SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDELINES

CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT
BY WEST MIDLANDS POLICE 3

1 THE NEED FOR PERMISSION 5

2 THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD SHOPFRONT DESIGN 9
   - Retaining, Restoring and Re-using older shopfronts 10
   - Replacement of shopfronts 10

3 DETAILS OF GOOD SHOPFRONT DESIGN 12
   - Fascia 13
   - Cornice 14
   - Stallriser 14
   - Shop Window 14
   - Entrance Door 15
   - Pilaster 16
   - Materials and colour 16

4 SHOP SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS 18
   - Fascia signs 19
   - Lettering 19
   - Internally Illuminated Fascias 20
   - Externally Illuminated Fascias 20
   - Projecting signs 20
   - Hanging signs 21
   - Cable Runs 22
   - Projecting Cantilevered Canopies 22

5 SECURITY SHUTTERS 23
   - Roller Shutter Policy 23
   - Ram Raiding 27
6 OTHER SHOPFRONT ELEMENTS
- Blinds and Canopies
- Upper Floors
- Lettering on buildings
- Access for all
- Footway display
- Ventilation
- Clocks, plaques, etc
- Burglar and Fire alarms
- Open Fronted shopfronts
- Window Display
- Glazing
- Shops on corner sites
- Change of Use
- Maintenance
- Empty shops
- Serving hatches

7 USEFUL CONTACTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced at a time of growing concern over the quality of shopfront design in the City Centre and suburban shopping areas. With increasing competition from highly accessible out-of-town shopping centres, it is becoming more and more important that our traditional shopping centres should be welcoming and attractive and project an image of quality and friendliness. Traditional shopping streets contain a greater variety of speciality shops as well as buildings of architectural and historic interest, they offer much more than shopping malls and out of town centres. An emphasis on good quality design, including the design of shopfronts and advertisements, is necessary to encourage investment and spending and which will bring reward which will ultimately benefit all traders.

These guidelines set out the principles of good shopfront design. They recognise accepts that companies do invest considerable sums to promote their own corporate images; however they also ask that retailers recognise that the City Council is also investing in the quality of the environment and is concerned to improve the image of the City Centre and other local shopping areas.

These guidelines will help both the City Council, retailers and designers in establishing the ground rules for the design of shop fronts and advertisements. They will help save time and avoid misunderstanding and will help to improve the attractiveness of the shopping environment.

The guidelines have the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance and have been the subject of extensive consultation with commercial, amenity and community groups and the West Midlands Police. The guidelines were approved by the Planning Committee on 25 May 1995.

The principles of good shopfront design are set out within this document and are intended to act as guidance for retailers, designers, and shopfitters with the aim of improving the environmental quality of traditional shopping streets. In this context, a 'traditional shopping street' may normally be defined as a shop or group of shops, facing directly onto a public street, as opposed to shops which face onto a privately controlled area within a shopping complex.

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for design guidance throughout the City. It is not intended to inhibit imaginative, sensitive or modern design.
Statement by West Midland Police

The West Midlands Police were invited to comment on the contents of this document. Their response commended the document on its excellence, and in terms of the use of shop front security stated:-

“the West Midlands Police deplore the use of solid roller shutters in an ordinary retail environment. Quite apart from the important issues of aesthetics and appropriateness to the risk involved, solid shutters are a target for graffiti, noise pollution when hit or otherwise abused by anti-social elements, and they create an environment which the majority of ordinary, law-abiding people perceive as oppressive and unsafe, when the shops are closed. This is partly because natural surveillance is impaired when no light from inside the shop can fall on the pavement outside. Moreover, if burglars do still manage to break in, the shutters act as a cover for their activities - an important point to be stressed when advising storekeepers of their inadvisability”...

“the police prefer the open style of shutters/grills to be used.”

“the West Midlands Police concur with the guide’s preference for laminated glass ....” We never approve of the use of ordinary toughened glass. This material is a burglar’s best friend because it breaks easily, especially when a centre punch is used, and it leaves no sharp edges.

Laminated glass also has a value in making ram-raiding much more difficult to successfully expedite, although because it demonstrates no visibly obvious difference from ordinary glass, its preventative value is somewhat limited. Once again we agree with the guide that stallrisers can have a considerable deterrent value in preventing ram-raiding. Ground to ceiling windows using toughened safety glass are most vulnerable to this form of attack”.
1. THE NEED FOR PERMISSION

In this document, "shop" is defined as all street-level premises having a fascia sign and/or a display window, and includes non-retail premises such as betting offices, restaurants, take-aways, amusement centres, estate agents, building societies, some banks, and other businesses in a shopping area.

The erection of a new shopfront or significant alteration of an existing shopfront, including installation of temporary site hoardings, requires planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Routine maintenance works, such as redecoration or straightforward repairs do not require planning permission.

Signs may often form part of the shopfront and in certain circumstances they require a separate application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. This is the case, for example, if signs are illuminated, or they are above the level of the bottom of any first floor windows, or they are greater than a certain area.

The demolition, alteration or removal of any shopfront within a conservation area requires prior consent under Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in such areas special attention is given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing older shopfronts.

Alterations to a Listed Building requires Listed Building Consent under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Any such alterations, including quite minor ones, will need to be consistent with the age and style of the building.

CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE IS RECOMMENDED PRIOR TO FORMAL SUBMISSION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION.

The Council may take Enforcement Action against alterations or work carried out without planning permission, where such permission is needed, and where works are detrimental to the visual amenities of an area, or the character or appearance of a building. This may involve the removal of the new works undertaken and the reinstatement of the original fabric.
Planning Applications

Planning applications for shopfronts and signs should include:

i) Fully detailed existing and proposed plans and front elevations of the full height of the property to a suitable scale (not less than 1:50) showing adjoining buildings. Sections may also be needed.

ii) Details of all materials and colours proposed for the shopfront and shop signs and of the adjoining shop fronts and shop signs.

In Conservation Areas, photographs of the existing shopfront and adjacent shops are also required.

Each Case on its Own Merits

All cases must be judged on their own individual merits as well as with regard to the shopfront design principles set out in this document. The criteria for such judgement will depend on existing circumstances, such as surrounding buildings and shopfronts and the extent to which the guidance contained in this document relates to them and has been taken into consideration.

Staff of the Department of Planning and Architecture are available to provide guidance in establishing a suitable shopfront design. A list of contacts is given at the end of this document.

The Birmingham Plan

The Birmingham Unitary Development Plan, 1993, contains policies relating to listed buildings, conservation areas, locally listed buildings and shopping provision, all of which are relevant to various issues covered in this document, which itself constitutes Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Unitary Development Plan.

