IMPROVING WOOLWICH'S HISTORIC HIGH STREET ONE SHOPFRONT **AT A TIME**



IMPROVING WOOLWICH'S HISTORIC HIGH STREET ONE SHOPFRONT AT A TIME



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First published in the UK in 2025.

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WHYA SHOPFRONT DESIGN TOOLKIT AND WHAT CAN IT DO FOR YOUR **BUSINESS?**

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Your shopfront is more powerful than you think! This guide has been created to reveal the potential of shopfronts in Woolwich and to support owners and businesses in maximising their impact. By working with this design toolkit you are actively contributing to the enhancement of Woolwich Town Centre for everyone. Investment in your building and adapting your shopfront will play a crucial role in fostering positive changes in the town centre and unlocking benefits for your business and the community.

Firstly, investing in your shopfront and enhancing your façade visually will showcase the ongoing improvements in the area, promote the economic vitality of the town centre and will encourage others to follow suit. This positive shift in perception will make the town centre more attractive, encouraging higher footfall and longer dwell time on the high street Ultimately, shopfront improvements can boost the economic vibrancy of the high street and benefit your business.

Secondly, your shop is a key part of the local community and plays a role in reinforcing socially positive behaviour. Creating a shopfront that is visible, welcoming, and accessible encourages a shift in how people perceive both the area and your business. Positive, inclusive, interventions can shift perceptions and, through word of mouth, potentially attract new customers who can then lead more people into your shop.

Thirdly, you are connecting locals to the neighbourhood's heritage and Woolwich's historic high street. Celebrating your host buildings, respecting the architectural heritage, and aligning with the rhythm of the street allows Woolwich to tell its story. It is clear that heritage places, that are well

maintained, foster a sense of belonging and community pride which significantly shapes people's perceptions of a place.

Lastly, by renovating your shopfront, you have the opportunity to foster cultural expression and community identity. Creating a unique and personalised design will not only set your shop apart but encourage others to do the same, improving the high street for all. Parades of diverse, high quality and characterful façades, that appreciate or support local heritage, will contribute to making Woolwich a unique and distinctive place to be. By following this design toolkit, your business and its shopfront will play an important part in the development and future success of Woolwich. Thank you for playing your part in the enhancement of the Woolwich Conservation Area and its historic high street.

A WOOLWICH SHOPFRONT DESIGN TOOLKIT TO...

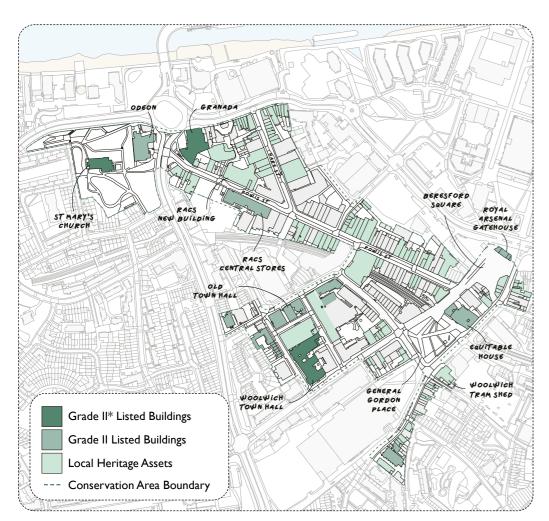
PROMOTE LOCAL ECONOMIC VITALITY

REINFORCE SOCIALLY POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

CONNECT LOCALS
TO HERITAGE

FOSTER CULTURAL EXPRESSION AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY

WHAT IS THE WOOLWICH CONSERVATION AREA?



Map of the boundary of the conservation area highlighting the key heritage assets

The Woolwich Conservation Area was designated in 2019 to celebrate and protect the heritage assets of Woolwich Town Centre. Considering the rich architectural heritage of the neighbourhood, the Council has created the zone in order to prevent further negative impact in the town centre and on its historical assets. The architectural heritage of the area is composed of a mix of buildings of modest scale and architectural merit, as well as buildings with exceptional landmark frontages from the 1890s rebuilding, and notable examples of early 20th-century buildings, including two imposing cinemas of the 1930s and two of London's most significant monuments to co-operativism. The commercial zone of the conservation area alone includes 8 nationally listed buildings and 55 local heritage assets.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AWNING

Retractable shelter, typically with fabric, extends over entrances for shade, rain protection, and allure. It includes a valance, hanging to display shop information.

CORNICE

Horizontal element installed at the top of a shopfront to frame the fascia.

FAÇADE

The front and street-facing part of the exterior of a building.

FASCIA

Prominent signage area above a store, displaying the shop name and street number. It frames the upper part of the shopfront and directs customers.

FASCIA LIGHTING

Device(s) that provide illumination to the fascia.

HOST BUILDING

The building within which a shopfront is set. It belongs to an architectural tradition and determines many design decisions regarding shopfront design.

MULLIONS

Vertical elements used to divide large expanses of glass.

PILASTERS

Vertical elements aligned with the host building's features, framing shopfronts and adding rhythm to the street. They consist of a plinth (base), console brackets (aligned with the fascia), and a shaft (connecting the plinth and brackets).

PROJECTING SIGN

Projecting signage element that protrudes from the shopfront to advertise the shop.

SEATING

Street furniture to allow customers and passersby to sit/rest.

SHUTTERS

Protective device installed to ensure safety and security where glazed elements are present.

SILL

The lowest trim of a window, which can be elongated to create seating when at the correct height.

STALLRISERS

Horizontal element that frames the lower part of the shopfront. It helps to protect the shopfront and gives structure to the façade.

TRANSOM

Horizontal elements used to divide large expanses of glass.

TRANSOM LIGHTS

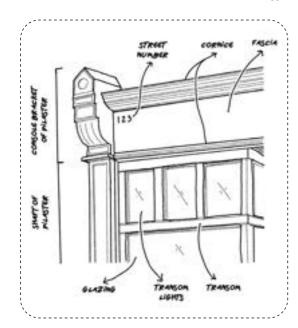
Division of glazing created by the introduction of transoms (horizontal elements) in the upper portion of the shop window. Often used to conceal the presence of a dropped ceiling or to bring more light into the space.

UPPERS

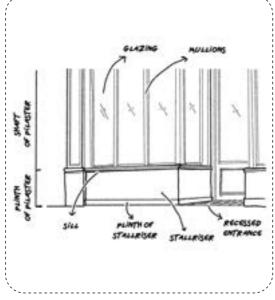
Upper parts of the building, the section above your shop front.

SHUTTERS SHUTTERS GIANTING VALENCE STALLRISERS

Elements of a typical Victorian shopfront



Upper elements of typical Victorian shopfront



Lower elements of typical Victorian shopfront

SETTING THE SCENE

Where we define the conservation area, its features, and its architectural heritage. The key first step to understand the context in which your future shopfront will operate.





BIRTHPLACE

OF THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT



59 LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS



FIRST MCDONALD'S IN THE UK





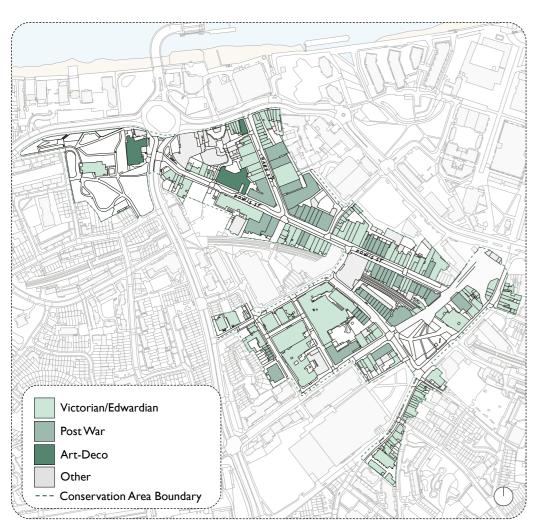
Woolwich is a unique corner of the city. While its diverse and vibrant community brings it to life and makes it a lively place to be, Woolwich is also famous for its cultural assets and the richness of its architectural heritage. Home to more than 59 local heritage assets, including 18 listed buildings and 3 Grade II* listed buildings (the second most important grade in heritage assets protection!), the conservation area is a highly concentrated zone of buildings of special interest. It has structures still standing today that are testimonies to its role in the birth of the cooperative movement but also as one of the key corners for trade in the capital. As one of the II medieval market towns, Woolwich has had an established market since the 1600s, which is still thriving today on Beresford Square. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the area became a very important destination

for shopping with major department stores (Burton, Cuffs, Garetts, Marks & Spencer, and Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society) establishing themselves in the area. During this period of great transformation, Henry Hudson Church (a prominent local architect) became elemental in shaping the future of the town centre and left his mark with a "conservative but eclectic" style. Two large cinemas were also constructed in the early 20th century, transforming Woolwich into a hub for entertainment and culture. Today, the evolution of the area continues with the regeneration of the marketplace, the uplift of the public realm on Powis Street and surrounding areas, and many other projects that are part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone. Your shopfront can be part of this transformation, and this guide has been made to help you be part of that story.

