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Midsomer Norton

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MIDSOMER NORTON HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE CASE STUDY

SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENTS

MARCH 2024



INTRODUCTION

Midsomer Norton's High Street Heritage Action Zone (HS HAZ) is a four-year partnership programme between Historic England, B&NES and Midsomer Norton Town Council. Through this programme we have enhanced Midsomer Norton's conservation area to create a more attractive, engaging and vibrant High Street.

This scheme has seen a £3.7m investment in the High Street, with key work strands including:

- Restoration of the Grade II Listed Town Hall and reinstatement of the Market Hall;
- Creation of a Market Square through the 1,000sqm public realm scheme;
- Creation of a shopfront Design Guide for the Town Centre;
- Public Realm improvements to High Street;
- Shopfront Improvement to various properties;
- 3 year Local Cultural Programme.



Midsomer Norton was one of more than 60 high streets across the country that were successful in receiving funding from Historic England. It was awarded £888k as part of Historic England's High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HS HAZ) Programme (2020 - 2024) with additional match funding from Midsomer Norton Town Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) and West of England Combined Authority (WECA).

SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENTS

How we got here

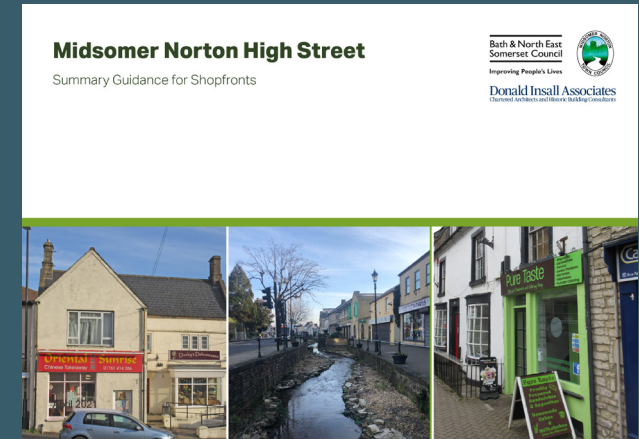
A Conservation Area Appraisal was drafted in May 2017, this highlighted that in Midsomer Norton there are many poorly altered and unsympathetic shopfronts and advertisements. Conservation Architects Donald Insall Associates were commissioned in January 2021 to undertake a survey and audit of commercial premises on the High Street.

Grant Scheme

As part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) funding was available for businesses and shop owners to make improvements to their premises in line with the Design Guidance. This £115k grant scheme worked with local businesses to bring forward 8 improvement schemes of varying sizes, to create best practice examples that might act as a catalyst for further private investment in the future.



Above: 123 High Street after improvements



Shopfront Design Guide

Following the survey and audit of the High Street a Design Guide has been produced. The Design Guide sets out best practice guidance for businesses and shop owners to follow in the creation and restoration of shopfronts and identifies a number of key aspects to support positive decision making in the planning process.

Left: 10 South Road after improvements

11 HIGH STREET | PURE TASTE

One of the businesses interested in the shop front improvement scheme was Pure Taste, located in a prominent position at 11 High Street, a Grade II listed building. The existing plastic fascia was not in keeping with the rest of the Grade II listed building, and the timber cills and window were rotting.



YOU&ME Architecture created a detailed design proposal based on the Shopfront Design Guide, reflecting the building's heritage value and location within Midsomer Norton's conservation area. The audit recommended the replacement of the fascia, a new timber door, and a redesign of the signage to ensure it was of a similar scale to the surrounding businesses. The new design took these suggestions into account, and also replaced the existing window with a multi-paned one, to create uniformity with neighbouring 10 High Street, with which there is a historical connection.

The shop front improvement commenced in early 2024, with completion in March. The completed shop front has an attractive, less



125 HIGH STREET | NISI

Working with the building owner for 125 High Street a further shop front improvement was brought forward. As before, YOU&ME Architecture worked with the owner to develop the new frontage, using the Shopfront Design Guide. Based on this, the design brief suggested replacing the modern door, which dominates the front elevation, with one more sympathetic to the rest of the building, replacing the uPVC rainwater goods, and reinstalling traditional awnings.

The final design included an amended opening arrangement to better reflect the buildings character and historic solid to void ratio, with sensitive signage, masonry and joinery repairs, and new traditional awnings. Improvements to 125 High Street were completed in March 2024.



Above: During construction
Below: Before renovations



High Street, Midsomer Norton.



10 SOUTH ROAD | SOMER PRINTING

Somer Printing (originally known as Fosseway Press) is located on 10 South Road, backing on to Midsomer Norton High Street. Following the success of the façade improvement at 14 South Road, the business expressed interest in undertaking similar Improvements.

The shop front previously had plain walls, an oversized sign, and bulky shutter boxes. Updated concept designs were developed by YOU&ME Architecture with feedback from the business. The design took a traditional, yet artistic approach that incorporated elements of typography and the printing press. Midsomer Norton has long been associated with printing, with the printers Purnell and Sons operating from the town in the 19th century, before going on to being one of the largest printers in the country.

The final design included a painted render with typography motifs, new painted signage and window vinyls. Local signwriter Tozer Signs was enlisted to paint the exterior mural and signage, and the façade was completed in February 2024.



OTHER SCHEMES | BEFORE & AFTER



123 High Street: Before



123 High Street: After



1 High Street: Before



1 High Street: After



2 Somer Place, High Street: Before



2 Somer Place, High Street: After

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SUMMARY



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