

Have your say: Yeovil Refresh Public Realm Design guide & Shopfront guide

South Somerset District Council's District Executive Committee approved the latest version of the Public Realm Design guide for Yeovil town centre and Shopfront guide for formal consultation in November and now you have an opportunity to have your say on both the guides.

Both guides have been designed as part of the Yeovil Refresh work and will help to make Yeovil town centre be a vibrant place to live, work, shop, learn and visit.

Working with consultants and key partners, South Somerset District Council has been exploring how it can best invest in Yeovil's future.

Public feedback from the initial consultation work at the launch of the Yeovil Refresh project told us that:

- You'd like to see the main high streets kept clean and better kept with nicer planters and other greenery, while keeping the streets from being too cluttered.
- You'd like to see improvements in vehicular and pedestrian access into the heart of Yeovil for locals and visitors
- There are concerns about some vehicle access to parts of the town centre (in particular on Middle Street)
- You'd like to make the town's open areas more appealing, using the space that is available to encourage visitors.

As a result of this feedback, one of the priority projects set included the creation of a Public Realm Design guide to help shape the look of open spaces in the town centre.

Councillor Peter Gubbins, executive portfolio holder for Yeovil Refresh, said: "By making sure there is a consistent approach to the look of the town centre, we can improve the visual appeal of Yeovil that will help to attract people to come and live, work, shop, learn and visit. The Public Realm Design guide and Shopfront guide will set the standard for what we expect to see with future development and enhancement works, so it's important that we give you, the public, the opportunity to have your say on what the District Council is proposing because after all, this is a town centre that we want everyone to be proud of."

What is the Public Realm Design guide?

The Public Realm Design guide is intended to provide a clear foundation for all future public realm schemes in Yeovil town centre. It will help create a guide for developers to follow when designing public areas. It will be adopted by the council as a Supplementary Planning Document which will add detail to the existing planning policies in the town centre.

Why do we need one?

The public realm design guide has been created through the past year as the wider public realm design project has progressed. It is broken into a number of sections which:

- a. Explores the existing situation

- b. Sets out design parameters
- c. Describe the approach to public art,
- d. Sets a Lighting strategy
- e. Creates a Wayfinding and Signage strategy
- f. Describes the Quality and types of Materials which are required.

What is a Shopfront guide and why do we need one?

A Shopfront guide provides guidance for the designs of new shopfronts as well as for alterations, replacement and restoration of existing shopfronts, both in historic and contemporary settings.

The guide aim to set out basic principles of good shopfront design and to help to create enjoyable and attractive shopping areas in Yeovil. The guide is part of the Public Realm Design Guide so will be a key part of the Supplementary Planning Document.

What are we consulting on?

This consultation is seeking your views on the documents as a formal element of their adoption as planning policy documents.

We are therefore seeking your views on any amendments or additions that you feel should be made to the documents. This should be substantive comments to help inform the final version of the Public Realm Design guide.

We are also happy to receive any general comments on the guide and it's content.

How can you have your say?

You can view both the Public Realm Design guide and Shopfront guide online on our consultation page of our website at www.southsomerset.gov.uk/consult

From this page, you will be able to submit your opinions to help shape the future of the district and in particular, Yeovil town centre.

The consultation for both guides opened on Monday 16 December and will close at 9am on Monday 27 January 2020.