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE AREA?



WHAT ARE THE KEY TYPES OF BUILDING IN THE WOOLWICH CONSERVATION AREA?



Map of the key building types in the Woolwich Conservation Area

While Woolwich has been inhabited since the Iron Age, most of the buildings still standing today in the town centre are from the Victorian and Edwardian period, complemented by additions of Art-Deco, Post-War and contemporary buildings. In order to preserve and celebrate the stories told by the heritage of the town centre, it is crucial to understand the architectural style of your host building. Each type of building has particular features which should be paid attention to when renovating their façade. The following two pages showcase typical examples of Victorian and post-war buildings on Powis Street.

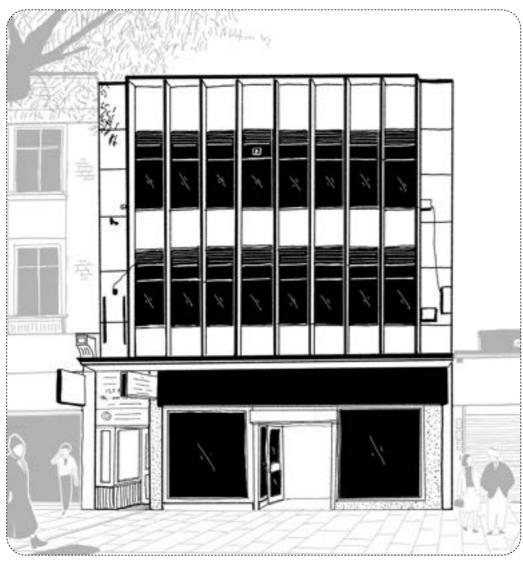
20

VICTORIAN



83-85 Powis Street — Built in 1899, designed by Henry Hudson Church

The majority of buildings in Woolwich Town Centre have a Victorian heritage, relating to the comprehensive remodelling of the high street by prominent local architect Henry Hudson Church in the 1890s. These buildings come with a very strong historical identity and heritage requirements, as they are often more than a hundred years old. They are characterised by ornate features on the upper levels and a clear set of typical proportions and elements on the ground floors. Shopfronts were historically built out of timber with setback entrances. They featured clearly defined cornices (horizontal mouldings) between the uppers and the shopfront and included pilasters, fascias, and stall risers to frame the units. It is crucial that all shopfronts in a Victorian setting carefully study the typology of the Victorian shopfront.



14-16 Powis Street — Built in 1960, designed by J. Seymour Harris and Partners

Woolwich has interesting examples of post-war constructions that are often well-integrated within Victorian terraces. These types of buildings are characterised by more streamlined façades where glass, metal, and concrete play an important role. Similarly to the Victorian buildings, they come with their own heritage features and should be respected accordingly. While the proportions and features of a typical post-war shopfront should be aligned with its Victorian neighbours, its architectural elements could be more geometric and simplified to follow the design of the building above.

[B]

A VISION FOR WOOLWICH TOWN CENTRE

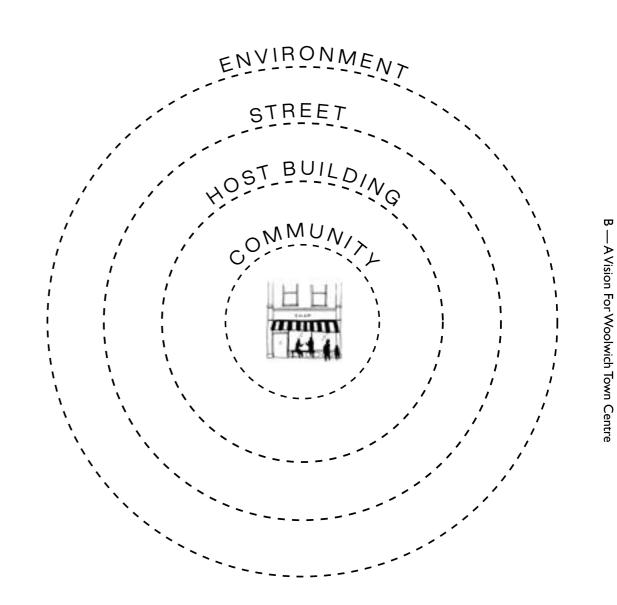
Where we highlight the potential of Woolwich Town Centre and understand that a well-designed shopfront is one that is aware of the context that it is in and the potential benefits it can deliver.

REFLECT THE
CULTURAL RICHNESS
AND DIVERSITY OF
THE COMMUNITY

CELEBRATE HERITAGE

INTERACT
GENEROUSLY WITH
THE HIGH STREET

CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT



The different levels of relationships of shopfronts



WOOLWICH: A TOWN CENTRE WHERE SHOPFRONTS...

Reflect The Cultural Richness And Diversity OfThe Communty

Each shopfront is unique and exists as a key part of the community that it is in. Woolwich stands out as one of the most culturally rich neighbourhoods in the capital. A key vision for the Woolwich Conservation Area is to ensure that the streets, buildings, and shopfronts serve as a true reflection of this diverse history, while embodying the varied backgrounds and stories of its residents today.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY SHOPFRONT UNIQUE?

- → CHOOSE A COLOUR THAT STANDS OUT FROM YOUR NEIGHBOURS: The colour of a shopfront is what can truly make it stand out. Use a simple and considerate palette that makes your shop contrast with its surroundings, whilst being complementary to your host building and the local heritage of the area. A single colour with a complementary accent colour will be preferred.
- → INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF YOUR PERSONAL STORY: All shopkeepers have a story of their own. What is yours? How can you use your personal heritage or story in your shopfront? Consider what symbols, colours, or patterns could help your shop tell a more personal story.

Shopfront Design Toolkit

- → KEEP IT SIMPLE: Considering the amount of clutter and volume of visual information on the high street, the best way to stand out is to design a shopfront that is simple, aligned, and carefully proportioned.
- → INSTALL A PROJECTING SIGN: To attract the eye of passersby to your shop, try installing a proportionate projecting sign that simply and clearly displays your logo or shop name.

- → COMPLEMENTARY
 LIGHTING: Carefully designed
 lighting can dramatically change
 the appearance and presence of
 a shopfront at night. Consider
 externally lighting your fascia,
 projecting sign and heritage features
 of the building itself with warm
 illumination from discrete or hidden
 light fixtures.
- **→ CUSTOMISE OR REMOVE** YOUR SHUTTERS IF YOU **HAVE THEM:** If your shop has existing shutters, consider removing them to make your business more visible at night and enliven the high street. If you intend to keep your existing shutter, you could consider commissioning artwork by a local artist to brighten the facade of your building even when your business is closed. Not only will it make your shop more recognisable, but it will also generate additional interest and engagement from the local community and visitors to the high street.
- → USE YOUR SHOPFRONT TO ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY: Woolwich is a lively area with many activities and lots of artists. Could your shopfront window or display provide a unique exhibition opportunity for a local artist, display local heritage information or engage with town centre events?



179 POWIS STREET — THE CASTLE TAVERN.

The shopkeepers have decorated the stallrisers of their pub with a pattern inspired by Ghanaian cloth, reflecting their heritage and the cuisine of the business.



WOOLWICH: A TOWN CENTRE WHERE SHOPFRONTS...

Celebrate Heritage

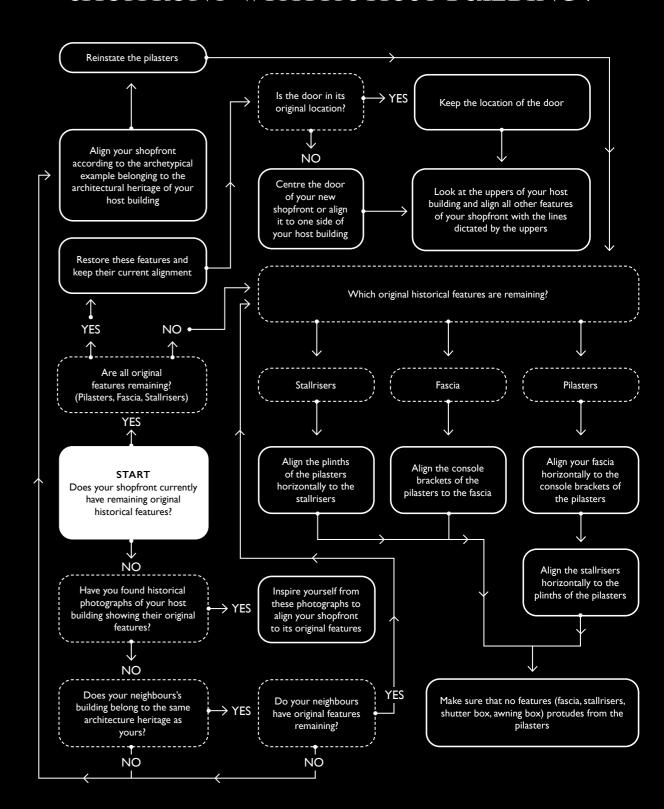
All shopfronts exist in the context of a building that hosts them on the street, and each of these buildings has a story of their own. This story (which goes back centuries in some cases in Woolwich!) has arrived in your hands to be continued with the creation of your shopfront. By making design decisions that recognise the journey your host building has been through, you will be giving your business the opportunity to belong to that rich heritage. Let's imagine a town centre where shopfronts are continuing the stories of their host buildings by celebrating their origins and unique character.

