

Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme **Application Form**

Commercial Property Name:.....

Commercial Property Address:.....

.....

Contact Name:..... Contact No:

Email:.....

Correspondence Address (if different from above):

.....

Description of Proposed Works:.....

.....

Planning Application Reference (if applicable):.....

S. 5 Declaration of Exempted Development (if applicable):.....

Estimated start date: Estimated completion date:

What is the estimated cost of this project:.....

Maximum grant will be 50% of the ex-VAT cost, up to the maximum amount listed in each category.

You may only choose one category from the list below:

Repair/replace existing shopfront (see Shopfront Design Guidelines) - Maximum Grant €2,000

Painting of a parade of shops - Maximum Grant €800 per property/shop

Paint shop front (may include upper floors) (see Shopfront Design Guidelines) - Maximum Grant €1,500

Replace shutters (see Shopfront Design Guidelines) - Maximum Grant €1,500

Replace plastic/box/neon signs with appropriate signage (see Shopfront Design Guidelines) - Maximum Grant €1,500

Pedestrian access improvements, which in particular support the Age Friendly Initiative - Maximum Grant €1,000

Note: Please provide a detailed breakdown and a written quotation for the total estimated cost of the project with this application.

DECLARATION

I declare that the information provided is true and correct

Name (Block Capitals): Position Held:

Signed:..... Date:

Completed forms, together with supporting documentation should be returned to:

Economic Development, Louth County Council, Town Hall, Crowe Street, Dundalk, Co Louth, A91W20C

Or emailed to: shopfrontgrant@louthcoco.ie

Checklist

Take a few minutes now to complete the checklist below before submitting your application form.

Q. 1) Is your business part of a national / international chain? Y / N

Q. 2) Is your property included on the Derelict Sites Register? Y / N

• **If you have answered yes to questions 1 or 2 above, you will not be eligible for grant funding.**

Q. 3) Do you owe local taxes or charges to Louth County Council? Y / N

If you have answered yes to question 3:

• **You may be eligible for grant funding if you are adhering to a payment plan or pay by direct debit.**

• **If you are not in a payment plan or paying by direct debit you should contact Finance (00353 4293 35457) to discuss your options.**

Q. 4) Do you consent to Louth County Council using the photo(s) provided by you for publicity of the scheme in publications and/or website and social media? Y / N

To qualify for a grant, the commercial property must be in County Louth.

Remember to include the following along with your fully completed application form, as failure to do so will considerably delay processing of your application:

Photographs of the existing shopfront (prior to work being carried out);

A written quotation for the proposed works;

Tax Reference Number of proposed builder/painter/contractor;

If painting - submit your colour scheme (can be marked on a colour chart)

If replacing signage - submit example of proposed new signage

If replacing shopfront - submit drawing of proposed new shopfront

If you are unsure about any issue or have any questions contact: shopfrontgrant@louthcoco.ie

Economic Development,
Louth County Council,
Town Hall, Crowe Street, Dundalk,
Co. Louth, A91 W20C

E: shopfrontgrant@louthcoco.ie

P: 00353 4293 35457

www.louthcoco.ie



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council



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Louth County Council

Economic Development

Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to foster good design practices which respect the character of streetscape in terms of detailing, materials, and finishes. The encouragement of high-quality commercial frontages which use a variety of architectural styles, need not duplicate established architectural approaches but conform to the scale, massing, height, and urban grain of the subject building, contribute to the overall aesthetic, appearance, character, and heritage of the urban environment. When considering changes to the shopfront please refer to: Louth County Council Shopfront Design Guidelines, the Record of Protected Structures, the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) Guidelines, and the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, as varied.

Your Council

for Your
Community



SHOPFRONT IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME GUIDELINES

Eligible Locations

Non-domestic commercial property in County Louth.

