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Coventry City Council

Agenda

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

Time and Date

11.00 am on Thursday, 15th January, 2026

Place

Diamond Room 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August, 2025
 - b) Matters arising
4. **Local Listing Consultation - The Astoria Cinema, 71 Albany Road and Spigot Mortar off Shilton Lane** (Pages 7 - 28)
Report of the Director of Regeneration and Economy
5. **Urban Design Consultations - Draft Shop Front Design Guides SPD & Stage One Design Code Consultation** (Pages 29 - 78)
Report of the Director of Regeneration and Economy
6. **Outstanding Issues**
There are no outstanding issues
7. **Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

7 January, 2026

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Suzanne Bennett Governance Services Officer, Email: suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillor N Akhtar (Cabinet Member)

By invitation Councillors S Agboola (Deputy Cabinet Member), Councillor R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Public Access

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Suzanne Bennett
Governance Services Officer, Email:
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Agenda Item 3

Coventry City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities held at 11.00 am on Monday, 11 August 2025

Present:

Members: Councillor N Akhtar (Cabinet Member)
Councillor S Agboola (Deputy Cabinet Member)
Councillor R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance M Bajway, T Robinson

Regeneration and Economy: M Lynch, D Nuttall, S Virman

In Attendance:

CV Life M Nugent

Public Business

7. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

8. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

9. Request by Culture Coventry Trust to Dispose of Collection Items, in Line with Relevant Policies and Accreditation Standards

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities considered a report of the Director of Regeneration and Economy to consider a request by Culture Coventry Trust to dispose of collection items, in line with relevant policies and accreditation standards.

The report stated that as a large municipal organisation, Coventry City Council collects a wide range of historical and artistic artefacts over time, through a combination of statutory archiving, donations and gifts, bequests, loans, commissions, and purchases. In Coventry, a significant proportion of these items are on loan, entrusted to the care of Culture Coventry Trust by way of a Funding and Management Agreement entered-into with the Council (the “Agreement”) and principally housed in Coventry Transport Museum, the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, and in ancillary stores. For one or more reasons, including the proactive

management of collections in accordance with the requirements of Accreditation, a museum may plan to periodically review such arrangements and propose to dispose of certain items from the collections in its care.

It was noted that Arts Council England's (ACE) Accreditation scheme requires participating local authorities and museums to have a Collections Development Policy. The Culture Coventry Trust Collections Development Policy 2024–2027 (attached to the report at Appendix 7) sets out principles, procedures, and decision-making processes for the responsible and ethical disposal of museum collections, ensuring transparency, public benefit, and engagement with stakeholders. In accordance with this policy, approval was sought from the City Council for the disposal of 588 identified collection items (including individual items and small collections) as requested by Culture Coventry.

Further to the officers' report, Councillor R Bailey, Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, highlighted a number of items of significant cultural value to be reconsidered as part of the disposal. Additionally, the Cabinet Member proposed asking the appropriate Scrutiny Board to consider future items proposed for disposal from the collection as part of the review process.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities:

- 1) Approves the request by Coventry Culture Trust to dispose of 588 identified collections items, in line with relevant policies and accreditation standards.**
- 2) Approves that the proceeds received from any commercial sales of disposed items be held in reserves by Culture Coventry Trust, pending re-investment into further acquisitions for the museum collections or in exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of existing collections, in accordance with the Trust's Collections Development Policy 2024-2027.**
- 3) Delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration & Economy or his nominee to oversee the appropriate disposal of collection items by Culture Coventry Trust according to accreditation standards and guidelines following disposal approval.**
- 4) That officers give further consideration to those items now identified by the Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities.**
- 5) That in future, the appropriate Scrutiny Board be asked to consider items proposed for disposal from the collection and to make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member.**

10. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

11. **Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 11.30 am)

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Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

15 January 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Cllr N Akhtar

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Regeneration and Economy

Ward(s) affected:

Earlsdon Ward and Henley Ward

Title:

Local Listing Consultation -

The Astoria Cinema, 71 Albany Road and Spigot Mortar off Shilton Lane

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

The City Council has an established nomination process for the nomination of additions to the Local List of Heritage Assets, available to the public via the authority's website at https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/23529/local_list_criteria

The Local Authority has received a nomination to consider the Astoria Cinema, and the CCC Archaeology Officer has nominated the Spigot Mortar off Shilton Lane for Local Listing. Further to officers assessment, the nomination has been found to be valid and it is recommended that public consultation is now undertaken on the nomination to further inform decision making.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the commencement of public consultation to consider The Astoria Cinema and Spigot Mortar off Shilton Lane for inclusion on the Local List of heritage assets.
- 2) Delegate authority to Head of Planning Policy and Environment, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to finalise the details of public consultation (including the period of consultation) in line with established processes.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix One – Conservation Officer Report - The Astoria Cinema
Appendix Two – Archaeology Officer Report - Spigot Mortar off Shilton Lane

Background papers:

City of Coventry Local List of Heritage Assets – criteria

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/23529/local_list_criteria

Other useful documents

N/A

Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny?

No - However, the role of Locally Listed Heritage assets in the planning system was considered by Scrutiny on 6th October 2022

Has it or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

Local Listing Consultations – The Astoria Cinema and Shilton Lane Spigot Mortar.

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Locally listed buildings are buildings and sites within the local planning authority's area which make a positive contribution to its local character and sense of place because of their heritage value.
- 1.2 Whilst these buildings or sites may not be nationally designated, the Local List identification of these sites and their significance then merits consideration in future planning decisions.
- 1.3 A Local Listing designation does not serve to restrict development of a site or building which holds the designation, rather any application for redevelopment would need to evidence impacts to the designation, and where any loss is proposed, demonstrate that the benefits of a proposal outweigh the loss.
- 1.4 Coventry City Council have maintained a Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest since (at least) June 1974. The list has evolved over time as nominations have been considered and if endorsed, placed onto the register.
- 1.5 The creation and maintenance of a Local List is a way to identify and celebrate historic buildings and sites which enrich the area, this identification and publication of designations also contributes to the Coventry Plan in the promotion of Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for the arts and culture.
- 1.6 The process establishes key assessment criteria of received nomination for consideration of inclusion to the Local List, in order that a nomination be valid and proceed to further stages of evaluation, applicants must demonstrate the nominations alignment with the articulated criteria.
- 1.7 This report considers undertaking of public consultation of 2 sites for consideration of inclusion into the Local List – these being informed by nominations to officers and building upon the findings of previous public consultation.
- 1.8 Officers have undertaken initial assessment of the 2 sites and found that they may be able to fulfil the criteria for local listing, subject to further research and findings of public consultation.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 Do Nothing (Not Recommended)

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities could choose to not progress the nomination to public consultation, however noting the potential for alignment to the criteria for Local Listing this is not recommended.

2.2 **Commence a public consultation** (Recommended)

Further to an initial review of the nominations, officers recommend that a public consultation is undertaken, in order to make a future recommendation to Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities in regard to any addition to the Local List of Heritage Assets.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. This report seeks authority to commence the consultation exercise.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The decision will be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1. Financial Implications

The recommendation will have no financial impact.

5.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report at this stage.

Consultation must be undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage, must give sufficient reasons to permit the consultee to make a meaningful response, must allow adequate time for consideration and response, and the results of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Assessment of Local List nominations contributes toward raising the profile of Coventry through promoting Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for the arts and culture, sports and leisure, music and events.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

There is no risk identified associated with the recommendation

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

The undertaking of public consultation will be deliverable within current resource.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

There is no direct impact from the recommendations of the report.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

Chris Styles

Head of Planning Policy and Environment

Service:

Regeneration and Economy

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	27/11/25	28/11/25
Anne Lynch	Interim Strategic Lead for Planning	Regeneration and Economy	27/11/25	01/12/25
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Ewan Dewar	Head of Service Finance Financial Management	Finance	27/11/25	01/12/25
Legal: Oluremi Aremu	Head of Legal and Procurement Services	Law and Governance	28/11/25	02/12/25
Director: Andy Williams	Director of Regeneration & Economy	-	03/12/25	04/12/25
Members: Name				
Cllr Naeem Akhtar	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	-	05/12/25	08/12/25

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The Astoria Cinema Local List Nomination – Officer Report

1.0 Context

1.1 The former cinema known as the Astoria (originally the Broadway Cinema, opened 3 November 1922) stands at 71 Albany Road in the Earlsdon district of Coventry. Constructed for the silent film, during a period of expansion and civic optimism, the building served as one of the city's principal inter-war entertainment venues and remains a notable surviving example of its kind.

Builder: A.W. Pell.

Architects: Believed to have been designed by Ives & Rushby

Built: 1922



Figure 1: The former Cinema Astoria, 71 Albany Road, Earlsdon

2.0 Site

2.1 The large rectangular property occupies a prominent gabled frontage on the eastern side of Albany Road near the junction with Winifred Avenue. The site lies within a mixed residential and commercial streetscape in Earlsdon, approximately half a mile from Coventry city centre and railway station. The building is set back slightly from the pavement with approach steps and formerly a landscaped forecourt.

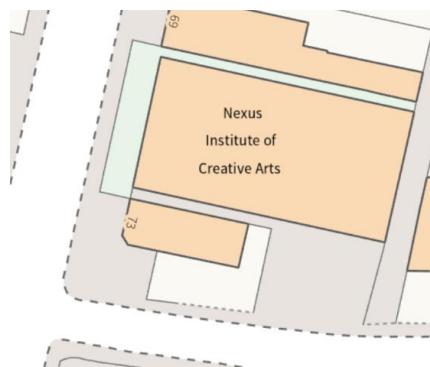


Figure 2: Site plan showing the former cinema the Astoria

3.0 Assessment – Discussion and Detail

External appearance

- 3.1 The building is notable for its Art-Deco frontage. It is built of red brick, with a pedimented gable and brick dentil coursing at eaves level and string course at the fourth floor. The ground floor entrance has metal framed glass double doors with margin light surround topped by an arched fan light. The opening is flanked by two six light windows with arched fanlight overhead. Above there are four double casement Crittall windows within segmental arch frames, all painted in blue. Brick pilasters break up the large façade and provide vertical emphasis and classical proportions to the building. Either side of the second-floor windows are two round windows. To the outer edges of the façade are two brick pilasters.
- 3.2 Coloured lamps originally highlighted the archway openings. The brickwork remains legible, and the architectural form retains its original rhythm of façade bays and portico approach. Alterations (such as an illuminated sign reading 'ASTORIA', a disabled access ramp, and changes to entrance doors) have been made, but the primary structural form and material character survive.