HOW CAN I CELEBRATE HERITAGE?

- RESTORE AND/OR
 REINSTATE ORIGINAL
 FEATURES: Maybe you are lucky,
 and your shopfront has some original
 historic features still in place! If you
 are in this position, make sure you
 make the most of this opportunity
 and restore them to their original
 condition (and glory!). Otherwise,
 try reinstating as many of the original
 heritage features as you can. Pilasters
 are a great way to frame your shop
 and to make the high street more
 attractive.
- ALIGN YOUR SHOPFRONT WITH ITS HOST BUILDING:
 Look above your shopfront to appreciate the heritage features and architecture above. Use the vertical lines and proportions of the building to inform the design of your shopfront. These original features are great guidelines that will help you make an informed decision about the configuration and design of your shopfront, and to ensure it maximises its impact and presence on the high street.
- → LIGHT THE UPPER PART OF THE BUILDING: If you are able to influence improvements to the upper floors, consider adding subtle architectural lighting. This will greatly enhance the appreciation of the building and give more attention and focus to your new shopfront.

- → COMMUNICATE THE HERITAGE OF YOUR SHOPFRONT: Some businesses have a long and interesting history on the high street, and some buildings have special stories to tell. If you are aware of any notable people or stories consider using signage, historical photos or commissioning a local artist to tell that story!
- → ALIGN YOUR SHOPFRONT WITH ITS ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE: There are a variety of heritage buildings in Woolwich. Make sure you consult this design toolkit and further planning guidance to confirm the building type of your host building, and ensure the design of your shopfront is coherent and complementary to the heritage of your building.
- → GRACEFULLY INTEGRATE UPPER FLOOR ACCESS IN YOUR SHOPFRONT DESIGN: If access to the upper floors is needed in the design, make sure this integrates elegantly with the street, so it feels like a coherent part of the shop façade and maximises the shopfront display.

HOW CAN I PHYSICALLY ALIGN MY SHOPFRONT WITH ITS HOST BUILDING?





68-86 POWIS STREET (KENT HOUSE) CURRENT CONDITIONS. The parade running on the Northern side of Powis Street is an important element of the architectural heritage of the conservation area. One of the major surviving buildings of the late Victorian era of Powis Street, its well-maintained uppers are a legacy of Garetts department store, a huge emporium of the late 19th century.

What used to be a grand and uniform ground floor designed by architect H. H. Church in 1892 has been heavily altered by modern shopfronts. This page uses 68-86 Powis Street as a case study to show with a key set of actions how shopfronts can be designed and aligned to celebrate their host buildings.



68-86 POWIS STREET (KENT HOUSE) POTENTIAL CONDITIONS.

RE-ESTABLISH PILASTERS: (with plinths and console brackets) uniformly between shopfronts and align them with the building uppers.

Shopfront Design Toolkit

- 2 RE-ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE PROPORTIONS: and consistent shopfront fascias and signage (with cornices) based on the Victorian building typology and historical photographs. Align the fascia with the console brackets (top part) of the pilasters.
- 3 REALIGN DOORS
 VERTICALLY WITH THE
 UPPERS: Doors could be centred
 or left/right aligned depending on
 your preference.
- 4 REINSTATE STALLRISERS:
 (with sills) based on the Victorian building typology and historical photographs. Align the height of the stallrisers with the plinths of the of pilasters.
- 5 REINSTATE TRANSOM LIGHTS: (high level windows) where necessary to accommodate dropped ceilings inside shops
- 6 REINSTATE LOST HERITAGE DESIGN FEATURES: where possible, such as by re-introducing the historic access to the shop with a a door on the corner of the building.





WOOLWICH: A TOWN CENTRE WHERE SHOPFRONTS ...

Interact Generously With The High Street

Shopfronts do not exist in isolation from each other. In town centres and high streets, they form the backdrop to our daily life and communities. They make our journeys more interesting, our nights out feel safer, and our mornings and lunchtimes livelier. Shopfronts have the power to make the high street more welcoming, accessible and attractive to communities. Having somewhere to stop for a chat with a friend, shelter under an awning, or to enjoy a window display at night are just a few simple benefits that shopfronts can deliver. Generous shopfronts, that make the town centre feel safer, livelier and more exciting will create a more engaging and attractive high street destination.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY SHOPFRONT MORE ACCESSIBLE?

→ MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM THE STREET AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE:

Maintain level access from the street into your shop. If your floor is higher than the street, use a ramp with handrails with a slow gradient (1:20 is recommended). Avoid steps, as they are impractical for many people and may act as a deterrent for potential customers. Make it as easy as you can for people to enter your shop! Removing barriers will benefit a wide range of the community, whether they have access needs or not, and will make families and the elderly feel more welcomed.

→ MAKE YOUR SIGNAGE EASY TO SEE AND MARK YOUR ENTRANCE CLEARLY:

Shopfront Design Toolkit

Understand that people's vision and perception will vary, and ensure the door is noticeable and that your signage is accessible, easy to see and read. A clear typeface on a contrasting background should do the trick.

→ KEEP THE SPACE IN FRONT OF YOUR SHOP EASY TO CIRCULATE: Streets can get very busy and cluttered. Make sure you do not contribute to this by avoiding unauthorised items like A-Frames and displays. This improves the street's overall experience and invites potential customers to stop by. It also improves the circulation around the town centre, especially for those with mobility aids, prams, and trolleys.

- → MAKE YOUR DOOR LIGHT, TRANSPARENT AND EASY TO OPEN. Your door and handle are the first contact point for customers, like a welcoming handshake on the way in. Ensure the door is lightweight and accessible, so that it is easy for everyone to use. Keep it transparent, so that people can be seen either side of the door.
- → MAKE YOUR ENTRANCE WIDE ENOUGH: Keep it easy for everyone to enter your shop by making your doorway wide enough. A minimum of 900mm is required for wheelchair users, but be more generous if you can, to allow good flow in and out of your shop. Consult Building Regulation requirements (Approved Document M) for further guidance on the entrance of your shop and accessibility.
- → DISPLAY THE STREET NUMBER CLEARLY ON YOUR FASCIA OR IN THE WINDOW ABOVE YOUR DOOR:

Invented in the 18th century to make life easier for post office workers, street numbers are still a great way today for people to easily find your business on the high street. Ensure your street number is clearly indicated on your fascia or in the window above your door to make it easy for customers and deliveries to your shop.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY SHOPFRONT MORE WELCOMING?

→ CREATE A CLEAR AND ATTRACTIVE ENTRANCE:

Make sure your entrance is clearly indicated and easy to navigate. Reduce clutter to the maximum and maintain cleanliness to draw customers into a visually inviting space.

- → ADD SEATING TO YOUR SHOPFRONT: Shopfronts can become spaces for people and the community, by incorporating seating into the design. Consider using your windowsills to provide perches or maybe a movable bench could make your shopfront a social spot. A lively façade attracts customers and will make your business shine! Keep in mind that a bench will naturally encourage passersby to sit in front of your shop, so it's important to be welcoming and understanding of the variety of people who might use it.
- → CREATE A RECESSED ENTRANCE: Think of augmenting your display surfaces by creating a recessed entrance in your shopfront. This will allow visitors to gradually step into your shop and give them a welcoming and progressive sense of arrival. However, recessed entrances might be refused by planning authorities if inadequate security measures are provided for them. See Section C for design requirements on recessed entrances.

- → PROVIDE SHADE AND **SHELTER:** Using your shopfront to provide shade and shelter on the street is a great way to bring customers closer to your shop. An awning or a recessed entrance can allow passersby to protect themselves from the rain or the sun. Maybe they will use this time to have a peek inside your shop, and they will then be only a few steps away from coming in. It's important to consider, however, that awnings might be refused by planning authorities if they obstruct CCTV or if inadequate security measures are provided for them. See Section C for design requirements on awnings.
- → CONSIDER HAVING ANIMAL FRIENDLY FEATURES: People love their animals and appreciate them being treated well. Adding a water bowl or other animal-friendly features at your shop can bring in new customers and open your business to other markets.
- → DISPLAY LOCAL ART:

Woolwich is packed with creative talent! Consider opportunities for artwork and community engagement in your shopfront design. Your window display or your shutters could be a great canvas! People who pass by might be interested in the artworks, and they might be curious enough to come in and learn about your business and tell others about your unique shop!

HOW CAN I MAKE MY SHOPFRONT MORE VISIBLE?

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→ KEEP IT ALIVE AT NIGHT:

Use transparent shutters and keep a few lights on at night (on timers). Not only will this contribute to making the street feel safer and deterring crime in the area (as advised by the Met Police), but it will allow your shopfront to promote your products or services even when closed!