Eligibility

1. Grants will only be offered to independent businesses. No grants are available to businesses that are part of national or international chains.
2. Grants will not be offered in respect of works already completed in excess of six months.
3. Grants will not be paid in respect of properties included on the Derelict Sites Register.
4. A claim under the Shopfront Grant initiative may only be made once in every five year period.
5. Maximum Grant is 50% of the ex-VAT cost, up to the maximum amount listed in each category.
6. **Applications may not be considered where there are local taxes or charges due to the Council.**

Guidance

When considering changes to the shopfront please refer to:

- Louth County Council Shopfront Design Guidelines
- Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) Guidelines
- Register of Protected Structures
- Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, as varied

All are available on www.louthcoco.ie

Eligible Works

Eligible works under the scheme may include:

1. Repair and reinstatement of all or any part of a shopfront fixture that is visible from the street, including the first and second floors of premises. We wish to encourage the reinstatement of architectural or historic features that have formed part of the buildings' design and character but may have been lost or damaged over time.
2. Retention of original shopfront and reinstatement of original features will be encouraged. New shopfronts in a traditional style should be based on the Shopfront Design Guidelines and nearby appropriate examples. Modern designs will also be supported: however, these must use high quality materials and be sympathetic to the immediate area.
3. Repainting of shopfronts in suitable colours.
4. Repair and reinstatement of guttering and down-pipes to match historic materials.
5. Repainting and/or re-rendering of prominent elevations in a suitable heritage style.
6. Repair of external stonework and brickwork and replacement of stonework or brickwork which forms part of the stall riser of the shopfront.
7. Pedestrian access improvements, which in particular support the Age Friendly Initiative.
8. Signage. Removal and replacement of neon signs, banners or other inappropriate signage affixed to front elevations (or side elevations visible from the street), and replacement with signage more appropriate to the shopfront design.
9. Replacement of Shutters (see Shopfront Design Guidelines).
10. Should applicants wish to undertake work themselves: a grant will be paid towards material costs only.

Ineligible Works

The scheme will not support:

1. Improvements to residential property (except for external improvements to upper floors of commercial premises carried out in conjunction with shopfront improvements).
2. Retrospective applications i.e. work already completed in excess of six months.
3. Structural repairs including re-roofing.
4. Internal repairs and alterations.
5. External security features, such as CCTV systems or external shutters.
6. Any work which is not in accordance with Planning legislation, ACA Guidelines or Protected Structure Guidelines. Grants will not be paid in respect of properties included on the Derelict Sites Register.

Will I Require Planning Permission?

Virtually all works that alter the exterior of buildings will require Planning Permission. A separate planning application will be required to show the extent of all new work. It takes the Council about two months to decide on a planning application. You will need to incorporate this into your timeline for carrying out your project.

Depending on the type of works you wish to carry out you may need Planning Permission. However,

• If your property is situated in an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), OR

• If your property is listed as a Protected Structure,

you **must** contact the Planning Department for advice and guidance before carrying out any works.

(planning@louthcoco.ie / 00353 4293 35457).

How to Apply for a Grant

1. Applicants should assess their own eligibility (including need for Planning Permission).
2. Applications may be made by the owner of premises or by the lessee with the owner's written consent.
3. Applications should clearly identify each element of the works proposed.
4. The completed Application Form must be accompanied by:
 - Photographs of existing shopfront, prior to work being carried out
 - Sketch of proposed changes (e.g. Drawings of new Shopfront or new Signage)
 - Indication of material type and colour scheme to be used
 - A written quotation for the proposed works from the proposed builder/contractor
 - Tax Reference Number of the proposed builder/contractor (The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the proposed builder/contractor is tax compliant).
5. A site visit may be arranged with the applicant to discuss the application and if necessary request further information.
6. Grants are awarded entirely at the discretion of the Council.
7. If the application is successful, the Council will send a Grant Offer letter, confirming the grant offered in accordance with the Guidelines.
8. Any alterations to design and/or materials must be agreed in advance and recorded on the work schedule. No grant will be paid to any project where changes are made that have not been agreed with the Council.
9. The applicant must inform the Council of any changes to the business or changes of business address and contact details.

Grant Drawdown

1. Payment will only be made following completion of works.
2. Upon completion of works, the applicant must submit evidence of paid contractor invoices, together with photos of the completed shopfront to the Council.
3. An inspection may be undertaken to ensure compliance with the agreed work schedule.
4. If the inspection/works are satisfactory, the Council will then pay the grant to the applicant.
5. The grant must be used for the purpose intended.
6. If a grant is not drawn down within a period of six months from the date of issue of the Grant Offer letter, then funding will be withdrawn, unless a prior agreement has been made.
7. Nothing in the agreement or negotiation of the grant will affect the Council's decision over Planning Permission. The Council accepts **no responsibility** should a business receive a Grant Offer letter or subsequent grant payment, and then be held to account by Planning Enforcement for breach of planning regulations relating to those improvements. In these circumstances any offer of funding will be withdrawn, and applicants will be asked to repay any grant claimed and to comply fully with Planning Enforcement.