LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

APPENDIX 15

DM Guidelines for ACAs

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2 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR ACA'S

The following guidelines relate to development within ACA's

2.1 PLOT WIDTHS

The following guidelines will apply to plot widths:

- New developments should have regard to the historically narrow plot sizes;
- New developments which extend over more than one historic plot, should address the design through variations in the façade composition that echo the historic plot pattern.
- Where plot amalgamation is considered necessary to accommodate new development the existing narrow land uses and the narrow plot frontage should be reflected in the streetscape design.

2.2 BUILDING LINES

The following principles in relation to building lines will apply:

- Maintain existing and established building lines where they exist.
- Create new building lines where they do not already exist in the case of extensive brownfield sites.

2.3 BUILDING LINES MAY BE RELAXED IN THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:

- For innovative design solutions where it can be demonstrated that the design will positively enhance the townscape.
- Where the provision of public or civic space are to be proposed.
- To accentuate an important building.

2.4 BUILDING HEIGHTS

The following principles will generally apply:

- The general range of building heights and number of storeys which are evident in the street should be retained.
- Stepping up of corner buildings or buildings creating significant landmarks will be permitted.
- In general, the difference in a buildings height from traditional buildings should not exceed one and a half storeys.
- Applications for modifications or variations to buildings does not in itself provide a justification for height increases. An alteration or extension to the existing roofline may still be unacceptable.

The following will be taken into account in assessing applications for higher buildings:

- The degree to which its prominence is justified in the townscape – traditionally, only significant public buildings received such prominence;
- The extent to which the building detracts or enhances important landmarks and views;
    - The extent to which the building detracts from or enhances the character of open space or public realm;
    - The degree of intrusion or obtrusion of skyline and the impact on the topography of the street;
    - Issues of shadow, significant loss of light and micro-climatic impacts;
    - The extent to which an imbalance in height is created between opposite sides of the street. This may not be relevant where there is future scope for the redevelopment of the opposite side too;
    - The extent to which the alteration to the façade or roofline impacts adversely upon the architectural integrity of the building and the area.
    - The quality of the existing or neighbouring buildings.

2.5 Skyline in ACA Area

The height and form of a building will have a direct influence on the skyline of the ACA. Features such as chimneys also add interest and variety to the skyline. Rooflines should normally respond to the articulation of the rest of the façade and it should therefore be possible to read the width of the plot division from the bottom to the top.
Design of buildings within ACAs shall have regard to the following:

- In many modern architectural solutions, rooftops tend to be flat and extended over a considerable distance (i.e. a building with a long façade). It can result in monotonous rooftops which should therefore be relieved with variations in building height at appropriate locations such as the stepping up heights at the centre of a uniform composition or at the corners.
- The roofline should reflect the rhythm, harmony and scale of the entire street frontage, with the roofline picking up the subdivisions of the façade.
- Materials should be chosen for their appropriateness to the character of the area i.e., red dyed tiles would be inappropriate in the town centre where natural Welsh slate predominate.
- Machine and mechanical plant rooms should be designed as an integral part of the building and should not cause disruption in the roofscape.

2.6 Roof Extensions

In general terms, the Council will not permit a roof extension if it is considered that it would:

- Harm the architectural integrity, proportions or uniformity of a building or significant group of buildings.
- Harm a significant or sensitive view.
- Reduce the visual interest generated by a varied skyline, or where the building has features that were designed to be silhouetted against the sky.
- Result in the loss of historic roof forms.

2.7 EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS MAY BE CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE WHERE:

- The scale of the proposed extension is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing property or is not visible from a public place;
- The proposed addition is of a high standard of contemporary or traditional design where appropriate;
- Steps have been taken to prevent the build up of visual clutter apparent from the street at high level.
- Permission will not be granted for other rooftop structures where these intrude into significant or sensitive public views, harm the character of a building or an area, or adversely affect the amenity of adjoining properties.

2.8 ADVERTISING STRUCTURES

- Policy to encourage removal of large advertisement structures if the opportunity arises.
- Policy to prohibit electronic video display screen in or adjacent to ACAs where they would impinge on, or negatively affect, the Character of the ACA.
- Advertisement structures within an ACA should not interfere with any structures that contribute to the architectural amenity/character of the ACA.
- All advertising structures should relate to the authorised uses in the building and should assimilate with the overall design of the shop-front and should be restricted to the fascia level. Additional advertising fixtures above ground floor level or on gable ends should be avoided.
- Generally, only the name and street number of the shop should be included, preferably hand-painted, on the fascia panel.
- The provision of temporary advertising structures on or projecting from any part of the façade, or hanging between buildings should not be erected without written approval of the planning authority.

