BIRMINGHAM’S Jewellery Quarter is unique, a heritage asset of international importance. It contains the most significant and extensive group of surviving 19th and 20th century buildings devoted to the manufacture of jewellery and small metal goods in Europe. Many of these buildings are still occupied for their original purpose, but industrial decline over a number of years has left others vacant and in a state of disrepair. Together with its partners the City Council is bringing new life to the Quarter, promoting a thriving mixed use economy and encouraging the reuse of its attractive and distinctive buildings.

The Council’s strategy for the revitalisation of the Jewellery Quarter underlines its commitment to the principle of ‘Regeneration through Conservation’, using the best of the past as a resource to guide the future. Design quality in the Quarter was historically high and is integral to the area’s special character. This document is intended to help maintain that quality, encouraging new development not only to preserve but also to enhance the exceptional historic environment of the Jewellery Quarter.

Councillor Ken Hardeman
Cabinet Member for Regeneration

THE PUBLICATION of this Design Guide completes the processes undertaken by the City Council and its partners to protect the unique environment of the Jewellery Quarter. This began with the architectural survey of the area carried out by English Heritage and their report, The Jewellery Quarter Urban Village, An Architectural Survey of the Manufactories 1760-1999, produced in 1999. In September 2000, on the basis of this work, the Council extended the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area and in January 2002 the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The character appraisal defines the special interest and character of the area, the context in which any proposals for change must be considered. The management plan provides policies which guide change so that this special character is preserved or enhanced.

The plan recognise that new development must respond sensitively to local context if the historic character of the Jewellery Quarter is to be protected. The promotion of sympathetic new design of high quality is essential to its successful management.

Clive Dutton
Director of Planning and Regeneration
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The publication of design guidance for new development within the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter completes the programme of policy development and management guidance established by the City Council to support the designation of the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area in 2002.

Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter is an extraordinary place. The recent detailed research carried out by English Heritage makes it very clear that the Quarter is a unique historic environment in England and that it has few, if any, parallels in Europe. What makes it so special? We know that the Quarter is home to a complex network of specialist skills and trades, to the busiest Assay Office in Britain and to a dynamic School of Jewellery. But what really puts the Jewellery Quarter in a class of its own is the survival and continued use of so many specialist factories and workshops in one place, buildings which define what the Quarter is all about and which mark its many phases of development from the late eighteenth century to the present day. Seen from the air, the Jewellery Quarter now appears as a tapestry made up almost entirely of long, thin plots of land on which has been developed the most extraordinary concentration of industrial buildings.

What is so striking about this historic industrial landscape today is the number of surviving buildings. The number of buildings still in use as industrial premises is equally impressive. The Quarter is no museum of lost industrial skills, but remains a thriving workplace and commercial centre for the jewellery trade and other metal working industries. It continues to be, as it has always been, a place where adaptation and change remain significant factors in the life of the community. But changes in the pattern and scale of manufacturing have brought demands for different uses and for new types of development.

How should the pressure for change in the Jewellery Quarter be managed? On the one hand extraordinary historic environments need special levels of care and attention if their special qualities are to survive. On the other hand an active working community has to react to constantly changing economic circumstances. Birmingham City Council, with the help of English Heritage, has worked to develop planning policies and guidance for the Jewellery Quarter which are both appropriate to the needs of constructive conservation management and sensitive to the needs of the Quarter’s business community.

The contribution made by new buildings to historic environments is crucial to their development and is invariably a significant component of successful conservation management. Where the preservation and enhancement of special character is the primary consideration, local authority guidance on the acceptable parameters for new design is essential. This document completes a portfolio of publications designed specifically for the management of the Jewellery Quarter in appreciation of its specific qualities. The processes of research, evaluation, protection, management planning and policy development have followed one from the other, each stage informing the next in the sequence. The City Council is to be congratulated on its dedication to this process and on the production of policies and guidance which protect and enhance the special character of the Jewellery Quarter. These should now be applied consistently and creatively as part of a long-term commitment to the care of this extraordinary place.

Bob Hawkins
English Heritage
This document was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the Birmingham Plan on 13th June 2005. It has been prepared in accordance with and builds upon guidance contained in the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (adopted as SPG 2002).

The UDP at Chapter 3 contains general design policies to guide development within all conservation areas. Paragraph 15.74 of the UDP refers specifically to development within the Jewellery Quarter and states that it

…..should recognise and retain the unique character of the area and be sensitive to existing uses and buildings and consistent with the requirements of its Conservation Area status.

The Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan provides more detailed design guidance and states in Part 2.2.1 that the City Council will produce a design guide for new development in the Quarter.

The Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Design Guide should be read in conjunction with the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

PURPOSE
This guide does not aim to stultify development but rather to promote sensitive new design of high quality which demonstrates a sympathetic and contemporary response to the unique historic context of the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area. Proposals which follow the guidance will be received positively. Poor quality proposals which ignore its requirements will be unlikely to gain consent.

All applications should contain a design statement showing how the principles contained in this document have been addressed.
The topography of the Jewellery Quarter allows good views within, into and from the area and enhances the vistas along its streets. In any new design therefore it is important to establish how and from where the proposed development will be seen.

Consider
- Long distance views to and from the site.
- How the development is viewed within its immediate context.

**ROOFSCAPE**
The Quarter’s varied roofscape forms an important element in the views into and through the area. Features such as chimneys and gables add variety and interest.

Rooftop plant can be bulky and intrusive. Plant should always be carefully integrated into the design of any new development. Where possible it should be accommodated at basement level or in the roofspace.

Setback storeys and brise-solies should be avoided. They introduce a dominant horizontal element uncharacteristic of the area which intrudes on the historic rooflines and the local street scene.

**ROOFSCAPE**

The varied roofscape of the Jewellery Quarter
HISTORIC LANDMARKS

Historic landmarks enhance the legibility of the Quarter’s townscape and reinforce its sense of place. New development should not block important views of such buildings and structures as seen from public space.

Consider

- Where these landmarks are and from where they can be seen.
- Will the proposed development block important views of any landmarks?

Provide

- Context plan showing views to and from the site.
- Photomontages showing views of proposed development.
- Existing sections through the surrounding blocks.

**View of St Paul’s Church - a historic landmark in the Jewellery Quarter**

[Image of a street view with St Paul’s Church in the background.]
Hierarchy

STREET HIERARCHY
The Jewellery Quarter has a clear hierarchy of streets. Any site is defined by its location within this pattern. New development should reflect the local hierarchy in scale, massing and architectural detail.

Consider

- The location of the development site. Is it on a primary, a secondary or a tertiary route? A design which is appropriate for a site on a principal route might not be suitable for a development on a secondary or tertiary street.

- How the proposed development relates to the hierarchy of the surrounding urban fabric.

- Does the site run through from one street to another? If so, street frontages should be designed to address each street.

- Is it a corner site? If so, how does the corner treatment relate to the street hierarchy? In some locations architectural emphasis should be given to the corner, in others a simple treatment is more appropriate.

A corner that has been given architectural emphasis

Buildings fronting a secondary street

The frontages of this corner building address both streets

A simple corner treatment
HIERARCHY WITHIN BUILDING PLOTS

There is a distinct hierarchy of buildings within historic plots. Buildings behind the street/principal frontage are subordinate in scale, architectural detail and variety of materials, their secondary status providing a clear division between public and private space. The massing of new development should reflect this traditional hierarchy.

Consider

- How the buildings within a site relate to one another.
- Use of materials and architectural detail.

Provide

- Plan showing primary and secondary vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
- Sketch showing how the proposed development relates to the hierarchy of the surrounding urban fabric. Identify existing and proposed principal and secondary frontages.
- Sketch showing hierarchy of proposed development within the site.
Enclosure

The dense urban grain of the Jewellery Quarter creates a strong sense of enclosure. The clear division between public and private space is emphasised by the views allowed through cart and carriage entrances into yards and courts.

STREET ENCLOSURE
Buildings should follow the predominant building line at back of pavement to create a well defined and harmonious street frontage. The division between public and private space should be clearly defined.

Some traditional properties are set behind front plots where boundary walls and railings have been removed for car parking. These should be reinstated wherever possible to maintain continuous enclosure along the street.

ENCLOSURE BEHIND THE STREET FRONTAGE
Open space at the rear of building plots traditionally took the form of a narrow yard enclosed by buildings and high boundary walls. New development should follow this pattern.

VEHICLE ACCESS
Carriage entrances off the street traditionally allowed a single cart or carriage through. Gates were hung at back of pavement to open inwards. New development should follow this pattern. Large vehicle entrances leave gaps in the street frontages which erode enclosure.

Buildings following the predominant building line at the back of pavement to create a well defined street frontage

Traditional carriage entrance which sits well within the street frontage

Wooden gate to carriage entrance
Consider

- The width of the street and the scale and massing of the buildings on either side.
- The relationship between public and private space.
- Access for emergency services in larger developments. Fire hydrants and wet/dry risers can be installed to avoid the need for large vehicle entrances.

Provide

- View along the street to show how the proposed development contributes to enclosure.

