



SHOPFRONT GUIDELINES

ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LEISURE

BRISTOL LOCAL PLAN
POLICY ADVICE NOTE 8



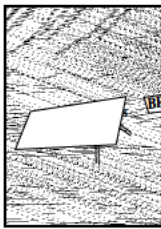
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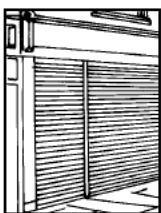
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INTRODUCTION

This Policy Advice Note (PAN) is one of a series of documents which aim to encourage high standards of development and environmental quality in Bristol. It provides supplementary planning guidance for shopowners, shopfitters and designers on how to achieve the principles contained in Policies B10 and B11 of the Bristol Local Plan.

Bristol Local Plan - Key Policies

B10 - Shopfronts that harm the appearance of an area through inappropriate design or the use of unsympathetic security measures will not be permitted. In determining applications account will be taken of the following:

- (i) the scale, proportion and overall design of a shopfront with regard to the building of which it forms a part;*
- (ii) any contribution and visual impact on the surrounding townscape and streetscene;*
- (iii) safe and convenient access for all people including disabled people.*

B11 - The introduction or replacement of illuminated signs will be permitted where:

- (i) the design adopts a scale, detail and siting appropriate to the character and detail of the buildings.*
- (ii) the design or siting does not constitute a traffic hazard.*

Shops are an essential element of the commercial activity of the City and there is constant pressure to update and modify them. High quality design which takes into account issues of accessibility, security and safety can make a significant contribution to the quality of the shopping environment.

A customer's impression of the quality of a shop can be strongly influenced by the appearance of its shopfront. A well designed shopfront is a good advertisement and a valuable asset to a firm seeking to establish a successful retail outlet.

A shopfront performs three functions. It advertises the business's presence and its style and character: It informs the shopper of the goods on sale by means of the window display. It protects the shop and its contents from crime. Consideration of all three functions should be taken early on in the design stage.

Bristol City Council is committed to promoting good design. Forming a new shopfront or altering an existing shopfront to a high standard can also promote business, add value to the property and enhance the character of a local area. The City Council will take a positive view of development proposals which follow the advice set out in these guidelines and assist in the early approval of your planning application.



Applicants are advised to discuss any proposals with the City Council well before starting work or submitting a planning application. Write to Planning, Transport and Development Services and enclose sketches and photographs to illustrate the proposed works. The Council can then clarify whether planning permission is required. All applications will be treated individually on their own merits.

'SHOPFRONT GUIDELINES' is divided into three sections

- SECTION 1. Design Principles
- SECTION 2. Signage and Advertising
- SECTION 3. Security

The guidelines are intended for agents involved in the design process who require detailed advice on shopfront design issues. Leaflets summarising the key items are available for each of the three sections of this document for shopkeepers and others involved in minor alterations to shopfronts.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHOPFRONT DESIGN

Bristol can boast many fine examples of traditional shopfronts. The majority are nineteenth century, but earlier examples from the Georgian period survive, together with more recent examples of the early 20th century.

Georgian Shopfronts

Georgian shopfronts were designed very much within the traditions of classical architecture whose characteristics can be summarised as follows:-

- * classical principles of composition, proportion, detail and decoration applied vigorously;
- * shop windows of simple geometric form, eg bow fronted;
- * glazing in small pane crown glass, increasing in size as the period progressed;
- * shopfront construction generally in timber;
- * provision for external shutters located within the architrave.

The typical classical shopfront consists of a framework with vertical columns or pilasters supporting a horizontal element, known as the entablature.

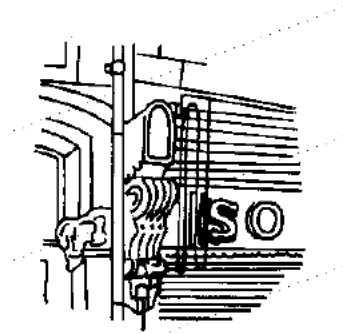
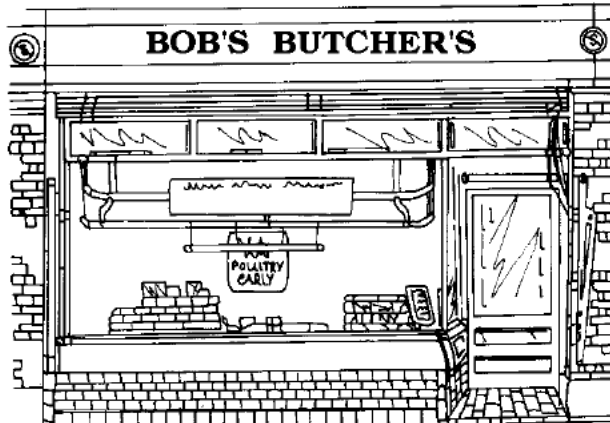


Classical shopfront

Victorian Shopfronts

The majority of traditional shopfronts in the city belong to the Regency (1800 - 1837), or Victorian / Edwardian (1837 - 1914) periods. Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts are generally characterised by invention and variety in progressively changing styles. The basic frame of the shopfront remained similar to that of the classical shopfront, however, the proportions were less influenced by classical rules. The architectural elements were also progressively transformed, often being overlaid with ornament, becoming more decorative in nature.

The biggest transformation occurred to the shop windows as a result of advances in glass manufacturing. From the 1830's onwards cylinder glass and later plate glass gradually replaced Georgian crown glass, allowing larger panes to be used. Early in the period cylinder glass in large panes was used, usually sub-divided by half-round glazing bars. These were framed by mullions of narrow spacing with either square or elliptically arched window heads. This was followed by plate glass in wider, full-height sheets, again with square heads or round arched, then by full window sheets. By the late nineteenth century the shop window had reached its maximum size.



Victorian shopfront

Characteristics of the Victorian/Edwardian shopfronts can be summarised as follows:

- * classical principles being relaxed in favour of influences from other sources;
- * increased width, height and depth of windows;
- * crown glass in small panes being superceded by plate glass in larger sheets;
- * shutters being replaced by roller blind boxes;
- * the use of a greater variety of materials .

Twentieth Century Shopfronts

Many interesting designs for shopfronts were produced in the early part of this century characterised by new materials such as chrome and 'Vitrolite'. Unfortunately, few examples survive in Bristol. More commonly found are examples of 1930's terraces of shops with shopfronts similar to, but often simplified versions of, Victorian or Edwardian shopfronts.

Although these shopfronts belong to this century, the principle of their preservation and enhancement still applies. As with all architectural forms they are significant examples of the evolution of shopfront design.



Early Twentieth century shopfront



Section 1

**DESIGN
PRINCIPLES**



Objective



Altering a shopfront to a high standard can add value to property and enhance the character of a local area

The City Council's policies are aimed at retaining the best features of traditional shopfronts, whether they are inside or outside Conservation Areas, or are part of a Listed Building.

There will be an overall objective of retaining old shopfronts of traditional design where they survive. Any ornamental columns, pilasters, fascias, consoles or other mouldings should be retained, even if the remainder of the shopfront is to be changed. These features should be reinstated where they are missing. Retention and repair of an historic shopfront will normally be less expensive than replacement and will not normally require planning permission.

New shopfronts should respect local character in terms of scale, proportion and materials.

New shopfronts should permit safe and convenient access for all members of the community, in particular disabled people.

The residential use of underused or vacant upper floors over shops will be actively encouraged and the loss of self contained access to upper floors will be resisted. The inclusion of residential use on the upper floors of new retail development will normally be encouraged.



