

This guidance is intended to provide information for businesses wishing to trade outdoors and key considerations when seeking to erect temporary structures or utilize street furniture. This guidance is intended to help Ceredigion's businesses make informed decisions which respect the character of our towns and support the County's economic recovery.

Development

Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Development normally requires planning permission unless it qualifies as permitted development.

Many structures have been erected in our Town Centers which change the use of land often from pavement or highway to cafes. Some structures erected have also entailed operations to attach structures to existing buildings or to land/highway which constitute a degree of permanency which require planning permission and other relevant licenses or permits.

In order to support the local economy through the pandemic, Ceredigion County Council had resolved not to take planning enforcement action. However, this approach has now changed and we advise traders to seek advice before erecting structures that do not have deemed consent. In the interim, it is therefore hoped that the advice contained within this guidance will assist businesses to make considered and informed decisions around the implementation of structures and street furniture in our town centres.

Built Heritage

Many Town Centres in Ceredigion have designated conservation areas. This is the case in all four safe zone towns. Maps showing the Conservation areas can be viewed here: <http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/6225/ceredigion-local-development-plan-ldp-volume-2b-proposals-maps-including-inset-maps-bilingual.pdf>

Any development in conservation areas must respect their character and any features of historic interest. Certain types of development in conservation areas require conservation area consent. Cardigan, Tregaron and Llanddewi Brefi Conservation areas are also subject to Article 4 Directions which remove some or all permitted development rights.

Structures should not obstruct key views into and out of the Conservation area. The continuity and rhythm of buildings within a street scene should not be adversely effected or distorted as this contributes to a sense of local identity and captures the distinctiveness of a conservation area.

In addition, there are numerous Listed Building within our Town Centres. These are buildings of special architectural or historical interest and are managed through the Listed Building consent regime. Listed building status covers the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures within its curtilage. Listed building consent will be required for any works that affect the character or appearance of a Listed Building

In order to preserve and enhance the character of our historic town centres, where appropriate, investing in a traditional canopy for a shop front should be investigated prior to consideration of a stand alone structure. Such canopies can be sensitively designed so that they are easily absorbed into the historic street scene. Canopies will also support the longer-term development of café culture in our towns. Please be aware that anything erected over a public highway will require the consent of Ceredigion County Council / Trunk Roads Agency (Local Highway Authority).

Marquees and other structures or street furniture associated with outdoor trading should be carefully sited to minimise their visual impact on the Conservation area and avoid any damage to the structure or materials of Listed Buildings. The setting of landmark buildings should be respected by retaining an openness around them and avoiding structures or furniture which detract from the aesthetic appearance of the building.

Size, Scale and Massing

Structures should respect the site and it's surroundings. Many marques type structures are large in scale and overwhelm the buildings which host the businesses they are used by. The cumulative impact of numerous marquees on the street scene can also be detrimental to the character of the area.

Location, Layout and Orientation

The location of structures within the street seen should be chosen with care. Ideally structures should not block the façade of buildings as this limits the number of active frontages. Where possible and most appropriate, structures should be located to the side of or behind the buildings hosting the businesses which they serve.

The orientation of structures is also important. Where possible the roof pitch orientation should reflect that of the street scene. Entrance points should avoid areas of high passing pedestrian movements to allow users to enter and leave in an orderly fashion without obstructing pedestrian movement flows or defined queuing systems. Internal layout must facilitate the social distancing requirements.

Street Furniture

In respect of street furniture such as seating, tables, screens and signage, it's siting and colour should respect the character of the area and be sufficient to withstand the weather experienced along the Ceredigion coastline during the main tourism season. The use of recyclable materials is encouraged. Outdoor dining furniture should be arranged in an orderly sufficiently spaced pattern and respect the social distancing measures in place at the time. The cumulative impact of street furniture should not create a cluttered effect within the street scene.

Traders should be aware that outdoor dining is controlled by the Street Café Licensing regime. Also, advertisements control including associated lighting is not covered in detail in this guide, however banners are likely to require Advertisement Consent.

Businesses should bear in mind that highways need to be inspected and maintained routinely and in emergency situations. This may be at very short notice and could involve the removal of structures. The more temporary in nature the structure are the better.

The authority wishes to continue to support businesses during this challenging period and will not pursue enforcement action hastily, however, where traders have erected structures that require consent enforcement action will be considered.

Accessibility

Structures and street furniture should not be sited in ways which adversely effect the legibility of the street scene or accessibility of public realm. Clear pavements and road crossings are important for the safety of all pedestrians including disabled users and those that are visually impaired. Public highways should be obstruction free and facilitate the safe and unfettered flow of pedestrians. Structures and furniture should also consider road safety and avoid diminished forward visibility for other road users, for example at junctions.

All street users should be able to access the town centre and cluttered streets with furniture and A frames make this very difficult for some people. When positioning items on the highway ensure that access is not impeded for any groups and that street users can access dropped curbs and other natural access point's safely.

Permitted Development

Permission to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application to a local planning authority, as granted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order. Further guidance is available here: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/wales_en/info/4/your_responsibilities/47/planning_permission/2. However, an application to the Council/Trunk Roads Agency (Local Highway Authority) may still be required.

Other Considerations

Businesses should consider the seasonality of the market which they are providing for. Providing shade and/or shelter at different times of the year will help to enhance the visitor experience.

The impact of proposals on flooding and drainage in the local area should be considered as well as the potential for damage caused by inclement weather events.

Policy and Guidance

Development proposals should be considered against national policy on good design and place making principles. Applications will be determined in accordance with the current Ceredigion Local Development Plan (LDP) 2007-2022 which is available at: <http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control-and-sustainable-drainage-body-sab/planning-building-control/ceredigion-local-development-plan/adopted-ceredigion-local-development-plan-ldp/>

For further advice and guidance on shopfront proposals, see the Aberystwyth Shop Front Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). <http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/6303/aberystwyth-shopfront-and-commercial-fa-ade-design-guide-spg-english.pdf>. A helpful tool to inform your proposals is the Heritage Impact Assessment process. Further guidance is available here: [https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/20170531Heritage%20Impact%20Assessment%20in%](https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/20170531Heritage%20Impact%20Assessment%20in%20)

Useful Contacts

To discuss your ideas/proposals please contact your Town Co-ordinator. They will involve the relevant service areas for an informal discussion around issues including Planning, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Advertisements, Street Café Licensing and Grants. All communication with the Council is encouraged through the Clic system . Contact us -
Tel:01545 570881

Email: clic@ceredigion.gov.uk

Grants may be available through the Transforming Towns Programme in Aberystwyth, Cardigan, Lampeter, Aberaeron, Llandysul & Tregaron.

Useful Links

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/4/contents/enacted>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/66>

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-11_0.pdf

<https://gov.wales/planning-permission-use-classes-change-use>

<https://gov.wales/technical-advice-notes>

<http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/6269/the-built-environment-and-design-spg-eng.pdf>