

Shopfront Design Guidance for Architectural Conservation Areas and Protected Structures

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ACAs and Protected Structures

- Kilkenny City Centre has **3 ACAs** – **City Centre, John Street and Patrick Street** (not including St. Canice's and Kilkenny Castle ACAs)
- Many of the buildings within these ACAs are also **protected structures** – see Appendix G of Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan 2014-2020
- Some of the buildings within the city centre have also been recommended for protection - **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage** – www.buildingsofireland.ie
- Any works to a protected structure that would affect its special **character** requires **planning permission**
- Any works to the **exterior of a building within an ACA** that would affect the character of the ACA would **require planning permission**
- However, **Section 5 and Section 57** can be used to agree the design and details of **minor works to PSs and buildings within ACAs.**

The importance of GOOD DESIGN

- Achieving a quality built environment means applying the principles of **GOOD DESIGN** to all proposals to the exterior of buildings within an ACA and whether the building is protected or not.
- It is recommended that you engage a design professional (architect/graphic designer) when considering making alterations to an existing shopfront or when proposing a replacement shopfront or replacement signage.

GOOD DESIGN (historic)





GOOD DESIGN
(new)

Poor DESIGN



Designing in CONTEXT

- How the proposal relates to:

The Building Overhead:

It should relate to the upper floors in terms of proportion, scale and alignment. The proportions of the individual elements may be suggested by the composition and proportions of upper floor details and window openings.

Adjoining Buildings:

New shopfront design must respect the scale and proportions of the streetscape by maintaining the existing grain of development along the street and respecting the appropriate plot width – narrow plot width and strong vertical emphasis is the norm in Kilkenny.

The Streetscape:

A corporate retail image with standardised shopfront design, corporate colours and materials is rarely appropriate in an urban streetscape. Compatibility with individual buildings and with the street scene will be considered more important than external uniformity between the branches of one company.

Shopfronts in CONTEXT



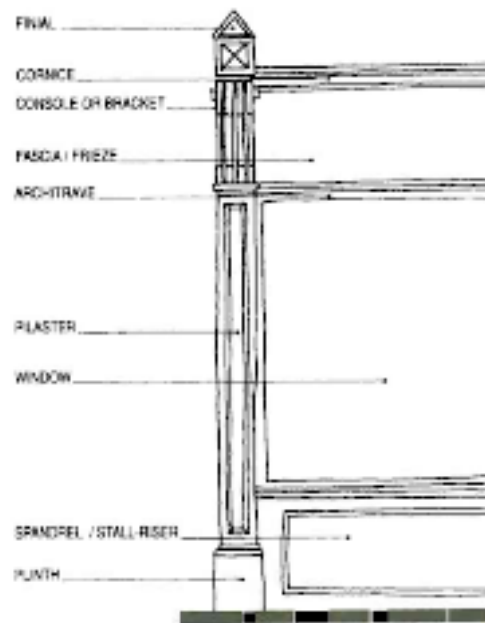
Designing in CONTEXT



Designing in CONTEXT



Shopfront Design- FRAMEWORK



- ▲ The elements of the traditional shopfront
- ◆ This traditional shopfront provides clear identification of the shop and well-defined display areas.

FUNCTION OF THE SHOPFRONT

The shopfront has a number of important functions in a streetscape, and these need to be borne in mind when approaching shopfront design. The primary function of a shopfront is to identify a retail premises within a street using a combination of name sign and window display. The shopfront also has an important role in expressing the architectural character of the building at ground-floor level. Both the commercial and architectural functions should be addressed in the design process. This section deals with the guiding principles, essential elements and various details relating to shopfront design.

THE SHOPFRONT STRUCTURE: DESIGN ELEMENTS

An understanding of the constituent elements of the shopfront is a valuable prerequisite to the subject of shopfront design. The basic structure, derived ultimately from Classical architecture, consists of relatively few elements (illustrated alongside):

- cornice
- fascia
- pilasters
- stallriser.