Repairs and Re-instatements

The City Council will seek the retention of traditional shopfronts. Where elements of these have been partially removed, they should be re-instated to match the original features. Consoles, for example, are commonly removed to accommodate wider fascia signs. Quite often the pattern of the removed console can be identified beneath the sign or on neighbouring properties. Neighbouring original shopfronts should be examined for details of elements likely to have been similar to those of the shopfront to be re-instated. This will often give clues to the height of the stallriser, the moulding section of mullions, the pattern of entrance door, cornice mouldings, console pattern, etc.

Where shopfronts have been totally removed from historic buildings, their re-instatement to a modern design may be appropriate. Modern re-instatements should however be sympathetic to the local context and to the building of which the shopfront forms a part.



New Shopfronts

It is recognised that shopfronts change rapidly to suit the fashion of the period. Many Georgian shopfronts, for instance, were replaced in Victorian times. Modern shopfronts therefore have a justifiable place when designed in sympathy with their setting.

For new buildings, a well-designed, modern shopfront, which takes account of the criteria set out in these guidelines, may be more appropriate than a 'reproduction' traditional shopfront. The use of modern materials and methods of construction, together with innovative design solutions, will be encouraged.



Successful modern shopfronts



Context

The perception of a building changes as it is approached. The eye first notices the outline and general character of the street. Then the individual property is picked out and its shape and proportions noted. Finally, the style and details of doors and windows, colours and textures are observed.

With this in mind, shopfront designers should consider the character of the street, the building and its features. Good design provides interest and harmony at each level. National, regional and local multiples may need to modify their corporate identities to suit the building and its surroundings.



The perception of a shopfront changes as the building is approached

Street Context



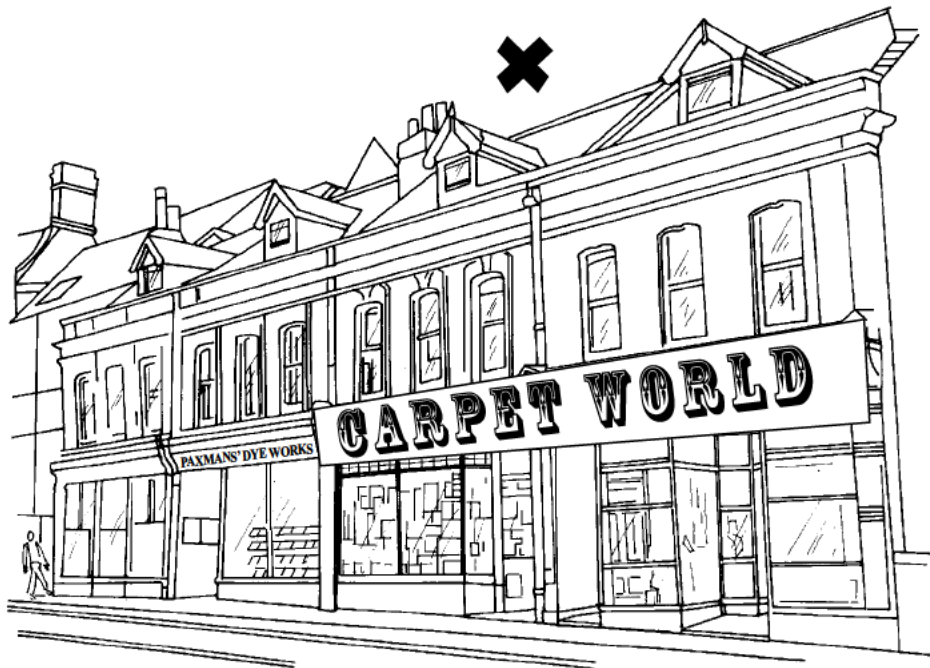
Jim's shop is too prominent in the street and detracts from the more important buildings

Many of Bristol's shops are contained within terraces. The character of a street is derived from the scale and proportion of its component buildings, as well as from their individual style and detailing. The perceived quality of a shopping street can be down-graded by one poorly-designed shopfront.

The division of a terrace into narrower plots is important in establishing the character of many streets, and gives strong vertical proportions. For a building to complement its neighbours this "verticality" should be maintained. Windows

should be taller than their width and original property divisions respected. Shopfront fascias and display windows should not span more than one property, as this upsets the rhythm established by these divisions.

Where streets do not have uniform building heights and equal plot divisions, there is often a "hierarchy" to the component buildings - a variation in scale and proportion, with key buildings gaining prominence in the street. This hierarchy should be respected when altering shopfronts.



Fascias should not span more than one property

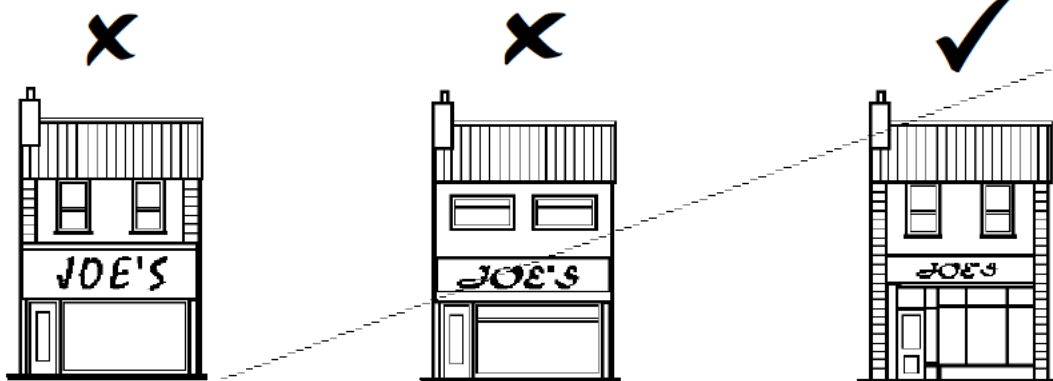
Building Context

A ground floor alteration should never take place without considering its impact on the rest of the building. The shopfront should be seen as an integral part of the building and should respect the scale, proportions, character and materials of the structure above.

A failing of many modern shopfronts is the use of large, undivided windows. Large areas of glazing can give an uncomfortable appearance where the floors above look unsupported. Traditional shopfronts include a strong frame to the display window with a solid surround consisting of pilasters, fascia and stallriser.

This gives a firm base to the building and integrates the shopfront more successfully into the facade. This principle is appropriate for shopfronts in both historic and modern buildings.

The strong vertical proportions of traditional facades can be lost in unsympathetic modern shopfronts. The benefits of a well-balanced shopfront with strong vertical elements are twofold. Firstly, the proportions complement the remaining facade, and secondly, marked vertical emphasis helps slow the eye and hold the potential customers attention.



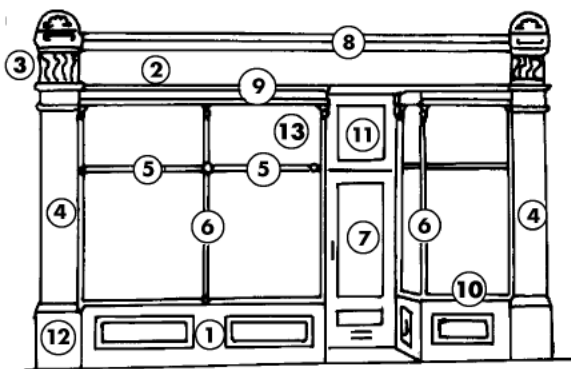
*Lack of framing to shopfront
- upper floor appears to float*

Vertical proportions lost



Design Elements

There is a wide variety in the design, detail, style and appearance of shopfronts. However there are certain features that are common to most. Even in the most modern shopfront it is often possible to identify a stallriser, fascia, and pilasters, and although not in a traditional form, elements that echo consoles, cornices and fanlights. In any design such elements should be compatible in terms of scale, proportion and materials in order to produce a well-balanced shopfront.



- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Stallriser | 7. Entrance |
| 2. Fascia | 8. Cornice |
| 3. Console | 9. Architrave |
| 4. Pilaster | 10. Cill |
| 5. Transom | 11. Fanlight |
| 6. Mullion | 12. Plinth |
| | 13. Transom light |

(1) Stallriser

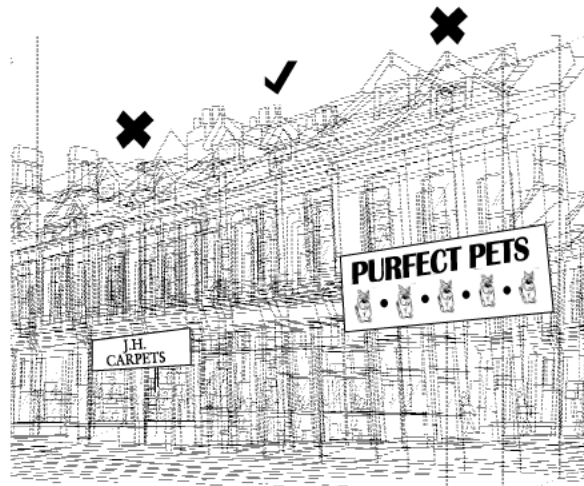
Traditional stallrisers were used to raise the level of the window display, with the height of the stallriser being determined by the nature of goods on display. More recently the stallriser has acquired an additional function as a deterrent against ram-raiding (see Section 2 - Security).

The alternative solution to providing a stallriser is to glaze the shop window to floor level. This has become commonplace in the second half of this century. The purpose of this is to increase the view into the shop and break down the barrier between the inside and outside of the shop. The benefits to shopkeepers of this approach are debatable. Full-height glazing can be satisfactory in internal shopping malls and for well-designed modern shopfronts, but in the majority of cases a stallriser is beneficial to the function and appearance of the shopfront.

(2) Fascia

The primary function of the fascia is to advertise the name of the shop. The fascia also gives visual support to the upper floors and helps frame the shop window. Traditionally, the fascia was an integral part of the facade and never applied to the building as an afterthought. The shallow depth of a traditional fascia corresponded to that of a beam or lintel spanning the glazed opening, integrating the fascia into the facade.

A failing of many modern shopfronts is the application of overlarge and inappropriate fascias, superimposed on the front of originals and obscuring such detailed elements as consoles and cornices.



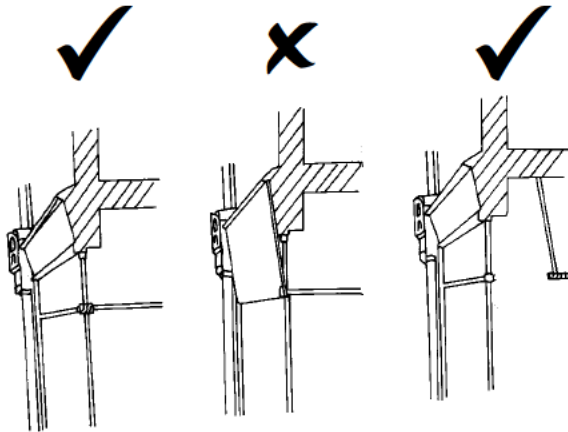
Overlarge fascias

A well-designed fascia should not project beyond the shop face and should not be too deep. As a rule of thumb, a fascia deeper than one fifth of the shopfront height will appear out of proportion. The fascia itself should also be appropriately detailed to avoid exposed edges. Fascias on traditional shopfronts should be framed with a cornice to the top, architrave moulding to the bottom and consoles or return mouldings to the sides. Similarly, a strong frame should be incorporated into modern designs.

The fascia should never be extended above first floor level or encroach on first floor windows. Excessive fascia depth to conceal a suspended



ceiling should be avoided in favour of either stopping the suspended ceiling short of the shopfront or concealing it behind a false, glazed transom light.



Avoid excessive fascia depth for concealed suspended ceilings

(3) *Consoles*

Consoles were introduced during the 19th century to provide a visually pleasing end to the fascia, similar to "bookends". They can be highly decorative and add strongly to the interest of traditional shopfronts. They can also accommodate the projection of a fascia, including canted fascias (ie. angled towards the pavement), and changes in level between adjoining shopfronts. It is strongly recommended that consoles are not removed from historic shopfronts, and where missing are replaced with replicas.

(4) *Pilasters*



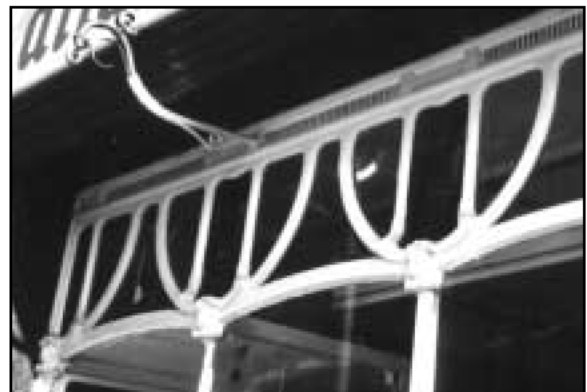
Overlarge fascia obscuring original fascia and spanning pilaster

Pilasters separate adjoining properties and are an important element in framing the shopfront. They can also visually support upper floors. Consoles are traditionally located within the width of the pilaster and help reinforce its presence in a similar manner to a capital above a column. Fascias should never span across pilasters but should be contained between them.

(5) *Transoms*

Traditional shopfronts often contained transoms, or horizontal glazing bars, to allow high-level opening lights for ventilation. Transoms can be introduced to improve window proportions, or to define decorative glazing below the fascia.

A transom can also be used to conceal a suspended ceiling behind a false transom light.



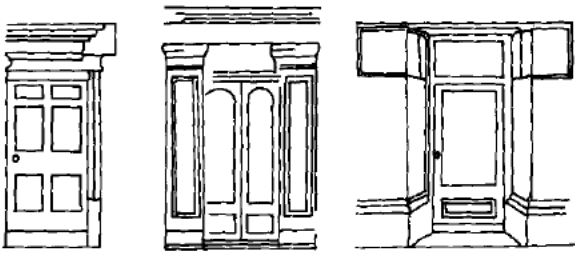
Decorative transom light

(6) *Mullions*

As well as sub-dividing large sheets of glass, which were not available for early shopfronts, mullions provide vertical emphasis to the shopfront. Traditional mullions were not rectangular in section but moulded to appear slender. To combat more recent attacks on shops, reinforced mullions in a shopfront can strengthen the glazed areas and limit the amount of glazing to be replaced following breakage.



(7) Entrances



Georgian

Paired Victorian

Edwardian



Art Nouveau

Modern

Period Entrances

Traditional shop entrances contained decorative elements such as mosaic floors to recessed doorways, panelled soffits, ornate ironmongery and glazed panelled doors.

Concertina type or hinged gates were occasionally used to increase security. Such decorative features should be retained in traditional shopfronts. Entrance doors should be appropriate to the period and style of the shopfront.

(8) Canopies and Blinds

Canopies and blinds can offer shelter and shade to pedestrians but should not detract from the style of the shopfront, the character of the building or the street scene. Existing canvas blinds and blind boxes should be retained and refurbished.

Canopies and blinds, if sensitively designed, can add to the attractiveness of shops. They should fit in with the style of the shopfront and the character of the building when both open and closed

Blinds should give at least 2.50 m clearance above the pavement when open. They should normally cover the whole width of the shopfront but be clear of pilasters and should not be fitted to upper floors. 'Wet-look' or glossy blinds are not acceptable as they appear brash and quickly deteriorate.