Internal appearance

- 3.3 The foyer once featured rich material finishes including oak-panelled walls, a rustic brick fireplace with art-metal candelabra, terrazzo floors and twin terrazzo staircases to the circle. The stalls area used Pavine flooring for acoustic control, and the auditorium was decorated with blue and gold plaster moldings, Futurist-style panels, and frosted coloured glass windows. A large 21 ft by 16 ft screen and orchestra pit further reinforced the building's grandeur.



Figure 3: Entrance Foyer and Concert Hall

3.4 Later changes included repainting ceilings, removal of decorative panels and replacement glazing; nevertheless, the spatial volumes, primary circulation routes and significant fixtures (terraces, stairs, stair cores) remain intact. The building comprises approximately 8,136 sq ft (755.85 m²) gross internal area over ground, first and mezzanine floors.

3.4.1 *On the ground floor the property comprises a large reception area, with toilets and offices at the front with individual music rooms, teaching areas and a refectory behind this off a central corridor which runs from the front to the rear of the building. The refectory includes a kitchen area, a meeting area and toilets.*

3.4.2 *The first floor is accessed via a lift and stairs on both sides of the building at the rear, and comprises a large concert hall with a stage, and preparation areas. The mezzanine area looks over and is accessed from the first floor concert hall, as well as separate stairs on both sides of the building to the front, and provides an open-plan area as well as offices, a library and toilets. – Right Move*

4.0 Assessment – Criteria

- 4.1 Historic: The building reflects the growth of the cinema industry in early 20th-century Britain, and its survival through wartime and post-war change adds to Coventry's urban narrative.
- 4.2 Architectural: The combination of high-quality brickwork, terrazzo detailing, oak paneling and decorative plasterwork demonstrates the standard of design found in purpose-built cinemas of the inter-war years.
- 4.3 Artistic: Decorative interiors featuring bespoke plaster moldings, painted panels and specialist lighting speak to the artistic ambition of the era.
- 4.4 Evidential: The extant fabric offers a tangible record of the planning, technical specification and experiential qualities of a 1920s picture palace.
- 4.5 Communal: The building has been a place of social gathering, culture and local memory for decades; its adaptation into other uses further demonstrates its continuing communal relevance.
- 4.6 Integrity: Although some decorative finishes have been removed or altered, the main structure, façade and internal spatial arrangement remain substantially intact.

4.7 Rarity: There are few surviving examples of suburban cinemas from this period in Coventry with such identifiable material quality and continued presence.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The Astoria Cinema, Albany Road, Earlsdon, is of local significance for its historic, architectural, artistic, evidential and communal values. It is a well-preserved example of early 20th-century entertainment architecture, notable for its durable materials, refined detailing and cultural role in the city. It is concluded that undertaking a consultation on the nomination would therefore be beneficial to gain a greater understanding of the views of local people on the nomination's inclusion to the Local List of Heritage Assets and invite contributions which may further an understanding of the buildings heritage value.

Local List Officer Report

Spigot Mortar off Shilton Lane, Oxford Canal

1.0 Location and Background

1.1 Context

1.1.1 A 29mm Blacker Bombard spigot mortar located along the Oxford Canal off Shilton Lane. It forms one of a pair along the Oxford Canal however the second is not within Coventry Cities Boundary. The Spigot Mortar was reported by a member of the public and recorded on the Historic Environment Records (HER). A further two Spigot Mortars are known; one off Bennetts Lane and a second off Staircase Lane in Allesley, both also have been documented on the HER (Table 1 and Figure 1).

1.1.2 The spigot mortar at Bennetts Lane was the first recognised before publicity of it identified the other two. It was Locally Listed in 2025 and identified the value of the World War II defences as of local importance. During the assessment of this Spigot both those on Oxford Canal and at Staircase Lane were visited to establish their condition and potential group value.

Table 1: Location, Grid Reference, HER Monument number and Designation number

Bennetts Road, Keresley	SP 32023 83357	MCT17239	DCT1428
Staircase Lane, Allesley	SP3013 8110	MCT17243	NA
Oxford Canal, Shilton Lane, Potters Green	SP3762 8295	MCT17244	NA

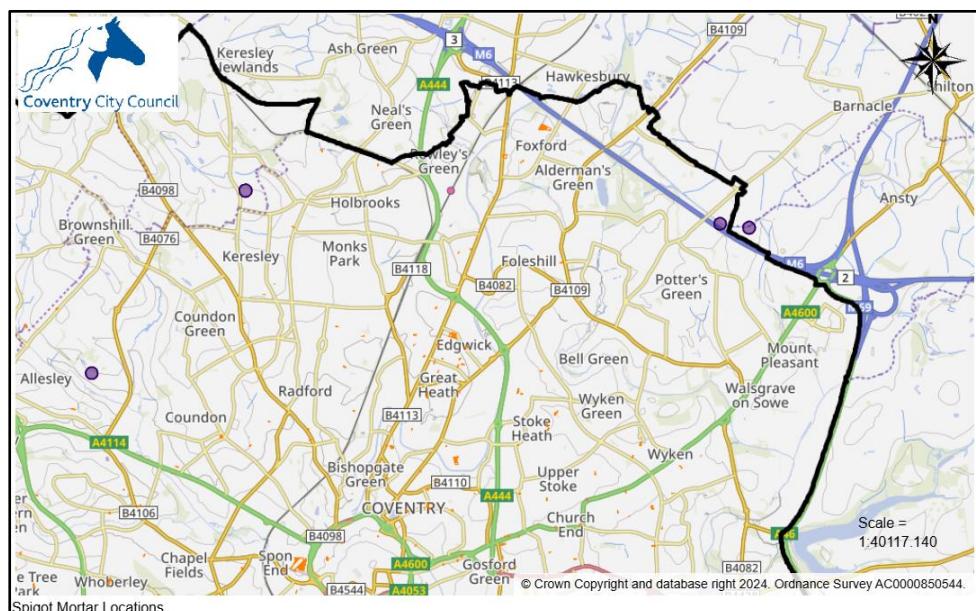


Figure 1: Locations of Spigot Mortars

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The spigot mortar off Shilton Lane is located on the left side of the tow path after crossing Stone Bridge to the west (SP3762 8295). The Spigot is situated in an opening within the treeline; the ground appears to be in regular use with evident bike tracks. The area is bounded to the north by the tow path and canal, to the south by a permanent fence and beyond that the M6.

1.2.2 The site was visited on 20th May 2025; it confirmed the Spigot Mortar was well preserved. It is composed of a round concrete pedestal, or 'thimble', mounted with a central steel pintle, it has however lost part of the casing of the concrete pedestal. There was no clear evidence of a surrounding pit or trench. Of significant note this spigot mortar has a surviving ammunition locker, and the surrounding areas have clear evidence of other structural remains. (Fig 2 and 3).



Figure 2: Spigot Mortar (rear) and ammunition locker (front)



Figure 3: Courses of brick exposed in surrounding area

2.0 Assessment

2.1 Historical Context

2.1.1 From the summer of 1940 England's defences strengthened against the threat of German invasion and a variety of defensive structures were built across the country.

2.1.2 These included 29mm spigot mortars which were developed between 1940 and 1941 and were used to engage static or mobile armoured targets, as anti-tank defence (Fig 2 to 4).

2.1.3 Designed by Lieutenant Colonel VVS Blacker they were also known as 'Blacker Bombards'. In addition to mobile units, a large number of static emplacements were issued. They were placed at points of local tactical advantage often as part of linear defences schemes such as 'stop-lines', composed of a number of defensive structures which were designed to obstruct the enemy's advance.

2.1.4 Drawings issued by the Directorate of Fortifications and Works in September 1941 show that the fixed emplacements were designed to consist of a circular or octagonal concrete pedestal or 'thimble' with a metal pintle at its centre onto which a weapon could be swivel mounted. A narrow pit around the outside of the pedestal allowed the operating crew a degree of protection and the ability to turn the mortar in any direction. The pits could also incorporate approach trenches and up to four brick or concrete ammunition lockers. It is estimated that around 8000 fixed emplacements were issued, though far fewer survive.

2.1.5 The majority of spigot mortar emplacements that are represented on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) are designated as components of wider scheduled sites; however, three examples are scheduled in their own right. The spigot mortars at Hapton, Lancashire (NHLE 1432881) Farnham Park (NHLE 1444575) and RAF Kenley (1487945), these examples survive remarkably well and have readable layouts which retain a diversity of original features including ammunition lockers. They also have group value with other listed assets that form part of a wider Second World War group.

2.1.5 The spigot mortar emplacements identified as part of this application are all located on the northern outskirts of Coventry and were probably constructed around 1941 or 1942. They will have formed part of an inland defensive stop-line, along with further defence structures (Fig 1).

2.2 Coventry Spigot Mortars Emplacements

2.2.1 The first spigot mortar that was identified is located in the tree line / hedgerow between two fields east of Bennetts Road. It was located during Archaeological Field Evaluation by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services in 2022 and recorded within the works.

2.2.2 It is composed of a round concrete pedestal, or 'thimble', mounted with a central steel pintle (Fig 4). There is no visible evidence of an associated pit, trench or ammunitions lockers however an undesignated red-brick pillbox approximately 270m to the north-west. At the time no other defensive structures had been identified and it was presumed that Coventry's defensive line was lost.