Other relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance includes the Car Parking Guidelines, Living above the shop; and other guidance includes designing for Parent and Child.

Building Regulations

A Building Regulations Application is required for the installation alteration or modification of a shop front. The following Regulations will normally need to be addressed:
Part A: Structure

Where the structural opening in which the shop front is located is to be altered, or where there is an insertion of a new or modified means of support a Building Regulations application will be required.

Part B1: Means of Escape

The means of escape from a shop will need to be considered if alterations to the shop involve:-

a) a reduction in the number or width of any openings
b) an alteration of the position of any openings
c) an alteration of any door swings.
d) an increase in the floor area of the shop

Part M: Access and Facilities for Disabled People

In carrying out works to a shop, consideration must be given to door widths, door swings, positioning of doors, threshold heights, and ramped and stepped approaches.

Part N: Glazing Materials

Glazing in shopfronts must comply with the Building Regulations. Part N requires that if the shopfront glass breaks, it does so in a way which is unlikely to cause injury and that any transparent glazing incorporates features that make it apparent to people in or about the building.

Staff of the Building Consultancy Division of the Department of Planning and Architecture are available to provide guidance. A list of contacts is given at the end of this document.

Public Highway

The Director of Transportation should be consulted where any features are proposed to project over the public highway. Advice is also available on the relationship of thresholds to the public highway.

Trading on the Public Highway

Street trading from a stall on the public highway is encouraged but only in acceptable locations. Advice on how to apply for permission is available from the Commercial Services Department.
Trading on the public highway outside shops, restaurants, pubs, etc, and which is an extension of the activity in the adjoining premises, requires permission under the Highways Act. Depending on the type of trading, further permissions may be required under Public Health legislation and under Licensing legislation.
2. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD SHOPFRONT DESIGN

The City Centre shopping area and the local shopping streets each have their own unique character. Interesting buildings with differing dates, local styles, use of materials, and the pattern of streets and spaces all contribute to create the special qualities of each place. Shopfronts and advertisements also play an important part because they are at the human pedestrian scale and are nearly always designed to attract attention. They have a vital role in contributing to the character of an area. It follows that shopfronts and advertisements which are unsympathetically designed will have the opposite effect. For many people they are the most visually important feature of an area, often to the exclusion of the quality of the buildings above. The maintenance of good shopfronts and the encouragement of a high quality of design in new shopfronts is vital to the improvement of an area.

It is recognised that many retailers wish to trade on the basis of standard house colours and a standard house style. This must be reconciled with the need to enhance the unique quality of each shopping area. With co-operation and flexibility and an emphasis on quality and good detailing, a corporate image can be adapted to complement the local environmental character without compromising the principles of good shopfront and advertisement design. It is important that the design, format and materials do not clash or detract from the existing attractive features of the building or the area but are related to the surroundings. Indeed, careful attention to detailed design will give the shop a unique quality which will help promote its image.

In recent years new materials and construction techniques have allowed the introduction of structurally independent shopfronts and large expanses of glass. Illumination of signs has also become more common place. All these factors have meant a dramatic change in the appearance of shopping streets, often with little thought to design.

Birmingham City Council has adopted these guidelines for good shopfront design and advertisement displays in order to enhance shopping areas. The Council also intends that shopfronts and advertisements throughout the City should be related to the design of the buildings in which they are located, i.e. the shopfront must be in sympathy with the facade and date of the building. It is the Council’s intention to ensure a high standard of design relating to any refurbishment work, and to conserve or improve existing shopfronts where possible which are designed using the traditional elements of fascia, pilasters and stallriser.
Improvements to the shopfront should, wherever possible be accompanied by an improvement to the total façade. This includes removing redundant fixtures and fittings, including signs, cables, etc and where possible cleaning brickwork or stonework above the shop window or repainting previously painted surfaces.

**Retaining, Restoring and Reusing Older Shopfronts**

Where the existing shopfront contributes to the character of the building or the area, it should normally be kept, rather than replaced. Often the most economical and the most satisfactory solution is to retain and refurbish what is there already.

Sometimes older shopfronts have been concealed by later additions. Careful removal of these additions can reveal original features such as pilasters or fascias, which if retained and restored, can greatly enhance the appearance of the shopfront. Similarly, high quality flooring materials, such as terrazzo, tiling or mosaic, should be retained.

Some of the shopfronts from the first half of this century can also be of interest. Interwar designs, for example, incorporating Art Nouveau, Art Deco or Jazz detailing are often constructed with high quality materials and may form part of the design of an entire façade. Serious consideration should be given to the retention of good designed shopfronts from this period.

Where older shopfronts have been mutilated, sufficient evidence may remain in the way of fragments on site, or photographic evidence may exist in local libraries, to permit an accurate reconstruction. If a shopfront is to be fitted in a traditional style, then it is vital that the details and materials are correctly reproduced and appropriate to the building and to the locality.

**Replacement of Shopfronts**

In certain cases, the existing shopfront may not be capable of retention, or in the case of more recent unattractive, crude or unsympathetic shopfronts, it might be positively desirable to encourage their replacement.

Many recent shopfronts do not incorporate the traditional features of shopfront design. Shopfronts which have excessively deep fascias unrelated to the design of the building above, will detract from the character of the area, and their replacement with a more appropriate design should be considered.
Where the existing shopfront is to be replaced, the question then arises as to how the shopfront should be designed. Should it be a traditional style, or should it be a modern design?

Although there are no hard and fast rules, an important principle is that the shopfront should not be designed in isolation, but should be considered in relation to the composition of the building above and to the adjoining buildings. The shopfront design should therefore respect the period and style of the building in which it is fitted, and should not over emphasise the fascia, as many recent shopfronts do. 6)

It is not normally appropriate to fit a Victorian shopfront in a modern building or a modern shopfront in a Victorian building. Where it is appropriate to install a modern shopfront, consideration should be given to commissioning an individual design using quality materials, rather than using a standard “off-the-peg” aluminium shopfront. 7)

Where adjacent shopfronts are to be operated as a single concern then each shopfront should be individually expressed by retaining or reintroducing the pilasters between them. The identity of multiple units can be retained through a unified approach to colour and lettering.

The Council will not grant Consent for schemes which involve the removal (demolition) of traditional or original shopfronts or parts of such shopfronts in conservation areas. Removal without Consent may lead to prosecution.