Fixed 'Dutch blinds' tend to obscure the shopfront. The materials used such as plastic are often inappropriate, particularly on historic buildings and in conservation areas.



Appropriate blinds



(9) Forecourts

Forecourts containing an attractive display can significantly add to the appearance of a shopfront and the visual interest and vitality of the street. The enclosure of private forecourts in materials which complement the buildings and surroundings can also be acceptable, subject to planning permission and listed building consent where required.

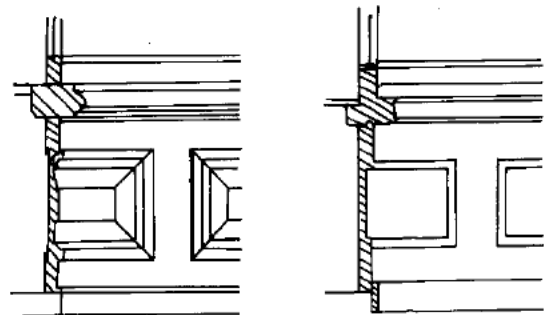
Care should be taken to ensure that the public footpath is not obstructed or encroached upon and paving materials are complementary to adjoining paving. Consideration should be given to accessibility for wheelchairs, prams etc., and obstructions for the partially sighted when siting outdoor items such as tables, advertising boards etc.



Forecourt displays

Materials and Colour

Natural materials should always be used for traditional shopfronts. Timber sections for traditional shopfronts should not be rectangular. Mullions and transoms of tapered, lambs-tongue or rounded section for instance, are preferred. These profiles give more slender proportions and create subtle shadow lines. Moulded cills should be provided beneath the bottom framing members, generally protruding over the stall-riser which may be timber panelled, tiled, rendered or stone, appropriate to the particular shopfront and building in question.



Example of stallriser/cill section

Timber shopfronts were traditionally painted. Stained hardwood is not normally appropriate to a traditional shopfront. Shopfront colours should be appropriate to the style and period of the shopfront design. Dark recessive colours, including black, are often successful for the shopfront elements. They complement the dark appearance of glass and provide a visually solid base to the upper floors of the building. Light coloured shopfronts can create an impression of "floating" upper floors whilst primary colours visually detach the shopfront from the upper floors.

The choice of materials for modern shopfronts is wider but should be carefully colour co-ordinated. Mill finish aluminium and steel are not normally acceptable due to their unfinished appearance.



Accessibility

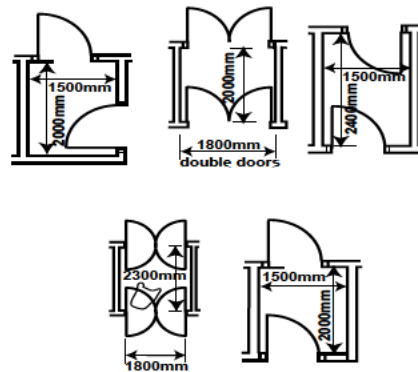
Consideration should be given to the shop so that it is easy for all people to enter it. Shop users include people with disabilities, and also people with pushchairs or prams. Access needs to relate to those who use wheelchairs, blind or partially sighted people, those with rheumatism or arthritis, together with pregnant women and senior citizens.

Access to the shop will be improved if the following criteria are met:

- Access doors should have a clear opening width of at least 900mm.
- Access doors, if fitted with self closing devices, should be easy to open (maximum resistance recommended 12mm).
- Spaces should be provided (min. 300mm) along the opening edge of the door for wheelchair users.
- Features such as bells and door handles should ideally be positioned 900 - 1000 mm above floor level; for ease of use, lever handles are preferred to knob handles.
- Where doors have two leaves it should be possible for a wheelchair, pushchair or pram to enter through one door without having to open both doors. Two-way swing doors are useful for those who find it difficult to pull a door towards them. Revolving doors should be avoided.
- automatic doors are provided.

The provision of a lobby in front of the entrance door may be considered. This could accommodate a ramped change in level, provide shelter from rain and increase access space if the pavement is narrow.

- Lobbies, should be designed to enable easy access for wheelchair users.
- Where possible level access should be incorporated. Steps should be avoided in favour of ramps (maximum gradient of 1:12.), with landings where possible.
- Frameless glass doors, and doors with large areas of glass are dangerous, as partially-sighted people and children may not see them. The entrance should be substantially framed or made clearly visible in accordance with Building Regulations, Part N2. Conversely, glass visibility panels should be fitted to solid entrance doors, positioned so that children and people in wheelchairs as well as other adults can see into the shop.
- Non-slip materials should be used for surfacing in front of the entrance door.
- Security can be improved by lighting lobbies or fitting appropriate gates flush with the shopfront.



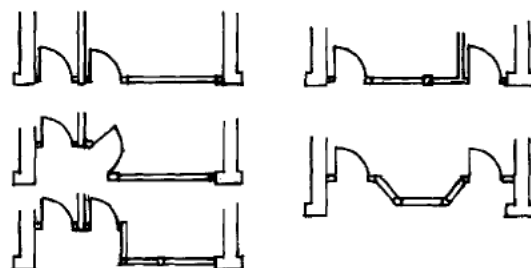
satisfactory lobby arrangements for wheelchair users

Further guidance on access arrangements is contained in the City Council approved 'Pedestrian Policy for the Avon Area (1995)'.

Access to Upper Floors

The City Council encourages the use of upper floors above shops for residential use. For reasons of security and safety entrance doors should ideally give access to the street, in preference to the rear of a property, where there is less opportunity for surveillance. Entrance doors to upper floors will therefore be encouraged provided they are integrated into the design of the shopfront.

Where an existing doorway in a traditional shopfront provides access to separate accommodation on an upper floor, it should be retained. Doors are usually located as shown below in traditional shopfronts. New access doors to historic properties should be in keeping with the existing features of the shopfront.



Alternative entrance arrangements



Checklist

- *consider the shopfront in the setting of the street*
 - *do not disrupt the rhythm of the terrace divisions, e.g. by spanning fascias across more than one property or removing pilasters at party walls*
 - *maintain the scale and proportions appropriate to the terrace.*
- *consider the shopfront as an integral part of the building*
 - *'frame' the shopfront window to create a surround to visually support the upper floors*
 - *subdivide glazing to create vertical emphasis in proportion to the upper floor windows*
- *consider the relationship of all construction elements (pilasters, fascia, stallrisers, etc) in the composition of the design*
 - *provide a stallriser to raise display of goods and improve security against ram-raiding*
 - *do not project the fascia beyond the shopface*
 - *avoid overlarge fascias (more than one fifth the height of the shopfront is excessive)*
 - *do not extend fascias above first floor level*
 - *avoid plastic box fascias*
 - *retain pilasters to visually support the upper floor and frame the shop window*
 - *use transoms and mullions to subdivide large sheets of glass*
 - *use entrance doors appropriate to the style of the shopfronts*
- *for new buildings, modern shopfronts are more appropriate than reproduction traditional shopfronts*
- *for historic buildings, where no evidence of the original shopfront can be found, modern reinstatement can be considered*
 - *reinstate/retain and avoid altering traditional shopfronts*
 - *pay careful attention to details of construction*
 - *avoid rectangular section mullions or transoms in favour of rounded, lamb's tongue, or tapered sections*
 - *use elements such as consoles, architraves and cills to give three dimensional modelling to the shopfront*
 - *avoid primary colours in favour of dark, recessive colours*
 - *avoid mill finish metal shopfront elements*
 - *provide/retain traditional canvas blinds in preference to 'fixed', 'wet look' or glossy blinds*
 - *avoid rear entrances to living accommodation above shops where surveillance is a problem*
 - *integrate entrance doors to upper floors within the overall shopfront design*
 - *provide easy access to the shop for people with disabilities, senior citizens, pregnant women, people with prams etc.*
 - *avoid revolving doors and doors with 2 narrow leaves*
 - *avoid steps and steep ramps and lobbies too small for wheelchair manoeuvring*