→ REMOVE VISUAL OBSTACLES:

If anything blocks the view inside your shop, like a wall or a thick curtain, make sure to relocate it so that the view inside your shop is unobstructed. The use of solid or pinhole external roller shutters is not supported, as they have a hostile appearance on the high street. Consider removal of shutters or opt for internal shutters, with an open grill/mesh design, to maintain security but ensure that your shop stays visible and attractive at night.

Shopfront Design Toolkit

→ ARRANGE YOUR WINDOW DISPLAY CAREFULLY:

A clean and well-organised shopfront is one of the easiest (and cheapest!) ways to create the best conditions to attract new customers. Curate your display to ensure people can still see inside your shop. Remember that a good shopfront is a 'teaser' that invites the shopper in. Be selective in what you display and do not try and showcase every single thing you have; it can be offputting and distracting for passers by and could deter people from entering your shop.

→ DECLUTTER WINDOWS:

Be minimal in the information you decide to display on your window. Opening hours, a small version of the shop name or logo should be enough. You might want to add a list of services or a description of what you do, but try to avoid stickers, posters, and advertisements of all sorts. These items can lead to a cluttered and unattractive window display, which can prevent people from looking in, and possibly put them off coming inside.



51 POWIS STREET — ARTFIX

The shopkeepers of this local cafe have used slightly deeper window sills to provide opportunities for customers and visitors to sit and spend more time on the high street.



WOOLWICH: A TOWN CENTRE WHERE SHOPFRONTS ...

Consider The Environment

It is everyone's responsibility to play their part in working more sustainably, to reduce the impact on the environment and our communities. Our planet is currently facing a climate emergency, and shopfronts are a small but still meaningful area where we can act. Construction is one of the leading contributors to CO2 emissions in the UK (and worldwide), so it is crucial that we do everything we can to find and develop sustainable practices in building. Let's ensure we make Woolwich Town Centre an example of mindfully designed shopfronts that do not cost the earth.

HOW CAN I CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN DESIGNING MY SHOPFRONT?

→ DO WHAT IS NECESSARY:

The most sustainable buildings are the ones that are already built. Of course, heritage buildings are a real asset to the high street and community and any original features should be kept and celebrated in the new design. Where a new shopftont is being installed, consider what existing elements can be kept, refreshed or re-used as part of the design. If your windows are still in good condition, try accommodating them in your new design. If the design of your shutters is changing, and you have existing open grill/mesh design shutters, consider if these can be reused or extended.

→ BE EFFICIENT WITH YOUR LIGHTING SOLUTIONS:

Shopfront Design Toolkit

Lights can be a very efficient way to attract customers' attention at night and keep the streets feeling safe and agreeable. Make sure you use warm and energy-efficient lighting solutions (LED is a good example). Consider putting your lights on timers so that you do not forget to turn them off in the morning.

→ INTEGRATE NATURE IN YOUR SHOPFRONT:

Think of ways that your shopfront could contribute to the biodiversity of the high street. Can you add plants or flowers that could brighten your façade and make the street a bit more green and attractive?

→ USE MATERIALS AND A DESIGN THAT WILL PASS THE TEST OF TIME:

We all have a t-shirt in our wardrobe that outlasts all of our other clothes. Its timeless design and solid construction make it very hard for us to get rid of. Try designing your shopfront like you would design that reliable and durable piece of clothing. Design it in a timeless style so that it would feel fashionable in 100 years. A good tip? Look 100 years back and see what has been working so far!

→ USE MATERIALS THAT HAVE BEEN USED BEFORE AND CAN BE USED AGAIN:

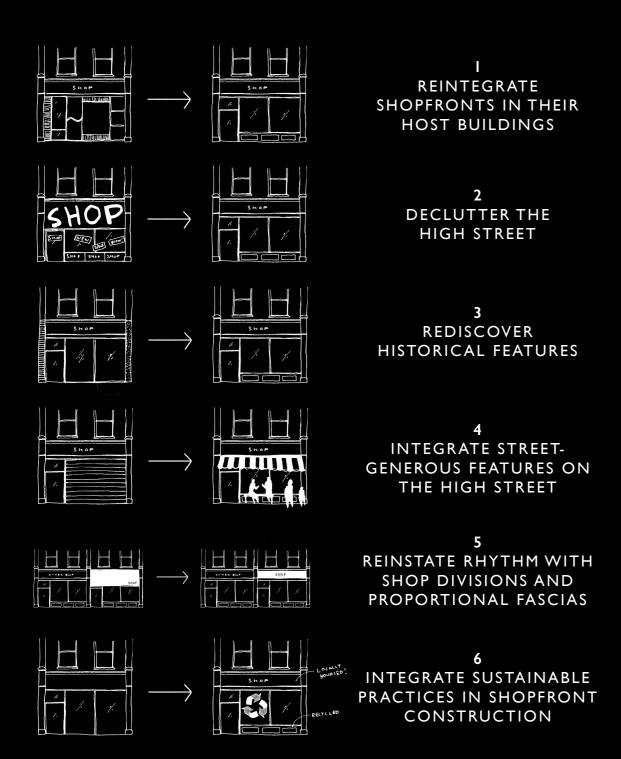
The most sustainable materials are often the ones that already had a life of their own. If you can get your hands on relevant elements that have been used before, try integrating them into your shopfront. A working fascia light, for example, could be repaired and repainted to be given a new life. Try thinking ahead and imagining what would happen if you moved from this location. Could the future shopkeeper use it? Could you take it with you? Could it be recycled?



50 HARE STREET — CHARLES DANCE

The shopkeepers have kept their glazing and redesigned the new shopfront around it minimising the amount of new glazing being used.

DESIGN REQUIREMENTS



Where we become familiar with the requirements of the conservation area: the guidelines that will deliver improved shopfronts that support the vision for Woolwich town centre.

Shopfront Design Toolkit

SIGNAGE DISPLAY LIGHTING

PROJECTING SIGNS

FASCIAS

ACCESS

AWNINGS

PILASTERS

STALLRISERS

SAFETY & SECURITY

COLOUR

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF YOUR FUTURE SHOPFRONT?

Shopfronts are made up of many small details. When these come together nicely, they can completely change how a street looks and feels. In Woolwich, where many buildings have a strong historic character, paying attention to these details helps the streets and shops feel both welcoming and unique. This chapter sets out the key ingredients of good shopfront design. It is here to help you understand what is possible and expected in a conservation area, and how to make your shopfront both attractive and appropriate to the high street. The guidance is practical and created to support your business in building a strong presence on the high street. You will find advice on signage and lighting, from well-designed display windows to subtle illumination that highlights your offer without overwhelming the street. Projecting signs are part

of the picture too. When designed with care, hanging signs can add both charm and visibility. Fascias, the horizontal bands above shop windows, are another key element where getting the proportions and materials right can make a striking difference. Other features include awnings, which provide shade and shelter; pilasters, which frame and support the shopfront; and stallrisers, which form the solid base beneath the display window. This section also offers guidance on creating accessible entrances, taking a thoughtful approach to safety and security, and choosing colours that harmonise with the wider streetscape. By understanding how these components work together, you can shape a shopfront that feels distinctive, confident, and in tune with its setting. This chapter will guide you through the process.

Design Requirement



SIGNAGE, DISPLAY & LIGHTING



Signage, display, and lighting play a big part in how positively our high street is perceived. These are key elements for your business too and it is crucial to design them carefully with your customers in mind. A clear, simple, and legible fascia with a well-maintained window display can do a lot for your business on a busy high street.

SIGNAGE. DISPLAY AND LIGHTING DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

→ GLASS: Large areas of glass are to be avoided. Vertical subdivision of glazing is encouraged, dividing areas of glass into bays of equal proportion. All verticals should be aligned with the architecture of the host building's upper floors.

WINDOW DISPLAY:

Windows of shopfronts can be used to display goods but should be well organised and maintained. The view inside the shop must be maintained; limit any obstruction between the street and the interior of your shop.

→ SIGNAGE ON GLASS:

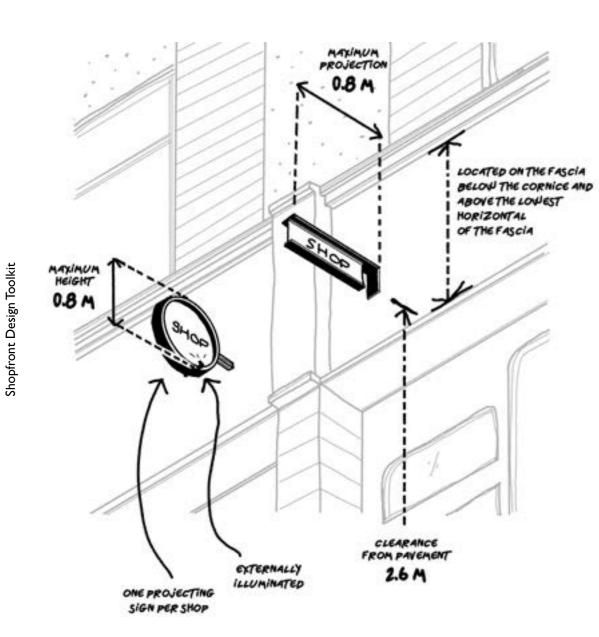
Windows and doors should be kept clear of any signage. Only carefully designed and proportionate vinyl or handpainted signs will be considered. No posters (even if temporary) must be applied to doors and windows. Hand-painted signs are recommended for window lettering on historic shopfronts.