Shopfronts that relate well to the Street and Building Facade

Altered Shopfronts with Typically Inappropriate Features

(Westminster City Council)
3. DETAILS OF GOOD SHOP FRONT DESIGN

The main purpose of the shopfront is to display goods for sale. It also has an important role in projecting the image of the shop. It follows that a shopfront that is tawdry in construction and materials or discordant in its colour scheme will not project a good image or enhance the display of the items for sale. The same is true of the whole of the shopping street.

Nineteenth century shopfront design was based on a set of principles which was noticeably successful in achieving satisfactory relationships between the shopfront and the building as a whole. These principles still hold good and can, and often do, form the basis for the design of many new shopfronts installed today. Four main elements can be used to enclose the shop window and entrance door rather in the manner of a picture frame which sets off a painting. These include the pilasters, fascia, cornice and stall riser. Each has its own visual and practical function. The pilasters identify the vertical division between the shopfronts; the fascia provides the space for advertising; the cornice gives a strong line at the top of the shopfront and protection from the weather; the stall riser gives protection at ground level and provides a solid base; and all of these elements form a frame which suggests, visually, a method of support for the building facade above.

These principles are still valid for new shopfronts, but all too often they are misunderstood. The accurate detailing of the traditional shopfront is very important for the achievement of a good design; if the details are incorrect the result is unconvincing and often ugly.

Shopfronts designed as part of new buildings constructed in traditional shopping streets should relate to the form and proportions of the adjoining traditional shopfronts. Provision should be made in the design of a new building which is to accommodate shop fronts, for the shopfitter to incorporate at a later date a correctly positioned and located fascia board to accommodate signage.

Where an existing shopfront of unsympathetic appearance is proposed for renewal, its replacement will be required to respect the character, appearance and scale of the building concerned, eg columns and pilasters should be seen to continue through the shopfront to the ground. The replacement shopfront should also relate well to adjoining buildings and their overall position in the street scene.
If a shop occupies more than one original shop unit or building then that division should be reflected in the design of the shopfront. Original plot widths generally determine the frontage design of a building, and it is this that gives the elevational rhythm of the street scene. Thus, when a proposed shopfront combines two or more such units, it is important to respect and retain the rhythm. This principle applies especially to supermarkets and other large fronted shops. Any change that proposes to ignore the separate identify of two adjoining buildings, in an attempt to give the appearance of a single shopfront, will be strongly resisted. Intervening pilasters and capitals should be retained or replaced, and the fascia divided.

Fascia

In traditional shop front design, the fascia which provides the space for advertising, is normally contained at each end by the console box or capital of the pilaster. It should never extend uninterrupted across a number of individual shop units.

Excessively deep fascias, which have become common in recent years, should be avoided. The scale and design of the fascia should be in proportion to the design of the shopfront and the height of the building as a whole, but as a general rule, the height or depth of the fascia, measured from the top edge of the cornice to the window frame below, should be no greater than one quarter the height of the shopfront below the fascia.

The top of the fascia should normally be kept well below the sills of the windows on the first floor. Where excessively deep fascias have been introduced in the past, the overall depth should be reduced, either to expose the wall surface above, or to increase the height of the shop window below or both. The existence of an unsuitable fascia, whether on the property in question or on an adjoining property, should not be allowed to influence the design of the replacement fascia. Where a false ceiling exists or is being inserted within the shop, it will not be appropriate to increase the depth of the fascia to conceal the edge of the ceiling. Other methods should be considered to hide a false ceiling, such as setting it back from the window or forming a splayed bulkhead or linking it into a transom rail, with obscured glazing above the rail. Sub-fascias, located below the main fascia, are not normally acceptable. Where the original fascia is canted forward at the top, the new one should also be canted.

Modern boxed fascias, which project from the face of the building can be inappropriate and clumsy and should preferably be avoided.
Fascia boards, particularly in Conservation Areas, should avoid the use of reflective, acrylic or plastic materials and fluorescent colours. Matt finish fascia boards are generally preferable.

Further advice on the use of colouring, lettering and illumination of fascias is given in Section 6. Shop Signs and Advertisements.

**Cornice**

It is usual for the fascia to have a projection above it, normally in the form of a moulded cornice, which is both decorative and functional, as it terminates the shopfront design and gives weather protection by throwing water clear of the shopfront and preventing rot. In appropriate cases, the traditional projecting roller blind can be incorporated within the cornice design. The cornice should be weathered with lead sheeting. In the design of some modern fascias, it may not be appropriate to have a cornice. 15)

**Stallriser**

The stallriser is an important element of the traditional shopfront below the display window. It gives protection to the shop window and provides the shopfront with a visual base and anchor to the ground. 16) Each shop should normally have a stallriser. Stallrisers will vary in height according to the style of the shopfront, but normally will be between 12-28 inches (300-700mm) high and have a moulded projecting cill to provide a strong junction with the glass.

Stall risers should be constructed of substantial and hard wearing materials. Thin laminates should be avoided. Traditional stallrisers are often made from painted timber panelling, but some take the form of a deep moulded skirting. The application of stick on mouldings onto flat plywood or blockboard sheets does not give an authentic result. The use of glazed tiles, marble, painted rendering or other non-reflective materials may also be acceptable, but brickwork stallrisers are not normally appropriate. In the design of some modern shopfronts, it may be appropriate for the display window to extend downwards to, or near to, pavement level. Strengthened stallrisers can give protection against ram raiding (See introduction and page 28).

**Shop Window**

In older buildings, long areas of plate glass with an undivided horizontal emphasis often have an unsatisfactory relationship
with the rest of the building and with the character of the local street scene. Vertical emphasis, if properly handled, can produce a more elegant effect. This can be achieved by the sub-division of long areas of glass into vertically proportioned sections. New shop windows should reflect the vertical emphasis of the building, where it exists, and mullions or pilasters should be provided to divide long stretches of glass where appropriate.

In some more recent buildings, designed with a horizontal emphasis, it may be more appropriate to have long, undivided shop windows which relate to the design of the building above.

Window framing, mullions and transoms should normally be of painted timber or bronzed or colour coated aluminium. Gold and silver aluminium frames are not normally acceptable, particularly when related to older buildings.

'Period' features such as bow windows and small panes of glass or other unusually shaped windows, are normally inappropriate and should be avoided, unless evidence is available to show that such features existed in the original shopfront.

Entrance Door

In many older shops, and often those in Conservation Areas, the entrance door is recessed and is located in the centre of a shopfront and flanked by display windows. Where it exists, it is preferable that this arrangement should be retained. In older shops where it does not exist and the shopfront is to be removed and replaced, a return to this arrangement should be retained, if it is appropriate. A recessed doorway has the effect of inviting shoppers in, and helps to modulate the scale of the shopfront.