Section 2

**SIGNAGE &
ADVERTISING**

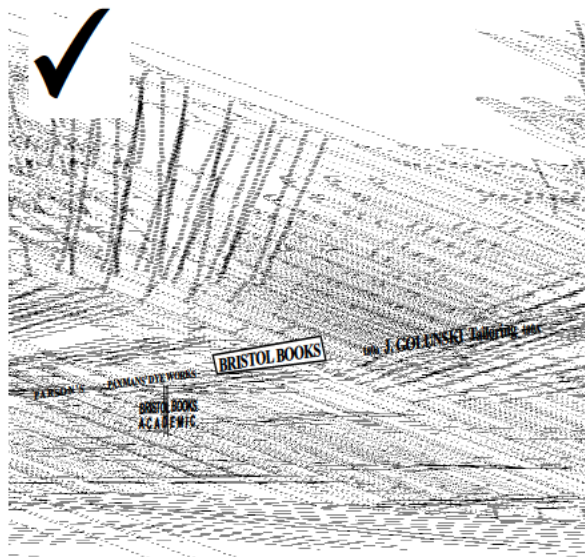
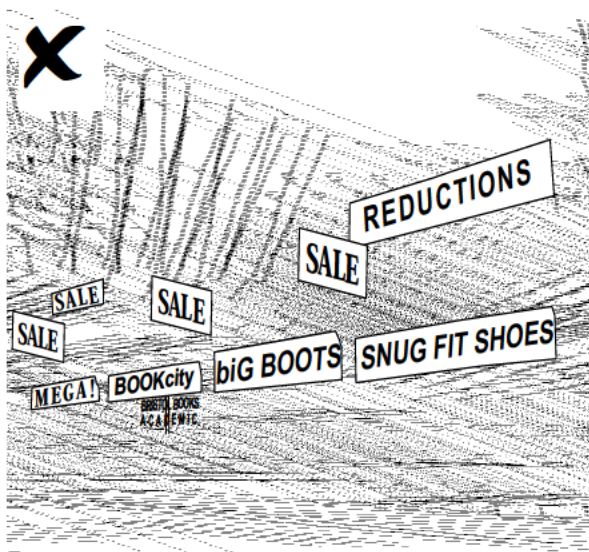




Objective

Shop signs or projecting signs should be of a suitable size, use appropriate methods of illumination and be located within the traditional fascia area.

Advertising should be restricted to that necessary to identify the name and service of the shop and should be sensitively integrated into the overall shopfront design.



Signage

Planning consent and listed building consent may be required for advertising and signage.

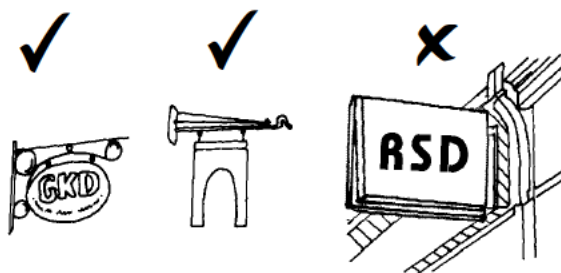
Fascias should only advertise the name and nature of the business and goods on sale. Further advertising is likely to appear excessive. Only one fascia, together with one projecting sign, should be provided above each shop window. For corner shops, with shop windows to two streets, two fascias and two signs are acceptable.

Consent will not normally be granted for new fascia boards that exceed the space traditionally used for this element. Where an overlarge fascia or sign exists in a shopfront, requiring alteration or reinstatement, the City Council will encourage its removal and replacement by a fascia appropriate to the building.

Fascia signs above first floor cill level will be strongly resisted except for certain historic buildings with original fascias at upper levels.

For larger stores, a larger scale of signage may be appropriate. Flagpoles may also be considered. These elements should be carefully co-ordinated to complement the building and its setting.

New fascia boards should not project beyond the original facade. Modern factory produced fascias of plastic, acrylic or similar materials, often internally illuminated, are out of place on buildings of traditional design. These fascias will only usually be acceptable on modern buildings. Here they must be appropriately integrated into the overall shopfront design, and of an appropriate size.



Projecting signs



Well-designed signs can enhance the appearance of the shopfront and add interest to the scene and will generally be encouraged. Projecting signs are acceptable if they are of the traditional hanging style with a modern design and meet the following criteria.

- They should be small and neat and constructed of materials which complement the shopfront eg. wrought iron, stove enamelled metal sheets or painted.
- There should be no more than one projecting sign for each shopfront.
- They should generally be in line with the fascia panel positioned centrally on a pilaster and not positioned above fascia level.
- The maximum size should be approximately 600mm high and 400mm wide.

The bulky type, commonly used in modern shopfronts, and formed by a box steel casing with illuminated acrylic panels, downgrades the appearance of a shopfront and is not recommended. Contemporary solutions to shopfront signage will not be discouraged.

Lettering

Lettering and decorative signs can be added to the inside of the shop window and can appear attractive if well designed. This is recommended for traditional buildings without fascias and where projecting signs would appear intrusive. Traditional gold-leaf lettering edged in black, or black and white lettering in scale with the shop are usually acceptable. Positioning and style should be carefully considered.

Lettering on fascias to traditional shopfronts was originally hand painted onto the painted fascia. This method is strongly encouraged. Individual 'cut out' letters made of wood, cast aluminium, bronze or brass can also appear attractive. The degree of projection should be carefully considered.

Lettering should be in scale with the fascia and should be carefully positioned within the fascia to appear well-balanced. Lettering which is too big or spaced-out will be difficult to read at a glance. The type face chosen for the lettering should be appropriate to the style of the shopfront.



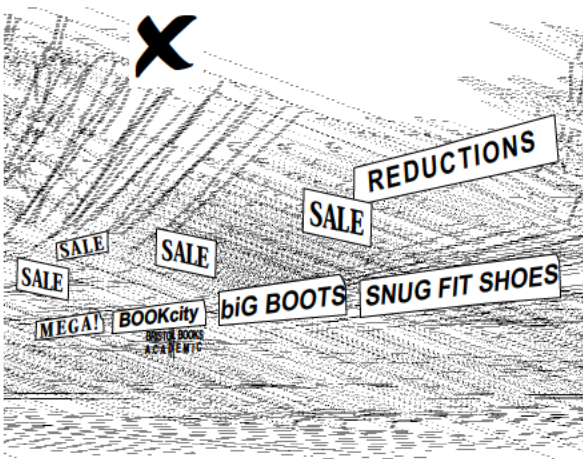
Lettering of sympathetic scale



Advertising

The appearance of a building or street can be spoilt by poorly-designed, excessive or insensitively placed signage or advertising. Outdoor advertisements are often added to a building as an afterthought rather than being integrated into a comprehensive design solution.

It is helpful to consider shop advertising as two types - 'informative' and 'promotional'. Informative advertising includes such items as the firm's name, the street number of the shop and the nature of the business. This is necessary information for the shopper and can be accommodated within a single fascia without the need for additional signage.



Over intensive advertising

Promotional advertising includes over-intense use of signs which are bigger and brighter than their neighbours, posters and stickers. Too many signs on buildings bring confusion and clutter to a street and downgrade its image. Such advertising will be strongly discouraged by the City Council. Designers should be prepared to compromise on matters of corporate image in sensitive areas.

Forecourt advertising should not be excessive or cause obstruction. Illuminated advertising will be strongly resisted.

