

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

Why Cambridge needs a shopfront design guide

Cambridge is fortunate in having many attractive areas. There are seven conservation areas in the City, including one which covers the historic center. Many of the historic buildings have traditional shopfronts. In the City center, these often date from the eighteenth, nineteenth or early twentieth centuries and many are on Listed Buildings. Elsewhere in the Conservation Areas, and in streets such as Mill Road, old shopfronts usually date from late Victorian or Edwardian eras. The City is world famous for its individual character and it is important for businesses as well as the public that the special quality of Cambridge is protected.

In all aspects of design, good quality makes economic sense. A high quality environment leads to a feeling of pride amongst residents and shopkeepers. Enhancing the shopping areas of Cambridge will increase the viability of individual shops, helping them to compete successfully with general shopping trends away from town centres and local shops.



Trinity Street

The individual character of streets and buildings help people to remember enjoyable shopping trips, so attention to the detailed design of shops makes sense for retailers. People find pleasure in details and pattern, reinforcing their memory of places.

Good quality shopfront design matters

The retailer's view

Shopfronts are the main advertisement for retailers. Good shopfront design attracts shoppers and encourages them to stay and spend their money. The impression of high quality goods on offer begins at the shopfront, tempting passers-by into the shop.

The planner's view

Shops are seen as part of a street, not in isolation. A high quality environment attracts businesses, encourages people to live in an area, and makes urban areas more lively by using buildings fully.

Policy background and status of this guide

The Cambridge Local Plan sets out the local policy framework for changes in the City and provides the basis for acceptable designs in shopping and other areas. Central government guidance encourages local planning authorities to produce guides on a range of issues including shopfront design. This design guide builds on the Local Plan policies and sets out more detailed principles of designers in Cambridge to follow. It aims to help designers ensure that new and refurbished shopfronts fit into their context by drawing on local themes, styles and materials. Planning applications for shopfronts will be assessed against the policies in the Local Plan and this design guide which has been formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The principles will apply to shops and other commercial premises such as offices, banks, pubs and restaurants

The guide is split into four parts:

1. This Introduction
2. Shopfront Design
3. Advertisements, Signs, Canopies and Blinds
4. Shopfront Security

Aims of this design guide

Modern retailing practices can sometimes conflict with the character of traditional shopfronts because of pressures to increase the size of retail units and to impose corporate designs, colours and materials regardless of the building's character.

This guide sets out advice for retailers who want to alter their shopfronts, so that changes to buildings and streets:

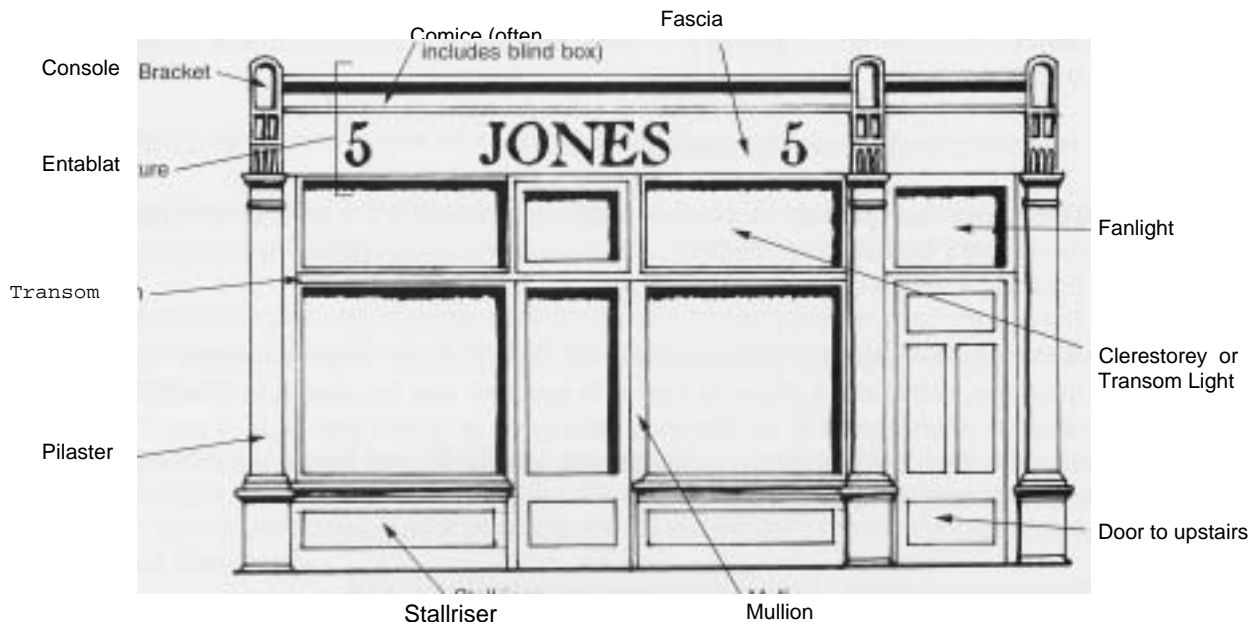
- create attractive and easily accessible shopping areas where local people and visitors want to spend their time and money
- maintain or improve the viability of shopping areas, so that a wide range of goods, services and jobs are available for Cambridge residents
- protect and improve the local character and appearance of shopping areas, individual buildings and conservation areas
- improve access for people with disabilities
- reduce opportunities for crime
- are sustainable



Mill Road in the 1960s

PART 2 - SHOPFRONT DESIGN

This section sets out some basic design principles for shopfronts throughout the City, giving guidance on how shopfronts can be restored, better shopfronts installed, and on designing shopfronts as part of a new building. The guide is not intended to constrain good, modern designs. Well thought out, imaginative solutions will always be welcomed.