A recessed doorway can also incorporate in an inconspicuous way the requirements for shop ventilation or extraction, burglar alarm equipment, outward swinging doors and any ramps that may be needed to facilitate access for people with disabilities. If there are concerns over the abuse of a recessed door, a hinged metal grill or gate can be fixed to the outer edge of the recess for closing the recess off at night.

Existing original doors or traditional panelled doors should be retained and refurbished or replaced with an exact replica.

The design of the shop door should be an integral part of the design of the shopfront, and where appropriate the door should be provided with timber panelling or kickplate at the bottom to match the height, design and colour of the shopfront's stallriser.
Doors to premises above a shop should be designed as an integral part of the facade, with particular respect to scale, design details and the framework of pilasters and frieze.

Where an existing doorway provides access to separate accommodation on an upper floor, the access should be retained, as this will help to sustain the provision of mixed uses in the street.

In the design of modern shopfronts, in a new or more recent building, it can be appropriate for the entrance door to be located in the same plane as the shop window.

Pilaster

In older shopfronts, pilasters identify the division between adjoining shopfronts and provide a vertical framing to contain the fascia and stallriser. 20) Where pilasters still exist, they should not be removed and where they have been removed, the opportunity should be taken to reinstate them when the shopfront is renewed. The pilaster is traditionally designed with a base and capital, which usually supports a console, or corbel which frames or contains the end of the fascia panel.

In new or more recent buildings, pilasters may not be present or appropriate, but their function as dividers between adjoining properties and as visual supports for the building above, can be provided by wider framing at the sides of the shopfront. 21)

Materials and Colours

The materials used for shopfronts and shop signs are very significant in determining their character and should relate to the remainder of the facade. All materials used should be of a quality to withstand weathering (buckling, staining etc) and be easily cleaned. Non-traditional materials such as glass fibre, perspex, UPVC and acrylic sheeting will not normally be permitted in conservation areas where they conflict with the character of older buildings. The use of traditional materials such as painted timber, stone and painted render will be encouraged. Non-traditional materials will normally only be acceptable in dark colours and matt finishes, when they do not detract from the character of an area. Strong, garish or "day-glow" colours and highly reflective or shiny materials should be avoided on any building, and will not normally be permitted in Conservation Areas.

Timber is the most versatile of materials, especially for the construction of traditional shopfronts. It can be worked into almost any profile, it is durable and repainting can freshen up or change the appearance of a shopfront at minimum cost. The sensitive use of colour offers much scope for improving the street scene, but there is no standard formula. Darker colours
were often used on traditional shopfronts such as maroon, dark green, black, dark blue and brown. Rich dark colours look very good as they leave the window displays to provide the highlight. Harsh and gaudy colours should be avoided.

The imposition of corporate colour schemes, regardless of the location, may erode the character of the area, but minor variations from a retailer's corporate colour can help to project the uniqueness of the location.

(*Hove Borough Council*)

*(fig. 22)*

---

1. Lead flashing
2. Fascia
3. Handpainted name
4. Original sub-divided window panels
5. Cornice
6. Corbel/Console
7. Fascia extends too high
8. Window partly obscured
9. Corbel has been removed
10. Unacceptable projecting box sign
11. Large modern style lettering
12. Internally lit bulky plastic fascia
13. Very large window area
14. Unacceptable glossy 'Dutch' blind
15. No stall riser
16. Silver coloured aluminium door and window frames
17. High door threshold (inaccessible to the disabled)
18. Pavement sign
19. Pilaster detailing obscured by tiles

*Figures: A traditional Shopfront and A poorly designed shopfront*
4. SHOP SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

In certain circumstances, signs may require a separate application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. This is the case, for example, if signs are illuminated, or they are above the level of the bottom of the first floor windows, or more than 4.6 metres above ground level, or they are greater than a certain area. Where signs are proposed on listed buildings, Listed Building Consent will be required as advertisements and signs can affect the character of a Listed Building. Consultation with the Department of Planning and Architecture is recommended prior to formal submission for planning permission.

The design and location of shop signs is most important. Well designed signs coupled with well designed shopfronts will add to the quality of an area, whereas poor design will detract. Large nationally known retailers should be prepared to adapt their standard signs if the Council feels that it is out of character in its particular location.

Shop signs which are well designed, carefully executed and of good quality can create a distinctive character for the individual shop.

The following points may be helpful in considering shop signs:

- It is important that signs are thought of as part of the overall shop front design, rather than as a separate issue or an afterthought.

- Signs and the style of lettering should relate sympathetically to the character of the shop front, the building where they will be situated and the surrounding area as a whole. The design of the sign will be determined by the following factors.

  - size materials
  - shape colour
  - position letter style and size
  - content illumination (if any)

- Too many signs on a shop front can be self-defeating. Signs should normally be limited to the fascia. In addition, one well designed projecting or hanging sign can normally be added depending on the character of the local street scene.
Fascia Signs

The fascia sign should state only the name or trade of the premises. Included should be the street number of the premises. Unnecessary duplication of a name or additional advertising or brand names on a single fascia is generally only confusing and should be avoided.

No individual shop fascia sign should unduly dominate the street scene. The Council will therefore expect signs to be contained within the fascia, which should not be horizontally sub-divided or added to in any way. New fascias should not be added over the top of existing ones. Only one fascia board above a shop window is normally acceptable.

On certain buildings fascias may not be present. In such circumstances it may be appropriate for individual lettering to be applied directly to the wall between ground and first floor levels or directly to, or behind the glass of the shop window itself.

Reference should also be made to the section on Fascias in Chapter 3.

Lettering

Lettering can evoke an image and provide great decorative interest either through the medium of sign writing directly onto the fascia, or, if carried out in a traditional manner, by the application of individual letters to the fascia. Considerable artistic effect can be provided if a competent signwriter is employed. The choice of lettering and illustration can reflect the use and character of the shop and should also take into account the character of the building. Colours are important; gilding or strong tones on a dark background reflect light, and are clearly visible at night. Rich effects can be achieved by shading and blocking off letters. Signwriting should always be painted directly on to the fascia, as applied boards look clumsy.

Alternatively, individual letters can be used. Simple solid shapes will normally be appropriate and traditional gilded lettering with half round section is particularly suitable for pubs, hotels, restaurants, etc.

Normally the lettering should be in proportion to the fascia and easily contained within it. As a general rule, a ratio of 60% fascia height for lettering, with 20% spacing above and below is a reasonable guide for a fascia depth as described in Chapter 3. Length of wording should not be greater than 75% of the fascia length.
The Council will encourage the use of hand painted lettering on fascias in preference to the use of standardised plastic. Specially designed external illumination of fascias will be permitted in most cases. The appropriate use of well designed window signs painted onto glass or sign boards hung behind the glazing can be an alternative where exterior fascia boards are difficult to position.