Canopies and blinds should not carry any form of advertising apart from the name of the business, the name or logo for which should be discreet and co-ordinated with the shopfront.

Illumination

On traditional buildings, internally-illuminated fascias and projecting box signs will be strongly resisted. They are out of character with historic buildings.

Where illumination is required the following methods are recommended:

1. Indirect, external illumination by maximum of two or three hooded spotlights or concealed fluorescent tube lights discreetly sited and fixed to the fascia and not the building
2. Internally illuminated letters with opaque sides
3. Internally illuminated box fascias with a non reflective opaque background which permits only the letters to be illuminated. Such fascias in traditional shopfronts should not project further forward than the original fascia
4. Halo lighting where the light source is concealed behind the lettering which stand proud of the fascia. Light is shone back onto the fascia creating a 'halo' effect around each letter
5. Trough lighting concealed within the moulded frame above the fascia



Checklist

- *avoid overlarge fascias*
- *do not project fascias beyond the original*
- *avoid modern plastic fascias*
- *do not apply fascias at upper floor levels*
- *projecting signs of traditional or modern design are encouraged:*
 - *they should be small, neat, and in materials appropriate to the shopfront*
 - *they should generally run in line with the fascia panel*
 - *they should give 2.5m min. clearance to the footpath*
- *projecting signs of plastic, boxed construction and/or with internal illumination should be avoided*
- *lettering on fascias should be hand painted or individually cut-out, projecting no more than 50mm beyond fascia*
- *avoid lettering over 350mm high*
- *avoid advertising with signage, posters and stickers*
- *avoid internally illuminated fascias and projecting box signs*



Section 3

SECURITY





Objective

Security measures for shops should be designed so that they do not harm the appearance of an area or buildings.

Whilst shopfronts are designed to attract customers, it has become apparent that they need to be protected against vandalism, ram raiding, and smash-and-grab thefts. Many products have been developed, such as metal shutters, grilles, laminated glass, security cameras and removable bollards, in an attempt to protect shops against such crimes, but their unsympathetic use and installation can lead to a downgrading of the visual quality of shopping streets.

The City Council is keen to ensure that the use of security measures does not detract from the appearance of individual shops and shopping parades. It is important to consider the appearance of shopfronts both during shopping hours and after dark when shop lighting and displays contribute to the vitality of shopping areas, provide additional street illumination and encourage people into the city centre.



Comment by Sergeant Tony Powell,
Avon and Somerset Constabulary
Headquarters:-

"This guide to shopfront contains information which, if followed, can effectively reduce the opportunity for crime whilst maintaining an aesthetically pleasing appearance.

Many retailers are very concerned about ram-raids. However research shows that 90% of burglaries against shops are carried out by more traditional methods involving insecure windows or rear doors.

There is no need to have a 'Fortress Mentality' and shutters are not the only option. Stallrisers, for example, provide a high level of security whilst preserving the appearance of the shop.

Effective partnerships between the police, local authorities, planners and architects can prove successful in reducing crime".

ABI

Comment by Adrian Forber, Association
of British Insurers:

"Insurance companies sometimes require policy holders to install security devices to make the premises acceptable for insurance. Companies usually propose a package of measures that need to be implemented, which may well include electronic security, and improved locks in addition to enhanced protection of shop frontages. It is very rare for an insurance company to actually insist upon the fitting of a solid roller shutter to a shop frontage. According to the Association of British Insurers, less than 4% of solid external roller shutters have been installed on the insistence of insurance companies. When a policy holder is asked to install improved security, insurance companies will always be prepared to take account of Local Authority requirements. The Association encourages the retailer, his/her insurance company and the Planning Department to liaise closely. In the end, the Association believes that it is important to reach a mutually acceptable solution which provides the policy holder with the level of security commensurate with their risk, which does not have a detrimental affect on the local environment".

This guidance has been endorsed by the Avon and Somerset Constabulary and produced in consultation with the Association of British Insurers



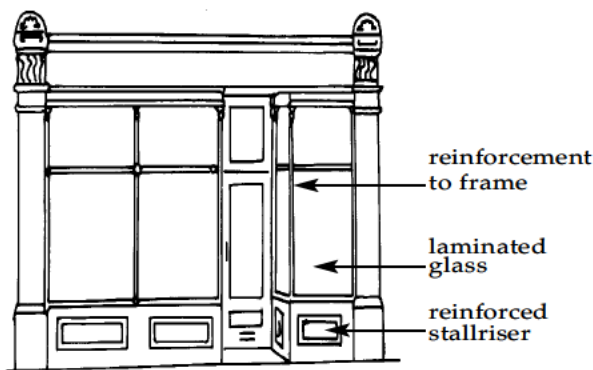
Traditional Shopfronts

In the past, shopfronts incorporated a solid element below the shop window known as a stallriser, the depth of which was determined by the type of goods on display.

In modern shopfronts this stallriser is often omitted in preference to full-height glazing, to allow a greater view into the shop interior.

The retention of stallrisers in traditional shopfronts, and their incorporation into new shopfronts, is strongly recommended for security reasons. As well as providing a visual deterrent to ram-raiding, they can be reinforced with masonry or steel construction behind a panelled front to give a greater resistance than shutters.

Shopfronts incorporating stallrisers are much less likely to be attacked by ram-raiding than those without stallrisers.



Security measures for traditional shopfronts

Glazing

The choice of glazing material and the method of window sub-division can play an important role in increasing the security of a shopfront against vandalism, ram-raiding and theft.

By sub-dividing large glazed areas with mullions and transoms, appropriate to the style of the shopfront, steel reinforced members can be introduced to strengthen the shopfront. The cost of replacement glass in such a design will be reduced

where panes have not been smashed in an attack. If breakage should occur, the cost of replacement glass will be reduced.

There is only one type of glass suitable for security purposes - laminated glass. Toughened glass is often used but is only effective as a safety glass and is not recommended for security purposes. Though there are extremely tough polycarbonate materials available, they are prone to scratching and are not considered acceptable for shopfronts. Laminated glass is recommended, particularly where its use is advertised to increase its deterrent value to a thief. If it is broken it will only crack or craze around the point of impact, the remainder of the window stays intact. Toughened glass, although 5 times stronger than ordinary glass, will shatter into thousands of small fragments, which are far safer than the jagged pieces of glass created when float glass is shattered. As the whole window tends to fragment, this makes it easier and safer for a thief to enter. Another drawback of toughened glass is that it has to be cut to the exact size before toughening so, unlike laminated glass, it cannot be cut on site.

Laminated glass gains its strength from two or more sheets of glass being bonded together using a special plastic inter-layer called PVB. The thicker the laminated glass the stronger it is. In normal circumstances three thicknesses are recommended for shopfronts 7.5 mm, 10.5 mm and 11.5 mm. Anti-bandit laminated glass, from 7.5 mm up, will normally resist a ram raid if properly fitted within a secure frame. It still may not stop the well-equipped and determined criminal but the time taken, and the noise involved, will deter most burglars. Care has to be taken that the fittings and frame holding the glass in place also provide a similar degree of resistance.

The material cost for 7.5mm laminated glass is roughly half the cost of a solid shutter, though allowance must be made for fitting costs.



Shutters/Grilles - General Principles

By combining the benefits of laminated glass with a stallriser, the provision of a security shutter or grille becomes less necessary. However, if the additional security provided by a shutter or grille is considered essential, then sensitive design can help relieve its visual impact. It is important that the shutter does not cover the whole of the shopfront, only glazed areas, and that it is integrated into the framework of the shopfront ie., the fascia, pilaster and cill. The shutter or grille should be painted or finished in a manner which complements the rest of the shopfront. The shutter guides or runners should be installed as discreetly as possible, and carefully located and colour co-ordinated with the shopfront.