Figure 4: Bennetts Lane Spigot Mortar

2.2.3 Historic England assessed the spigot mortar for formal designation and concluded it did not meet the level necessary for listing in the national context. It was suggested for Local Listing due to its wartime value, its vast contribution to the military efforts, and a site type which had at that point not been recorded within the city.

2.2.4 The Spigot mortar off Shilton Lane, along the Oxford canal is one of three known emplacements within Coventry. The concrete pedestal is in good condition although some of the outer casing has been lost and the steel pintle was also still in place. A specialist has noted the pintle is missing the circular platform that would normally sit underneath but this may be a localisation to the construction (Fig 5). A surviving ammunition locker is visible as well as rubble in the surrounding landscape that may be associated (Fig 6).



Figure 5: Steel Pintle atop spigot mortar platform



Figure 6: Surviving ammunition locker

2.2.5 A third spigot mortars has been documented at Staircase Lane, Allesley . The site is largely covered with overgrown shrubbery and foliage and so the Spigot Mortar is not visibly identifiable. The spigot is however recorded in an article in the Allesley Parish magazine in which photographs indicate on the very top of the spigot was visible, this is now likely covered by the overgrowth (Fig 7).

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Allesley Home Guard Defensive Site

Out on a local Allesley walk I took discovered that it is a spigot mortar emplacement with a shelter / weapons pit. These photos of an infilled and overgrown concrete defensive structure. It was positioned behind a hedgerow next to a road bridge across the River Sherbourne.

After the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk in 1940, an invasion of Britain by Nazi Germany was seriously expected. The British Army had been forced to leave many weapons behind in France and was now desperately short of anti-tank guns. The spigot mortar was therefore issued in considerable numbers to the Home Guard as an inexpensive anti-tank and anti-personnel weapon to protect bridges and other strategic locations.

This device needed a crew of between three and five to operate it. Two types of ammunition were available: a 20 pound (9 kg) anti-tank bomb and a lighter 14 pound (6 kg) anti-personnel warhead.

The bomb had a propellant charge inside its tail. When the mortar was to be fired, the bomb was pushed down onto the spigot, which exploded the propellant charge and blew the bomb into the air.

A couple of local residents, who were teenagers during the Second World War, told me that this site had been manned by the local Home Guard as part of the defences for the Brown's Lane Daimler shadow factory that was producing military aircraft engines. I have seen many Second World War pill boxes dotted around the landscape but had not previously come across this type of structure. I therefore did some research and

*Spigot mortar ready for action
(my sketch inspired by Second World War manual)*

Figure 7: Spigot Mortar Staircase Lane, article from Allesley parish magazine

2.3 Wider Boundary

2.3.1 The spigot mortar outside of Coventry's boundary which was paired with the one off Shilton Lane, was also visited and observed. To the south-west of the spigot mortar an anti-tank structure was visible, likely part of the same line of defence covering the outer perimeter of Coventry. The spigot was observed and displayed some difference to that of the one within the boundary, the pedestal was much larger in diameter and the concrete top has been lost exposing the iron supports (Fig8 and Fig 9).



Figure 8: Anti- tank structure south-west of spigot mortar



Figure 9: Spigot mortar outside of Coventry's boundary along the Oxford Canal

3.0 Assessment – Criteria

Assessing the heritage asset against the Local List criteria, the heritage asset is valued locally for the following:

3.1 Historic:

The site displays substantial historic, social and community significance. The spigot mortar off Shilton Lane confirms further surviving structure related to Coventry's WWII defence line. Along with the locally listed spigot mortar off Bennetts Lane (DCT1428) and the further identified/documentated structures higher significance is being highlighted.

Historic value considered medium to high.

3.2 Age:

The site is of the modern period, with construction taking place 1941-1942. The period is of particular significance due to the second world war and the impact it had on everyday life. For Coventry the spigot mortars reflect a material response to the threat of WWII and need for defence. The structure is characteristic of this period and considered a direct response to historical events during the time.

3.3 Rarity:

The publicity of the first identified 29mm Blacker Bombard off Bennetts Lane highlighted further Coventry WWII defences, including identification of the other two Spigot Mortars within Coventry's boundary. It is suggested the examples may show regional construction trends as it is missing the circular platform below the steel pintle. Along with the other spigot mortars some variation in the doming of the concrete pedestal have also been noted.

Rarity is considered to be medium to high.

3.4 Integrity:

The spigot emplacements themselves are relatively complete and this example in specific has an associated ammunition locker. The surrounding landscape suggests unknown structural and landscape features that may also be related to the spigot mortar.

Integrity is considered to be medium to high.

3.5 Group Value:

The spigot mortars formed part of a wider defensive network, at the time of consultation for the one identified at Bennetts Road, it was the only known remnant of this network. The interest from the public has led to the identification of the further two spigot mortars as well as the third located just outside of Coventry's boundary.

The spigot mortar in question, off Shilton Lane, provides a unique opportunity amongst the group due to the surviving ammunition locker to understand the setting of the assets.

Group value is considered low to medium,

3.6 Coventry's identity:

The spigot mortar off Shilton Lane, along the Oxford Canal forms part of Coventry's wartime defence line. There are now a growing number being recognised and incorporated into Coventry Historic Environment Record. Potential remains to research the Spigot Mortar's as a group within Coventry and to understand firing range, defensive position as well as characterising the regional construction techniques.

Coventry's local identity value is considered medium to high.

3.7 Evidence:

3.7.1 The site forms part of a small, distributed group of spigot mortars and has high potential to contribute to the narrative of wartime Coventry's defence perimeter. The spigot mortars may offer insight into regional construction techniques and should be recognized with the others coming to light as part of a wider defensive network.

3.7.2 The spigot mortar off Shilton Lane has potential to inform on the setting of the assets through the preservation of further surviving features such as the ammunition locker. The presence of original features confirms a higher potential for remains in the surrounding area; visible debris may be related directly to the spigot mortar (Fig 9).



Figure 9: Spigot Mortar, Off Shilton Lane, Oxford Canal surrounding rubble

3.7.3 Considering it alongside the second spigot mortar along the Oxford Canal, outside of Coventry's Boundary, there is more evidence to suggest preservation of surrounding features in this area is high. The spigot mortar was within distance of an anti-tank defence and was surrounded by areas of raised landscape.

3.7.4 Desk-based assessment uncovered an aerial mosaic which further suggests the area has high probability of structural and landscape remains in situ. The photograph (Fig10) was taken by the R.A.F in 1946, the canal has less growth and the spigot emplacements can be seen clearly. A total of four spigot mortars are visible along the canal in the photograph: the one in question, an additional one on the opposing side of the canal, the known one within Warwickshire's boundary and another further down the tow path to the east. The photograph suggests that the spigot mortars have surrounding trenching and perhaps further structural details.

3.7.5 Consequently, the sites have clear historical value and the potential for further archaeological significance. Further scope for expert investigation is indicated to fully understand the nature and role of these war defences from this period of history in the wider Warwickshire area and how they relate to one another.

The evidential value is considered medium to high.



Figure 10: Air Photo Mosaic Sheet (1:1,250 scale): 42/3782 N.E. / SP 3782 N.E.
Above: zoomed in. *Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland- purchase digital download November 2025.*

4.0 Conclusion

4.1.1 Desk-based research supported by a site visit assess the application to be valid and considered of local importance. Public consultation for Bennetts Lane spigot mortar confirmed resounding support and it is expected that this second spigot mortar off Shilton Lane, Oxford Canal would also have strong support. The importance and support deriving from the enhancement in understanding Coventry's WWII defences.

4.1.2 It is concluded that undertaking a consultation on the nomination would therefore be beneficial to gain a greater understanding of the views of local people on the nominations inclusion to the Local List of Heritage Assets, and invite contributions which may further the understanding of heritage value.

Report Dated 17th November 2025 Sara Farey MA BA PCIfA

Historic Environment Record Access 2025, entry contributions from Matt ParkerWooding

Specialist Consulted- Chris Kolonko



Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

15 January 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Cllr N Akhtar

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Regeneration and Economy

Ward(s) affected:

All Wards

Title:

Urban Design Consultations – Draft Shop Front Design Guide SPD & Stage One Design Code Consultation

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

The City Council has committed through the adopted Local Development Scheme the development of a revised Shop Front Design Guide SPD and the commencement of public consultation on emerging Design Codes for Coventry. This report seeks authority to commence these consultations, prior to seeking formal approval to recommendations upon progression to adoption or further consultations.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the commencement of public consultation on the Draft Shop Front Design Guide SPD as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2) Approve the commencement of the first stage of consultation of the Coventry Design Code process as detailed in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 3) Delegate authority to Head of Planning Policy and Environment, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities:
 - a) to finalise the details of public consultation (including the period of consultation) in line with established processes; and

- b) make any necessary minor editing changes to the Draft Shop Front Design Guide SPD and Coventry Design Code questionnaire prior to consultation.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix One – Draft, Revised Shop Front Design Guide SPD.

Appendix Two – Stage One Design Code consultation questionnaire.

Background papers:

Coventry Local Development Scheme – September 2025

Other useful documents

N/A

Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

Urban Design Consultations :

Draft Shop Front Design Guide SPD & Stage One Design Code Consultation

1. Context (or background)

1.1 Shopfront Design Guide SPD

- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) as 'documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues. Supplementary Planning Documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan'.
- 1.3 It is good practice to update supplementary guides over time to ensure that they remain relevant and robust. This SPD is a comprehensive review and updating of the 2014 Design Guidance on Shopfronts for Conservation Areas and Historic Buildings and will provide clear guidance for applicants considering works to retail shopfronts across the City.
- 1.4 The quality of retail frontages can have a significant qualitative effect upon the character and quality of streets across the City. The revision of the SPD seeks to provide best practice guidance for shop front design, establishing ten key principles of good design. The SPD also recognises and advises approaches across a range of architectural styles found across the City, seeking to ensure that the SPD can service to guide development proposals in areas of identified special character.
- 1.5 The SPD expands upon policy DE1 of the adopted 2017 Local Plan and policy DE1, DE2 and R5 of the Local Plan Review, which has now reached examination stage.
- 1.6 It is anticipated that the SPD will be developed further in recognition of the outcomes of the public consultation, however adoption of the SPD will be progressed further post the examination phase of the Local Plan Review in order to ensure that the SPD remains aligned to adopted policy.