Internally Illuminated Fascias

Internally illuminated fascia signs are not acceptable on listed buildings or in Conservation Areas. In certain circumstances halo illumination of lettering may be acceptable i.e, where the letters stand proud of the fascia and light is shone from behind each letter onto the fascia, creating a glow or ‘halo’ effect around the letters.

In other locations where internally illuminated fascias may be acceptable in principle, the size and projection should be kept to a minimum and be of an appropriate scale and location in relation to the appearance of the building. Large areas of bright illumination are not acceptable.

Where possible illumination should be restricted to individual letters only, with the fascia background in a dark, opaque, not-reflective material.

Externally Illuminated fascias

External illumination of a fascia by means of swan neck lamps or spotlights may provide an acceptable alternative to internal illumination, particularly on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas. In such instances only the fascias should be lit and the spread of light should be controlled and not overbright.

A limited number of hooded spotlights (two or three for an average width shop fascia) or a full length strip light concealed by a compact hood is acceptable. Their design and position should not detract from the appearance of the building during daytime hours.

Light fitments should be carefully fixed to the fascias and painted to match or made of brass.

Projecting Signs

Internally illuminated projecting box signs will not normally be permitted on Listed Buildings or in Conservation Areas.
Illuminated projecting signs of appropriated design may be acceptable on Listed Buildings or in Conservation Areas, where letters are illuminated by halo lighting. In modern shopping frontages projecting box signs form a prominent element in the street scheme and should be carefully designed. Projecting signs should relate in vertical dimension to the fascia and are often best positioned centrally on a pilaster at fascia level, when they are designed as an integral part of the fascia itself. Signs should not extend above fascia level.

One projecting sign per shopfront is normally sufficient. Well designed projecting signs of the finger type, in stainless steel, bronze, black or brown carcasses may be acceptable in modern shopfronts. Lettering should relate to the name of the shop only, and not to individual brand names or products.

Hanging Signs

A well designed hanging sign suspended from traditional brackets can enhance the appearance of the shopfront and add vitality to the street. Where an original bracket of traditional style survives, this should be re-used. Hanging symbols denoting the trade carried on in the premises might be considered as an alternative to a hanging board.

Although hanging signboards were traditionally in timber with a vertical emphasis, it is difficult to pre-determine the size and design of hanging signs. A general principle is that they should be of a high design quality and relate to the size and scale of the building facade and not appear either over- intrusive or too small.

The design of the bracket should be carefully considered and simple brackets will be appropriate in most cases, although in certain circumstances more elaborate signs in wrought or cast iron can be appropriate. Signs and brackets should be based on local patterns where available.

There should normally not be more than one hanging sign and this should be carefully positioned to take into account the architectural design of the building. The traditional position for hanging signs is level with first floor windows but there will be variations and each building should be treated on its merits. However, in some cases the architectural design of the building or the character of the street will be of such importance and quality that any form of hanging sign may be unacceptable.

The most appropriate form of illumination for hanging signs is picture lighting by means of a strip light covered with a metal shade normally attached to the top of the sign.
However, spotlights attached to the building adjacent to the sign are acceptable in some cases. Lettering on a hanging sign should relate to the name of the shop only and must not carry advertisements for brand name products sold in the shop.

Cable Runs

Where external illumination is proposed, details of lighting source, location, intensity, type, fixing and all external cable runs must be submitted as part of the application for consent under the Advertisement Regulations. Cable runs should preferably be internal or hidden, but where they are proposed to be external, they should be as unobtrusive as possible and painted to blend with their background.

Projecting Cantilevered Canopies

Some modern shopping developments have permanent horizontal cantilevered canopies constructed as part of the design of the building. In such cases, shop signs should be accommodated as a shop fascia element immediately below the cantilevered canopy. It is not appropriate to fix signs to the front edge of the canopy or on to the top of the canopy, but it may be possible to suspend small, carefully designed shop signs under the cantilevered canopy, at right angles to the shop front. This will give broadly the same effect as a "finger" sign projecting from a shop fascia.
5. SECURITY SHutters

The installation of all types of external security shutters requires planning permission. Internal security shutters do not require planning permission, except that any alterations to a shop which is, or is part of a Listed Building, will require Listed Building Consent. If existing external security shutters are replaced with a different type of shutter, the external appearance of the premises will change and planning permission will always be required. Consultation with the Department of Planning and Architecture is recommended prior to formal submission for planning permission.

The City Council wishes to encourage the creation of attractive and visually lively shopping streets which continue to remain attractive after normal shopping hours. Some types of shutters, particularly solid shutters, have a depressing and deadening effect on the character and appearance of a shopping street during the period when the shops are closed. Discussions with the Police, the Fire Service and the City Council’s Community Safety Unit confirm that solid security shutters create more problems than they solve. Their forbidding appearance creates a fear of crime and deters the public from window shopping, which in turn results in a lack of natural surveillance along the street.

There is therefore a need for achieving a balance between the need for security measures and wider environmental and public interests. The Association of British Insurers has rejected the suggestion that insurance cover will only be granted if solid shutters are installed and says that it is prepared to accept other types of security measures. In response to these concerns, the following policy guidelines have been established for the provision of security shutters and their application has generally been successful in achieving a better commitment.

Roller Shutter Policy

In all cases applicants must satisfy the Planning Committee that security shutters are necessary. The use of other forms of security, for instance security glass, should always be considered when circumstances make it practical. Only roller shutters that achieve maximum transparency will be acceptable.

Principle 1. There will be a general presumption against the use of security shutters on Listed Buildings and within Conservation Areas.
If security shutters on Listed Buildings are proven to be necessary, the form of security should be designed to be sensitive to the character of that building. It is also expected that any security shutters which are to be permitted in Conservation Areas will be sympathetic to the character and appearance of that area.

