



Armadale

Shop Front Improvement Guidance

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West Lothian
Council

Design Guidelines

It is important to establish a strong and attractive shopfront scheme for Armadale Town Centre, in order to support the promotion of the town as a retail and visitor destination. In doing so, it is also important to ensure appropriate design and quality is achieved when undertaking shopfront alterations.

Many shop fronts have been altered from their original state over time and even relatively modest proposals can have a positive effect in bringing a shop front back to its original character. It should be noted that works to shop-fronts might need planning permission and/or building warrants and the installation of advertisements/signage may require advertisement consent.

General Design

Where a shop occupies more than one building; any replacement of the shop front should take account of the individual buildings and should not be designed as a unified whole extending across both facades. The corporate styles of multiple stores should be adjusted to suit local circumstances.

Traditional Features

Traditional shop front stall risers - the part of the elevation filling the area between the shop window and the pavement - and sills should be retained if original and treated simply in flat timber or render and coloured to match the rest of the shop front. The stall risers should not be made into features through tiling, advertisements, panelling or painting in dramatically contrasting colours. Recessed doors should be retained if they survive. Traditional feature such as pilasters - rectangular supports that resemble a flat column - surrounds and cornices should be retained if they survive.

Fascias

The opportunity should be taken to return enlarged fascias - the area at the top of the shopfront where the sign is situated - to their original depth.

Materials

Where new work is required, traditional materials, eg timber should be used. Aluminium, tiles, mirrors, UPVC, laminates etc. are not generally appropriate.

Colours

Pure white, purple, lilac, bright red, light colours and pastels are not usually appropriate. Lower sections where staining can occur, often look best when painted a very dark colour such as black or slate grey.

Signage

Hand painted signs are preferred, but high quality applied lettering of a non-plastic or non-reflective materials can also be appropriate. Where a fascia board exists, lettering should be applied flush to the board and be no higher than four fifths of the height of the fascia board. Lettering should be limited to the minimum information relating to the shop and its service. Lettering should not be applied to any sub-fascia or other parts of the facade. Sponsored fascia signs are rarely appropriate unless they conform to the standards identified above. Hanging signs can be effective but projecting box signs, whether illuminated or not, should be avoided.

Window Advertisements

Covering the shop window with signs and advertisements does little for the street scene as a whole and such clutter should be avoided. An imaginative or simple window display can be more effective than a profusion of signs and bills posted behind the glass.

Illumination

Internally illuminated box signs applied to the fascia and projecting in front of the main plane of the shop front are not attractive elements in a traditional street scene and should be avoided. Where illumination is necessary it should, where possible, be in the form of well designed down lights illuminating a fascia board.



Security

Security measures, where necessary and approved, should be integrated into the original design of the shop front rather than stuck on. Flat shutters which cover the windows when closed, external boxes to contain roller shutters when open, alarm boxes, gates and grilles are unsympathetic and add an unattractive air to the street scene.

Alarm boxes should be fixed in inconspicuous positions on the facade. Solid shutters cause a dead and uninteresting appearance and should be avoided. An open mesh grille behind the glass is the preferred means of security. Where considered acceptable, external shutters should be of an open grille type.

Canopies

West Lothian Council should be consulted to assess whether canopies are appropriate. Where canopies are required, only retractable blinds of a traditional canvas type, without advertisements, lettering or images should be used. Curved Dutch canopies are not appropriate.

Access

When alterations are being made to a shopfront, the opportunity is available to improve access for all, with special consideration for those with disabilities and people with prams.

Contact details

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