

the urbanists



Hadleigh Town Centre Shopfront Design Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The Hadleigh Town Centre Shopfront Design Guide is a collaborative document created by the Urbanists in partnership with Castle Point Borough aimed towards SME business owners, business start-ups, and property owners and landlords within Hadleigh town centre.

Its purpose is to offer supporting design guidance on shopfront improvements for local businesses situated within town centre focus area established within the *Hadleigh Town Centre Visioning Study & Report*. It also provides information on grant funding available, and how to access it.

The drawing below shows the extent of the town centre focus area and the area of retail located within the area.

WHY DO GOOD SHOPFRONTS MATTER?

Shopfronts are important for defining the character of an area and its economic success. Located at street level, they are highly visible, and the image they present affects how people living, working, or visiting the area may feel about it.

Well-designed shopfronts serve their commercial purpose by showcasing products and attracting customers. They also make the street more attractive, encouraging people to spend more time in the area, which boosts business. Alternatively, unattractive shopfronts that don't fit with the area can have a negative effect, making the place less appealing and discouraging shoppers from spending time within the area.

By improving Hadleighs shopfronts, we aim to..

1. Improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre;
2. Increase the footfall in the town centre, creating new and supporting existing business opportunities;
3. Create a high quality urban environment where people want to visit, shop and relax.



UNDERSTANDING SHOPFRONTS

Well-maintained shopfronts can have a positive impact on an area. by adding charm and variety to the streetscene, whilst helping to create a unique local identity and 'sense of place'. This is more important than ever, as shoppers can easily choose to buy online or go to out-of-town retail centres.

To stay competitive, local shopping areas need to offer a different experience - such as a pleasant environment to enjoy and places to connect with the community.

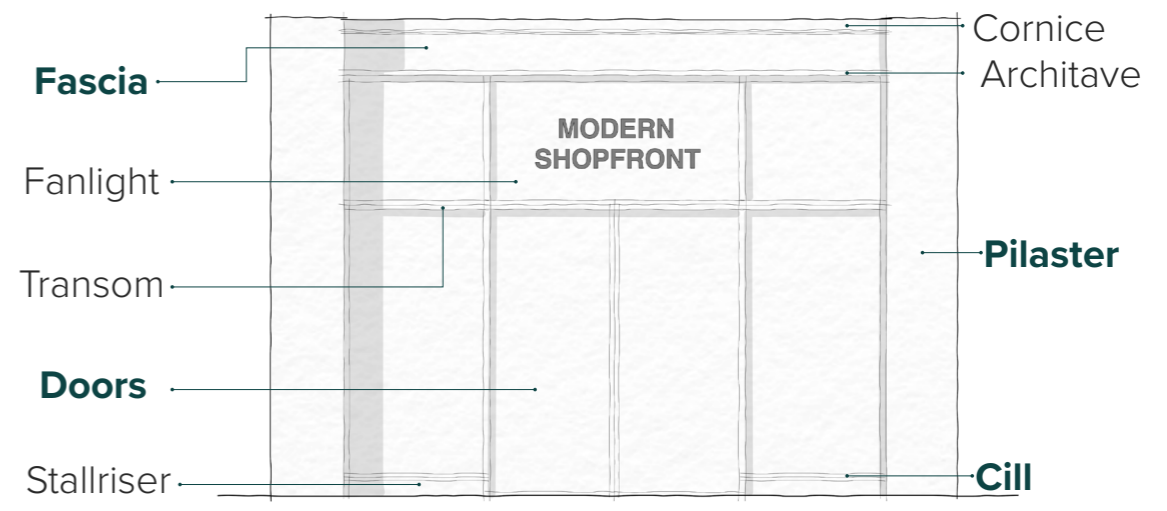
In order to understand the parts which make up a successful and good quality shopfront an outline of the main features of both traditional and contemporary shopfronts are presented below.

STATUTORY APPROVALS

Please note there may be a requirement for statutory approvals, including planning permission, for any shopfront improvements:

Permitted Development:

Planning Approval Required:



WHAT SHOULD HADLEIGH ASPIRE TO?

We have outlined a series of best practice examples to assist local business and property owners with how best to improve existing shopfronts within Hadleigh town centre. It is also important to understand the aims and aspirations are behind the shopfront improvement scheme. These aims are detailed below:

1. Reinstate & Restore Hadleighs Historic Character

Maximise original architectural features of existing shopfronts. Traditional style shopfronts offer an opportunity to preserve and enhance the character of the area.

2. Sensitive Safety and Security Measures

Security features should be integrated sensitively within shopfront design and can help to make a positive impact on the street scene e.g. shutter artwork, canopies and lighting which can support Hadleigh's night time economy.

3. Prioritising Accessibility for Everyone

Doorways and entrances should be obvious and accessible to people of all abilities and ages.