Shopfront design - FRAMEWORK

Provide a strongly defined framework to include the following:

- **Cornice** – narrow projecting detail over the fascia – keeps rain off the fascia sign and provides a strong definition to the top of the shopfront – it is critical from a visual view point.
- **Fascia** – its function is to carry the **shop name and street number**. The depth of the fascia should be proportionate to the size of the building, and proportion and length of the shopfront. A single fascia should not be used to link buildings of different architectural identities and the lettering should always be in scale with the fascia panel.
- **Pilasters** – rectangular columns projecting slightly from the face of the building – often running up through the fascia as brackets/consols – traditionally very elaborate with scrolls and fluting and often capped with a finial. Pilasters should always sit on a plinth. They give **vertical definition** to the shopfront and are critical in reflecting the pattern or grain of buildings in the streetscape.
- **Stallriser** – the **horizontal element** between the bottom of the window and the ground. The stallrise should be between 300mm and 600mm in height to give a strong visual base to the shopfront. However, they are often omitted from contemporary designs to maximise impact of display area -

Shopfront Design – Windows and Doors

Windows and doors:

- The **appropriate proportions** of windows and doors are likely to be suggested by the proportions of openings in the upper part of that building and by adjoining buildings.
- It is advisable to design windows and doors in sympathy with other features of the building
- While owners of busy shops may consider widening the entrance or entrances to their premises, it is important that the **dimensions of the openings** are kept in scale with the buildings and adjoining buildings.
- The detailing of each of the constituent elements is critical to the visual strength of the framework.

Strongly Designed FRAMEWORK



Lack of FRAMEWORK



Good Design - WINDOWS and DOORS



Good Design - WINDOWS and DOORS



OXFOR



Good Design -
Windows and Doors

Poor Design – WINDOWS and DOORS



Good Design - FASCIA SIGNAGE

- In general only the **name and the street number** of the shop should be used on the fascia panel.
- Signs comprising **individually mounted lettering** or **handpainted lettering** are generally the most appropriate solutions
- Letter design should be **simple and legible** – the dimensions of the fascia should dictate **size and height of letters**.
- Materials for the letters should complement the shopfront materials.
- **Illumination should be discrete**, either concealed LEDs or by rear illumination of the letters. Spotlights are no longer necessary given advances in lighting technology and as they create visual clutter are no longer acceptable.

Good Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE



Good Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE



Good Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE





Good Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE

Good Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE





Poor Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE

Poor Design – FASCIA SIGNAGE



Good design - MATERIALS

- The materials chosen, their colour and texture, should complement the architectural character of the building and integrate with the overall visual unity of the streetscape.
- Whether traditional or contemporary shopfront, achieving a quality, durable finish should be of prime consideration.
- A high level of attention to detail and craftsmanship is required to achieve a quality appearance.
- Materials like stone, steel, aluminium are particularly appropriate in a contemporary context and to can be enlivened by modelling and detailing.

Good Design - MATERIALS

A photograph of a building facade featuring a sign that reads "Leaping Lizard". The sign is made of white, three-dimensional, stylized letters mounted on a light-colored wall. The letters are arranged in two words: "Leaping" and "Lizard". The "L" in "Lizard" is particularly large and prominent. The building has a red brick upper section and a light-colored lower section. A window with a flower box is visible above the sign. The overall scene is captured in a slightly low-angle shot, emphasizing the sign's placement on the building's exterior.

Leaping Lizard



Good Design - MATERIALS

Good Design - MATERIALS





Good Design - MATERIALS

Good Design - COLOUR

- The colour of the shopfront and the colour of materials chosen should be determined by the need to harmonise with the rest of the building and with the streetscape.
- Colours that create an overly strident visual effect should be avoided.



Good Design –
COLOUR



Good Design – COLOUR

Good Design - COLOUR



Good Design – PROJECTING SIGNS



Visual Clutter - PROJECTING SIGNS



Good Design – PROJECTING SIGNS





Good Design – PROJECTING SIGNS

BANNERS

- Banners should also be kept to a minimum with no more than one permitted per building. Their size should be appropriate to the scale of the building and of the architectural detail (ie not covering strong courses or cornices and suitable for the proportions of the facade).
- Corporate signage in banner signs or projecting signs is not permitted.

Good Design – BANNER SIGNS



Living City Initiative - Commercial

- LCI – A Scheme of property tax incentives introduced in 2015.
- Scheme applies to SRA's – special regeneration areas in six cities – Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Cork, Kilkenny
- 2 types of tax relief – owner/occupier residential and retail/commercial

Commercial Element of LCI

- Expenditure must relate to refurbishment or conversion only and not to 'new build'.
- Expenditure must be at least 10% of commercial value of the property before works are carried out.
- Not restricted to pre 1915 buildings.
- Capital allowance is 15% of qualifying expenditure for each of the 6 years and 10% in year 7.