

Leith & Portobello Shopfront Improvement Schemes

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

What is the scheme for?

It can offer financial help for new traditional or modern shopfronts or repairs to existing shopfronts.

Who can apply?

Owners and leaseholders of commercial premises in Great Junction Street, Leith and Portobello High Street prepared to pay a share of the costs involved.

What is required?

The style must achieve the principles of good design set out in the Leith & Portobello Shopfront Improvement Technical Guidelines.

How to apply

Applications for financial assistance should be submitted to the City of Edinburgh Council using the attached form. Applicants will also require planning permission and/or listed building consent. Advertisement consent may be required in certain circumstances. A building warrant application may also be required.

There is a two-stage application process for the financial assistance.

Stage 1 – Design

The applicant appoints an architect who prepares sketch design and an itemised project budget. The architect agrees these with the applicant and submits a completed Council Application Form. The design and budget must then be approved by the Council's Conservation and Design Section prior to detailed design work beginning. The Council can agree to fund the architect's initial fees up to £500. In order for the Council to pay the initial £500, the following information is required:

- A completed application form for each scheme.
- A sketch design including details of the materials to be used
- A section
- An indicative cost plan

These need to be agreed with the Conservation and Design section prior to payment. In addition it is expected that applicants are willing to proceed with the schemes.

The architect then designs a shopfront that meets all the scheme's requirements and that can be used to obtain the relevant planning consents. It must be supplemented by:

- An indicative cost plan;
- A 1:50 outline drawing of the whole building including the shopfront;
- A 1:25 elevations of the shopfront;
- Full size details of mouldings and features; and

- A floor plan of the premises.

The cost plan including an assessment of the professional fees and design must be agreed prior to an offer of grant being made. It is expected that the professional fees will be reasonable.

The designs and costings must be agreed with a Planning Officer in the Conservation and Design Section (0131 469 3770) before the application can proceed to the next stage of obtaining planning consent.

Stage 2 – Works

If the applicant wishes to continue, the Council is informed that the scheme will be proceeding. The level of assistance is discretionary but for most shops it will cover 75% of the eligible costs of the work and the fees. VAT is not normally covered since the applicant can recover it. The Council will, however, retain its discretion to award a financial contribution of less than 75% to expensive shopfront improvement schemes that would take up a disproportionately large part of the overall budget for the Initiative.

Approval will be on the basis of a tendered price obtained by the architect and the receipt of planning permission. The Council would prefer that the applicant had a formal contract with the contractor.

Payments

The payment for *Stage 1 – Design* will be made on receipt of a copy of the architect's initial design fee, certified as having been paid by the applicant.

Payment for *Stage 2- Works* will be made on completion of the work to the satisfaction of the Council and on receipt of a final certificate or final invoice and evidence that all financial obligations have been met. The Council will have the discretion to be flexible about stage payments but in general would expect to only pay the main contribution at the end of the contract and not normally in stages.

The Applicant's Obligations

Applications should not be submitted for already completed works. Retrospective grants will not be given.

The Council's offer of grant letter will be subject to conditions. Copies of the standard conditions are available on request from Conservation and Design Section. The Council reserves the right to alter, amend or insert additional conditions where necessary, within the Council's offer of grant letter.

Work should not start before the Council's offer of grant letter is received. Offers of grant, together with any additional costs, must be formally accepted by letter before work commences. Any offer of grant aid will be inclusive of reasonable professional fees and without any further commitment to expenditure by the Council.

For any further information on the Leith and Portobello Shopfront Improvement Scheme please contact the Conservation and Design Section on 0131 469 3770.