Street enclosure
The close urban grain of the Jewellery Quarter is particularly distinctive and should be retained and wherever necessary enhanced by new development.

Where the characteristically dense grain of the area has been eroded, through the demolition of rear workshops for example, it should be reinstated to reflect the traditional form. Development must respect the historic pattern of plot boundaries, particularly where a proposed new building covers two or more traditional building plots.
BUILDING LINE
Except where historically there was a front plot, new development should be built hard up against the back of pavement to follow the historic street frontage line. Setbacks will not be permitted. Where domestic privacy at ground floor level is a design constraint, commercial use should be considered.

INFILL BUILDINGS
Infill buildings should be built up to the party walls on either side. Foundations should be designed to negate the need for any gaps.

LARGE GRAIN
In some parts of the Industrial Fringe the close urban grain has been lost. Here consideration may be given to the retention of the later larger grain.

Consider
- The historic grain of the site. It may be useful to look at historic maps and plans.
- How new street frontages can be articulated to reflect historic plot boundaries.
- How the historic plot pattern can be retained or redefined at the rear.

Provide
- Figure and ground plan with buildings blocked out.
- Tissue study.
- A 3D model for larger schemes.

Tissue Study
Tissue studies are a method of site and context appraisal where the scale and layout of different settlements can be compared. The technique provides clues to how the place may be structured by tracing plans and maps of familiar and successful places over a proposed development site at the same scale.
New buildings should respect the urban context of the site in height and scale. New development should not generally attempt to match the height of adjacent buildings precisely but should maintain the subtle variety of roofline characteristic of the area.

Except in the City Fringe building height in the conservation area is limited to a maximum of four storeys. In some contexts however three or even two storeys may be more appropriate.

**PROPORTION**

Traditional buildings in the Jewellery Quarter have regular and harmonious proportions.

The pattern of fenestration is vital in the expression of proportion. As a general rule windows should be regularly spaced and set back within a reveal. Glazing bars and, where appropriate, transoms and mullions should always be incorporated into window designs and profiles and sections should be correctly proportioned.

Entrances should be proportioned to relate to the overall design. They can be used to provide a focus at street level but should not be visually dominant.

Floor to ceiling heights are important in establishing proportion. In the Jewellery Quarter these are generally reduced in diminishing proportions from the ground storey upwards. This should be replicated in new buildings. Provision for commercial use can assist in creating appropriate floor to ceiling heights at ground floor level.
RHYTHM
The rhythmic use of architectural elements and detailing is frequently employed to break down scale.

LEVELS
The topography of the Jewellery Quarter can create various changes in level within a development site. New buildings should sit on actual ground level and floorplates should step down the hill. They should accommodate any changes in level and follow the gradient within the development site.

Consider
- How floor to ceiling heights affect proportion.
- How the proposed development responds to the height of the surrounding buildings.
- How the proposed development responds to the rhythm and proportion of the surrounding buildings.

Provide
- A bird’s eye perspective showing the height of the proposed development in relation to the adjacent buildings.
- Perspective drawing of the new development within the existing street scene.
- Indication of floor levels of proposed and adjacent buildings on drawings and perspectives.
- 1:50 indicative details of windows, together with 1:20 window profiles and sections.
- A site plan showing levels.
One of the defining characteristics of the Jewellery Quarter is the limited palette of traditional materials, generally red brick with brick, stone or terracotta details and blue grey slate. Window frames are timber or metal. These materials should be used in new development to reflect local context and create a harmonious street scene. Other high quality materials may be allowed where they are sympathetic and can be shown to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area.

Materials which disrupt the harmony of the streetscape such as silver/light grey cladding, timber cladding, render or yellow brickwork will not be allowed. The use of UPVC for windows, doors and cladding will not be permitted. The use of reclaimed traditional materials is sustainable and will be encouraged. White glazed bricks were sometimes employed in the Quarter to reflect natural light through side or rear windows. The use of this material to achieve the same purpose may be acceptable in new designs.
Consider

- How materials are to be used. Stone, for example, must not be used to face an entire façade.
- The sustainability of materials.
- How building materials will weather.
- How mortar joints and brick bonding can contribute to the overall quality of the design.

Provide

- Full colour drawings of elevations showing texture and 3-dimensional effect.
- A condition requiring samples of all materials will be attached to planning approvals. Details of materials must be submitted with your application, preferably in the form of a colour sample/board.
- A sample panel constructed on site, showing brick bonding and mortar joints.

Full colour drawing

Principal frontage in terracotta

Workshop with banded brickwork and traditional metal window frames

Stone used to give horizontal emphasis
Architectural detail should always be an integral part of the design of any new development in the Quarter and should never be considered as an afterthought. The primary frontage should be the focus of architectural display with secondary buildings given a simpler treatment.

