



---

**To: Communities & Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)**

**Date: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Subject: Draft Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document**

---

## **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To provide the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) with a review of the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Appendix 1) update of the Coventry Shopfront Design Guide.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board are recommended to:
  - 1) Support the public consultation of the updated Shopfront Design Guide SPD, and provide feedback to the consultation to inform the SPD's future development.
  - 2) Identify any further recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member.

## **3 Information and Background**

- 3.1 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'.
- 3.2 It is established good practice to update SPD's over time to ensure that they remain relevant and robust. This draft 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.
- 3.3 The content of the SPD will inform applicants and decision makers of the expectation of high quality proposals when seeking to gain planning permission for new shop fronts across the city, rather than being limited to guidance for Conservation Areas as is currently the case with the adopted 2014 SPD.
- 3.4 The quality of retail frontages can have a significant qualitative effect upon the character and quality of streets across the city. The draft 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 guide development proposals across a wide variety of contexts.

- 3.5 The draft SPD seeks to articulate these requirements in a manner to align to our local planning policies, and inform applicants, business owners and agents of the high quality design expectations when proposing new shop fronts.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 The findings of the consultation will inform the next stages of development of the guidance ahead of its being presented to members for adoption, inclusive of a summary of feedback and response to the consultation findings.
- 3.8 To ensure that the SPD remains aligned to latest planning policy, it is intended that adoption of the SPD will only be progressed after the adoption of the Local Plan Review.

#### Appendix 1: Shop Front Design Guide 2026

Chris Styles  
Head of Planning Policy and Environment  
Coventry City Council