FASCIA SIGNAGE:

Lettering on the fascia must be appropriately sized. All oversized letters or logos will be discouraged. The logo or shop name should be directly handpainted on the fascia or placed with cutout letters. No plaques will be accepted.

- → NO SIGNAGE ON **ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:** Signage should not cover any architectural features (pilaster, stallrisers, fascia, etc.).
- **→ EXTERNAL ILLUMINATION:**
 - All lighting must be external illumination with discrete or hidden light fittings for the fascia signage or subtle 'halo' lighting behind cut out letters. Internally illuminated signs will be considered unacceptable. Intermittent flashing lighting or moving displays will not be accepted. Carefully integrated linear strip lights are encouraged. Swan-neck style lighting is discouraged in the Conservation Area.
- → DISPLAY LIGHTING: Subtle lighting within the shop window to display goods is encouraged.
- → OBSTRUCTION WITH **SIGNAGE**: Do not obstruct the public highway or footway with displays. Devices such as A-frames should be avoided or located inside your demise and not obstruct the pavement.

PROJECTING SIGNS

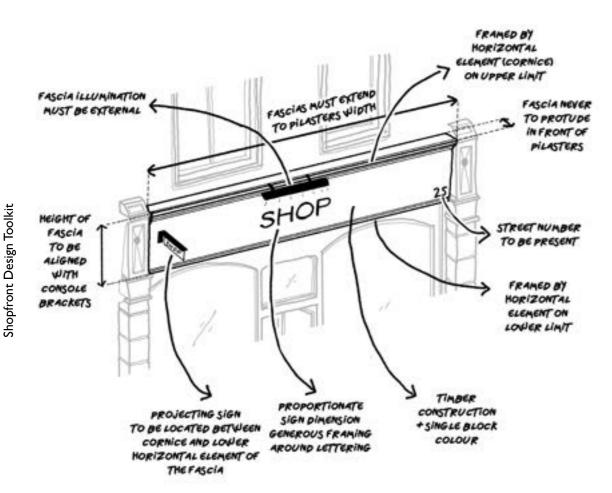


Projecting signs are an efficient way to attract attention from pedestrians. They allow people to notice your shop from a distance and guide them towards your business. Allowing one projecting sign per shopfront and designing them with the appropriate proportions ensures that our high street can be legible and easy to navigate.

PROJECTING SIGNS **DESIGN REQUIREMENTS**

- → QUANTITY: No more than one projecting sign per shopfront façade will be accepted.
- → LOCATION: Projecting signs must be located between the cornice and the bottom of your fascia.
- → SENSIBLY DIMENSIONED: Projecting signs should be proportional to the shopfront. They must not extend below the lower horizontal line of the fascia and not extend above the cornice. They must project a maximum of 800mm from the fascia and be a maximum of 800mm high.
- → 2.6M CLEARANCE: Projecting signs must leave a minimum of 2.6m clearance between the lowest point of the projecting sign and the pavement.
- **→ EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED:** If lighting the projecting sign, it should be externally illuminated. Internally illuminated signs are not acceptable within the Conservation Area.

FASCIAS



Your fascia should act like a friendly and welcoming 'hello' from your business to the high street. Keeping it simple and in proportion is the easiest way to present yourself in the best light to your customers. When nicely framed and properly aligned, carefully designed fascias are a powerful marketing tool and a great way to respect your host buildings and give back to the street.

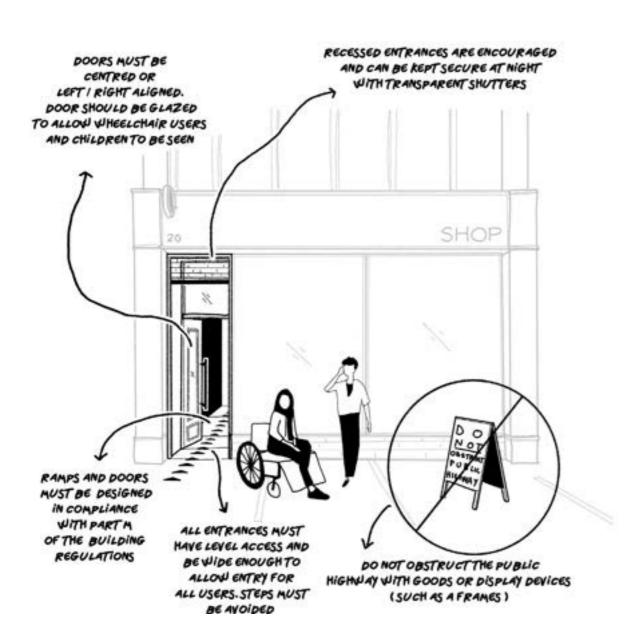
FASCIAS DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

- → FASCIAS ARE MANDATORY: All new shopfront designs must incorporate a fascia. This should be a horizontal element above your shop, displaying your shop name and street number. It frames the upper part of the shopfront and should clearly direct customers.
- → HORIZONTAL ALIGNMENT: If pilasters are present, the fascia must be carefully aligned with the console brackets. If pilasters are not present, fascias must be sensibly aligned with the surrounding buildings and uppers.
- PROPORTIONATE SIGN DIMENSIONS: The fascia must have proportionate sign dimensions. A generous empty frame should be kept around the lettering.
- MATERIALITY: Fascias should be made out of timber. The background of the fascia should be of one colour, and shiny and nonreusable materials such as plastic should be avoided.
- DEPTH: Fascia depth should be proportionate to the rest of the shop and be appropriately sized. Fascias must never protrude in front of the console brackets or pilasters, if present.

- WIDTH: Your fascia should extend to the full width of your shop and stand between pilasters, if present. It should never stretch across a number of distinct buildings or architectural units.
- CORNICE: All fascias must be framed with horizontal elements on their upper and lower edges. This upper element is called the cornice.
- event that an internal dropped ceiling should be concealed, this should be done with transom lights. In no circumstances should the fascia extend to accommodate an internally dropped ceiling.
- ILLUMINATION: If fascias are to be illuminated, this should be done with subtle and dimmed warm external illumination. No cold temperature lighting will be accepted.

ACCESS

ACCESS DESIGN REQUIREMENTS



Shopfront Design Toolkit

- → LEVEL ACCESS: Steps should be avoided. All entrances should be level and wide enough to allow entry for all users. Where a change of level is unavoidable, steps and ramps must be designed in line with Approved Document M of the Building regulations (see page 78 for a link to this resource). A 1:20 ramp gradient is recommended for new ramps. They must also be wide enough for wheelchair users (1.2m minimum) and include landings where necessary.
- to open by all users, centered or left/right aligned with the shopfront. Doors must be able to be operated easily by wheelchair users and those with access needs. Handles should be designed and positioned in accordance with accessibility regulations, ensuring ease of use for people of different abilities. Doors and handles should be designed appropriately and be sympathetic to the period and style of the shopfront.

- → LEGIBILITY: The needs of the partially sighted must be considered when designing a shopfront. Incorporating stall risers and vision panels (glazing on doors at eye level) will make sure the façade of your shop is easy to navigate.
 - RECESSED ENTRANCES:
 Where they exist, recessed entrances should be retained.
 Carefully integrated shutters that can fold back during opening hours can provide security to the external lobby at night.
 The shutter boxes must never protrude in front of the shop and should be concealed in the fascia.
 The integration of appropriately designed new recessed entrances

will be encouraged.

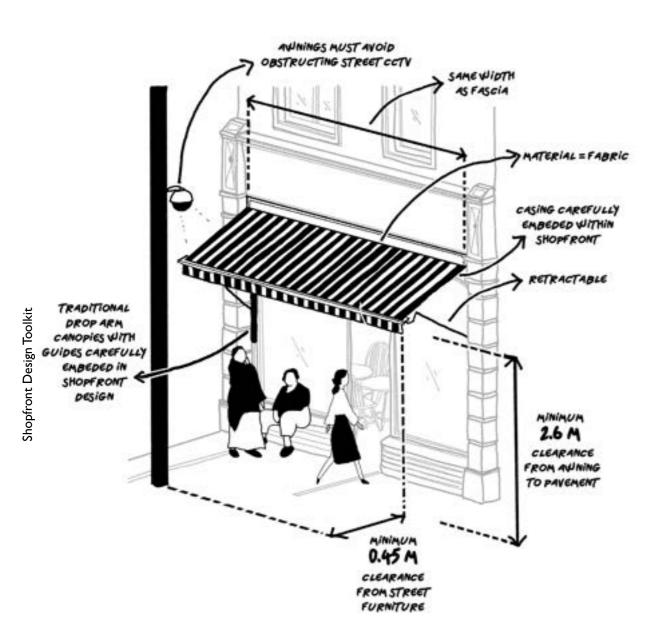
Entry and exit from your shop is a key interaction with your customers.