Architectural detail should be functional. It should promote legibility, reflect hierarchy, contribute to scale, proportion and rhythm and help protect the building from the weather.

There should be no unnecessary clutter on the façades of new buildings. If safety rails are required, simple bars in the window opening should be used rather than Juliet balconies or railings which project from the face of the building.

Balconies, whether projecting or recessed, should not be positioned on street frontages. Balconies on the rear of existing buildings will not be permitted but may be allowed on the rear elevations of new development where these are not open to public view.

Entrance canopies disrupt the harmony of the streetscape and should be avoided.
Consider
- How architectural detail can promote legibility.
- How it can reduce scale.
- How it can provide protection from the weather.

Provide
- For all architectural details,
  - Large scale indicative drawings.
  - Cross and vertical sections.

Simple modern entrance in a yard

Architectural display on a primary frontage

Large scale indicative drawings
Private external space in the Jewellery Quarter was traditionally provided by narrow rear yards, usually paved in blue brick. New development should reflect this tradition.

**FRONT PLOTS**
Some properties have front plots that have been paved over for car parking and the boundary walls and railings removed. The reinstatement of front boundary walls, gates and railings will be encouraged. The development of car parking spaces on forecourts will not normally be permitted.
The demolition or part demolition of buildings for the development of car parking will not normally be allowed. Parking in the rear yards of existing buildings may be permitted where there is a carriage entrance off the street. In new development car parking should be accommodated below ground, wherever possible, or in small enclosed rear yards.

Consider
- The use of surface materials in rear yards. These should be traditional, simple and robust, blue bricks or paviors, for example. Planting schemes should be limited to pots and tubs or narrow planting strips along walls.
- The boundary treatment of surviving front plots. The reinstatement of traditional boundary walls, gates and railings will enhance the appearance of both the building and the conservation area.
- How car parking can be integrated into development to create the least impact on the character of the area.

Provide
- Site plan/perspectives indicating landscaping details and materials.
In a commercial area such as the Jewellery Quarter signage can make a significant contribution to local character.

There is a wide range of traditional sign types in the Quarter:
- Signs painted directly onto brickwork.
- Painted timber boards.
- Relief lettering.
- Planted or incised lettering.
- Etched or painted windows.
- A series of metal or wooden plaques on buildings in multiple occupation.

New signage should reflect one or other of these types, with the emphasis on quality and finish.

Signage should be designed to suit the proportions of the building. It should not clutter the façade or destroy or obscure architectural detailing.

SHOPFRONTS
Retail units generally have a shopfront or display window. The City Council’s Shopfronts Design Guide (adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 1995) contains policies relating to the appearance of shopfronts and retail signage. Reference should be made to these policies when designing new buildings with a retail element or shopfronts within an existing building. In the unique context of the Jewellery Quarter special regard should be paid to characteristic local design and materials.

Examples of display windows

Examples of traditional and modern signage in the Jewellery Quarter

Well proportioned signage which forms part of the architectural detailing
**LIGHTING**

Shopfronts and fascias should be externally lit. Lighting should be unobtrusive. Internally illuminated signs are not permitted in a conservation area.

Floodlighting may be acceptable for landmark buildings.

**Consider**
- The size and position of any proposed sign.
- Use of materials.
- The appearance of a proposed shopfront in relation to the building in which it is contained and the local streetscene.

**BLINDS**

Dutch blinds, fan blinds and fixed blinds will not be permitted. Traditional retractable blinds will be allowed where appropriate.

Before displaying any sign check with Planning whether Advertisement Consent is required. Advice can be given on the appearance and siting of proposed signage.

**Provide**
- Detailed drawings at a scale of 1:50 of entire elevations showing existing and proposed shopfronts and signage.
- Detailed scale drawings and sections of any proposed shopfronts and signs.
- Photographs of existing shopfronts and those on any adjacent buildings.

Further examples of traditional approaches to signage
Security in the Jewellery Quarter, where valuable goods are being manufactured and sold, is clearly an issue of great importance. A balance must be struck between preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area and providing appropriate security.

Acceptable solutions can be provided by:
- Security glazing.
- Internal window security grilles.
- Demountable external security grilles.

There is a general presumption against the use of security shutters on Listed Buildings and within Conservation Areas (Shopfronts Design Guide 1995). This applies to all developments in the Jewellery Quarter.
GATES
Gates in the Jewellery Quarter were traditionally made of timber and this is the preferred material for new gates. Where, for security reasons, visibility is required beyond the gate, a metal grille/visibility panel can be fitted. Timber gates can be reinforced with steel at the rear for increased security or a set of metal gates can be additionally installed at the end of the cart or carriage entrance.