Traditional timber shutters and grilles fitted to historic buildings should be retained, and not removed or replaced with modern substitutes.

The shutter box housing should be considered as an integral part of the fascia. It will look unsightly if it projects forward of the fascia.

The choice of shutter or grille will depend on a number of factors including the effect on the appearance of the shopfront. As a general rule, a type should be chosen which is as transparent as possible. This not only allows the shop display to remain visible at night, but with good lighting inside the shop, allows surveillance of the interior by police or public passing outside. Theft can take place behind a solid shutter

Internal shutters, preferably the open lattice grille type, are the most discreet solution. Locating these grilles behind the shop window display, with the option of displaying replica goods, further reduces their impact. Internal shutters may require planning permission, and listed building consent is necessary for installation to a listed building.

The City Council recommendations for shutters are as follows:

Listed Buildings

Security measures should be in the form of reinforced stallrisers and laminated glass shop windows. External shutters of any type are not suitable for listed buildings. Open lattice type shutters, well set back behind the shop window, may be acceptable if they can be accommodated without detriment to the internal character of the shop.

Conservation Areas

External shutters have a detrimental effect on the character of conservation areas. Security measures as those for listed buildings are appropriate. Where there is the need for shutters they should either be of the open lattice or demountable grille type and should preferably be internal. Shutter housings should not project beyond fascias.

Other Areas

For shopfronts to historic buildings and shopfronts in historic streets security measures as those for conservation areas apply. For other areas internal shutters are the preferred option. Where external shutters are necessary they should be of an open lattice or demountable type. Shutter housings should not project beyond fascias.



External Shutters and Grilles

External shutters and grilles provide protection to the shop window, the extent of which depends upon the design. All types require planning permission, and where relevant, listed building consent.

Demountable grilles are a traditional method of providing an external mesh protection to shop windows. Installation usually involves fixing brackets or tracks to the shopfront to which the grille is hung or padlocked. The grille is usually a relatively lightweight structure that causes minimal visual impact on the shopfront. If a decorative grille is used there is an opportunity for creative design to provide enhancement. The advantages of visible window display and surveillance clearly apply. The grille does however require some manhandling and storage space during the day.

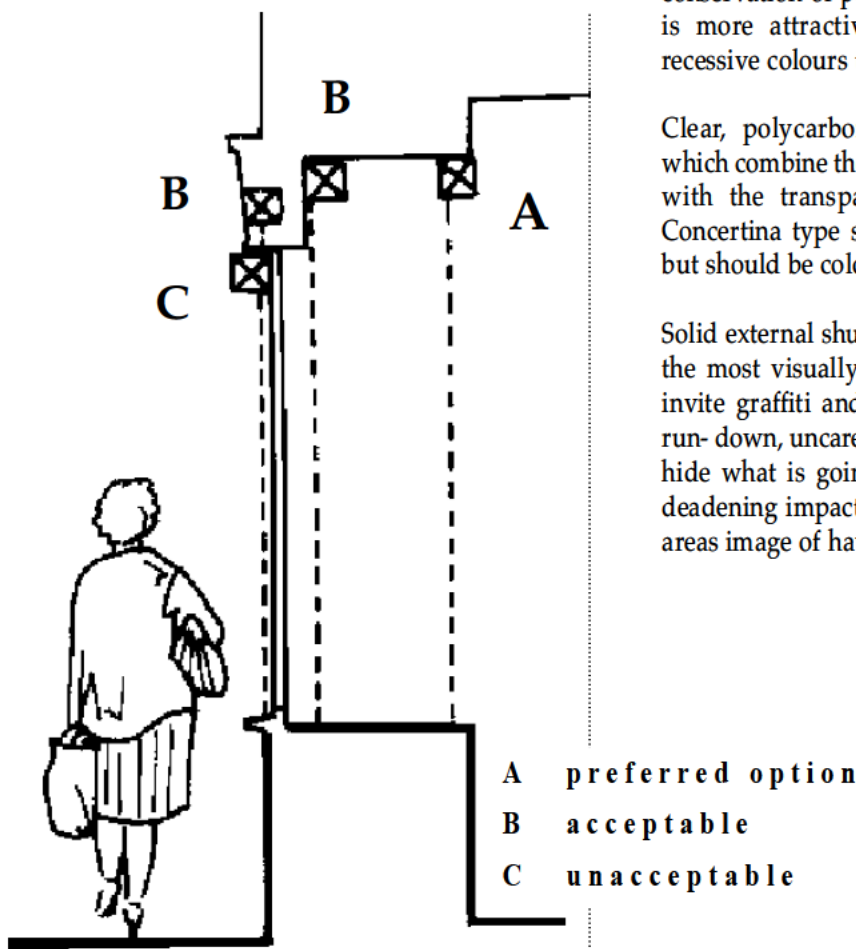
Open lattice type grilles allow a similar transparency to the shop window as demountable grilles and, are therefore preferable to more solid shutters. They are however prone to vandal attack, especially if taken down to ground level. Glazed versions of this type of grille are now available which are less prone to vandalism.

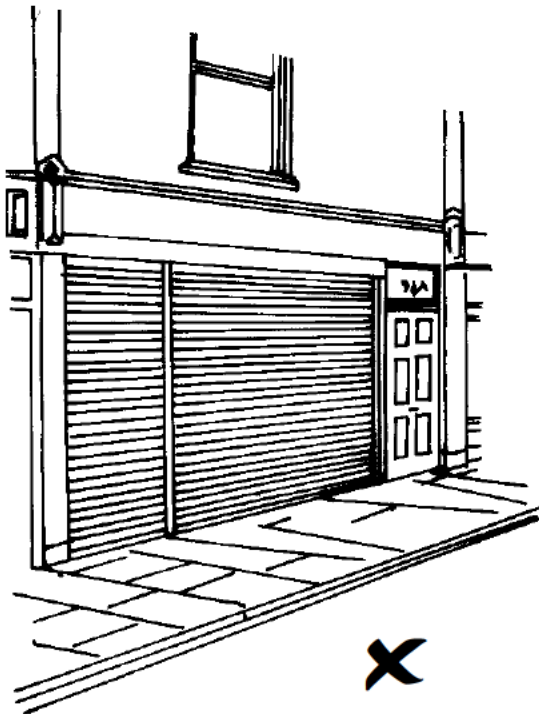
Colour co-ordination with the shopfront together with a well lit shop interior will greatly enhance their appearance.

Perforated shutters are essentially solid screens that permit a limited night-time view of the shop interior provided it is illuminated to a high lighting level. However, adequate transparency is rarely achieved in practice. Lighting should be low-energy for conservation of power. A co-ordinated colour finish is more attractive than mill-finish metal. Dark, recessive colours tend to be less intrusive.

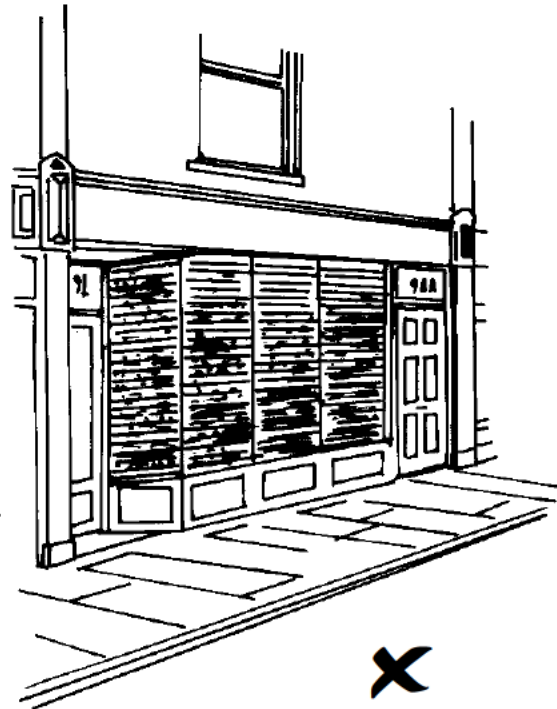
Clear, polycarbonate shutters are now available which combine the security benefits of a solid shutter with the transparency of an open, lattice type. Concertina type shutters also fulfill these functions but should be colour co-ordinated.