4. Encouraging an Active High Street

Shopfronts and window displays should be designed so that they encourage interaction and engagement, contributing to a dynamic and vibrant high street that fosters a sense of community.

5. Considering Hadleighs Built Environment

Create unity and cohesion in the street scene by ensuring shopfronts and signage suitable sit within the building structure, maintaining the scale, proportion, and rhythm of the building above.



Historic Architectural Details in Hadleigh



Opportunity for symmetric contemporary shopfronts



Shopfronts maintaining vertical rhythm of building

BEST PRACTICE



HADLEIGH TOWN CENTRE

WHERE WILL SHOPFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

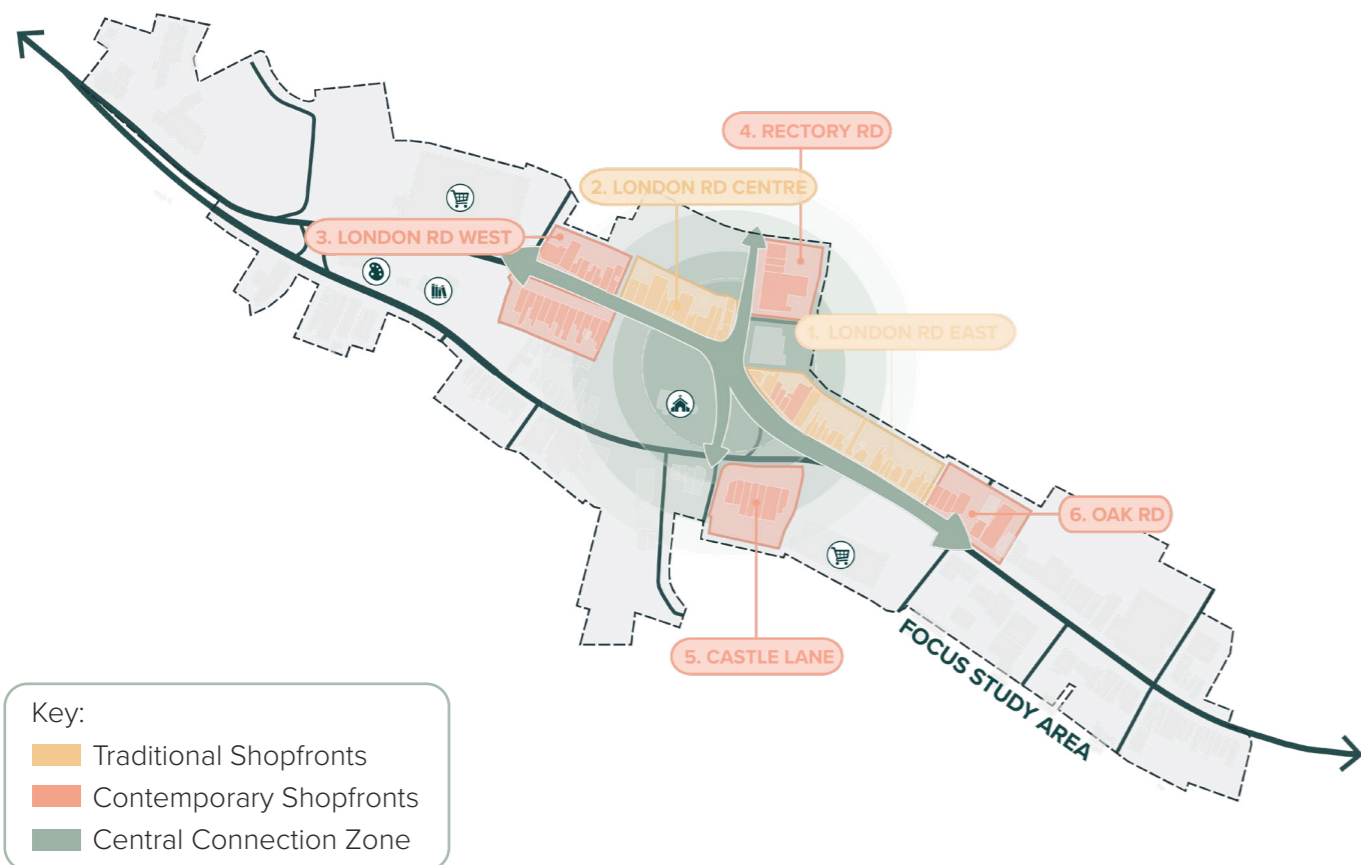
HAVE THE BIGGEST IMPACT?

In order to ensure future shopfront improvements will have the biggest and most positive impact a series of key retail areas have been identified within Hadleigh town centre where supporting grant would be best utilised. The selected areas are aligned to the areas for shopfront improvement outlined in the Hadleigh Town Centre Visioning Study.