1.7 Design Code – Initial scoping consultation

- 1.8 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 introduced at paragraph 15F, a requirement for Local Authorities to produce Design Codes which should be considered for planning permissions to be granted.
- 1.9 In September 2025, the City Council adopted its most recent Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the initial timelines of development of Design Codes to meet the requirements of the LURA. The timeline noted an initial anticipation of a number of codes being produced to reflect the distinct variety of contexts which are present within the Local Authority area, however that this approach and the number of codes could develop further based upon the findings of public consultation.

- 1.10 This initial stage of consultation takes the form of a questionnaire to investigate what our residents view as important design characteristics and how they perceive their local context. The findings of this consultation will then inform the future progress and structure of the Design Code process.
- 1.11 The questionnaire can be found at Appendix Two of this report, and is proposed to be hosted electronically, being promoted for engagement using the Councils consultation database notifications and media channels. The commencement of this initial stage of consultation is aligned to the adopted September 2025 Local Development Scheme.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 Do Nothing (Not Recommended)

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities could choose to not progress the consultation, however this would not be aligned to the adopted LDS as is therefore not recommended.

2.2 Commence a public consultation (Recommended)

Undertaking consultation upon the reviewed draft Shopfront Design Guide SPD and Design Code questionnaire is aligned to the September 2025 Local Development Scheme as is therefore recommended.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. This report seeks authority to commence the consultation exercise.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The decision will be implemented at the earliest opportunity. The Coventry City Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) July 2021 states that SPD consultation should be undertaken for no less than 4 weeks and no more than 6 weeks. Upon commencement the consultations will therefore run for 6 weeks in order to best enable residents to participate in the consultation.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1. Financial Implications

The recommendation will have no financial impact.

5.2. Legal Implications

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out how to prepare development plan documents and SPDs. Before the SPDs can be adopted, it is necessary to undertake rounds of public consultation.

Design Code – Initial scoping consultation

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 introduced legislation to require every local planning authority to produce design codes for their areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024, sets out that to carry weight in

decision-making they should be produced either as part of a local plan or as supplementary planning documents.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Planning policy documents and planning applications help deliver the aims and objectives of the One Coventry Corporate Plan by determining the type and quantum of development needed, where this should be located, areas which should be protected, enhanced or improved and the infrastructure which should be provided. In line with the Corporate Plan, the proposed consultations focus upon supporting local communities by creating an attractive, cleaner and greener city and enhancing the quality of the built environment.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

There is no risk identified associated with the recommendation

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

The undertaking of public consultation will be deliverable within current resource.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

The council acknowledges that, in exercising its functions, it has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This duty applies to all people defined as having protected characteristics under that legislation.

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

There is no direct impact from the recommendations of the report.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

None

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Coventry City Council

Design Guidance For Shopfronts

**Supplementary Planning
Document (SPD)**

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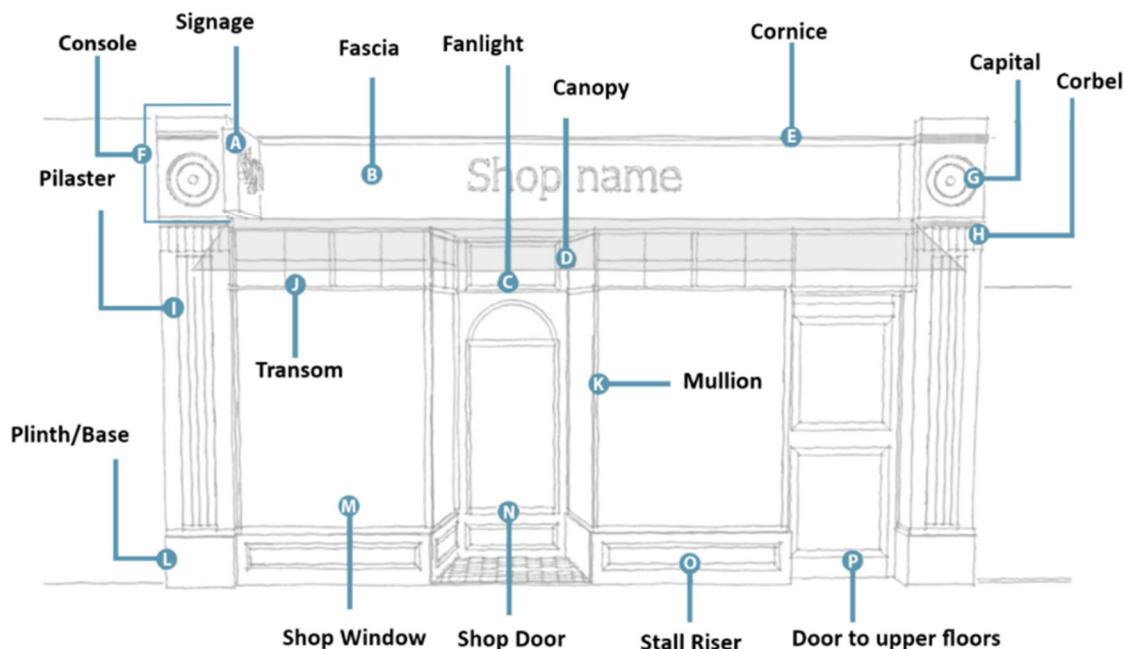
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1.0 Glossary of Terms

1.1 Retail frontages, both traditional and contemporary are often comprised of a number of architectural elements, these elements are referenced through this design guidance, with the following providing a glossary of these terms to assist the SPD's interpretation and application.

1.2 What Makes a Shopfront? – Architectural Elements:



1.3 **Signage**

Any graphics, symbols, or text used to convey the shop's name, services, or promotions, typically located on the fascia board, windows, or other prominent areas.

1.4 **Fascia Board**

A horizontal board above the shop window, often bearing the shop's name or logo. It is a prominent feature for displaying signage.

1.5 **Fanlight**

A small, semi-circular or rectangular window above the door, often including decorative glazing, allowing additional light into the entrance area.

1.6 **Canopy**

A retractable or fixed covering that extends over the pavement or forecourt, providing shade and shelter.

1.7 **Cornice**

The cornice is an ornamental moulding located at the top of the fascia board designed to ensure that water is thrown clear of the shopfront, it may serve as a decorative element that adds character to the shopfront.

1.8 **Console**

A projecting bracket positioned to the edges of a fascia. Its role is to support the horizontal elements of the shopfront, with the decorative capital forming its visible front face.

1.9 Capital

The decorative front face of the console, forming the topmost element of a pilaster or column and providing a visual crown to the vertical support.

1.10 Corbel

A structural piece projecting from the wall or pillar which can be both structural whilst providing detailed decoration.

1.11 Pilasters

Flat, rectangular columns that project slightly from the wall. They frame the shop front, adding a sense of structure and elegance. Pilasters form the division between adjoining shopfronts and provide a vertical framing to the side of the stallriser and fascia.

1.12 Transom Window

A horizontal window division above the main shop window allowing extra light into the interior and sometimes featuring decorative glazing.

1.13 Mullion

A vertical element that forms a division between elements of a window or door.

1.14 Plinth

The Base element upon which a column pedestal or structure rests, forming the junction between the shopfront and the ground.

1.15 Shopfront Window

The large, usually glazed area that showcases the shop's interior and merchandise to passersby, acting as a visual connection between the shop and the street.

1.16 Shop Door

The main entryway to the shop, often designed to be inviting and complement the overall style of the shopfront. These entranceways must be designed for inclusive access

1.17 Stall Riser

The solid panel beneath the shop window which is often formed of timber or masonry. It provides a sturdy base, protects the glass, and can be used for additional decorative detailing. A stallriser is often between 400-700mm high and topped with a moulded projecting cill where it joins the shop window.

1.18 Architrave

Architraves are decorative mouldings that frame windows and doors.

2.0 What is an SPD

- 2.1 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a document which contains additional detail on how the Council will interpret and apply specific policies in its Local Plan. An SPD does not include any new policies that do not currently form part of the Local Plan, and an SPD also does not form part of the Local Plan.
- 2.2 SPD's are a key consideration in the determination of planning applications and applicants are advised to refer to the contents of an SPD, as this will provide guidance on how the Council will carry out its decision-making functions.
- 2.3 Shopfronts, with their associated signage and advertising, can have a major impact upon their locality. Whether this impact is positive or negative depends upon how the shop is presented. Whilst the main purpose is to display goods for sale or services offered, the shopfront has an important secondary role to play in projecting the image of the business.
- 2.4 Poor design, low quality materials, bad workmanship, inappropriate colour schemes, intrusive lighting, excessive signage and advertising can negatively impact upon the first impressions of the retail offer for potential customers and the character of the wider area. Whilst a well-designed shopfront gives a favourable perception of a business, and if all the premises in a street are attractive, that impression will extend to the whole area, to the mutual benefit of both local traders and residents.

2.5 Policy Context

This document is based on planning policies set out at the local, and national level. It expands on policies within the City Council's Local Plan and provides detail from the local level through to national guidance.