2.9 DEMOLITION OR ALTERATION

The Council will not permit the demolition or alteration of buildings within designated ACAs unless it can be demonstrated that all of the below criteria is applicable:

- The building is in a very poor state of repair;
- All efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or find new ones, and these efforts have failed;
- Redevelopment of the site would greatly benefit the community and would outweigh the loss of the building/structure resulting from demolition;
- The building is unsafe and cannot be made safe.

2.10 SHOPFRONTS AND SHUTTERS

- Proposals for new contemporary shopfronts will be considered by the planning authority, where the design is of a high quality and achieves a balance of finish and textures establishing a sense of character in contemporary design.
- Historic robust materials such as smooth render finish, granite, limestone, brick, and timber, cast-iron, brass and copper can be integrated with lightweight contemporary materials such as stainless steel and glass. Glass, in particular, introduces reflective properties which add in a sense of playfulness and liveliness across facades.
- Design needs to be imaginative within the constraints of the existing building, enhancing its character rather than conflicting with it. In most cases, an appropriate modern proposal is preferred to inaccurate historical representations or pastiche.

2.11 SHOPFRONT GUIDELINES:

The guidelines below apply not only to retail premises but also to commercial, medical, medical-related and other premises providing services. In all cases, existing signage, tiled shopfronts, wrought ironwork, stonework, plasterwork detailing and any original features shall be retained on retail and commercial premises.

- Signage forms an integral part of the overall design for the shopfront and should be restricted to the fascia level. Generally, only the name and street number of the shop should be included, preferably hand-painted, on the fascia panel.
- The size, shape and position of shopfront signage should reflect the scale and façade of the building on which they are situated.
- Illumination by bracket or wash lighting is preferred to internally illuminated signage.
- All lettering is to be legible and in keeping with the character with the building.
- Minimum lettering should be used.
- Preferred signage locations are to position lettering:
  - Directly to the glazing,
  - To the bulkhead behind the glazing,
  - To architectural feature like doors,
  - Behind the glass.
- Lettering or logos should not be affixed directly to the glazing of any shop or business windows, other than etched lettering. All sign displays inside the shop should be kept back a minimum distance of 500mm from the glazing. Lettering or logos should not obstruct the window display or exceed one quarter of the area of the window through which the advertisements are exhibited
- Corporate, mass-produced signage using bright colours with plastic shopfronts and plastic fascias will not be acceptable within the ACAs
- Projecting signs shall not generally be permitted as a profusion of such signs in a confined area can lead to visual clutter in the streetscape. However, positive consideration may be given to the use of a projecting sign if a building is in multiple occupancy and the proposed sign would lead to a significant overall reduction in the number and scale of advertisement structures on or projecting from the face of the building.

In these circumstances, the following guidelines must be observed:

- Not more than one projecting sign should be displayed on a building,
- Signs should not be fixed directly to the face of a building but should be fixed by a bracket,
- Projecting signs should be fixed at fascia height adjacent to the access to the upper floors,
- Signs should be individually designed to complement the scale, materials and design of the building,
- Signs should not obscure important features of a building or adjacent buildings.

2.12 COLOURS

- The colours used in shopfronts and buildings in the ACAs should be complementary to the character of the area, that of the building and adjoining buildings.
- Loud, garish colours which clash with the colours and tones of the building and adjoining buildings should be avoided. Painting over brickwork or stonework is not acceptable.
- Corporate design packages, including colour and material palates and signage, will generally not be acceptable unless fully compatible with, and complementary to, the character of the building and adjoining buildings. The context for the proposal is considered more important than uniformity between branches of one company.

2.13 SECURITY FEATURES

- The installation of security shutters requires planning permission
- The use of such shutters is discouraged as these can visually detract from the lively ambience of a shopping street at night.
- The location of rollers on the exterior of the shopfront will not be permitted.
- Alternatives to roller shutters such as demountable open grilles will be considered where security needs are involved.
- Where security shutters are considered essential because of the nature of the business, they may be permitted provided they meet the following criteria:
  - They must be open grill type, not solid, or perforated.
  - They must be painted or coloured to match the shopfront scheme.
  - Where possible, they must be housed behind the window display.
- A security hatch or slot of a sufficient scale to accept newspaper deliveries shall be incorporated into the design of new shopfronts, as appropriate. Such a feature shall be located at or immediately above the level of the stall riser and should not interfere with the general proportions and presentation of the front façade of the shopfront.

2.14 RELATIONSHIP WITH OVERHEAD BUILDING

- A shopfront is an integral part of the building of which it forms part and therefore it should relate to the architectural character of the upper floors in respect of proportion, scale and alignment.
- Excessively deep fascias should be avoided, particularly where these obscure detailed elements such as console brackets and cornices. The fascia shall not encroach on or above first floor level or extend uninterrupted across a number of buildings.

The design of a new shopfront should relate to the architectural characteristics of the building of which it forms part, relating sympathetically to the upper floors in structural concept, proportion, scale and vertical alignment**.**