Each area summary includes supporting information on the type of shopfronts, the type of retail uses, and additional details as to why this area would benefit from shopfront improvements.

Prioritisation of shopfront improvement areas should consider...

1. Location within Hadleigh town centre
2. Style and potential impact of shopfront improvement.
3. Type and variety of retail and public realm in the shopfront zone.



TRADITIONAL

1 London Road East



Varied, mainly **traditional style** terrace shopfronts with some contemporary shopfronts as well. There is a mixture of **independent retail** and **cafe** units with **street seating**.

2 London Road Centre



Varied, mainly **traditional style** terrace shopfronts with some contemporary shopfronts as well. There is a mixture of **independent retail** and **cafe** units with **street seating**.

CONTEMPORARY

3 London Road West



Consistent, **contemporary style** terrace shopfronts with a mixture of **independent cosmetic, retail** and **food and beverage** units with **street seating**.

4 Rectory Road



Consistent, **contemporary style** shopfronts in one block with a mixture of retail units including a **charity shop, clothing shop** and a **convenience store**.

5 Castle Lane



Consistent, **contemporary style** shopfronts in one block with a mixture of **independent cosmetic and retail** units including a **charity shop, barbers** and **furniture store**.

6 Oak Road Junction



A mixture of **contemporary style** shopfronts and public realm at the **towns eastern gateway**, with a mixture of **independent retail** and **estate agent** units.

HOW SHOULD I USE MY FUNDING?

Funding Option 1



A series of potential shopfront improvement 'Quick-Wins' could be used to maximise impact with a smaller budget, including:

- **Repainting the external facade**
- Organising and **improving existing shopfront features**, such as tidying up loose wires and cables.
- Adding engaging **shop displays** and vibrant **hanging baskets** to attract attention and showcase the type of retail or service available.
- **Removing outdated or unnecessary sub-fascias** to create a cleaner overall look.

Funding Option 3



With further funding a shopfront could be replaced and 're-assembled' to include more substantial features which require joinery and electrical input. This could facilitate:

- **Adding security features** such as alarms and sensitive shutter systems, ensuring they are visible but do not overwhelm the facade.
- Providing **level wheelchair access** to accommodate people of all abilities.
- **Replacing glazing and framework with improved materials**, which complement the architectural rhythm of the building above.
- If the shopfront spans two buildings, incorporating a **visible break to reflect the division between the structures**.

Funding Option 2



Working with a medium-level amount of funding could facilitate a series of more substantial interventions (subject to planning permission), including:

- **Replacing the shopfront signage**, ensuring that the text does not exceed 2/3 of the fascia height for a balanced appearance.
- **Restoring the existing historic features of traditional shopfronts** to preserve their character.
- **Installing a complementary, fully retractable canopy** (subject to planning permission).
- **Adding subtle, externally mounted lighting** to enhance the nighttime atmosphere and safety of the street scene.

Funding Option 4



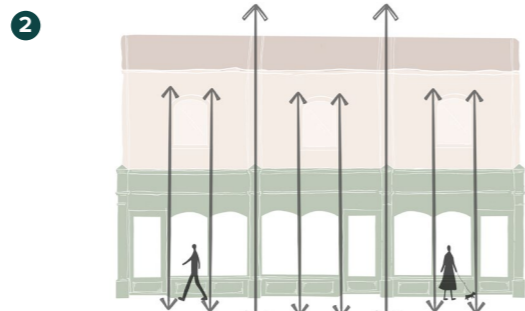
Additional supporting projects could be undertaken to build on any success of future shopfront improvements. These could be community-led and **in collaboration with local businesses and organisations, such as HOFS (Hadleigh Old Fire Station - Arts Organisation)**.

These projects could include **light displays or sculpture trails created by Hadleigh's own artists**, injecting excitement and vibrancy into the town. **Such initiatives could relate to the town's heritage (e.g. Hadleigh Castle) and help establish a dynamic nighttime economy transforming Hadleigh's street scene.**

Rules for Best Practice



Paint & Colour - Colours should be bright to create an attractive and varied street scene without being garish or dismissive of neighbouring shopfronts.



Building Rhythm - The shopfront rhythm should align with the building above for consistency. Any break between buildings should be reflected in the shopfront design. These breaks can also help to bring a more intimate scale to windows.



Accessibility - Shopfronts should cater for all abilities wherever possible. Strategies for achieving this include providing level access, a door width of at least 1200mm and a light-weight door with a push/pull sign and easy grip handle.



Signage & Fascias - Signage should occupy no more than 2/3 of the fascia height, with fonts and colours complimenting the overall palette. Fascias must align with neighbouring shops, covering no more than 20% of the shopfront height. Sub-fascias should be removed.

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