Keys to good shopfront design

1. respect the character of the existing building and its neighbours
2. reinforce the local identity of the area and/or create a sense of place
3. add visual interest to the street without detracting from other buildings
4. use special features, finishes and details to draw people's attention and make the shopfront memorable
5. have a clear identity not a mixture of styles
6. avoid blank frontages and deep fascias
7. conserve historic buildings and features as these give the City character
8. visually separate shopfronts on adjacent buildings of differing types, or
9. follow the existing pattern of appropriate adjoining shopfronts on buildings of similar style
10. follow the proportions of the rest of the building and provide a visual support for upper floors
11. keep designs simple, even if elements within the shopfronts are elaborate
12. emphasise the form of the shopfront by using different planes to create areas of shadow
13. clearly define the entrance
14. create independent access to upper floors if in different use
15. provide easy access for people with disabilities, the elderly and parents with pushchairs
16. integrate signs, lighting and security measures within the design of the shopfront
17. employ a competent designer and use high quality materials and craftsmen
18. adapt company 'house styles' to suit the character of the local area and building, avoiding arbitrary repetition or stretching of logos

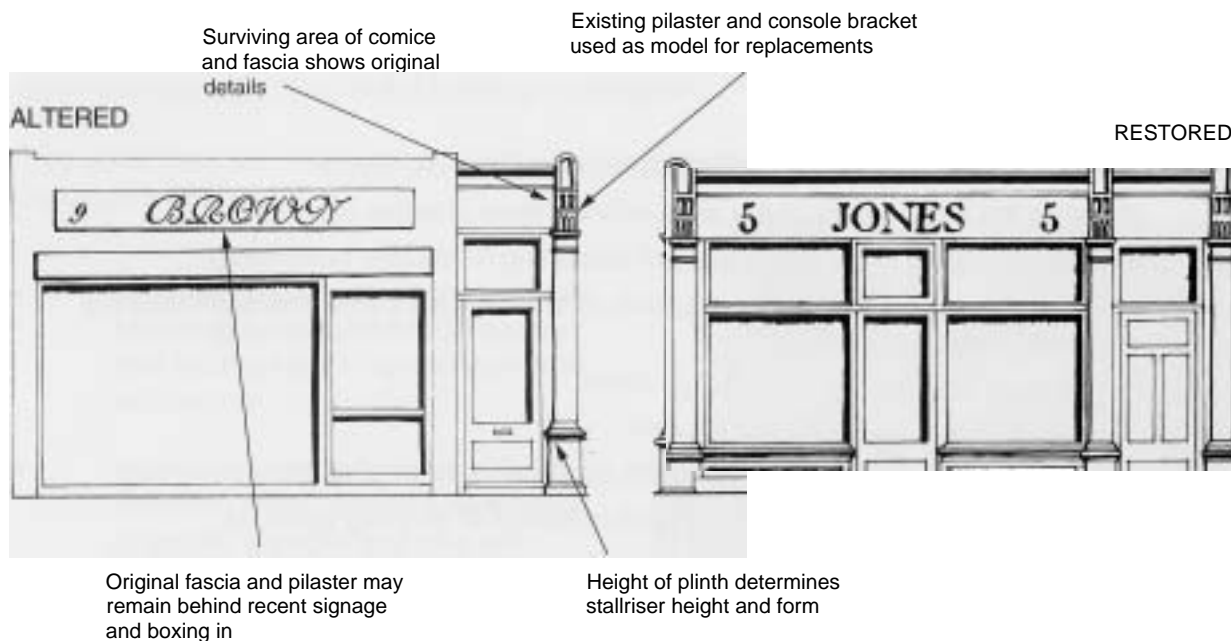
Sustainable Alterations

- reuse existing materials and ensure timber is from sustainably managed plantations
- minimize heat loss and solar gain by modifying the glazing and so reduce energy consumption on heating and air conditioning
- use materials which do not consume large amounts of energy or pollute the atmosphere in their manufacture, eg natural paints and wood stains, and the use of timber rather than plastics and aluminium

Repairing and restoring traditional shopfronts

Traditionally designed pre-war shopfronts make a great contribution to the character of the City. Their removal from Listed Buildings or traditional buildings in Conservation Areas will not be allowed unless they are totally incapable of repair.

Usually some element of an original shopfront remains, though it can often be hidden by later additions. For example, old fascias often lie beneath modern box fascias, and pilasters and console brackets were often boxed in as fashions changed, or at the first sign of rot. These features can easily be uncovered, and there are several local firms and craftsmen skilled in the restoration of traditional features.



If elements of the shopfront have been removed, there are a number of ways to find clues to their original design. Old photographs and plans are the most obvious. In Victorian times particularly, rows of shops were often built speculatively, so neighbouring properties may have some of the original details. By the middle of the nineteenth century, 'pattern books' were very common. These were catalogues of building products and contained shopfront designs which could be bought 'off-the-peg'.