Local	National
<p>The Coventry City Council Local Plan 2017</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. R2 – Coventry City Centre Development Strategy 2. DE1 – Ensuring High Quality Design 3. HE1 – Conservation Areas 4. HE2 – Conservation and Heritage Assets <p>The Coventry City Centre Area Action Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Policy CC1: Coventry City Centre – Development Strategy 6. Policy CC3: Building Design 7. <p>The Coventry Local Plan Review</p> <p>Emerging policies :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. DE1 – Ensuring High Quality Design 9. DE2 – Delivering High Quality Places 10. HE1 – Conservation Areas 11. HE2 – Conservation and Heritage Assets 12. CC1 (partA) – Coventry City Centre Development Strategy 13. CC1 (partE) – City Centre Character Areas 	<p>National Planning Policy Framework (2023)</p> <p>Chapter 12 Achieving well-designed and beautiful places.</p> <p>The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment.</p> <p>It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development.</p> <p>Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.</p> <p>Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment</p> <p>Historic England – Historic Town Centres and High Streets</p>

3.0 Aims of the SPD

- 3.1 Shopfronts, when poorly designed and maintained, can detract from the overall quality and character of the street and surrounding area. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for the designs of new shopfronts as well as for alterations, replacement and restoration of existing shopfronts, both in historic and contemporary settings, encouraging a sensitive approach to shopfront design.
- 3.2 This Shopfront Design Guide SPD supports Local Plan design policies by setting out what the Council considers to be good shopfront design principles across the entire city and supersedes the previously adopted 'Shop Front Design Guide In Conservation Areas SPD'.
- 3.3 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to shop owners and their agents to ensure that future development in the city reflects high-quality, inclusive design that contributes to a vibrant, welcoming environment and supports Coventry's aspirations for its places and people.

3.4 Shopfront Evolution

Shopfront design has evolved in step with social, technological and architectural changes, which can be broken down into five core typology periods to offer era appropriate designs that complement the host building in which they sit.

- 3.5 In the late medieval period shops were simple openings in domestic facades with small window opening that doubled as counters enclosed by timber framing and accompanying shutters.
- 3.6 As trade expanded through the 18th to early 20th centuries, larger glazed displays emerged framed by classical elements such as pilasters, cornices and stallrisers. The advances in glass production allowed for wider panels and further opening up of displays, while the growing emphasis on craftsmanship and ornaments offered reflection of the prosperity of Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian commerce creating a coherent architectural language that tied the shopfronts to the host building.
- 3.7 The Interwar period introduced further streamlining and Art Deco influences, favouring curved glass, chrome, and marble detailing that celebrated progress and luxury.
- 3.8 Following post-war construction, simplicity and standardisation was favoured utilising aluminium frames, plate glass and box fascias which replaced decorative joinery often eroding local design distinction and ornate detailing.
- 3.9 Contemporary 21st century design has shifted towards transparency, minimalism and sustainability using expansive glazing, subtle branding and accessible entrances which prioritise inclusivity, high quality robust materials, energy efficiency and visual



Fig 2 - 18th – 20th Century Shop Fronts



Fig 3 - 18th – Interwar



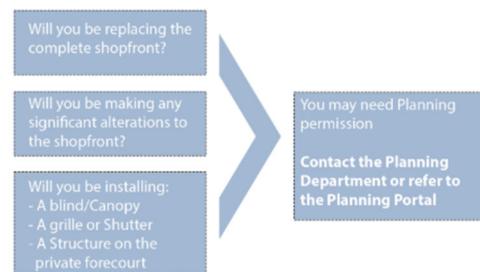
Fig 4 - 18th – Postwar

permeability, re-establishing the shopfront as both a civic interface and expression of modern identity.

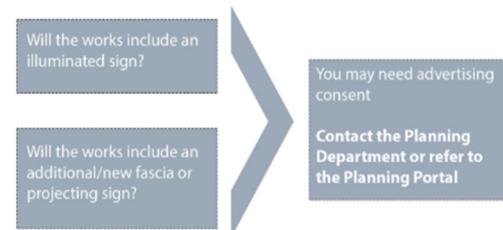
4.0 When is permission required?

- 4.1 The installation of a new or replacement shopfront will normally require planning permission, whilst alterations to an existing shopfront, that go beyond repair and maintenance and involve a material change in appearance may also require planning permission.
- 4.2 The requirement of making a planning application for such works is dependent upon a number of factors, including if the area is within a designated Conservation Area, if the property in question is a designated Heritage Asset or if the area or property is subject to an Article 4 direction. Therefore, direction should always be sought from the Coventry City Council planning office. planning@coventry.gov.uk
- 4.3 Building Regulations approval will likely be required for all new or replacement shopfronts and for all structural alterations. You are advised to contact Building Control before proceeding with any works. buildingcontrol@coventry.gov.uk

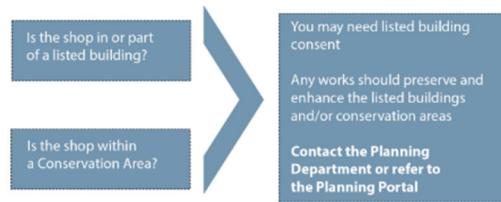
4.4 Planning Permission checklist



4.5 Advertisement consent checklist



4.5 Heritage consent checklist



4.6 Licencing checklist



5.0 How to use the guidance.

- 5.1 This Guide sets out design considerations for all ranges of shopfronts from repair, replacement to the installation of new shopfronts.
- 5.2 The SPD offers guidance upon how planning policies will be applied when assessing planning applications for undertaking works to a shopfront or installation of a new shopfront.
- 5.3 All shopfronts will need to be designed with consideration of the good principles outlined in Chapter 6.0, alongside the specific character appropriate guidance offered in Chapter 7.0.
- 5.4 Character appropriate guidance is broken down into the five core period shopfront typologies. For ease, a list of areas and which typology those areas generally respond to, can be found below :

5.5 Retail Character Areas :

Late Medieval Character	Inter-war Period	Post-War
1. Spon Street	1. Jordan Well	1. Trinity Street
2. Far Gosford Street	2. Whitefriars Street	2. Ironmonger Row
3. Hay Lane	3. Ansty Road	3. Broadgate
18th to 20th Century Character		
1. The Burges	4. Baginton Road	4. Smithford Way
2. Hale Street	5. Baker Butts Lane	5. Market Way
3. Gosford Street	6. Binley Road	6. New Union Street
4. Far Gosford Street	7. Henley Road	7. Corporation Street
5. Warwick Row	8. Daventry Road	8. Acorn Street
6. Little Park Street	9. Green Lane	9. Bell Green
7. High Street	10. Holbrook Lane	10. Birmingham Road
8. Hillfields	11. Longford	11. Broad Park Road
9. Hay Lane	12. Keresley Road	12. Charter Avenue
10. Cuckoo Lane	13. Station Avenue	13. Holyhead Road
11. Hertford Street	14. Radford Road	14. Quorn Way
12. The Butts		15. Jardine Crescent
13. Walsgrave Road	Contemporary	16. Jubilee Crescent
14. Foleshill Road	1. Lower Precinct	17. Riley Square
Areas of Contrast	2. City Centre South	18. Sutton Avenue
15. Upper Precinct	3. Bishop Street	19. Willenhall
	4. West Orchards	20. Windsford Avenue
	5. Belgrave Plaza	
	6. Bannerbrook	

5.6 The Guide concludes with a Design Checklist to enable the understanding of the typical design parameters anticipated for the successful delivery of shopfront designs in line with the policies which support these elements for developers and shop owners to review.

5.7 Imagery used within this document is contained to assist in the exploration of possible design outcomes; however, inclusion of such imagery does not suggest endorsement. Proposed design outcomes will be assessed on a contextually specific basis.

6.0 General Principles of Good Shopfront Design

6.1 Traditionally shopfront designs were based on a set of broad principles which successfully achieved a satisfactory relationship between the shopfront and the building as a whole and can still be applied as the basis for new shopfronts today. Four main elements can be used to enclose the shop window and entrance door in the manner of a picture frame, each with its own visual and practical function, these include;

1. The pilasters to identify the vertical division between shopfronts
2. The fascia which provides space to advertise the business
3. The cornice which gives a strong line across the top of the shopfront and gives protection from the weather.
4. The stallriser which gives protection at ground level and provides a solid base

6.2 An attractive shopfront is an important advert for any business. It alerts customers that they are there, it displays the goods and services that are on offer and encourages potential customers to enter the shop. A good design needs to respond both to the host building, the streetscene and the overall character of the area, design principles to achieve this outcome include :

1. The proposed shopfront should reflect the character, design and proportions of the host building.
2. If a shopfront is to be designed in a traditional style, it must be historically accurate and appropriate to the building and the street.
3. The proposed shopfront should not visually divorce the ground floor from the upper storeys of the building, but rather treat the building as a unified whole.
4. Where a proposed shopfront would span across more than one building the individuality of each building should be retained.
5. Buildings whose upper storeys have a strong symmetry should have that symmetry incorporated into the proposed shopfront as well, by spacing vertical divisions to correspond with strong vertical elements above.
6. Where new shopfronts are introduced, they should include generous areas of clear glazing to allow views into the shop, contributing to an active and engaging streetscene.

6.3 Where the existing shopfront represents a good example of being appropriate to the character of the area and the host building, ideally, it should be retained and refurbished rather than replaced. However, many historic shopfronts in Coventry have been replaced with unsympathetic, modern installations in recent years and the replacement of these with more appropriate designs has the potential to greatly enhance historic buildings and the streetscene.

6.4 The Council will expect the design and detailing of proposed shopfronts to be of a high standard and to be responsive and sympathetic to the host building.

