

Old Town

Shopfront Design



The Old Town has great potential as a diverse speciality shopping area, but has yet to fully exploit this opportunity. Both visitors and locals alike come to the Old Town to sightsee and shop. The historic character of the Old Town is internationally recognised and the area's popularity is set to increase. As improvements progress to make the area more pedestrian friendly, there will be further opportunities to increase trade.



Shopping is a major leisure activity so making shops as inviting as possible is one of the best ways traders can improve their business. In addition the appearance of shops also affects the character of an area. The more attractive the area the more people will be drawn to it. Experience has shown that appealing shops in pleasant areas can have two or even three times greater turnover than similar but unattractive shops in unappealing areas.

appealing shopfronts
Good
for business

achieving Complementary design



A walk around the Old Town reveals a surprising variety of shopfront designs from many different periods. Sadly, many shopfront designs show a lack of careful detailing and consequently a poor image is projected.

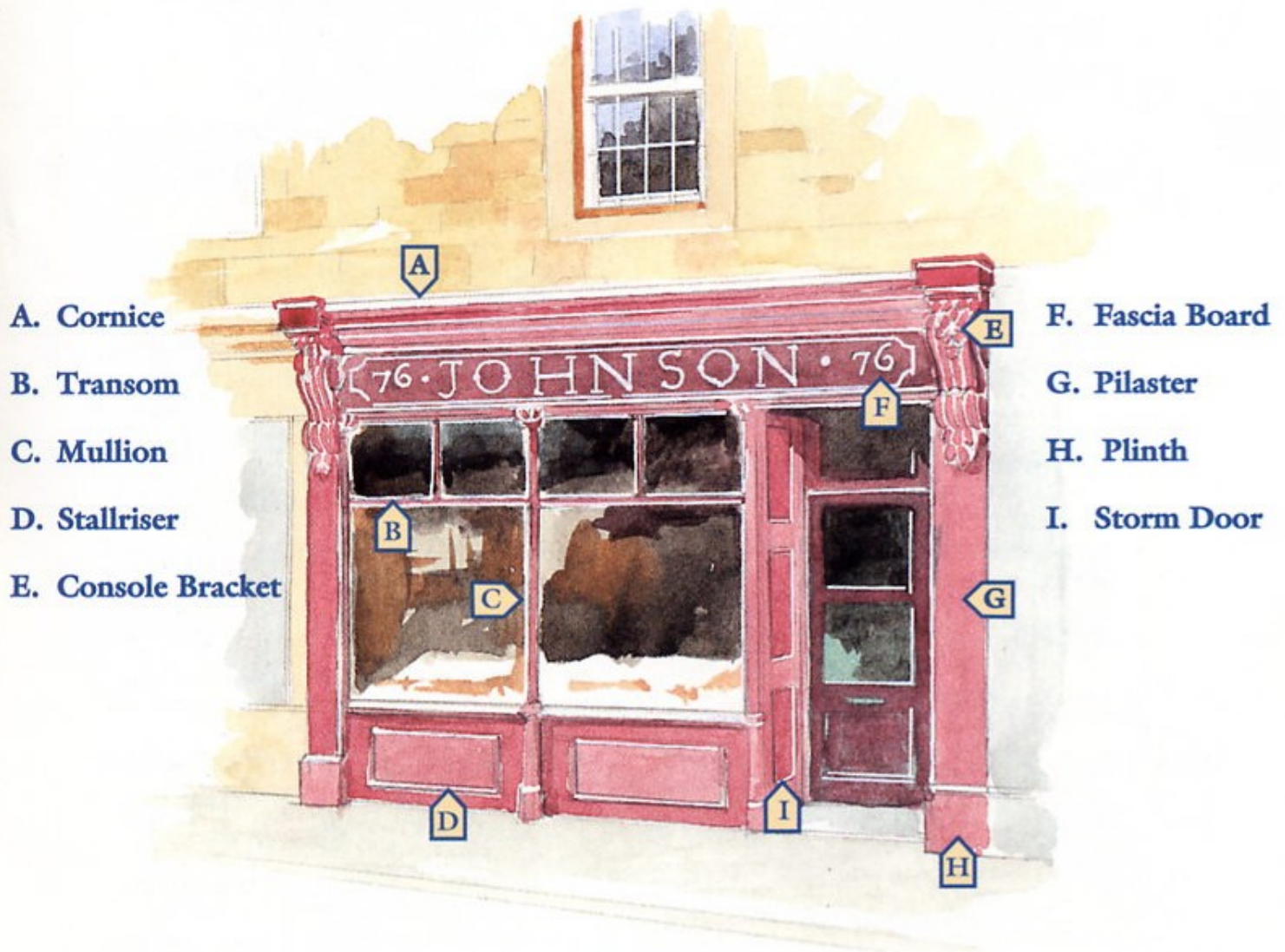
However, one can also see a number of modern shopfronts that work

successfully and help create a positive image.

Some of these are designed in a traditional style, while others exhibit more contemporary flair.



Simplicity of design and careful detailing is often the hallmark of a quality shopfront. The style of neighbouring shopfronts is less important though they should usually follow similar principles. These include the use of good materials, correct proportioning of the shopfront and ensuring the shop sits sympathetically within the building. A number of technical terms are used in designing shopfronts and the illustration below is a guide to the terminology.