Repairing original shopfronts is often quite easy. They were usually made of wood, and so new timber can be pieced-in to replace rotten wood. Repair is much cheaper than installing a whole new shopfront, limits the use of scarce natural resources, and old wood is usually more hard-wearing than modern timber. A prestigious new image can be given to a traditional shopfront by repairing it and painting it in a suitable colour.

1. *The removal of all or part of a shopfront from a Listed Building, or traditional building in a Conservation Area will not normally be permitted if it is contemporary with the original building, appropriate to the building, or is of architectural or historic interest in its own right.*
2. *Permission for replacement shopfronts in Listed Buildings or traditional buildings in Conservation Areas will only be granted if the existing shopfront is inappropriate to the building or area, its replacement would improve the character of the building, or the shopfront is beyond repair and little evidence of the original design remains.*

Installing new shopfronts in existing buildings

This section deals with the replacement of shopfronts in existing buildings, and applies when the existing shopfront is inappropriate or beyond repair (see Principle 2 above).

3. *Applications for recreating early shopfront designs will be approved when there is clear proof of the original shopfront, or the design is appropriate to the age and style of the building.*

This approach may be sensible if just one shopfront has been lost from a row of identical shops for example. There may however be cases where the building has been altered since the original shopfront was removed, and it may not now be structurally or visually appropriate to recreate the original shopfront.

CONTRAST BETWEEN SHOPFRONTS OF
THE EARLY AND LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY



Shopfront highly symmetrical, with faithful classical detailing. Windows subdivided. Shopfront set within masonry frame (including stallriser which has light grilles to illuminate the basement)



Shopfront asymmetrical, no adherence to classical detailing. Large areas of plate glass. Shopfront fills the entire width of the elevation

The City Council will not encourage fanciful designs which are inaccurate replicas of traditional styles. Even in Listed Buildings, there will sometimes be a place for appropriately designed and proportioned new shopfronts which use high quality materials.

4. *New shopfronts in existing buildings must respect the proportions, scale, vertical or horizontal emphasis, materials, and type and amount of decoration on the original building.*

Characteristics of shopfronts of different ages

This section should be used to guide the design of new shopfronts in buildings of different ages.

Buildings before 1840

Materials

Timber predominates, though masonry with stucco detailing and marble can be found.



Heffers Children's Bookshop

Building Frame

The shopfront does not take up the whole width of the frontage and so the frame is provided by the masonry piers either side of the shopfront.

Cornice

These were large and had faithfully reproduced classical details and proportions.

Fascia

These were very shallow, hardly deeper than the cornice above.



White painted bowed shopfront, Trumpington Street



Deighton Bell, Trinity Street

Windows

These were often bowed or had arched heads. The windows are subdivided into small, well proportioned panes by glazing bars which became slimmer as the Georgian era progressed.

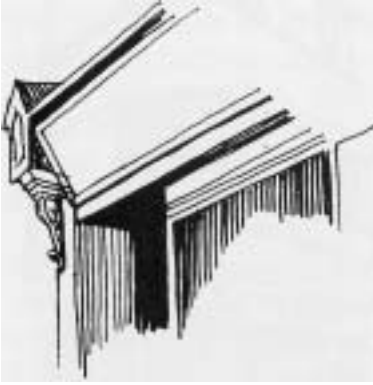
Stallriser

These were always present and usually housed windows or grilles to light the basements.

Pilasters

These were either faithful reproductions of classical columns or virtually non-existent to allow the outer wall Diers to dominate.

Shopfronts built 1840 - 1940



Cornice

A characteristic of buildings of this period. Usually less precise replicas of classical details and more florid decoration. Often used to hide the blind box.



Windows

Panes were larger than on earlier shopfronts, but windows were still usually split into 2 or 3 sheets, and set back at least 50mm from the plane of the pilasters. Later nineteenth and early twentieth century shopfronts often had transom lights.

Fascia

Larger and often tilted so as to be easy for passers-by to read. Should be topped by a cornice which is lower than the height of the top of the console bracket, and on no account higher than the first floor window cills. Should be in roughly the same plane as the pilasters - ie set back from the console bracket head.

Pilasters

Usually quite wide and an important part of the frame. Panelled if wood, though sometimes made of cast-iron, masonry or tile-covered. Topped by console bracket or sometimes capital.



Building Frame

The pilasters, entablature and stallrisers frame the display windows and visually support the upper floors.

Stallriser

An important part of the frame. Usually paneled timber, masonry or tiles.

Materials

Normally timber, though masonry, marble, cast-iron, or glazed tiles can be appropriate.

The post-war period is characterised by the availability of a wide range of building materials. The increased strength of some materials meant that the shopfront could be composed of large sheets of glass. The philosophy of limited ornament, horizontality and the enjoyment of plain, uncluttered surfaces was developed from the fashions of the 1920s and 1930s, though shopfronts based on more traditional designs continue to the present day. Refer to the previous section for advice on such frontages.



Post-War Buildings

Materials

Depends on the character of the rest of the building. For slim section glazing, aluminium, steel, bronze, timber and other high quality materials can all be appropriate.

Pilasters

The strength of the exposed structural elements of the building means that pilasters are often in effect just the frames for the glazing. In 1930s buildings, the glazing was often in the same plane as the building's structure, though later examples are usually set back in the reveals from the main building plane.

Building Frame

Display windows are usually set back within an exposed frame which supports the rest of the building.

Cornice

Rarely found on buildings of this age, except where the shopfront is based on more traditional designs.