6.5 Permission will not normally be granted for the removal of a historic shopfront and in many cases the insertion of a shopfront into a historic building where there has not been a shopfront previously may be resisted without careful consideration, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis

- 6.6 The following provides elements to consider when altering or renewing the shopfront which should be read in conjunction with the design checklist (section 9). Any proposed alterations should be checked to determine whether planning permission is required.
- 6.7 'Decluttering' can be an affordable and effective way of enhancing an existing shop front and should also be a consideration in new shop front design. The restrained use of window manifestation to can delivery greater levels of transparency between the street and the retail interior, delivering an 'active frontage' whilst careful consideration of the placement of features such as lighting, wiring and security features should be undertaken to ensure unnecessary visual clutter is avoided.
- 6.8 The re-use of existing good quality features is also encouraged as a more sustainable way of improving an existing shopfront, this can often also offer a more affordable solution.
- 6.9 Designs should respect and enhance key features of the host building, the original shopfront and elements of interest. Enhancement of original features and fixtures should be offered through repair and reuse where possible.
- 6.10 Designs should not try to divorce the ground floor from the upper storeys of the building, but rather treat the building as a unified whole.
- 6.11 Designs should respect the character of the host building and the wider area taking consideration of location, framing, proportionality, materials, colours, lettering font, and lighting.
- 6.12 Good quality designs should incorporate signage that compliments the host building and character of the street scene.
- 6.13 Bulky illuminated box signs should be avoided.
- 6.14 All entrances, external and internal areas should provide safe and inclusive access for all, including wheelchair users, families with prams and shopping trolleys
- 6.15 Shopfronts should always deliver an active frontage to the street, enhancing visual transparency and minimise coverings that obscure the shopfront.
- 6.16 Designs should seek to provide a visually attractive contribution to the streetscene outside of opening hours, with careful consideration of security shutters and internal fittings.
- 6.17 Canopies and awnings should only be offered in contextually appropriate areas that does not detract from the host building.
- 6.18 It is recognised that shops that are part of a chain may wish to use a 'house style' or corporate image in terms of design and colour scheme. With co-operation, flexibility and an emphasis on quality and detailing, a corporate image can often be adapted to offer contextually appropriate responses without compromising the principles of good design, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6.19 **The Ten Key Principles of Good Shopfront Design**

6.20 **Principle One** – Shop front design should be responsive to the architectural style of the host building, opportunities for retention and enhancement of original architectural features should be taken where possible.

6.21 **Principle Two** – Shopfronts should relate to the host buildings form, reflecting the original proportionality by retaining the legibility of the established plot rhythm of individual buildings. This can be achieved by ensuring that shop fronts do not span across neighbouring buildings without appropriate subdivision.

6.22 **Principle Three** – Use character area appropriate materials, and consider opportunities for the sustainable re-use of materials.

6.23 **Principle Four** – Signage and facias should use appropriate proportions of scale and character to positively reflect the character of the host building and wider streetscene. These elements should always be placed below the cill of first floor windows and be positioned evenly within the retail framing. The lighting of signage should be carefully considered and avoid being excessively bright to avoid detrimental amenity impacts.

6.24 **Principle Five** – Shopfront design should deliver an active frontage to the public realm, limiting excessive manifestations which can erode transparency, and consider how interaction to the public realm is delivered outside of retail opening hours.

6.25 **Principle Six** – Shopfront design should sensitively incorporate necessary security measures in ways which maintain the quality of frontage outside of opening hours. Consideration of the use of shutters with a visual transparency, or the use of internal shutters may be positively considered, whilst the sensitive positioning of alarm boxes should also be considered within design development.

6.26 **Principle Seven** – Shop front design should ensure easy access for all, with careful consideration of topography and threshold design. Consideration should also be given to the width of footpath fronting the shopfront, where recessed entranceways may aid ease of access and limit conflict with pedestrian flows.

6.27 **Principle Eight** – Where use of outdoor spaces are proposed, proposals should not impede pedestrian flow.

6.28 **Principle Nine** – When considering design for a new shop front, consideration should be given to the potential of future periods of vacancy and how the shopfront many be utilised for a meanwhile use.

6.29 **Principle Ten** – Canopies should only be proposed when in keeping with the shop front typology, canopies should be retractable and not be inclusive of product advertisements.

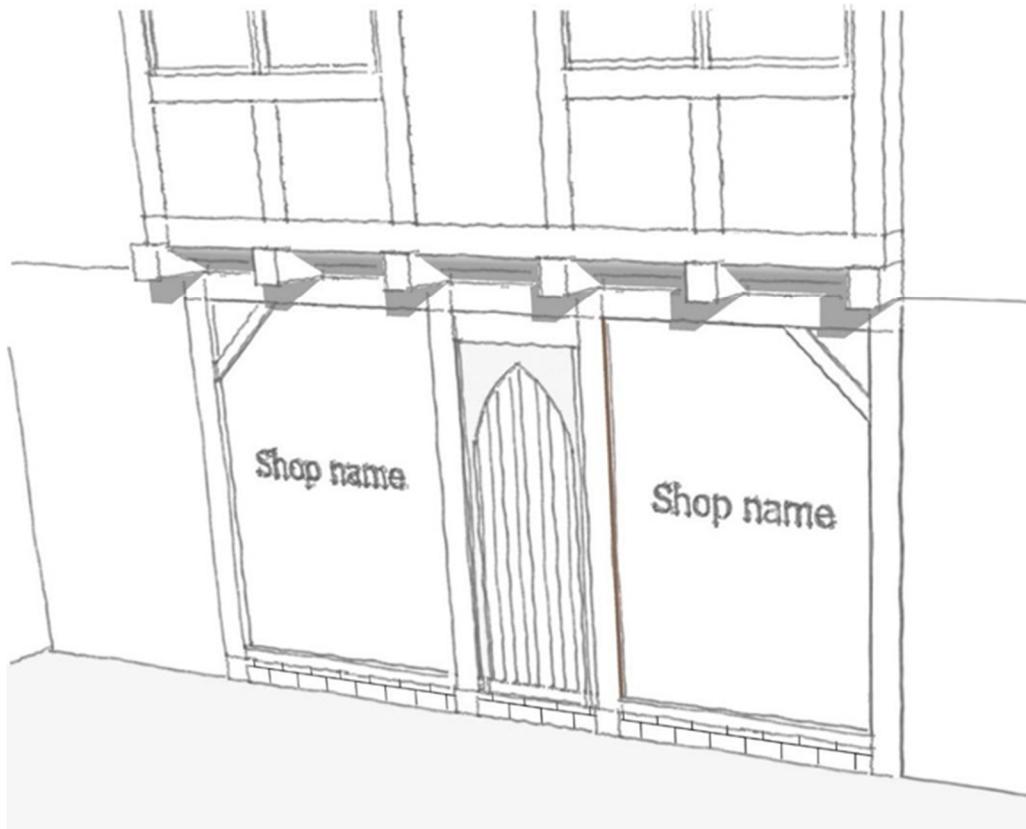
7.0 Character Specific Design Guidance

7.1 **Late medieval**

7.2 The earliest examples of shopfronts are late medieval and were little more than a door and a window, the window would have served as the counter and would have had wooden shutters for security at night. These very rarely survive as the ground floors of timber-framed buildings have usually been heavily altered in the intervening centuries.

7.3 Many timber-framed buildings in Coventry, such as those along Spon Street or Far Gosford Street have been heavily restored to return them to their earlier appearance. In these cases, it would not be acceptable to fit a conventional shopfront and instead the ground floor wall is omitted and replaced by large, glazed windows within the opening in the timber frame.

7.4 As there is no fascia to display the name of the business, signage should be restricted to hanging signs on a bracket at first floor level and the modest use of window vinyls that leave the majority of the window clear for a display with any security shutters needing to be internal fitted.



7.5 **18th- 20th Century**

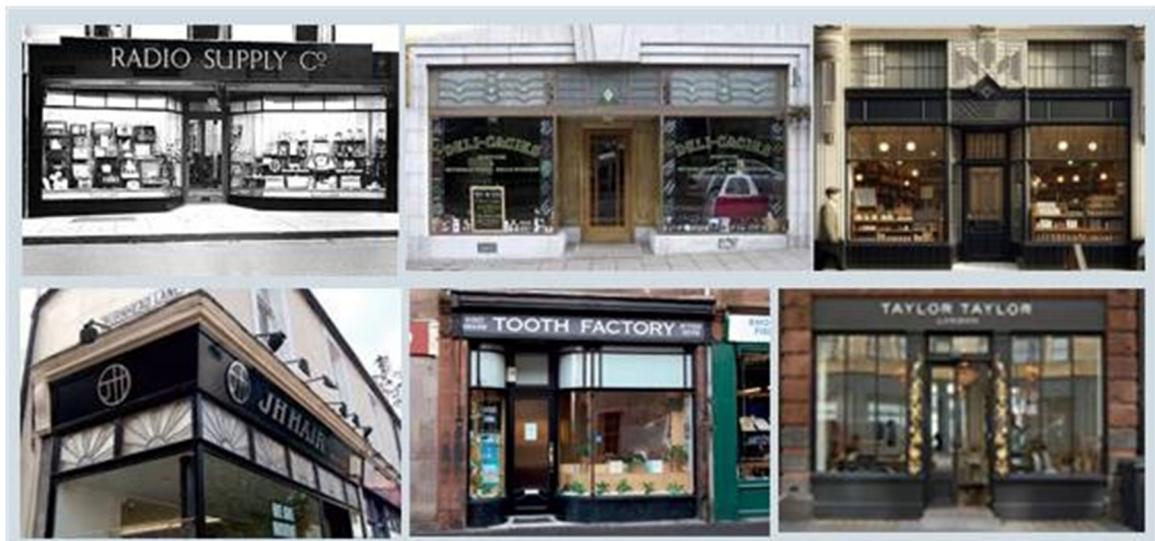
7.6 Shops and shopfronts as we know them today with large, glazed windows to display goods developed during the 18th and 19th centuries and began a tradition that continued until the mid-20th century. Georgian period shop windows have numerous panes of glass divided by glazing bars and some would have curved bow windows to make the display of goods more conspicuous to the street. Elements derived from the classical tradition such as decorative pilasters, stallrisers and cornices are also used for the first time and harmonise the appearance of the shopfront with the rest of the building. Examples of Georgian style shopfronts in Coventry can still be found today in Hay Lane.