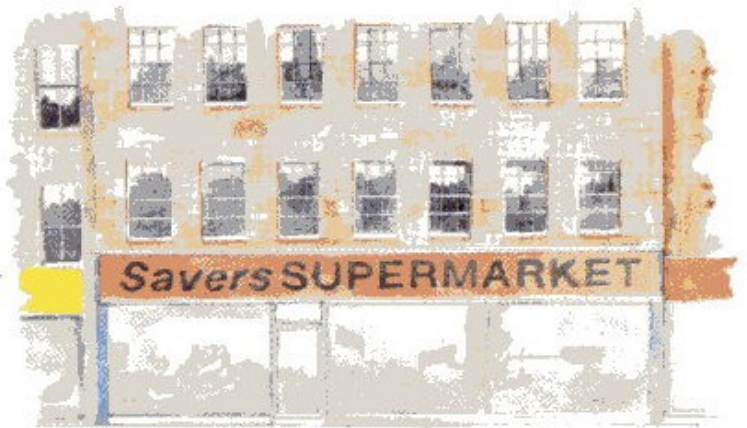
shopfront Features

There are a number of poor shopfronts in the area which can be identified by the careless use of scale, materials and design. The drawings show some of the problems associated with shopfronts in the Old Town. These problems range from the use of oversize fascia boards to a lack of scale in relation to the building above.



◀ Here is a large and unattractive fascia board and shopfront which spans two architecturally distinct buildings. The scale is destroyed and the division between the two buildings ignored.

Here a large and long fascia board spans a whole building and is only supported by slim end pilasters. This tends to leave the building looking unsupported or 'floating on air'.



◀ One inappropriate shopfront can drag down a whole street and spoil its appearance. It must be appreciated that individual shopfront design has a duty to respect the surrounding shops.

W what can go
Wrong

shopfront Details



A part from the fundamental design, individual features can enhance or spoil the shopfront. The sketches show how illuminated signs, security shutters and Dutch (non - retractable) canopies can be visually destructive and how, with careful thought these elements can be redesigned attractively.



good Examples & bad

The dramatic visual difference between well and poorly designed shopfronts is illustrated below. The first example will display goods attractively and invite custom, whereas the second example appears shabby and unfriendly.



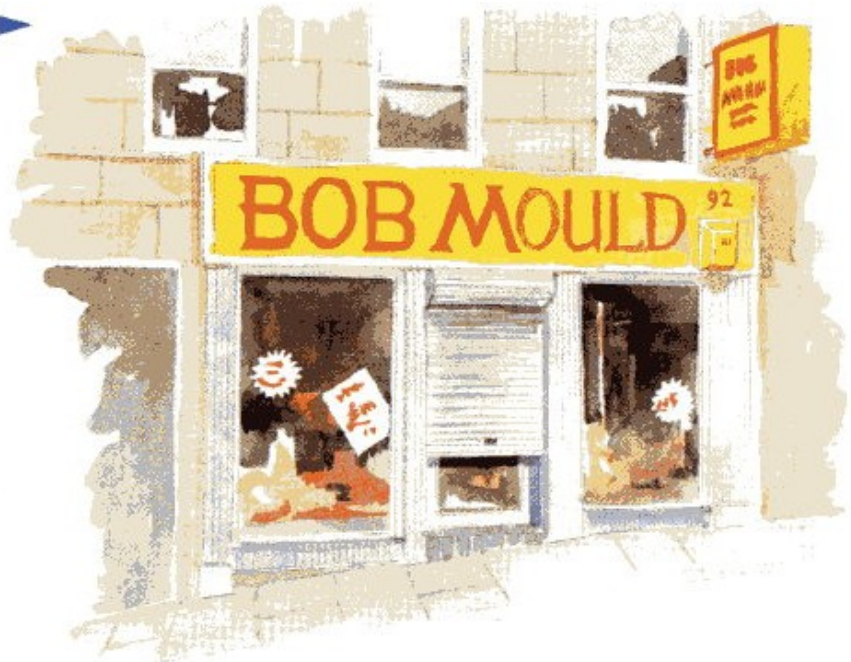
◀ This example shows a traditional shopfront with cornice, pilasters and stallrisers, as well as mullions and elegant console brackets. The shopfront has pleasing proportions and blends in well with the building above.

The lettering on the fascia is both elegant and restrained as is the overall colour scheme which works best with a dark background and lighter lettering. The shopfront is constructed in timber which is long lasting and easy to repair.

This example shows much of what is wrong with modern and recent shopfronts. The fascia is too tall and deep and constructed from a non traditional material such as perspex or formica. ▶

The crude fascia board does not respect the buildings proportions. In addition there is a clumsy roller shutter and an illuminated sign looms above.

The pilasters are tiled - a rarely effective treatment. The lettering is far too big and the colour scheme is not appropriate to its surroundings.



This sketch shows a poor ▶
shopfront dating from the
1960's. This style of shopfront can
be seen in the Old Town especially
in South Bridge. Below are some
alternative designs for the
shopfronts.



◀ The sketch shows the original 1790 arched
treatment for South Bridge. Where
appropriate, these can be reinstated.

Another alternative for the shopfronts is this ▶
traditional design based on earlier examples.
It displays goods in an elegant and
efficient manner.



◀ Another design incorporating a traditional
approach echoing the original arches.



This example shows a modern shopfront ▶
with large windows and natural stone details.
Modern shopfronts that respect the original
proportions of the building may be acceptable in
certain locations.



alternative
Designs

