk)

For highways licences:

Surrey County Council Highways  
Room 296-298, County Hall, Penrhyn  
Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT1  
2DN  
Tel: 0300 200 1003  
Email: [contact.centre@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:contact.centre@surreycc.gov.uk)

### Appendix 3: Further reading and useful links

- Waverley Borough Council Local Plan 2002: [http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/1004/planning\\_policy](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/1004/planning_policy)
- Waverley Borough Council Local Validation List: [http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/485/planning\\_applications/559/planning\\_forms](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/485/planning_applications/559/planning_forms)
- Waverley Planning maps: [http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/200164/waverley\\_planning\\_maps/1365/waverley\\_planning\\_maps](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/200164/waverley_planning_maps/1365/waverley_planning_maps)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>
- DCLG guidance: Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outdoor-advertisements-and-signs-a-guide-for-advertisers>
- Historic England: The National Heritage List: <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>
- SCC clearance heights guidance: <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning/trees-grass-and-vegetation/trees-and-shrubs-near-roads/owners-responsibilities-for-trees-on-their-property>
- SCC Advertising on the highway guidance: [http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/30803/Advertising-on-the-highway-guidance-Nov12.pdf](http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/30803/Advertising-on-the-highway-guidance-Nov12.pdf)



## Appendix 4: Permissions and Consents

### Planning Permission

Planning permission is required if you are constructing, altering or replacing a shopfront. For further information regarding what documents/ plans will be required to be submitted for a planning application, please see the Local Validation List on Waverley Borough Council's website.

### Advertisement Consent

Advertisement Consent is required for the majority of illuminated and non-illuminated signs, with the exception of some smaller advertisements which are within set limits.

If the shopfront or proposed advertisement is within a conservation area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Area of Special Control of Advertisements, then advertisement consent will be required for all illuminated signs and there are stricter controls on all advertisements.

For further information regarding when consent is required, please see the DCLG guidance (see Appendix 3). For further information regarding what documents/ plans will be required for an Advertisement Consent application, please see the Local Validation List on Waverley Borough Council's website.

### Conservation areas and Buildings of Local Merit

If the shop is in a conservation area or a Building of Local Merit you can also apply for alterations under the normal planning process. However, the Council will seek to ensure enhancements do not harm the character of the area, are sympathetic to the original building and are of a high standard of design. Proposals should preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area.

You can use the Waverley Planning maps (see Appendix 3) to determine whether your property is within a conservation area or is a Building of Local Merit. Alternatively, for advice on appropriate alterations you can contact the Planning Projects Team. A fee for pre-application advice may be chargeable.

### Listed Building Consent

Alteration of a Listed Building must have regard to the requirement to preserve its fabric, character and any features of importance. Where alterations are proposed to a Listed Building (both internal and external), Listed Building Consent will be required. It is a criminal offence to carry out works to a Listed Building without Listed Building Consent having been granted.

Listed Building applications will be required to demonstrate how the proposed alterations are in keeping with the existing fabric and special architectural interest of the building, and if necessary proposed materials will need to be provided.

For further information regarding what documents will be required for a Listed Building Consent application, please see the Local Validation List on Waverley Borough Council's website. Alternatively, you can contact the Planning Projects Team to obtain advice on appropriate alterations (Appendix 2). A fee for pre-application advice may be chargeable.

### Building Regulations

The Building Regulations aim to ensure that your shop satisfies its functional requirements and the building provides reasonable health and safety for shoppers and staff. This is different to Planning Permission but the application process is similar.

Not all works will require Building Control approval. However, they will apply if:

- The changes are structural (for example where a structural support such as a lintel is required).
- The changes involve moving the entrance or altering its width.

For further information regarding the Building Regulations process and application forms, you can contact the Council's Building Control team (Appendix 2).

### Enforcement

It is important that you apply for any necessary permission, as you may leave yourself at risk of enforcement action being taken against you by the Council.

**Appendix 5: Glossary of Terms**

Advertisement Consent.....	Consent required for the majority of illuminated and non-illuminated signs.
Architrave.....	The lowest part of an entablature, the lower framing edge of a fascia.
Buildings of Local Merit.....	Locally designated heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the local character and sense of place and are offered some level of protection by the local planning authority.
Cill.....	The lowest horizontal member of a window frame
Conservation Area.....	An area of special architectural and historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
Console Bracket.....	Bracket supporting the upper members of a cornice
Corbel.....	A block of masonry or material such as brick or wood which projects from a wall and supports a beam or a feature. A corbel may be carved or moulded.
Cornice.....	The upper projecting portion of an entablature
Entablature.....	The upper part of a Classical architectural order, which rests upon the columns. Consists of an architrave, fascia and cornice.
Fanlight.....	Window above a door
Fascia.....	The flat surface above a shop window, on which the name of the shop or other sign may be displayed
Glazing bar.....	The metal or wooden members in a window which form the framework dividing individual panes of glass
Listed Buildings.....	A building, and all pre-1948 buildings within its curtilage (curtilage-listed), which are considered to be of national special architectural or historic interest. There are three Grades of listed building: Grade I - of exceptional interest Grade II* - particularly important buildings of more than special interest Grade II - of special interest
Listed Building Consent.....	Consent required for all applications which may affect the character or special architectural or historic interest of a listed building or curtilage-listed building.
Manifestation.....	Where transparent glazing which people are likely to come into contact with while moving in or about the building, includes features which makes it apparent.
Mullion.....	A vertical member or rail dividing a window. A mullion should line up above and below the transom and should seek to reflect the vertical alignment of windows on the upper floors.
Pilaster.....	A rectangular column, projecting only slightly from a wall, usually forming a division between bays of a building or a stop to a shopfront or bay.
Plinth.....	The projecting base or moulding to any structure, pilaster or column.
Shopfront.....	A street-level frontage with a display window, usually serving a retail outlet but also restaurants, banks, building societies and other businesses in a shopping area.
Stall riser	The area beneath the cill on a shopfront, providing protection to the structure as well as decoration. Clad in stone, tiles, panelled timber or other finish.
Supplementary Planning Document.....	Documents developed to further define and implement the policies and strategies contained within the Local Plan.
Transom.....	A main horizontal member dividing a window opening, or the upper part of a shop window. The transom should divide the window at the same level as the top of the door.