Stallriser

Often virtually non-existent. Dark-coloured stallrisers usually look good as a contrast to the lighter exposed frame. The stallriser should normally be in the same materials as the rest of the building and set back behind the piers.



Green Street



1930's Regent Street shop

Fascia

Can often be omitted altogether and replaced by lettering on the glass. Otherwise set it back in the same plane as the rest of the shopfront. Should not project as far as or forward of the main building frame. The depth of the fascia should be in proportion to the rest of the building.



Regent Street

Windows

Usually large sheets of glass with slim section framing. Set back in reveal from main building frame.

Building new shops

The shopfront is an integral part of the whole building design. When submitting a planning application for shop units in a Conservation Area, it is important that details of the shopfront design are submitted, even when the final design is to be determined by the future occupier. Often the shopfront will be set within a masonry frame. Plans should show the degree of set-back of the shopfront from this frame, the position of doors, the sizes of frame section, the fascia depth, and the height of stallrisers.

Shopfronts in new shops should be as easy for people with disabilities to enter as the rest of the community. Avoid steps or steep ramps, make sure doors are large enough and easy to open and to see for the partially sighted. Inside, avoid changes in floor levels, and ensure that access to the upper floors is easy if this is part of the retail area.

Think about the possible security needs of prospective tenants when designing new shops. Allow sufficient space for grilles to be fitted internally, and make sure that shutter coils could be housed in places not visible from the outside. Security measures should be part of the original design not bolted on later.

Will you need permission?

Planning Permission

Planning permission is required for external alterations to a shop which materially affect its character and appearance. For example; altering the size of the window, changing the position of the door, installing a completely new shopfront, or an external shutter.

Advertisement Consent

Some fascia signs and hanging or projecting signs need Advertisement Consent. This includes most illuminated advertisement signs. Blinds displaying advertisements sometimes need Consent, and those without advertisements may need planning permission. The Advertisement Regulations are complicated, so speak to a planning officer if you are in any doubt.

Cambridge Shopfront Design Guide: Shopfront

Conservation Area Consent

Consent will be required for works which involve the demolition of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas.

Listed Building Consent

If the shop is a Listed Building, any alteration which affects its character will need Listed Building Consent. This includes works to the inside as well as the outside of the Listed Building.

Building Regulation Approval

Alterations that affect the structure or safe use of buildings will usually need Building Regulation Approval.

Design - November 1997

Timing of applications - If you need to apply for any form of consent, you should make your application at least eight weeks before you intend to start work, as works carried out without the necessary approvals are done entirely at the developer's risk, and it is an offence to start altering a Listed Building without consent. It is often a good idea to speak informally to officers before submitting formal applications.

Modern light-weight shopfront, Peas Hill



Access

Policy requirements

The Disability Discrimination Act 1996 requires designers to take account of the needs of people with disabilities when altering buildings. The Building Regulations require that 'Reasonable provision shall be made for disabled people to gain access to and to use the building.' In terms of shopfront design this means that a level access should be provided wherever possible taking account of the constraints of historic buildings.

Central government guidance clarifies when level access should be installed and Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 'Town Centres and Retail Developments' requires that 'when existing shops are being refurbished, they should, wherever possible, install level access, unless there are valid conservation reasons or the difference in level cannot reasonably be overcome.' Policy BE14 of the Cambridge Local Plan 1996 reinforces these aims, and expects that proposals for retail uses will include access improvements without losing character and historic fabric.



Maricot Citroot

How to improve access

If installing a level access would involve the loss of important features on a historic building, other alternatives such as handrails should be considered to help ambulant disabled people. Any changes to access arrangements should take account of the needs of people with sight or hearing difficulties by avoiding obstacles on footpaths, making the entrance clear, and avoiding the use of doors which open outwards across a footpath. If a shop has a sales area capable of holding more than 50 people (customers and staff) doors should open outwards. Recessing the doors is the usual way of dealing with this; otherwise guard rails would be needed, and these are not usually acceptable on public footpaths.

Details of acceptable methods of providing accessible entrances are shown in the Approved Document accompanying part M of the Building Regulations 1991, 'Access and Facilities for Disabled People'. This is an extract of the main points:

- minimum clear opening door widths for adequate disabled access are 800mm for single doors, and 850mm for double doors
- maximum gradients for ramped access are 1:12 if less than 5m long, 1:15 if less than 10m
- landings of at least 1.2m² will be needed at the top and bottom of each ramp, and intermediate landings between two ramps need to be 1.5m long
- open sides of any ramp need a raised curb of at least 100mm, and a continuous handrail if the ramp is more than 2m long

PART 3 - ADVERTISEMENTS, SIGNS, CANOPIES AND BLINDS



King's Parade in the late nineteenth century and today



Advertisements and signs

After the shop window, the most effective form of advertisement for the retailer is the sign. For nationwide chains, signs can be even more important than the window display because people automatically know what to expect in the store.

This section gives advice on the types of advertisement which will be acceptable in Cambridge, and should be read together with the accompanying guidance on 'Shopfront Design'. Signs must always be designed for specific buildings with corporate images adapted to suit different types of building and situation.

The Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations

These regulations allow some advertisements to be displayed without permission. Whether or not shop signs need Advertisement Consent depends on such things as:

- the number and size of signs to be displayed
- the type of illumination and the size and position of the light source (all illuminated signs in Conservation Areas need Consent)
- the proportion of the building's frontage to be covered by the sign
- if the sign is on a different wall to the one containing the shopfront
- whether any characters or symbols exceed 750mm in height
- if the signs are more than 4.6m from the ground, or higher than the bottom part of the first floor windows
-

Areas of Special Advertisement Control

Large areas of Cambridge are designated as an area of 'Special Advertisement Control'. In this area, the control of advertisements is stricter, and signs with letters more than 300mm high need consent, as do signs more than 3.6m above ground level.

When Advertisement Consent is required, proposals will be considered against the two criteria of visual amenity and public safety.

Please check with the Planning Department to see if you need permission before you undertake work to a shopfront or sign.

Local Plan Policies

When Advertisement Consent is required, the signs and advertisements will be judged against the following policies from the Cambridge Local Plan 1996, together with the additional guidance contained within this document:

- BE19 *Where Consent is required, standard signs and corporate identities will only be accepted where they are used in a manner that complements the character of the building and its surroundings.*
- BE 20 *Internally illuminated box fascia and projecting signs will not be permitted where they would adversely affect the character of the building concerned, or the street scene, or both.*
- BE 21 *Hand-painted signs, applied letters and traditional three-dimensional signs will be encouraged as appropriate to the character of the building concerned. Where consent is required, signs in perspex and other non-traditional materials will not be permitted on or related to Listed Buildings, buildings of local interest and townscape importance, or where they would seriously detract from the character of the area.*
- BE 22 *Banner signs will only be permitted where they relate to specified activities of limited duration, and where they would not adversely affect the character or setting of a Listed Building or the character of the area.*

Fascia Signs

The Local Plan policies encourage signs which respect the character of the building and area as a whole. Using the following general rules will help your signs achieve this:

1. *Do not use fascia signs which extend through more than one adjacent shop unit.*

Long, unbroken shopfronts and fascias which have no regard to the character of the rest of the building will not be acceptable.



Long unbroken shopfronts do not respect the character of the building and give a bland appearance at street level



Disproportionately large fascias look clumsy and mean that the first floor windows must be reduced in size

2. *Do not use signs which obliterate, hide or destroy the proportions or architectural features of the building.*

Signs which squeeze up against or cover the cills of the first floor windows, or are so long that console brackets have to be removed, or so deep or thick that the proportions of the console brackets and cornice will be lost or look out of proportion will not be granted consent. The size of the fascia should therefore be dictated by the features of the rest of the building. See the section on shopfront design for further advice on fascia sizes for different ages of building.



Aluminium framed and plate glass looks very 'sixties' and not in keeping with the traditional building



This is especially true when combined with deep box fascias clad with elastic

3. *Use materials which respect those of the original building.*

Usually, the fascia will be constructed of the same materials as the rest of the shopfront. In 'traditional' shopfronts (up to around 1940) they will generally be of timber, though coloured glass or tiles were sometimes used. In some cases, the whole shopfront may be of stone or marble. High quality materials, if used sensitively, can be successful on both modern and traditional buildings. Plastics, modern cladding materials and aluminium will rarely be appropriate on Listed Buildings, in Conservation Areas or on traditional buildings however.



Overscale lettering destroys the proportions of the console brackets, cornice and fascia. The style shown is too modern for traditional Buildings

Appropriately positioned lettering of more modest size and suitable type fits comfortably with the elements of a traditional shopfront



4. *Ensure that the lettering size, materials and type are appropriate to the building.*

On traditional buildings with timber fascias, sign writing directly onto the fascia board, or individually mounted letters will usually be appropriate. The latter should also be used where the fascia is of masonry. The size of the letters should be in proportion to the depth of the fascia. They should not fill the entire fascia. The type style should be appropriate to the character of the building, and the text should be restricted to the proprietor's name, the nature of the business and the shop number, not the brand names of goods for sale.

5. *Colours which are out of character with the building or area will be discouraged.*

Whilst the desire to use corporate colour schemes is understood, the rigid application of modern colours can be at odds with the character of traditional buildings. In such cases shopkeepers will be encouraged to restrict their corporate colours to the lettering and detail only, rather than covering the entire fascia.

6. *In special cases, alternative forms of signage will be considered.*

On buildings without shopfronts, letters mounted individually to the wall, name boards, lettering directly onto the glass, or signs hung behind the shop window may be appropriate depending on the character of the building. Where the upper floors have a different use to the ground, lettering on the glass is likely to be the only form of sign acceptable above ground floor. This can be supplemented by a small sign at the ground floor entrance door to the upstairs.

Individually mounted letters are usually appropriate on buildings not originally designed as shops. When illumination is necessary, they can often be discreetly halo-lit.



High quality continental shopfront which is an advertisement in itself



St. Edmund's Passage

Witty representation of the goods sold by the shop

Hanging Signs

The principles described in the section on fascia signs also apply to hanging signs. In addition, the following points should be considered.

7. *No more than one hanging sign on each elevation with a shopfront will be permitted.*
8. *Hanging signs are usually best positioned at ground floor fascia level.*

On many traditional shopfronts, the console brackets were designed to accommodate a support for a hanging sign. On some of Cambridge's traditional buildings, signs above ground floor level will be more appropriate to avoid interfering with architectural features or to maintain the building's symmetry and proportions. This is also true where signs would be so low as to be a danger to passers-by. As a general rule, the bottom part of the sign should be at least 2.4m above pavement level, and the sign should not be within 1m of the kerb edge. If above the carriageway, a sign would need to be at least 5.1m above ground level.