Principle 2. The various alternatives for achieving security for all retail or quasi-retail units throughout the City are detailed below in order of preference. In each case the applicant must satisfy the Planning Committee as to why the preceding alternatives are not suitable.

a. Security glazing
b. Internal window security grilles
c. External window security grilles either of a removable or roller type
d. Timber shutters
e. Open lattice or large punched hole metal roller shutters, including transparoll shutters
f. Solid curtain metal roller shutters, perforated shutters and visiscreens are not normally acceptable

a. Laminated security glazing is the most preferable option as it provides security without affecting the appearance of the property or the character of the local street scene. Unlike other security measures no additional installations or fixings are required and no planning consents are needed to install laminated security glass. Security glazing can also be combined with vertical steel mullions to provide a secure but visually acceptable shopfront. See also Glazing on page 26.

b. Subject to suitable design, if a form of shuttering is needed, rolling internal security grilles are the preferred option. Not only do these types of shutter allow display illumination to penetrate through to increase the level of adjacent street lighting but also give a friendlier, less forbidding appearance in the street scene. The use of internal security grilles does not require planning permission, unless the shop forms part of a Listed Building where Listed Building Consent will also be required.

c. External grilles have similar advantages to the internal variety but are more noticeable and can be very poor visually especially if they are not removed during the day time. All external grilles whether removable or of the roller type require planning permission. Fixings including
roller boxes and runners should be concealed if possible, or painted to match the shop frame. Fixings must not damage architectural features or mouldings. Removable grilles should not cover the pilasters and should be colour finished to match the shopfront, or bronze anodised. Removable grilles must be stored inside the shop or otherwise out of sight when not in use.

d. The use of painted timber shutters can be particularly appropriate on traditional shopfronts or in traditional shopping arcades. Where original or traditional wooden shutters survive, they should be retained, properly maintained and painted.

e. If other more robust types of enclosure are required then open lattice or large punched hole roller shutters are acceptable where they have a high degree of transparency. See through shutters allow the window display to be seen and help create an attractive welcoming frontage even when shops are closed. The light from inside the shop also shines onto the street giving passers-by a greater feeling of safety and security which the West Midlands Police strongly support. Shutters which allow a view into the shop they are protecting are preferred. Where shutters of this type are proposed they should aim to achieve a minimum of 55% transparency. 33)

Transparoll shutters consist of aluminium ribs and strips of transparent polycarbonate sheet and allow a full view into the shop.

If see through shutters have a solid portion at the bottom, this must be no higher than the stallriser, where shops have a stallriser. If they do not ie, the shop front has a full depth display window, any solid portion should be restricted to no more than 300 mm in height. Solid portions at the side should be kept to a minimum and should be “squared off” to give a neat visual appearance. Any solid portion at the top of a roller shutter should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary.

f. Solid metal shutters are not acceptable in shopping frontages. 34) They are not acceptable on Listed Buildings or within Conservation Areas. They have a deadening effect on the appearance of shops when they are shut and create a street environment which is seen as unwelcoming and unsafe. They are not necessarily the most effective, and are opposed by West Midlands
Police because they create an environment which most people see as unsafe when the shops are closed; they are also a target for graffiti and if there is a break-in and solid shutters can act as a cover for burglars' activities.

Perforated shutters, and visiscreens are made up of slats that are perforated with many small holes (2-3mm). Strong rear lighting can give limited views into a shop premises, however, they appear solid during daylight hours and when viewed at an angle at night. This type of shutter is not normally acceptable because they do not achieve the benefit of see-through shutters and can have the same visual impact as solid shutters.

**Principle 3.** Where acceptable in principle, roller shutters should be confined to the structural opening or area of the window only.

There will be a presumption against the granting of consent for shutters whose containing spindle boxes or guide channels project across the pilasters of the shopfront or over architectural detailing, particularly on buildings of architectural or historic interest. Sectional drawings clearly indicating this relationship should always be submitted with a planning application.

**Principle 4.** Shutter boxes should be recessed within the structure of the building or disguised behind the shop fascia and should not result in the fascia projecting noticeably forward. Vertical runners or guides should be hidden behind or in the side of the pilasters or incorporated in side mouldings and be painted to match the shopfront. 35)

This reflects the Local Authority’s concern that prominent and unsympathetically sited shutter boxes are visually very poor and can destroy the architectural character of a building.

**Principle 5.** A selective approach to the use of materials and type of finish adopted for shutters and containing boxes will be encouraged.

Metal shutters, roller grilles and exposed shutter boxes or components should have a matt finished coloured powder-coated or matt paint finish to match the shopfront. It is therefore important that details of the proposed material and finish are included when a planning application is submitted.

**Principle 6.** When applications for new shop fronts are being considered applicants should satisfactorily demonstrate that their design is capable of sympathetically accommodating a roller shutter and associated box at a later date.
Security shutters should always be detailed as an integral part of the overall shop front design, rather than appearing as an incongruous addition.

Principle 7. When permission is granted for roller shutters, it will be a condition of the permission that the shop display is illuminated when the shutter is in use until at least 11.30pm.

Rear-lighting an open lattice or large punched hole roller shutter will ensure that an attractive shopping frontage and security is maintained.

Ram Raiding

Ram raiding is of concern to some traders, particularly those displaying costly and easily portable merchandise. The starting point for considering means to deter ram raiding should be a risk assessment, taking into account the design of the shopfront and the building and its relationship to the surrounding environment, both front and rear, as well as displaying of the goods sold in the shop. The real risk, not the perceived one, needs to be identified.

There are a range of deterrent measures available, and some may be more appropriate than others, depending on individual circumstances. Traditional shopfronts with stallrisers to a depth of at least 600mm and small areas of glazing, which in many instances the City Council would encourage on aesthetic grounds, can be more resistant to ram raiding than many modern shop fronts. Unobtrusive protection against ram raiding is possible by the use of a stallriser, strengthened if necessary in high risk situations, with internal steel posts or beams, and by the use of laminated security glazing combined with vertical steel mullions.

In certain situations, where the use of street furniture, planting boxes, seats and trees can be considered as part of a wider environmental enhancement scheme, including other factors, such as ensuring the safety of pedestrians, particularly people with sensory or other disabilities, additional opportunities to deter ram raiding may be taken into account.

fig. 36) (Alsecure Limited)

The Transparoll curtain consists of aluminium ribs and strips of transparent polycarbonate. The aluminium ribs have a recessed opening in which stainless steel pens have been fitted loosely. This construction prevents the ribs from being sawn through. The polycarbonate ribs are UV-stabilised and scratch-proof.
A variety of shutters are available which allow the interior of the shop to be seen at night and if the shutter is closed during the day. At night lighting inside the shop improves security and enlivens the street scene. In the case of type-5, the perforated shutter is not see-through unless it is lit from behind. Lighting at night is therefore essential.
6. OTHER SHOPFRONT ELEMENTS

Blinds & Canopies

Planning consent is usually required to install a shop blind. Staff of the Department of Planning and Architecture are available to give guidance.

Blinds have a practical purpose - to protect goods from damage by sunlight. Normally there is no need for them on north facing elevations or in narrow streets. They should normally be retractable so that the fascia is not permanently obscured, and so that they may be pulled down only when required. Well designed blinds can add colour and interest to the street scene if they are appropriate to the character of the area. Blinds should normally extend over the width of the shopfront between the pilasters.