Making it as easy as you can for everyone to come in should be a key priority.

You must keep your entrance unobstructed and level to the street so that all feel welcome to come in.

AWNINGS

AWNINGS DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

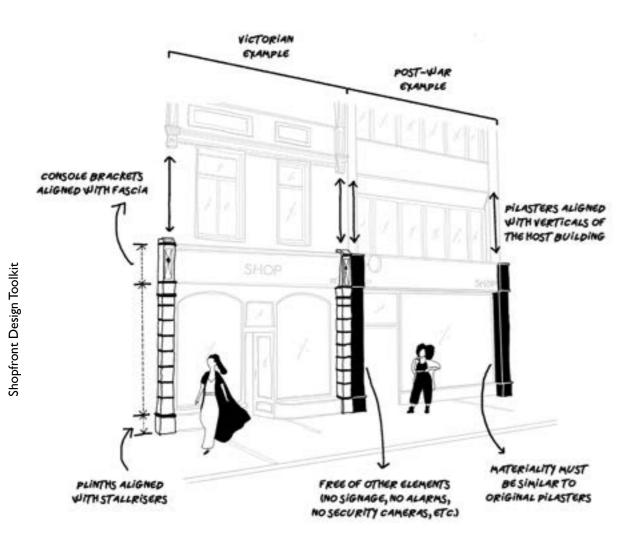


Awnings do much more than create shade. By extending into the street, they create a different buffer zone between the full public life of the street and the interior of your shop. They create little "outdoor rooms" in front of your shop for potential customers. Designing them carefully is key to ensure they achieve their maximum potential and are as respectful as they can be towards their surroundings.

- → STYLE AND MATERIALITY: Awnings should be designed sensibly and consider the architectural heritage of their host building. Traditional drop arm type awnings with fabric covering (shown in the drawing on the left) will be encouraged. Any other proposed type of awning will need justification.
- RETAIN EXISTING TRADITIONAL AWNINGS: If a traditional awning is already in place, it should be retained and repaired using the same type of materials and fabric it is made of.
- → 2.6M CLEARANCE: Awnings must leave a minimum of 2.6m clearance from the lowest point of the awning to the pavement.
- ALIGNMENT: Awning casings (the box into which the awning retracts) must be embedded carefully within the shopfront and never protrude in front of the fascia or pilasters. They should be seamlessly integrated in the fascia.

- COLOUR: Awnings should use a colour that is complimentary to the rest of the shop. Striped awnings will be preferred over a block colour due to improved durability.
- → RETRACTABILITY: Awnings must be retractable. They should be retractable and encased in a blind box which sits flush with the fascia when retracted.
- → SETBACK FROM STREET FURNITURE: Awnings must leave a 0.45m setback clear from any surrounding street furniture.
- → WIDTH: Awnings should be the same width as the fascia.
- → SECURITY: Awnings must avoid blocking CCTV.

PILASTERS



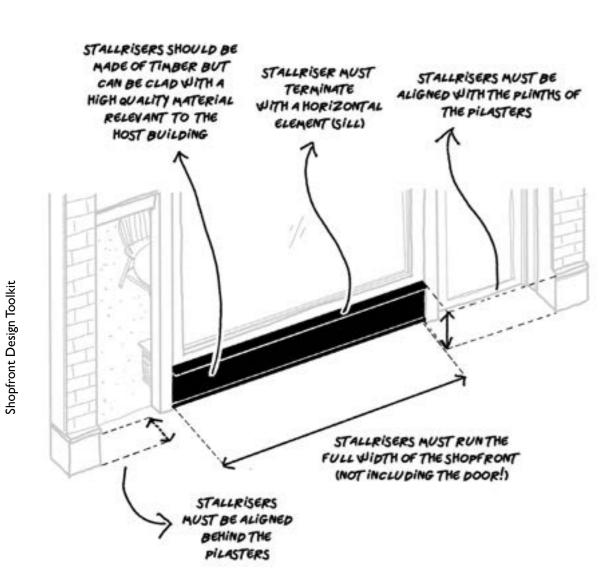
Pilasters attractively frame your shop. They are the vertical elements that create rhythm along the street and help define the different units. They generally follow the structural grid of their host buildings and are one of the key elements to consider when aligning your shop horizontally and in relation to the depth of the shopfront. Reinstating missing pilasters and repairing existing ones are crucial for giving your shop the presence it deserves and it will also improve the wider appeal and attractiveness of the high street.

PILASTERS DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

- → RETAIN ORIGINAL PILASTERS: If pilasters are a feature of your shopfront, they must be retained and repaired as required. The repairs must be done in the same materials as the original pilasters.
- PILASTERS: If your shopfront is missing one or more pilasters, new pilasters should be reinstated and include plinths (base) and console brackets (upper part). The design of the new pilasters should be inspired by the original pilasters on your shop (either from what is present on site or historic photos) and be made of a similar material. The console bracket should be aligned with your fascia, and the plinths should be aligned with stallrisers.
- → LOCATION: New pilasters must be aligned with the location of the original pilasters. This location should reflect the architectural rhythm of the upper floors of your host building.

- → FREE OF OTHER ELEMENTS: New or reinstated pilasters must not have anything fixed to them. No signage and no other devices (alarm, camera, signs, posters, cables, etc.) should be fixed to the pilasters.
- **→ SHARING A PILASTER:**
 - When sharing a pilaster with a neighbour, this pilaster must be a neutral colour (white, off-white, grey, or black). The colour chosen should harmonise with the colour of similar pilasters in your street.
- COLOUR: If your pilasters are not shared by your neighbours (if they have their own pilasters), your pilaster must be either painted the same colour as the rest of your shop or in a neutral colour (white, off-white, grey, or black).

STALLRISERS DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

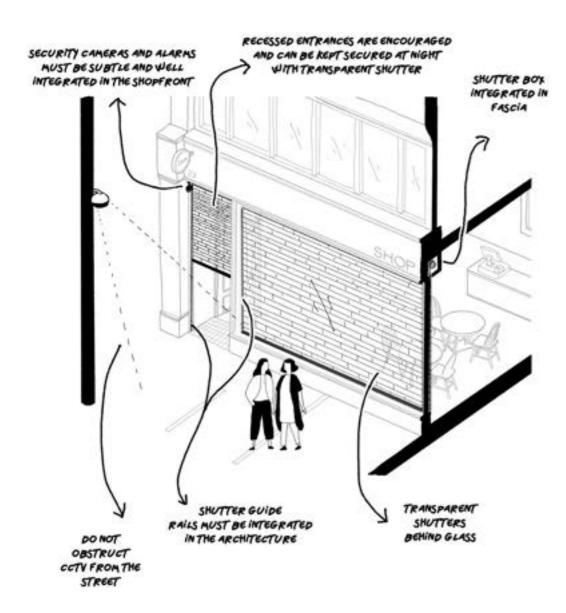


- → RETAIN ORIGINAL STALLRISERS: If stallrisers are present on your shopfront, they must be retained and repaired, as required, with the same materials as the original stallrisers.
- → REINSTATE MISSING STALLRISERS: If your shopfront is missing one or more stallrisers, they should be reinstated. The design of the new stallrisers should be inspired by the original stallrisers present on site or from historic photos of your shop.
- → MATERIALITY: Where a stallriser is being replaced it should be made of timber but can be clad with a high-quality material that is compatible with the shopfront frame and complementary to the upper floors of the building.

- → DIMENSIONS AND
 ALIGNMENT: The stallrisers
 must be installed to the same
 height as the plinth on the
 pilasters, they should not extend
 above the top edge of the plinths.
 Stallrisers should extend for the
 full width of the shopfront, except
 where doors interrupt the façade.
- → SILLS: The top edge of the stallrisers should be finished with a projecting sill (a horizontal moulding that protrudes slightly in front of the panel of the stallriser) to create a clear horizontal distinction between the window and the base of the shopfront.

Stallrisers form the base of your shopfront. They prevent your glazing from being damaged at the lower level and provide an attractive horizontal frame for your shop. When carefully aligned with the plinths of your pilasters, they can become a great tool to give character and personality to your shop.

SAFETY & SECURITY



Keeping your shop secure at all times is a top priority. To do so, you want to create the safest environment in and around your shop (safety) as well as integrating features that can deter or prevent people from breaking into your property (security).

SAFETY & SECURITY DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

→ INTERNAL AND TRANSPARENT SHUTTERS:

Streets with transparent, well-lit, shopfronts at night have much lower crime rates than those with dark and closed frontages. For this reason, if shutters are to be installed, they must be internal (inside your shop — behind glazing). External shutters will be accepted only when impossible to accommodate otherwise. Maintaining internally illuminated displays, both in the windows and within the shop, will add to light levels in the street after dark. improving perceptions of safety for pedestrians and enabling supervision of the interior of the premises. Transparent brick-bond type shutters are encouraged. Solid or pinhole shutters will not be supported.