9. *The maximum size of a hanging sign will be dictated by the appropriate fascia depth.*
10. *The materials of construction and letter sizes and types should respect the character of the building and be of similar character to the fascia sign.*



Rose Crescent

On buildings without shopfronts, novel forms of signage can work well. Here the hanging sign is neatly combined with a lantern. Its position at ground floor fascia level means it is easy to read by passers by.

Here a sign above fascia level works well because of the symmetrical character of the building. As the shopfront fills the full width of the shopfront, a sign at fascia level would look cramped and clumsy



Illuminated box, hanging or projecting signs will not be approved on Listed Buildings, in the Conservation Area, or on feature buildings, because the proportions are too clumsy for traditional buildings. Banner signs will not be approved as permanent signage.



This cut out sign is strikingly noticeable, elegant and interesting showing the use of the building clearly

This box sign is clumsy, the lettering style will date quickly and it gives no idea of what the shop sells



11. *Three dimensional signs relating to goods or services supplied will be encouraged.*

These were common into Victorian times because many people were illiterate. Such signs can look appropriate today, as can more individualistic signs which can add a touch of humour or art to the street.

12. *Existing brackets for hanging signs should be reused where they are of an appropriate design and in a suitable position on the building. The design of new brackets should be appropriate to the shopfront and kept relatively simple.*

Illumination

13. *illumination of signs on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas will be restricted to those buildings which are open in the evenings and at night, and conditions will be attached to ensure that signs are only lit when the premises are open.*

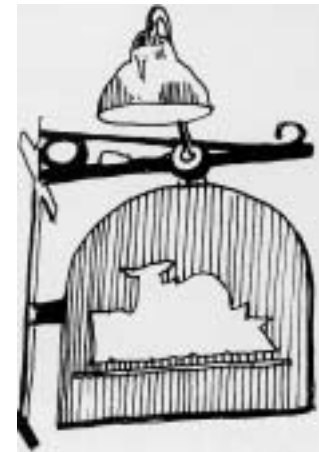
Only shops such as chemists, and restaurants, cafes, pubs, off-licences and places of entertainment will normally be granted consent for illuminated signs. Out-of-hours advertising by other shop types should be restricted to leaving the internal lights on; this is also a good security measure.



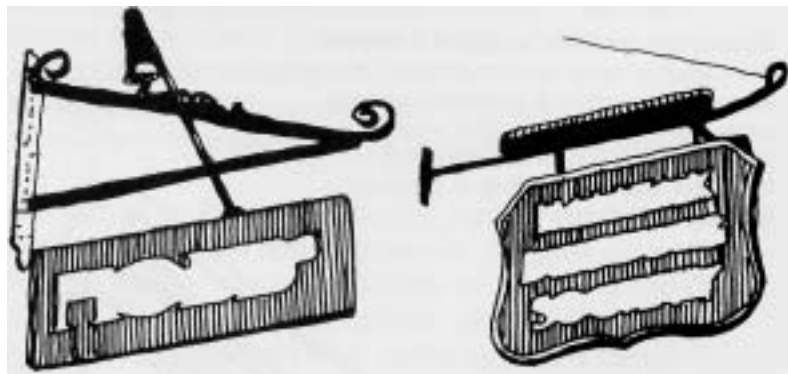
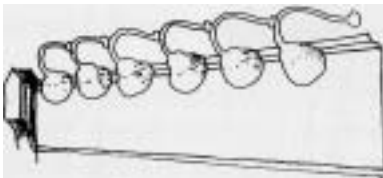
The fascia above is lit by a clumsy strip light which is extremely prominent, similarly below, there are far too many over-large swan necks for such a small fascia.



A fascia lit by a lighting unit concealed within the cornice means the effect of the lighting is seen not the unit itself



The lighting source for hanging signs also needs to be carefully handled. The example above has an over-large brass swan neck which detracts from an otherwise pleasant sign. The examples below are neater, especially when seen from a distance because they blend with the elements and colours of the bracket itself



14. *On buildings where illuminated signs are acceptable, the light source should be discreet and not interfere with architectural features or proportions of the sign or building.*

Illuminated box fascias will not be acceptable. Strip lights which fit within the cornice or architrave, individually lit lettering and a small number (two on most shopfronts, three on very wide frontages) of slim, elegant spotlights can be successful. On hanging signs, the illumination should be discreetly attached to the bracket. Large spotlights, swan-necks or heavy canopy lights bolted on to the top of hanging signs will not be acceptable.

15. *In residential areas, the degree of illumination should be kept to a minimum.*
16. *The light level should be relatively subdued and constant.*