Shop blinds can be described under the following types:

a. Traditional retractable blinds
b. Dutch blinds
c. Fan blinds
d. Fixed blinds

Traditional Retractable blinds

Traditional canvas roller or 'apron' blinds were a common feature of Victorian shopfronts and are suitable today for shops of that period and also for modern shops. These blinds are normally retracted into a slot just below the fascia board. Occasionally, they are incorporated within the cornice above the fascia. Where original traditional canvas blinds and blind boxes exist, they should be retained and refurbished.

Dutch Blinds

Non retractable, "Dutch" blinds or balloon canopies with rounded ends, tend to obscure the fascia and introduce an alien and dominant shape, out of character with the street, and the building to which they are attached. They are frequently made of reflective or shiny plastic and in most instances are kept permanently extended, serving more as an advertisement than as a protection against sunlight or the weather. For these reasons they are not normally permitted.

Fan Blinds

A folding "fan" canopy, which can be retracted, is acceptable but only if the canopy hood does not project too far forward of the fascia or shopfront, or obscure fascia or pilasters or other architectural features.
Lettering On Buildings

Occasionally, special cases exist where older buildings have traditionally displayed painted lettered and illustrated signs at high level.

Such lettering carried out sensitively in appropriate styles, size and colour can add vitality and reflect the character of the area.

Access For All

Shop doorways should accommodate the needs of people with disabilities as well as carers with prams and buggies. Alterations and refurbishments of shop fronts should be used as an opportunity to make it easier for people with disabilities to gain access into and through the shop. As a general principle, steps should be avoided and doors should be wide enough and capable of being opened by people in wheelchairs and people with limited strength. Where entrance steps are unavoidable, the nosing of the steps should be highlighted. Corduroy type tactile floor tiles can help blind people detect the head of a flight of steps. Handrails are helpful at changes in level and where possible, ramps should be provided between the public footway and the internal shop floor level. Shop floors, including entrance doors, should wherever possible have a slip resistant floor surface.

Where an external ramp is needed, the gradient should not be steeper than 1 in 12, preferably shallower and surfaced with a non-slip material. Small changes in level between the pavement and the shop floor can sometimes be overcome by raising the footpath, with the agreement of the Director of Transportation, or accommodated within a recessed entrance doorway.

Frameless glass doors should not be used as they are dangerous for the young and partially sighted. Where large areas of glass are used, these should be designed with graphics, panels or etching to make people aware of them. A visibility panel should be included in doors that are not of glass, and this should be positioned so that children and people in wheelchairs, as well as adults, can see and be seen.

To aid people who are partially sighted in recognising the name of the shop, it is advisable to provide an embossed sign of contrasting colours which is fixed to the door or window, between 120mm and 1400mm above ground level. Features such as a bell, or the bottom of the door handle, should not be above 1040mm from the ground. The door handle should have a minimum clearance from the door frame of 50mm, with a diameter of 45mm. For ease of use, lever
Fixed Blinds

Fixed blinds or rigid blinds are those where material covers a wood or metal frame, and although they are sometimes designed to appear like a retractable blind, they cannot be retracted conveniently on a daily basis, or without special tools, and for this reason fixed blinds are not normally acceptable.

Lettering on Blinds

Advertising lettering on a blind is not normally acceptable and should be confined to the shop fascia. Where the blind is of the traditional retractable roller type and retracts into the cornice above the fascia, so that it obscures the lettering on the fascia, when the blind is lowered, then the name of the firm that occupies the shop could appear on the blind at a reasonable size. No additional advertising on the blind is normally acceptable.

The use of glossy, wet look reflective materials, stretch fabrics and fluorescent colours for blinds is not advisable. Blinds located above shopfront levels will not normally be permitted.

Upper Floors

Where businesses occupy premises above other commercial property, the use of lettering applied directly to the window will be permitted. The lettering should be coloured black, gold or a dark colour and should not be more than 100mm in height. The wording should relate only to a separate business on that floor and not to the commercial use of the building at street level.

Consideration of advertisements for upper floors displayed at shopfront level will follow the guidance applied to shop signs.

Where there are office or business premises above street level or in cases where a shopfront type display is not possible, the usual means of signage is to have a name plate next to the street entrance. Business name plates should not be illuminated and there should only be one plate display for each business. The sign should only mention the name of the business and the trade profession or service provided. It should normally be made of engraved or painted brass or aluminium.

Upper floor windows should not be used to display goods unless the windows have been specially designed for the purpose. Windows should have curtains or internal blinds if stacked goods are visible from the street.
handles are preferred to knob handles. Self closures, if fitted, should not be so strong that access by the elderly or people with disabilities is hindered.

The minimum clear opening through the doorway should not be less than 850mm. Where doors have two leaves, it should be possible for a wheelchair to obtain access without having to open both doors. Two way swing doors are useful as some people find it easier to push a door than to pull it towards them. Under no circumstances should revolving doors be the only means of access. In shops where people carry heavy loads, the ideal is self opening doors controlled by a pressure mat. Reference should also be made to Part M of the Building Regulations.

Alterations to shopfronts on listed buildings or within historic areas can create access problems which are difficult to resolve because features such as doors, steps and staircases are often an important part of the building's character, and merit retention. Innovative solutions are called for which both increase accessibility and respect the building's character. In some cases, it may be necessary to create an additional entrance in a less prominent facade.

Footway Display

There are an increasing number of shops that display goods for sale on the public footway. In addition to possibly contravening Section 121 of the Highway Act 1959 (relating to wilful obstruction of the highway), the practice should be discouraged as it can result in property looking untidy and cluttered, and may cause problems for blind or partially sighted people. Displays on private forecourts, particularly by shops which traditionally display their goods outside, such as garden shops, green grocers and ironmongers, can add interest and liveliness to the street scene.

Ventilation

Areas of glass louvered windows are generally not in character with traditional shopfronts and should only be considered if there is no alternative.

Clocks, Plaques, etc

Clocks, Plaques, specially designed lighting fitments and other unusual details sometimes found on older properties make an important contribution to the overall appearance of the street scene. Such features should be retained or restored, and where necessary re-instated. Modern features of a similar kind should be of high quality.
Burglar and Fire Alarms

These items are often necessary, but their insensitive siting can be visually detrimental to a building. They should be carefully sited and must not obscure or damage architectural details. Sometimes it is preferable to install alarms either near ground level or out of reach above the shop front, where they are less visually intrusive. Ideally, they should be incorporated into the design of the shopfront, which is often easy to do on modern shops. For traditional shops it may be possible to accommodate an alarm by modifying a small part of the shopfront, such as one panel of the stallrider, a soffit, or to locate the alarm within a recessed entrance doorway. On listed buildings the alarm must be painted to match the shopfront. The police strongly advise that all alarm sounders cut out automatically after 20 minutes and that boxes are fitted with a strobe light.