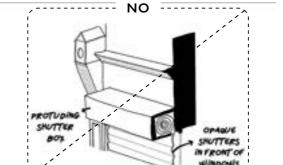
→ RECESSED ENTRANCES: Integrated shutters that can fold back during opening hours can provide security to the external

lobby of recessed entrances.

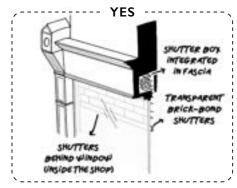
→ INTEGRATED SHUTTER BOXES: If shutters are to be installed, shutter boxes must be carefully integrated into the shopfront and not protrude in front of the fascia. All protruding shutter boxes will be refused. (see images below)

→ INTEGRATED SHUTTER GUIDES: If shutters are to be installed, the vertical guides of the shutters that guide the shutter grill vertically must be carefully integrated into the shopfront design.

security features are to be installed, devices such as cameras, sensors and alarms should be as discreet and well-integrated with the shopfront design as possible.

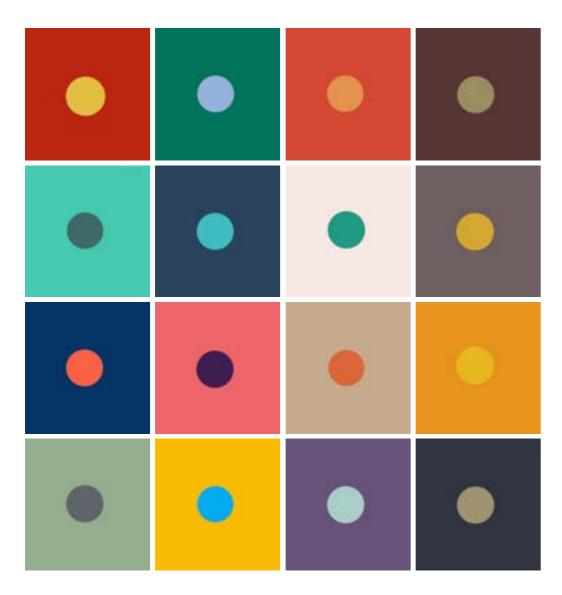


Inappropriate shutter box location



Appropriate shutter box location

COLOUR



One of the most effective ways to make your business stand out is through the effective use of colour. While your shopfront should primarily feature a more muted colour, complementary to the Conservation Area, consider highlighting small design features with colour accents in more vibrant tones. Shown above are some examples of colour combinations that you could consider. While the conservation area recognises the importance of using colour as a tool for supporting your brand and building a vibrant and differentiated high street, inappropriate use of colour (such as pure black, pure white, shiny materials, or excessively bright colours) will be refused.

CASE STUDIES

Where we look at three case studies to illustrate the translation from ideas into an architectural proposal for the shop. We look at a low, medium and high cost intervention and hear the thoughts of the shopkeepers on the impact of the shopfront on their business.

HOW EXPENSIVE IS A SHOPFRONT

173 POWIS STREET

MEDIUM COST

50 HARE STREET

Shopfront Design Toolkit

HIGH COST

107-111 POWIS STREET

NEW TIMBER NEW CUTOUT STRIP LIGHT FASCIA LETTER SIGN NEW £££ PROJECTING SIGN NEW FASCIA LIGHTING NEW WINDOW NEW DOOR TO UPPERS ENTRANCE NEW GLAZING £££

OTHER ELEMENTS NEW AWNING ££££ repaint existing window frames && NEW SHUTTERS £££

NEW STONE PILASTERS EEEE NEW PLASTER PILASTERS &&&

KEY £ VERY LOW COST (£100 TO £1000) ££ LOY COST (£1000 TO £2000)

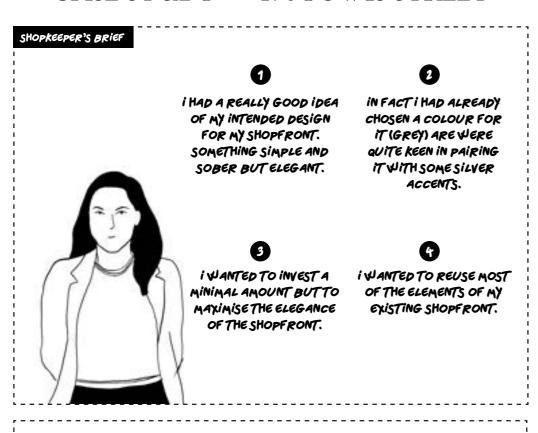
£££ MEDIUM COST (£2000 TO £5000) ELLE HIGHT COST (£5000 +)

Renovating your shopfront can represent a significant cost and investment for your business. However, not all shopfront interventions are expensive. Therefore, be strategic with your design decisions and which elements you will reuse and refresh where current shopfront features are compliant with this toolkit and in good condition. Repainting existing window frames and investing in the more impactful elements is recommended, such as

pilasters and fascia. These features can transform a shopfront without necessarily incurring high costs. Discussing the options with a qualified architect will help you visualise and understand the benefits your changes and investment could bring. To help you visualise the scale of interventions possible, the next pages show three examples of shopfront renovations in the Woolwich Conservation Area, highlighting a range of costs and the different changes made in each project.

LOW COST INTERVENTION

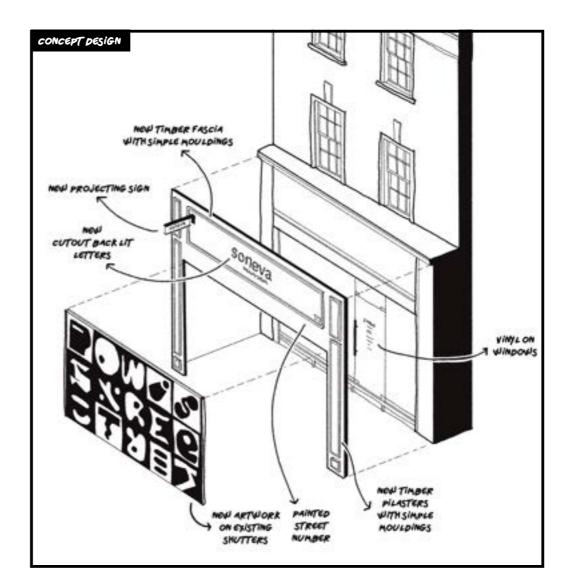
CASE STUDY — 173 POWIS STREET



MY SHUTTERS
WERE QUITE
BLANK AND I WAS
INTERESTED IN
USING THEM TO
FEATURE ART
THAT COULD ANIMATE THE STREET
AT NIGHT.

i Wanted to Find Ways to attract new customers in the shop by presenting my business in a new light









ABOVE
173 Powis Street before interventions

NEXT PAGE

173 Powis Street after interventions and its shopkeeper holding a scale model of the shopfront



MEDIUM COST INTERVENTION

CASE STUDY — 50 HARE STREET

SHOPKEEPER'S BRIEF

AS A PAYUNBROKER AND A JEWELLER, IT CAN BE QUITE DIFFICULT TO PRESENT YOURSELF TO THE WORLD. ON ONE HAND, I WANTED MY SHOP TO APPEAR APROACHABLE BUT I ALSO WANTED TO PROJECT SOME IDEA OF PRESTIGE AND ELEGANCE ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRADE OF JEWELLERY



OUR SHOPFRONT WAS QUITE CLUTTERED WITH LOTS OF SIGNS and adverstisements. so a FIRST STEP WAS TO FREE OUR SHOP OF THESE AND CELEBRATE WHAT WE FOUND UNDERNEATH. PILASTERS WERE VERY DAMAGED BUTSALVAGABLE.



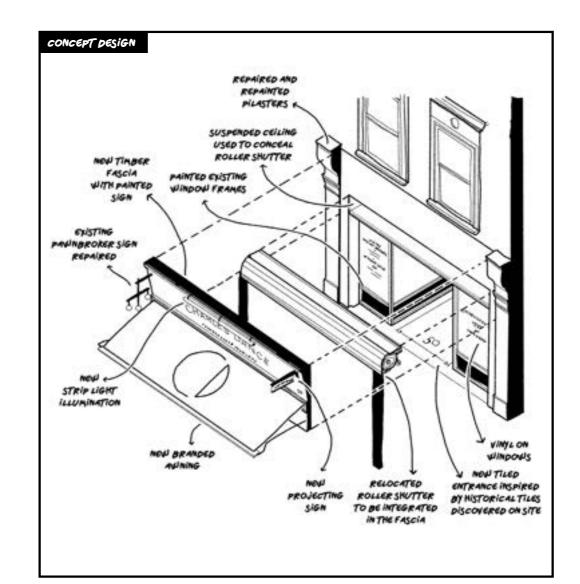
THE RECESSED ENTRANCETHAT WE HAD WAS WORKING QUITE WELL FOR US. HOWEVER, THE TILES WERE QUITE DAMAGED. SO WE THOUGHT WE SHOULD REFRESH THE ENTRANCE WITH NEW TILES AND REPAINT THE FRAMES.