7.7 The introduction of plate glass in the mid-19th century revolutionised shopfront design as it became possible to span the whole display area with a single pane with the minimal use of slender mullions and a low stallriser at the base. The display area was then framed with elaborately detailed pilasters and a fascia displaying the shop's name. Large and elaborately decorated shop fronts did exist in Coventry City Centre, but most were lost when it was rebuilt after the Second World War and what survives today are often the more modest shopfronts in outer areas like Spon End and Gosford Street. These are often quite narrow and reflect the width of the medieval property divisions. The stallrisers and pilasters were often brick or glazed brick with a display window and a recessed door to the side.



7.8 Interwar

7.9 By the mid-1930s Art Deco-inspired shopfronts were widespread throughout British towns. By the end of the 1920s, two main types of shopfront style had emerged. The first was a very minimalist, undecorated design constructed of sleek and shiny materials. The second was of a more traditional style using curved glass entrances, leaded glass to the clerestory and marble or tiled entrance floors reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement. Few examples of inter war period shopfronts remain within Coventry and thus existing examples are to be protected where possible.



7.10 Postwar

7.11 After the Second World War, details were simplified even further although many were modern but still stylish. However, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed a swing to insensitive more subtle designs that were often unresponsive to the host building. Over-dominant fascia's and box signs, crude plastic lettering, large areas of undivided plate glass, aluminium window frames, standardised corporate signage and a general disregard for the architectural features of the host buildings managed to damage the character of many shopping streets across the city.

7.12 However, where contextually appropriate a successful design can still be achieved through the use of proportional fascias with simple lettering, integrated canopies, recessed doors, large open windows, metal framing and the use of simplified wooden or stone bases. These features should be used to elevate the design whilst respecting the host buildings form and any established framing, as demonstrated in the example below.



7.13 Contemporary

7.14 Modern storefront designs offer a departure from traditional approaches, emphasising clean lines, transparency and minimalist design focussing on the functionality, adaptability, and aesthetic appeal of the store through the strong use of glass, steel, and aluminium. This departure from the more traditional ornate detailing allows for the development of a sleek appearance that often both complements the host building and surrounding context.

7.15 Modern storefronts foster a connection between the interior of the shop and the streetscene through large glass windows, doors with well- considered displays and window manifestations to embrace street frontage activation, inviting interaction and showcasing merchandise through visual permeability, whilst often acting as extension to the public realm itself.

7.16 Sustainability and inclusivity are also key considerations within modern storefronts with a focus on energy efficient and recyclable materials. Consideration should also be given to adopting features such as level entrance thresholds and automatic doors to ensure that the shops remain welcoming and accessible.

7.17 Modern high-quality signage is an important element of the storefront design and should be balanced and well considered both in regard the host building and branding. These features often include minimalistic branding elements which avoid ill- proportioned fascia's, overbearing manifestations, poor framing and cluttering to contribute to an overall cohesive storefront.



7.18 **Areas of Contrast**

7.19 In some limited instances some areas may offer a contrast to the general design advice offered within the Guide and in these cases will be considered on a case-by- case basis. It is imperative further guidance on the delivery of appropriate design responses is sought from the Council, areas where this may be applicable are listed below.

7.20 **Upper Precinct & Broadgate**

7.21 Upper Precinct and Broadgate are subject to a separate shopfront Management Plan and further guidance on the parameters should be sought from the Council. The Guidelines are to ensure a clear visual connection is maintained between the retail units and the units maintain interaction and an active frontage with the Upper Precinct at ground and first floor levels. The management plan is responsible for maintaining clear visual connectivity between retail units, ensuring both interaction and an active frontage response is found throughout the Upper Precinct retail area.

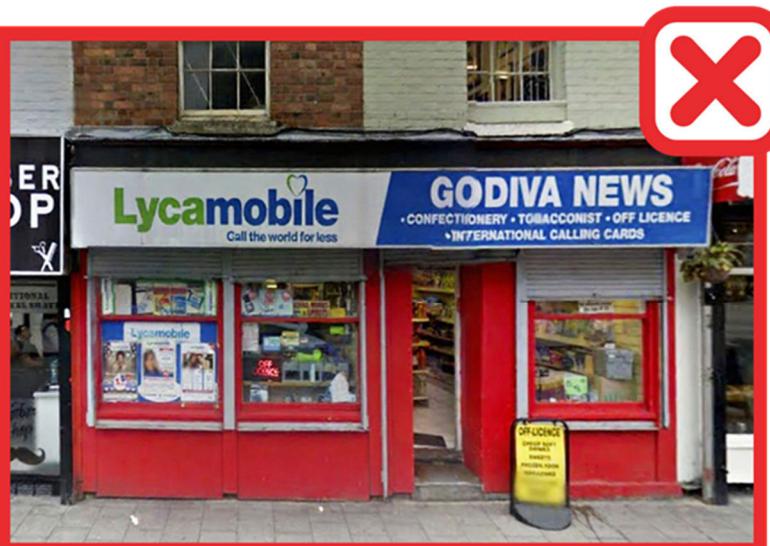
8.0 Shopfront Precedents

8.1 Responding to the host building

Respecting the host buildings form, plot rhythm and style will allow for the storefront to sit comfortably with the streetscene and create an appropriately contextual response to both the character of the building the street.

Poor Design

An example of an unsympathetic storefront which does not respect the host buildings form, plot rhythm or style which creates a dead frontage divorced from the context



Good Design

A good example of a responsive storefront being reintroduced to offer a era appropriate design which respects the host building & plot rhythm



8.2 Shop branding

Shop branding plays an important role in the identity of many shops however this should not detract from the quality of the shopfront response and can often be adapted to offer both the necessary brand identity and contextual response to the character of the building.



8.3 Signage

Good Design

A selection of storefront examples that offer signage that responds to the design and era of the host buildings and context of the street

Traditional 18th - 20th Century



Post war 20th century



Modern 21st century



Poor Design

These shopfronts have poor quality, plastic fascia signage demonstrating little thought went into the design or lettering and are out of keeping with the host buildings era, form and proportions. This creates visual clutter, and an undesirable disconnection which would not be considered an acceptable response



Good Design

These shopfronts do not incorporate fascia's for signage so the shop window is utilised to display the business name with well proportioned and moderate graphics. Large parts of the window being covered would not be considered appropriate as it limits the shop's transparency and active frontage.



8.4 Colour Palette

Poor Design

The use of brash colours can detract from the quality of the shopfront and negatively impact upon the host building and character of the area



Good Design

A well considered palette can enhance both the host building and shop itself



8.5 Cornice



A moulded shopfront cornice with dentilated detail on the underside.

8.6 Canopies

Traditional canvas roller blinds were a common feature of Victorian shopfronts in order to protect goods from damaging sunlight and customers from bad weather. The inclusion of a roller blind into a new shopfront has the potential to enhance an area so long as it can be integrated into the overall design and the blind fully retracts into a recessed blind box behind the shopfront fascia. The installation of such a blind may require planning permission and / or advertisement consent.

Good Design
Examples of well proportioned canopies in Coventry that retract neatly designed into the shopfronts.



Poor Design

A Dutch blind in Far Gosford Street that is cluttering what otherwise would have been a well designed and attractive shopfront.



8.7 **Decorative Pillars**

Traditionally they are designed with a foot at the base and a capital at the top on which the console sits. They are often made of timber or masonry and decorated with timber panels or fluting but can be left plain. Glazed bricks are sometimes used in place of timber pilasters. Pillars play an important role in framing the shopfront signage, window display and entrance.

Good Design

Examples of decorative pilasters found within Coventry, these are typically delivered in robust materials such as timber or masonry. Earlier shopfront examples offer lavish decoration whereas more modern examples have further simplified the designs to compliment the host building while still delivering the desired shop framing.



8.8 Entrances

Doorways offer the primary access into the shop and it will be expected that storefront designs coming forward should offer entrances which are both legible and accessible for all users.

Good Design

Inclusive access can be designed into shopfronts when considered alongside the internal layout arrangements and will be sought within all shopfronts designs



Good Design

A recessed doorway with flanking windows found along Hay Lane



Good Design

Stallrisers are often offered in a variety of styles that compliment the shop's design with many being made from robust and attractive materials. Earlier examples of shops often utilised either timber or glazed bricks with later 20th century examples opting for tile, brick or stone finishes, whereas many modern 21st century shops have removed stallrisers all together unless there is a level change present.

**Poor Design**

Tacked on moulding has been used to create decorative panels on this shopfront but they are poor quality, vulnerable to damage and quickly degrade. Proper joinery techniques should be used on timber shopfronts to offer a robust design.



8.10 Shopfront Displays

Good Design

A well considered storefront that responds to the cornerplot with a dual frontage design



Good Design

A shop window with an attractive and eyecatching display which still offers visibility into the shop and onto the street



8.11 Window Manifestations

Poor Design

The whole of the shop window is covered by a vinyl graphic which ruins the external appearance of the building



Good Design

The restrained use of vinyl here to the top and bottom of the window giving the name of the business allows the majority of the window to be left clear so that potential customers can view the display and activity inside the store. By leaving windows clear it allows views into shop making it far less intimidating for new customers to enter.



8.12 Transom Windows

Typically found within 18th to 20th Century shopfronts, shop windows of this period are sometimes horizontally divided by transoms, to allow the provision of a row of shallow windows above the main shop display windows, known as 'transom lights'. These often feature within traditional shopfront design.



8.13 Mullions



Good Design

A selection of shopfronts with the windows proportionally divided with the use of mullions, an element that often features heavily within shopfront designs of any era and style that assists in the framing of the shopfront.

Poor Design

Externally fitted solid shutters like these are not considered appropriate due to their poor quality appearance that create dead frontages and negatively impact the vitality of a street



Good Design

good examples of an internally fitted horizontal sliding shutter



Good Design

A good example of a store utilising the forecourt with non permanent solutions to enhance frontage animation through seating and soft planting.