Solid external shutters of metal lath construction are the most visually offensive type of shutters. They invite graffiti and flyposting which give an area a run-down, uncared-for appearance. Being solid they hide what is going on inside the shop and have a deadening impact on the street scene, adding to the areas image of having a high crime level.

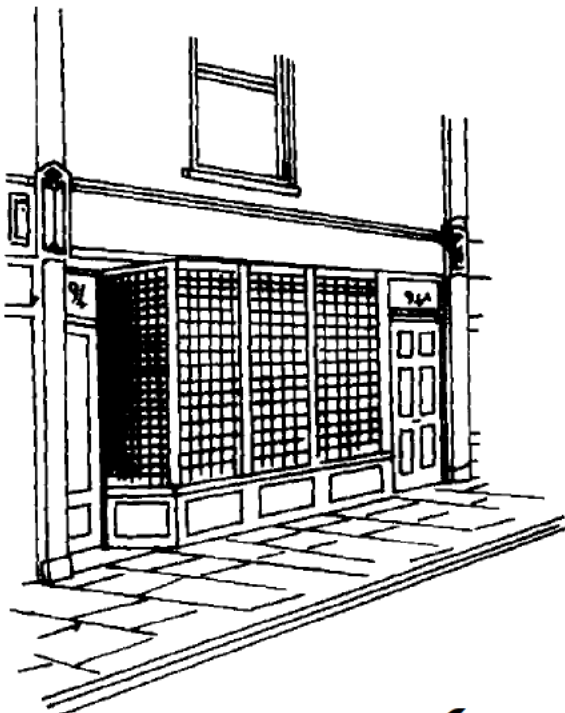




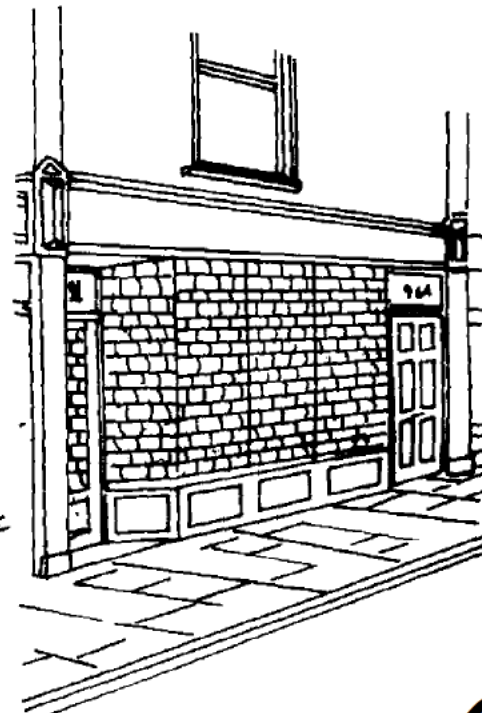
Solid external shutter



Perforated shutter



Demountable grille



Open 'brick-course type grille



Bollards

The installation of bollards can provide an effective, but often unsightly, measure against ram-raiding, whether positioned at the kerb edge or at the back of the pavement, close to the shopfront. In many cases, however, this is not a satisfactory solution. Bollards along the kerb edge need to be spaced a maximum of 1.4m apart to exclude cars. As well as adding to the visual clutter of the streetscape they may cause obstruction to pedestrians, especially those who are partially sighted or disabled and people with pushchairs. The position of underground services will also need to be considered. This approach may be appropriate in a co-ordinated overall street enhancement scheme where the installation of bollards or other street furniture such as seating, planters cycle stands or trees can be designed to take account of ram raiding in conjunction with Highway requirements. The provision of bollards on adopted footpaths will require permission from highway authority.

Bollards located close to the shopfront detract from its appearance and can also cause obstruction unless set back from the pavement. Planning and listed building consent where appropriate may be required for their installation. Removable or drop down bollards may provide a satisfactory solution to ram raiding if carefully co-ordinated with the design of the shopfront. They should be easily operated so as not to encourage erection during shop opening hours.



Discrete security bollard

Electronic Security Devices and Lighting

The use of security devices such as closed circuit TV, alarm systems and security lighting can greatly reduce crime against shops and, in some cases, negate the need for security shutters. They will generally be encouraged by the City Council provided that the appearance of the shopfront is not adversely affected.

Alarm systems can be operated by contact, infra-red or movement activated devices. The positioning of alarm boxes should be considered in the context of the shopfront design, and should be sited so as not to obscure or damage architectural features, preferably at one end of the fascia, nor be within easy reach of thieves. They should be painted to co-ordinate with the colour of the shopfront. The police strongly advise that all alarm systems comply with BS4737. This advises that alarm sounders should cut out automatically after 20 minutes and be fitted with a strobe light.

Listed building consent will be required for alarm boxes and security lighting on listed buildings.

Shop display windows which are well lit at night contribute to street lighting and help deter crime. Low energy lighting should be used to conserve energy.

Recessed doorways should be illuminated by lighting in lobbies to deter crime.



Checklist

- *choose security measures which do not detract from the appearance of the shopfront by day or by night*
- *retain /provide a stallriser to deter ram raiding*
- *use laminated glass (but never toughened glass) to avoid smash and grab attacks*
- *subdivide glazing with mullions and transoms to reduce the cost of replacement glass*
- *do not position shutters box housing in front of the fascia*
- *Avoid solid shutters in preference to open lattice types positioned well behind the glass*
- *avoid mill-finish shutters and grilles in preference to a dark or colour co-ordinated finish*
- *avoid bollards in front of the shopfront unless well set back from the pavement*
- *alarm boxes should be colour co-ordinated and positioned at one end of the fascia*
- *provide low energy, illumination within the shop for night time security*





Planning permission, listed building consent and building regulations approval are likely to be required for alteration to shopfronts and new shopfronts.

This guidance is intended to help you gain planning permission for such works. Grants may also be available for traditional shopfront re-instatements. Planning Officers can give further advice if you make an appointment with them. It is advisable to consider using an architect or agent who is competent in this work in order to achieve good design and to provide suitable drawings and other information to go with your application.

Planning Officers can be contacted through our Reception Staff, preferably by writing or telephoning to make an appointment. An appointment will ensure that Planning Officers can make time to see you and maximise the benefit of your visit. The address is:

Planning Reception
Department of Environment, Transport and Leisure
Brunel House
St. George's Road
Bristol BS1 5UY. Tel: (0117) 922 3774

For information relating to different methods of security to shops from an insurance point of view, contact:

Association of British Insurers
Transom House
Victoria Street
Bristol BS1 6AH Tel: (0117) 929 7478

Police advice on all aspects of commercial security is available from your local Crime Prevention /Community Affairs Office. For design advice on new and refurbished shopfronts, contact:

Architectural Liaison Officer
Avon & Somerset Constabulary
Police Headquarters
P.O. Box 37
Valley Road
Portishead
Bristol BS20 8QJ Tel: (0117) 945 5340

Information on laminated glass is available from:

Laminated Glass Information Centre
299 Oxford Street
London W1R 1LA Tel. 0171 499 1720

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