WE WANTED TO CELEBRATE THE FACTTHAT THE SHOP HAS BEEN HERE FOR ALMOST 100 YEARS.



ATTHESAMETIME, WE WANTED TO MAKESURE WE LOOKED CONTEMPORARY AND REACHABLE. THIS BALANCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND NEW WAS KEY FOR US.



SINCE THE SHOP HAS BEEN BUILT...

it's so great to come into the shop every MORNING AND SEE THE CHANGES. ON TOP OF OUR REGULAR CUSTOMERS WE DEFINITELY ARE ATTRACTING A NEW CLIENTELE NOW. THE JEWELLER PART OF OUR BUSINESS OFFER HAS PICKED UP AND WE HAVE ALSO ENCOURAGED OUR NEIGHBOURS IN refreshing their shopfront!



Case Studies



ABOVE

50 Hare Street before interventions

NEXT PAGE

50 Hare Street after interventions and its shopkeeper holding a scale model of the shopfront



HIGH COST INTERVENTION

CASE STUDY — 107-111 POWIS STREET

shopkeeper's brief

WE WANTED TO REFRESH OUR IMAGE AND PRESENT OURSELVES AS CLASSY, BOLD AND ELEGANT. WE WANTED THE SHOP TO COMMUNICATE A CERTAIN DEGREE OF GLAMOUR WHILE LOOKING SMART AND STYLISH.

THE LOCATION WE OCCUPY ON THE STREET BY USING THE CORNER OF THE BUILDING AS AN ENTRY POINT. NOT ONLY WOULD THIS ALLOW US TO HAVE MORE VISIBILITY FROM BOTH POWIS AND HARE STREET BUT ALSO ALLOW US TO OWN THIS CORNER OF THE STREET.

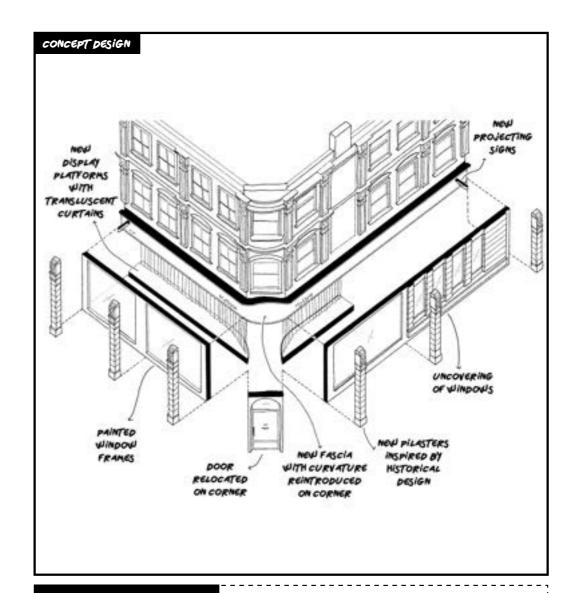
WE WANTED TO CELEBRATE



OUR OLD SHOPFRONT WAS WHITE WHICH WAS MAKING OUR FACADE BLEND TOO MUCH WITH THE UPPER PART OF THE BUILDING (ALSO WHITE). WE WANTED THE NEW SHOP TO HAVE A CONTRASTING AND PUNCHY COLOUR TO ATTRACT THE EYES ON US.



OUR WINDOWS ON BARNARD CLOSE HAVE BEEN COVERED FOR A LONG TIME AND WE HAD DISPLAY IN ALL OF OUR FACADE WHICH WAS PREVENTING CUSTOMERS FROM SEEING INSIDE OUR SHOP. OPENING UP OUR SHOPFRONT WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR US.



SINCE THE SHOP HAS BEEN BUILT...

THIS NEW SHOPFRONT WAS A VERY BIG CHANGE FOR US. A LOT OF PEOPLETHINK We are new here on the street which is great, attracting new customers! THE BIGGEST CHANGE FOR US HAS BEEN THE TRANSPARENCY WE HAVE ACHIEVED BY UNCLUTTERING OUR WINDOWS. PEOPLE CAN NOW SEE INSIDE OUR SHOP MUCH MORE Which is allowing them to see more of OUR PRODUCTS.





ABOVE
107-111 Powis Street before interventions

NEXT PAGE 107-111 Powis Street after interventions and its shopkeeper holding a scale model of the shopfront



HOW CAN NATIONAL BRANDS ADAPT THEIR SHOPFRONTS TO PRESERVE LOCAL CHARACTER WITHOUT COMPROMISING THEIR IDENTITY?





27 HARE STREET — CEZAR

A renovation project that thoughtfully respects its host building, using subtle lighting and materials to achieve a strong impact on the high street.

Generic, ready-made branding from large chain stores can harm the look and feel of a high street, so it is especially important to take extra care in a Conservation Area such as Woolwich town centre. These ready-made designs often put corporate logos and colours ahead of the unique character of the place. Oversized fascias that overpower the shopfront, or brightly lit signs that glare at night, can make the street feel cluttered and out of step with its surroundings. This not only distracts from the buildings' architecture but also weakens the heritage and rhythm of the area. But it does not have to be this way. Many national brands across the country have adjusted their usual style to blend with historic streets and sensitive

locations, proving that a business can retain its identity while respecting its setting. Smaller-scale, wellproportioned signage, using natural materials, thoughtful lettering and softer lighting, can help a shopfront feel both distinctive and in harmony with its neighbours. In Woolwich, this kind of proportionate and welljudged design is more than just welcome, it is strongly encouraged. Signs should match the scale, details and materials of the building, and add to its qualities rather than fight against them. Engagement with the requirements of this toolkit and appreciation of the context of the Conservation Area is a minimum expectation for all shopfront applications.

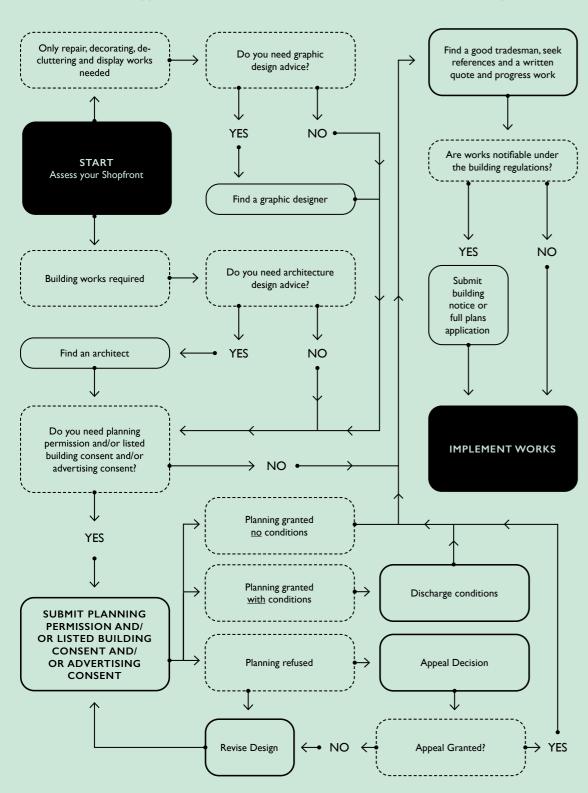


2 BARNARD CLOSE — THE FRIENDS
Bright, simple changes refresh this local café's façade, bringing new faces to the establishment and delighting regulars.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Where we list additional references available to you to help you design your future shopfront.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR ME TO FOLLOW TO ADAPT MY SHOPFRONT?



Shopfront Design Toolkit

WHAT ARE THE OTHER RESOURCES I SHOULD BE AWARE OF WHEN DESIGNING MY SHOPFRONT?

- → Woolwich Conservation Area Appraisal: https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/ conservation-and-listed-buildings/maps-and-adopted-character
- → Urban Design Guidance SPD: https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/200190/planning and_building_control

All proposals prepared using the Design Toolkit should also comply with the SPD so as to be acceptable in urban design terms.

→ Finding an architect:

From the Architects Registration Board: <u>architects-register.org.uk/</u>

From the Royal Institute of British Architects: find-an-architect.architecture.com/wizard/landing

→ Finding a graphic designer
One of the world leading portfolio platform for creatives: behance.net

→ Part M Building Regulations: Access to and use of building (Building other than dwellings) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-ofbuildings-approved-document-m



The shopfront design toolkit for Woolwich Conservation Area is supported by Historic England as part of the Heritage Action Zone programme.

EDITING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Turner Works

TYPEFACES

Gill Sans

Gill Fascia

PaintBoxPro

PAPER

Munken

PRINTING

Park Communications Ltd

PUBLISHING

London, 2025

The Shopfront Design Toolkit For Woolwich Conservation Area is supported by:

Mathematical Historic England