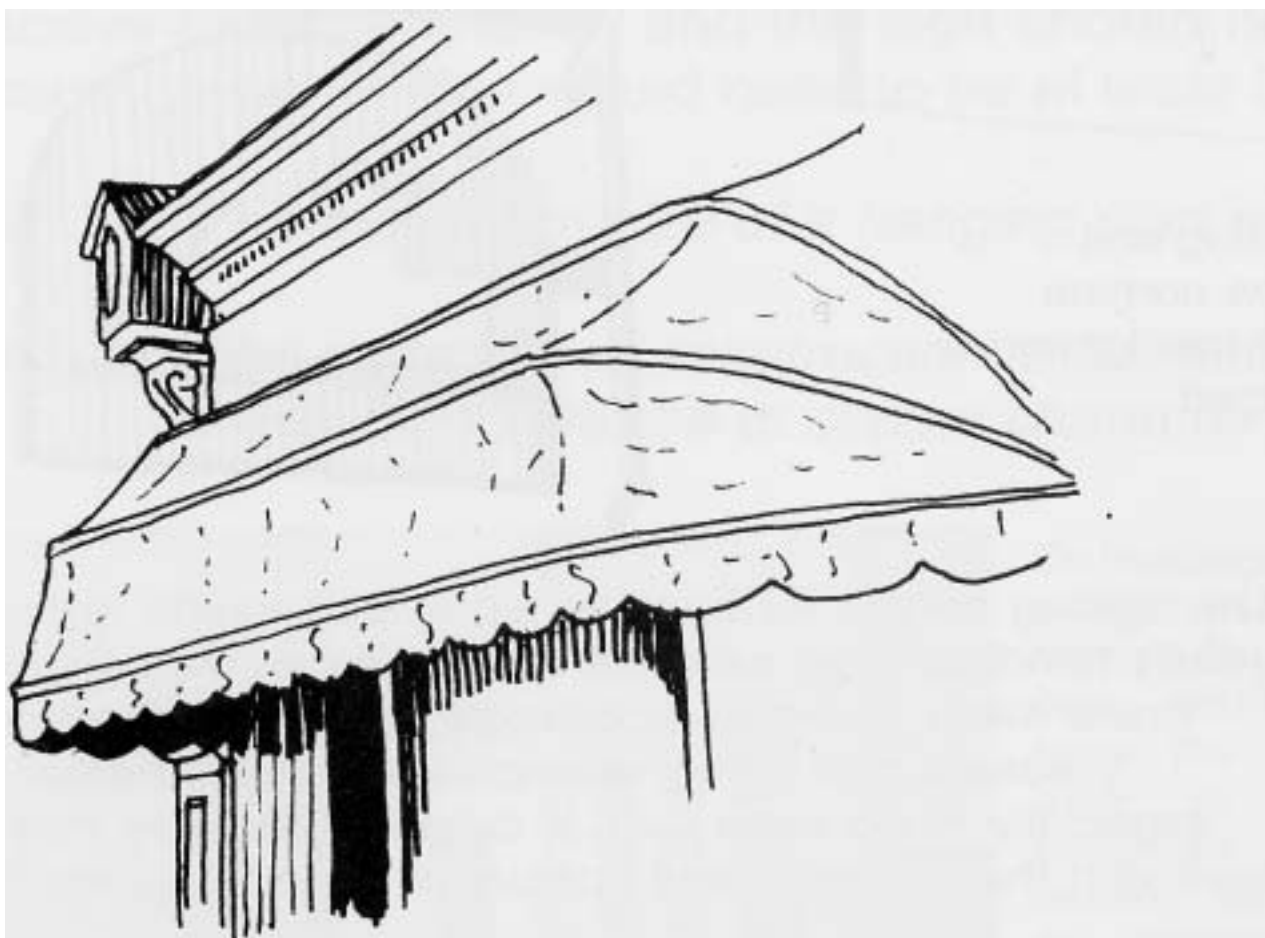
Bright or flashing lights which look garish, disturb local residents or could distract drivers will not be permitted.

Blinds and Canopies

Many traditional shopfronts (especially those dating from the Victorian era) had canvas blinds built into them. The housing for these was incorporated into the cornice or occasionally the architrave of the shopfront. The purpose of these was to protect customers from the weather (sun, or more likely rain!), and to shelter any goods displayed outside.

Modern awnings seldom provide much shelter. They are often of bright colours, wet-look materials and have decorated borders. They are usually supplementary advertising, and are rarely retracted. For these reasons, the Cambridge Local Plan contains the following policy:-

BE 24 *Blinds, awnings and security shutters and grilles will not be permitted on Listed Buildings, or buildings in Conservation Areas, unless they can be accommodated without damage to the character of the building, and relate well to existing detailing.*



Modern canopies are usually of stretched shiny fabric of bright colours,(above) They are for decoration rather than shelter and are rarely retracted. The position means

Where original blind boxes survive, there is unlikely to be any objection to the reinstatement of a traditional blind. In shopfronts without a blind housing, installing a blind box is likely to cause damage to original fabric of the building, or loss of architectural features, and is unlikely to be acceptable. Blinds which cannot be retracted are unlikely to be acceptable on traditional buildings. When open, the blind should be more than 1 m from the kerb edge, and the lowest part should be as a rule at least 2.4m above pavement level. Canopies or blinds will not be permitted

PART 4 - SHOPFRONT SECURITY

Solid shutters give the building a dead appearance. The horizontal slats are at odds with the vertical emphasis of the rest of the shopfront and building generally.



The coil housing sticks out from the plane of the shopwindow and destroys the proportions and relationship of the console brackets, cornice and fascia.

The solid nature of the shutters mean that police and fire brigade cannot see into the shop when closed



Collapsible gates are relatively inobtrusive

1. Getting the balance right

People need to feel that their environment is safe and secure. This is particularly true for shop owners who need to satisfy their own peace of mind and their insurers. The best protection an area can have is to increase the numbers of people living in shopping areas and using the streets at all hours. The police acknowledge the importance of this 'natural surveillance', and the City Council has installed CCTV cameras, will continue to improve street lighting and will work with local people to improve the City's night-time environment.

