

Shop Front Improvement Scheme Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Shop Front Improvement Scheme (the Scheme) forms a part of a programme of activities that will deliver the already approved Successful Centres Strategy (previously known as Thriving District and Local Centres) improving the viability, use and appearance of our neighbourhood centres to establish a successful and thriving network of centres across the city .
- 1.2 The primary objectives for the wider programme include:
 - Attracting more private sector investment in neighbourhood Centres, particularly those with sites available for housing development or significant numbers of empties
 - Improving the economic health of Centres
 - Improving the quality of life and place within the Centres
- 1.3 A network of successful centres across the city is a key part of developing Great Places to Live, helping to sustain communities, enhancing the competitiveness of the city's economy and supporting local jobs/businesses.
- 1.4 The aim of the Scheme is to improve the image of the Designated Area, creating conditions that will attract future investment and boost trader confidence. This scheme will :-
 - Improve the front elevations of the shops,
 - Improve the street scene,
 - Consolidate the other public sector investment in the area:
 - Increase confidence and encourage other private investment increasing potential job opportunities

2. Circumstances and Eligibility

- 2.1 The Council will only consider an Application for a Shop Front Improvement Assistance (Assistance) in respect of a Property where it is satisfied:-
 - The Property is a Shop
 - The Shop is located in the in the Designated Area
 - The external condition of the Shop is detrimental to the street scene image.
 - That Assistance has not previously been provided in respect of the Shop”.
 - The applicant is a Trader operating from the Shop and has completed a Scheme Consent Form
 - The Applicant has an Owners Interest in the Shop

- Everyone with an Owners Interest in the Shop has completed a Scheme Consent Form
- The Shop is not part of a national or international chain of shops. Where the Shop is a franchise of a national or international chain of shops, it will be treated as being part of a national or international chain of shops.
- Once the Works are completed the occupation of the property will be sustainable.
- The Applicant does not have an Outstanding Debt to the Council

2.2 The purpose for which Assistance may be approved is:

- To fund works to improve the appearance of the entire elevation of which the shop front forms a part.

2.3 The Council may only approve Assistance where:-

- It has specified the works to be undertaken (the Works)
- It is satisfied the Shop will be occupied or capable of occupation and use.

2.5 The Council may approve an Application from an Applicant who is not a Trader operating from the Shop where the Shop is vacant and the Council is satisfied that the condition of the Shop is such that improvements would contribute to the aims and objectives of the Scheme.

2.6 Within the above criteria for eligibility, priority for awarding Assistance will be determined having regard to:

- the Council's available resources
- the cost of carrying out the Works
- the location and proportion of shops wishing to participate in the scheme and the impact to be made.

2.7 The Council will adopt a phased approach to the Scheme. In respect of individual phases, Assistance will only be approved within that phase where there is at least an 80% take up of the Scheme within the phase

3. The Assistance

3.1 The Assistance will be a maximum of 100% of the cost of the Works. The amount of Assistance will vary according to the extent of the work agreed for each property.

Any work in addition to or exceeding the Works will be funded directly by the Applicant.

3.2 The maximum amount of Assistance that can be paid is £5000 per Shop

3.3 Where the Applicant is eligible for Assistance the Council shall decide the amount to be approved. When making this decision regard will be had to the following: -

- the estimated cost of the Works
- any other relevant circumstances

4. Payment of Assistance

- 4.1 Payment of the Assistance will be made on completion of the Works to the satisfaction of the Council. Payment will be made direct to the contractor procured by the Council carrying out the Works.

5. Conditions

- 5.1 Assistance may only be provided in respect of a Shop once. Where Assistance has been provided in respect of a Shop any further Applications will not be approved
- 5.2 Following completion of the works, The Applicant shall maintain the improvements to the Shop arising the Works”.

6. Definitions

- 6.1 This section details specific definitions of certain terms used in the Scheme
- 6.2 “Applicant” means a person who has made an Application
- 6.3 “Application” means an application for Assistance
- 6.4 “Assistance” means assistance provided by the Council under the Scheme.
- 6.5 “Designated Area” means the area shown on the plan and outlined in red, set out in the appendix to this document.
- 6.6 “Owner’s Interest” shall mean in relation to any property:-
- an estate in fee simple absolute in possession, or
 - a term of years absolute.
- 6.7 “Property” means the property which is the subject of the application for Assistance.
- 6.8 “Shop” shall mean a Property within the Designated Area which use is for a business purpose falling within one or more of the descriptions of use under classes A1, A3, A4 and A5 of Part 1 of the Schedule to The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987
- 6.9 “Outstanding Debt to the Council” means any liability of the Applicant which is owed to the Council and is outstanding when the Applicants Application is being considered. However, where the debt relates to arrangements where the liability is being discharged by instalment, for example council tax and business rates, and the Applicant is making payment of those instalments on time and in accordance with those arrangements, the debt will not be treated as an Outstanding Debt to the Council. Where the Applicant is in breach of those arrangements, resulting in the full debt being payable immediately, the Applicant will be treated as having a Debt Outstanding to the Council.

7. Darnall Shop Frontage Improvement Scheme – Boundary Line