Open Fronted Shopfronts

The removal of shopfront features such as doors, stallrider, transoms, mullions, and glazing in order to create an open fronted shop, can detract from the architectural integrity of the building and the character of the street. At night, such shopfronts, which require roller shutters to secure the property, create dead and uninviting spaces which offer no interest to the passerby. However, where such shopfronts occur, such as traditional fishmongers, butchers and greengrocers, the installation of sliding glass panels which form a glass shopfront at night, is the preferred solution.

Window Display

The shopfront provides the framework for displaying goods inside. Even the best designed shopfront can be ruined by posters stuck to the glass. Shop windows should not be obscured by a proliferation of window stickers. Shop windows should be looked through, not looked at.

The art of window dressing is disappearing. Shop window displays add to the interest of the shopping street. In the case of building societies, banks and other money shops, and those high street units which do not display goods (including bookmakers), an imaginative display will help to avoid the deadening effect such units can have on the shopping street.
Glazing

Glass is an essential element of any shopfront design, but its qualities and security performance are often overlooked. Increasingly, the choice of glazing material is being made on the needs for safety and security. Safety is a requirement in new shopfront design and is specified in Part N of the 1991 Building Regulations. Glazing which people might collide with, including floor to ceiling glazed shopfronts, must be designed with mullions, graphics or etching, to make people aware of its presence.

There are two types of glass that combine safety with some degree of security. Toughened glass is five times stronger than normal glass of the same thickness but when it does break it shatters into small, fairly safe fragments. Laminated glass is an alternative, and when this breaks it will only cause cracking or crazing around the point of impact. From a security point of view the Police recommend laminated glass, but they caution that the weakest point in the window is not the glass, but the beading holding the glass.

Shops on Corner Sites

There has been pressure from retailers to convert the traditional double - aspect corner shop window to single aspect by blocking in the side window. This proposed change is detrimental to the quality of the local street scene and will be resisted, as any alteration to the display windows will affect the overall design of the building and the street environment, with the result that the street corner will appear much less attractive. A shallow display window, possibly externally accessed, may resolve this problem and enable the side windows to be retained and continued in use for display purposes.

Change of Use

The change of use of shop premises to non-retail uses, eg. offices, residential, etc., have design implications for the street scene. Where such change of use is permitted, consideration must be given as to whether a shop like appearance should be retained, or whether an appropriate and sympathetic alternative design solution is possible. The general presumption will be in favour of retaining the shopfront where possible.

Maintenance

Regular maintenance is essential if shopfronts are to remain attractive. This is particularly important in the case of joinery work and metal surfaces.
Neglect will lead to decay and unnecessary expenditure on repairs or replacements.

Empty Shops

Most shopping streets have some empty shops. To avoid them detracting from the character of the street and depressing the attractiveness of the shopping area, owners should ensure that maintenance and repair is continued and where possible, a shop window display is maintained, pending the arrival of a new tenant.

Serving Hatches

Serving hatches in new shop fronts are not appropriate where they will detract from the design or where footpaths are narrow or where pedestrian volumes are heavy, immediately in front of the window. They may however be acceptable where adequate private forecourts exist.

NOTE:

The above sections deal with the main types of shopfront and advertisement. Other, more unusual, features will of course occur from time to time. Such cases must be considered in relation to the shopfront and the building as a whole. If an applicant does wish to erect or add any feature not discussed above, they are advised to consult the Department of Planning and Architecture at an early stage to allow discussions to take place.
7. USEFUL CONTACTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Planning Permission

Advice on how to apply for planning permission and on the need for permissions are dealt with by the Planning Direct Enquiry Team. For more detailed site specific and policy advice, ask for the teams listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Centre</th>
<th>Area Description</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Perry Barr, Erdington, Hodge Hill and Sutton Coldfield Constituencies</td>
<td>0121 303 1115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Ladywood, Small Heath and Sparkbrook Constituencies, outside the Ring Road and all of Yardley Constituency</td>
<td>0121 303 1115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Edgbaston, Hall Green, Northfield and Selly Oak Constituencies</td>
<td>0121 303 1115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For advice on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas 0121 303 1115

Major Developments Team 0121 303 1115

All correspondence in connection with applications for planning permission should be sent to Planning Control Division, Planning Department, Alpha Tower, Suffolk Street Queensway, Birmingham, B1 1TU.

Building Consultancy Area Teams

Commercial Team (only for large shop schemes valued over £100,000) 0121 303 3070

South Area Team 0121 303 4818
North Area Team 0121 303 8902

All correspondence in connection with Building Regulations should be sent to Building Consultancy Division, Planning Department, 1 Lancaster Circus, Birmingham, B4.

Security Matters

West Midlands Police 0121 626 5106

All correspondence with the West Midlands Police on security matters should be addressed to Architectural Liaison Officer, Community Services, Police Headquarters, PO Box 52, Lloyd House, Colmore Circus, Birmingham, B4 6NQ.
Other Relevant Documents available include:

Planning Control Charter Leaflet

Development Control Guidelines:
- Car Parking Policy and Standards
- Living Above the Shop
- Hot Food Shops / Restaurants / Cafés
- Amusement Centres and Arcades
- Access for People with Disabilities
- Designing for Parent and Child
- Shop Front Security - A Guide for Shopkeepers (Summary leaflet)

To obtain Policy Guidelines and other documents, ask for Continuous Improvement Team - 0121 303 1115.
8. Acknowledgements

Many diagrams and illustrations that appear in the text have been taken from documents produced by other organisations. The following are thanked for their permission to reproduce their illustrations:

- Westminster City Council (from Shopfronts Blinds and Signs)

- Luton Borough Council (from Shopfronts Design Guide)

- English Historic Towns Forum (from Shopfronts and Advertisements in Historic Towns)

- Hove Borough Council (from Shopfronts in Conservation Areas)

- London Borough of Richmond (from Design Guidelines for Shopfronts and Shop Signs)

- City of Edinburgh (from Shopfront Security)

- Poole Borough Council (from Guidelines for Shopfronts and Shop Signs)

- Shrewsbury and Aacham Borough Council (from Shrewsbury Town Centre, Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide)

- Moseley Society (from Moseley Shop Front Design Guide)

- Alsecure Limited (from Transparoll brochure)