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Good Design

This is a good example of utilising outdoor space to activate the frontage by enhancing the vibrancy of the streetscene. This is accomplished through the careful consideration of temporary seating and planters which do not obstruct pedestrian movement and can be easily altered or fixed



©2021 Google Streetview



©2023 Google Streetview

Poor Design

Poorly considered use of the forecourt can be obstructive and detracts from the appreciation of the host building and the character of the streetscene



8.16 Cash Machines

Good Design

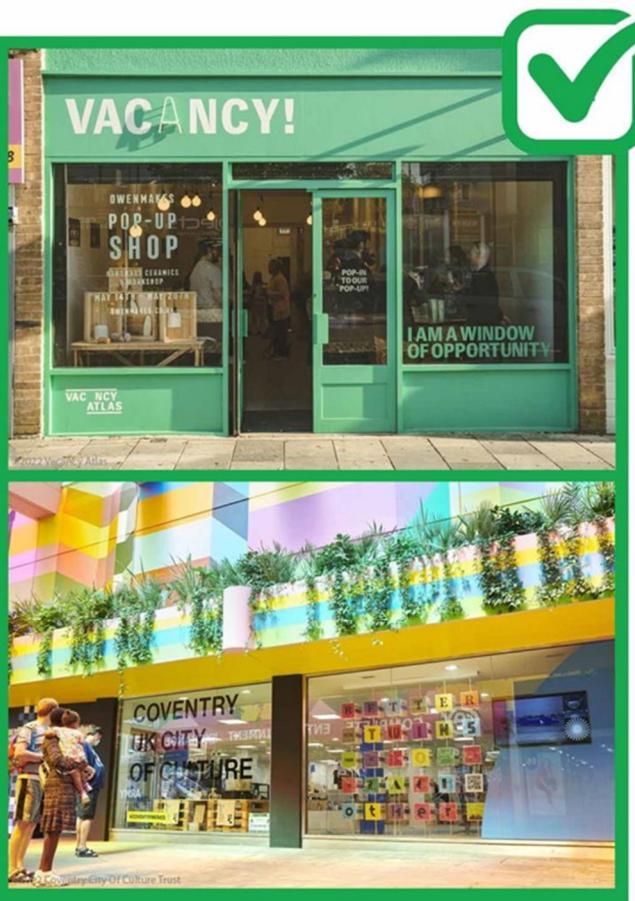
A Good intergration of a cash machine that utilises the exsiting window pattern to insert the cash machine and utilises colours that compliment the shopfront while not becoming overly dominant within the design



8.17 Meanwhile Uses

Good Design

Good examples of vacant units offering a meanwhile use through a pop up shop to support start-ups, showcase events and promote the units availability



8.18 Area of contrast

Good Design

Some areas have specific design guidance that may contrast the typical advice applicable to the character of the area. In these cases it is advisable that further guidance is sought from the council to offer appropriate design responses



9.0 Contacts and Resources

General development control enquiries concerning permissions and consents should be referred to The Development Management Team:

Phone 024 76831212

Email planning@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries relating to planning enforcement issues should be directed to the Building Control Team:

Phone 024 7683 2057

Email buildingcontrol@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council Planning Map – including identification of Conservation Areas and Listed Building designations

www.coventry.gov.uk/planning-2/online-planning-map

CCC Conservation Webpage

www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage

CCC Adopted Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)

www.coventry.gov.uk/planning-policy/coventry-local-plan-2011-2031



Design Code Questionnaire:

1. How would you describe the Character of your local area?

(Select one)

Historic neighbourhood with a strong identity



Edge of town or suburb



Mixed use urban area (homes, shops, places of work)



Student or a transient community



Predominantly residential area



Industrial or formerly industrial



2. What design features or qualities make your local area unique or special?

(Below table for internal tally only)

Categories	Number of responses
Built environment	
Natural environment	
Community and culture	
Character of local centres	
Transport, connectivity and accessibility	
Availability of local amenities	
Heritage sites and landmarks	
Waterways, canals, rivers and water features	
Dark skies and tranquillity	
Industrial heritage	
Specific local features	

3. From the list below, please rate how important each of these following building design elements is to you

	Not important at all	Not very important	Neutral	Important	Very important
<i>A positive impact on the environment and wildlife (e.g. green walls and planting)</i>					
<i>Sustainable construction (e.g. energy efficiency)</i>					
<i>A mix of uses (e.g. homes, workplaces, shops)</i>					
<i>Accessibility for all (e.g. wheelchair access, adaptability)</i>					
<i>Affordability</i>					

<i>A safe and secure environment</i>				
<i>Building which create active life on the streets (e.g. community, play)</i>				
<i>Use of local building styles (e.g. terrace or topshops)</i>				
<i>Use of local building materials (e.g. redbrick, slate, sandstone, timber)</i>				

4. What improvements to transport infrastructure and services would you like to see support sustainable growth and improved connectivity?

<i>Better connection to public transport services</i>	
<i>Better integration between transport modes</i>	
<i>Attractive and convenient walking routes</i>	
<i>Improved cycling networks</i>	

5. Which mode of transport do you most often use to travel to the city centre?
(Select one)

<i>Walking</i>	
<i>Cycling</i>	
<i>Public Transport</i>	
<i>Car</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	

6. How confident are you using public transport or walking home? (row for Day/Night)

	Not very confident	Not confident	Neutral	Confident	Very confident
<i>Day</i>					
<i>Night</i>					

7. Which routes do you most use to reach Coventry city centre when walking or cycling?

	Day	Night	Both
<i>Warwick Road</i>			
<i>Spencer Park/Warwick Row</i>			
<i>Albany Road/Queens Road</i>			
<i>Albany Road/Butts Road</i>			
<i>Sovereign Row/Butts Road</i>			
<i>Spon End/Butts Road</i>			
<i>Upper Spon Street/Spon Street</i>			

<i>Holyhead Road</i>			
<i>Upper Hill Street/Hill Street</i>			
<i>Nauls Mill Park/Nauls Mill Underpark</i>			
<i>St Nicholas Street/Bishop Street</i>			
<i>Foleshill Road</i>			
<i>Stoney Stanton Road/Hale Street</i>			
<i>White Street/Hale Street</i>			
<i>Cox Street/Fairfax Street</i>			
<i>Sky Blue Way/Gosford Street</i>			
<i>Far Gosford Street/Gosford Street</i>			
<i>Gulson Road/Whitefriars Street</i>			
<i>London Road/Whitefriars Street</i>			
<i>Parkside/Much Park Street</i>			
<i>Mile Lane/New Union Street</i>			
<i>Quinton Road/New Union Street</i>			
<i>Stoney Road/Manor Road</i>			
<i>Radford Road</i>			
Other: _____			

8. What features would make streets feel more pleasant, inclusive and safer?
(Select three - 1 = most important)

	1	2	3
<i>Better lighting and visibility</i>			
<i>Fewer barriers or street clutter</i>			
<i>Well-maintained paving and road surfaces</i>			
<i>Wider paving and dedicated cycle lanes</i>			
<i>Clearer signage, road markings and wayfinding</i>			
<i>Slower traffic speeds, crossings and traffic measures</i>			
<i>Less noise and pollution</i>			
<i>More greenery</i>			
<i>Greater street activity</i>			
Other: _____			

9. From the following list, please rate how important each of the following design features are in parks, squares and public spaces

	Not important at all	Not very important	Neutral	Important	Very important
<i>Inclusive accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users</i>					

<i>Interpretive signage and wayfinding</i>				
<i>Good lighting and visibility</i>				
<i>Street furniture (e.g. benches, bins, cycle parking)</i>				
<i>Spaces for community events</i>				
<i>Areas of play</i>				
<i>Public art, sculptural features and heritage</i>				
<i>Parking</i>				
<i>High quality paving materials</i>				
<i>Tree planting and landscaping</i>				

10. How can green and blue spaces better support use, wellbeing, and climate resilience?
(Select three – 1 = most important)

	1	2	3
<i>More trees and shaded areas</i>			
<i>Better water access and management</i>			
<i>Wildlife and habitat creation</i>			
<i>Safer better connected green routes</i>			
<i>Spaces for community gardening or food growing</i>			
Other: _____			

11. What role should public art, culture and heritage play in shaping new design? (Select three 1 – most important)

	1	2	3
<i>Integrating public art in new developments</i>			
<i>Using lighting or installations to reflect identity</i>			
<i>Protecting and celebrating heritage assets and landmarks</i>			
<i>Design inspired by Coventry's Heritage or Story</i>			
<i>Supporting community events or markets</i>			
Other: _____			

12. Are there any public spaces, artworks or local landmarks that you feel best represent your part of Coventry's Identity?
 (Short written response – please give examples if possible)

13. Which of the following ways should creativity, innovation, and culture help to shape Coventry's Future?
 (Select three – 1 =most important)

	1	2	3
<i>Integrating art and creativity into buildings</i>			
<i>Using culture to strengthen community identity</i>			
<i>Supporting local artists or cultural programmes</i>			
<i>Encouraging innovative building design</i>			
<i>Promoting sustainable and creative approaches to materials or construction</i>			

- Other: _____

14. How important do you think the following are for making new developments in Coventry be more environmentally friendly?

	Not important at all	Not very important	Neutral	Important	Very important
<i>Energy efficient building design and use of sustainable building materials in construction</i>					
<i>Reusing existing materials and buildings</i>					
<i>Use of renewable energy sources</i>					
<i>Water efficiency and flood mitigation</i>					
<i>Sustainable waste management</i>					
<i>Increasing of greenery in the area</i>					
<i>Well-connected footpaths and cycleways</i>					
<i>Climate Change adaptation and resilience</i>					

Other: _____

15. Thinking about different types of development or design features, what should the Coventry Design Code be encouraging and what should it be preventing?

(Please describe in three words for each)

- Supporting

_____ , _____ , _____

- Preventing

_____ , _____ , _____

16. In no more than three words, how would you like to see Coventry designed in the future?

- _____
- _____
- _____