Provide
- Detailed drawings of elevations showing the positions of proposed security grilles.
- Detailed drawings of proposed security grilles showing fixing and tracks.

Security bars
Building Regulations

All new development and most proposals for change of use of or material alteration to existing buildings in the Jewellery Quarter will require Building Regulation Approval.

The relevant Approved Documents for work to historic existing buildings are as follows -

Approved Document B - Fire Safety
Covers fire safety issues such as means of escape, internal and external fire spread, internal fire protection and Fire Brigade access.

Sensitive individual solutions can be designed and approved to comply with the requirements.

Approved Document E - Resistance to the Passage of Sound
Covers sound insulation in the case of a change of use and applies to existing walls and floors.

The document recognises that, where historic buildings are concerned, it may not be practicable to improve sound insulation to the approved standards. In these cases a balance should be sought between compliance and what is practically possible.

Approved Document L1 and L2 - Conservation of Fuel and Power
Covers heat loss and thermal insulation in the case of a change of use or material alteration.

The document recognises the need to conserve the special character of historic buildings. In these cases only reasonable provision is required to improve energy efficiency to the extent that is practically possible. This is particularly relevant in the case of replacement windows.

Approved Document M - Access to and Use of Buildings
Covers access to and use of buildings by all people regardless of disability, age or gender.

Historic buildings are recognised as a finite and culturally important resource where it is important to achieve an appropriate balance between accessibility and historic character and appearance.

Compliance with Approved Document M is not a requirement under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). Advice on this legislation and its application to historic buildings should be sought from a qualified access consultant.

Applicants are advised to refer to the following publications by English Heritage


Applicants are advised to refer to the following publications by English Heritage


Appendix 2: Additional Reading


Regeneration through Conservation
Birmingham Conservation Strategy 1999

Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan 2002

Shopfronts Design Guide 1995

The Jewellery Quarter Urban Village, Birmingham, Urban Framework Plan 1998

Building Regulations and Historic Buildings  Balancing the needs for energy conservation with those of building conservation: an Interim Guidance Note on the application of Part L
English Heritage 2002

Easy Access for Historic Buildings
English Heritage 2004
"The Jewellery Quarter is recognised as a centre of excellence for high value-added goods and for its inspiring architecture and character. It is acknowledged as a spatial priority within the Regional Economic Strategy. In support of our contribution to deliver the strategy, AWM will offer assistance to projects located within the Quarter, which will be sympathetically developed in line with this Design Guide.

Rosie Paskins
Director for Birmingham and Solihull, Advantage West Midlands.

"The Jewellery Quarter is one of Birmingham’s most unique areas and it is therefore vital that in regenerating it we do not compromise the quality of design. The Design Guide sends out a clear but positive message to developers and landowners about what is expected to ensure the area’s regeneration is not undermined by mediocre development."

Jan Rowley
Assistant Director, Regeneration Birmingham City Council.

"The Jewellery Quarter is truly an architectural gem and I welcome the introduction of clear design guidance for developers and landowners which will hopefully encourage not only the sympathetic refurbishment of existing buildings but some exciting new designs”.

Andy Munro
Operations Director, Jewellery Quarter Regeneration Partnership.

"The Jewellery Quarter Association and Birmingham Civic Society welcome the Design Guide document as Supplementary Planning Guidance, to help those involved in the regeneration and refurbishment of the Jewellery Quarter, and to encourage good contemporary design not a pastiche, in harmony with the particular buildings and streets that adjoin."

Ross Bellamy
Chair, Jewellery Quarter Association and Member of Birmingham Civic Society.

"Some developments over the last few decades have been an insult to the heritage of our City and the mistakes of the past must not be allowed to be repeated. The Guide concisely identifies the extraordinary historical and unique character of The Quarter and then very succinctly sets out the standards, values and principles that future projects should aspire to achieve."

Tim Field
Chair, The Jewellery Quarter Community Web

"Good design is critical to attracting and retaining good businesses in the Quarter. We need an approach to development which reflects the creativity of the businesses working there and our aspirations for the Quarter as a place which gets noticed nationally and internationally”

David Draycott
Executive Director Business Services Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Business Link.

"Hopefully this guide will assist developers and their consultants in understanding the aspirations for the Quarter which will assist in the implementation of future schemes and minimise delays”

Jon Bellfield
Barberry Developments Ltd.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Ben Bolgar - The Prince's Foundation
The Jewellery Quarter Partnership Board

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Historic Building Plan showing shopping wings