Shop owners often see solid external shutters as the best protection against vandalism and theft. These can give the impression that crime is rife and stop people using the area when the shops are closed. The Department of the Environment's Circular on 'Planning and Crime' acknowledges this saying *'the creation of a fortress-like atmosphere can be self-defeating. Solid roller shutters can have an adverse environmental effect, giving an area a 'dead' appearance and contributing towards the creation of a hostile environment.'* Some shops will need shutters, but a balance must be struck between the need for security and the quality of the environment.

We will encourage shopkeepers to use security measures which will not affect or will improve the area's appearance. Using appropriate internal and external lighting, reducing temptation by taking valuable stock out of the window at night, removing rubbish outside shops which can be used to break windows, letting out rooms above the shop, and installing alarms and internal video cameras to protect valuable stock can all significantly reduce the likelihood of crime

Acceptable security measures

When considering planning applications for shop alterations, we will expect shop owners to use the least visually intrusive security measures which meet their needs. Solid shutters are not the only way to combat crime. This guide therefore sets out when different measures will be acceptable, and how to install them in a sympathetic way.

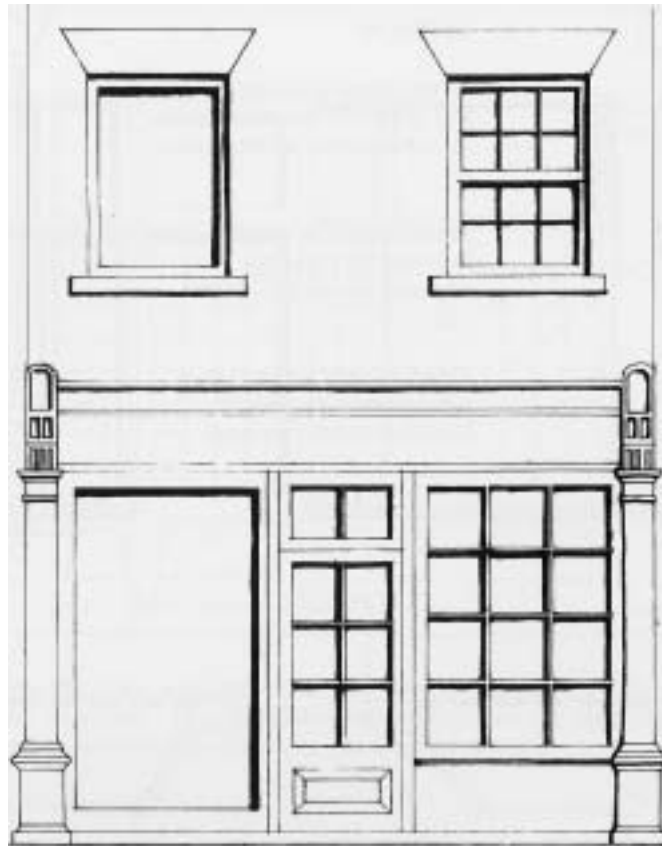
2. When will security measures be acceptable?

	Listed Buildings	Conservation Area where CCTV operates	Other Conservation Area	Elsewhere	See Section in text
Laminated Glass	✓ a (see below)	✓	✓	✓	3
Reduce Glazing	✗ b	✓ c	✓ c	✓ c	3
Internal Screen	✓ a	✓	✓	✓	4
Internal Grille	✓ a	✓	✓	✓	4
Timber Shutter	✓ d	✓ d	✓ d	✓ d	5
External Demountable Grille	✗ e	✗ e	✓ f	✓ f	5
External Roller Grille	✗ e	✗ e	✓ f	✓ f	6
External Roller Shutter	✗ e	✗ e	✗ e	✗ e	6
Gate	✓ d	✓ d	✓ d	✓ d	5

Key

- a Likely to need Listed Building Consent. Only acceptable when no features of architectural or historic interest are affected.
- b Listed Building Consent needed. Unlikely to be acceptable if historic fabric is removed or altered, unless the existing shopfront is of no historic interest, and alterations would improve the appearance of the building.
- c May need Planning Permission depending on degree of alteration. Unlikely to be acceptable on traditional buildings.
- d Will need Planning Permission, and Listed Building Consent on Listed Buildings. Will only be approved if there is an historical precedent and the design is appropriate.
- e Only-acceptable in exceptional cases. Will always need Planning Permission, and Listed Building Consent on Listed Buildings. Installation must be supported by written statement from police and insurance company (see Part 8).
- f Planning Permission needed. Design must relate to elements of the shopfront. Installation must be supported by written statement from police and insurance company (see Part 8).

3. Altering the glazing



Large sheets of glass

- easy to damage
- expensive to replace
- character of building lost

Subdivided glazing

- cheap to replace small glass panes
- glazing bars can be strengthened without changing their appearance
- subdivided glass matches style of other windows

Stallriser

- protects glass and defends against 'ram raids'
- maintains the proportions of the shopfront

Types of glass

Laminated glass can be effective against window breakages and theft. Different thicknesses of glass are available for different situations. It can often be fitted without any effect on the appearance of the shopfront if the frames are strong enough. The main drawback is that when damaged, the outer sheet of glass can craze. Also, if the shopfront has slender mullions and glazing bars (common in many old buildings), these may need to be strengthened to take the size and weight of laminated glass and this is unlikely to be acceptable on Listed Buildings. Sometimes the old glass may be of interest and so its replacement may not be desirable.

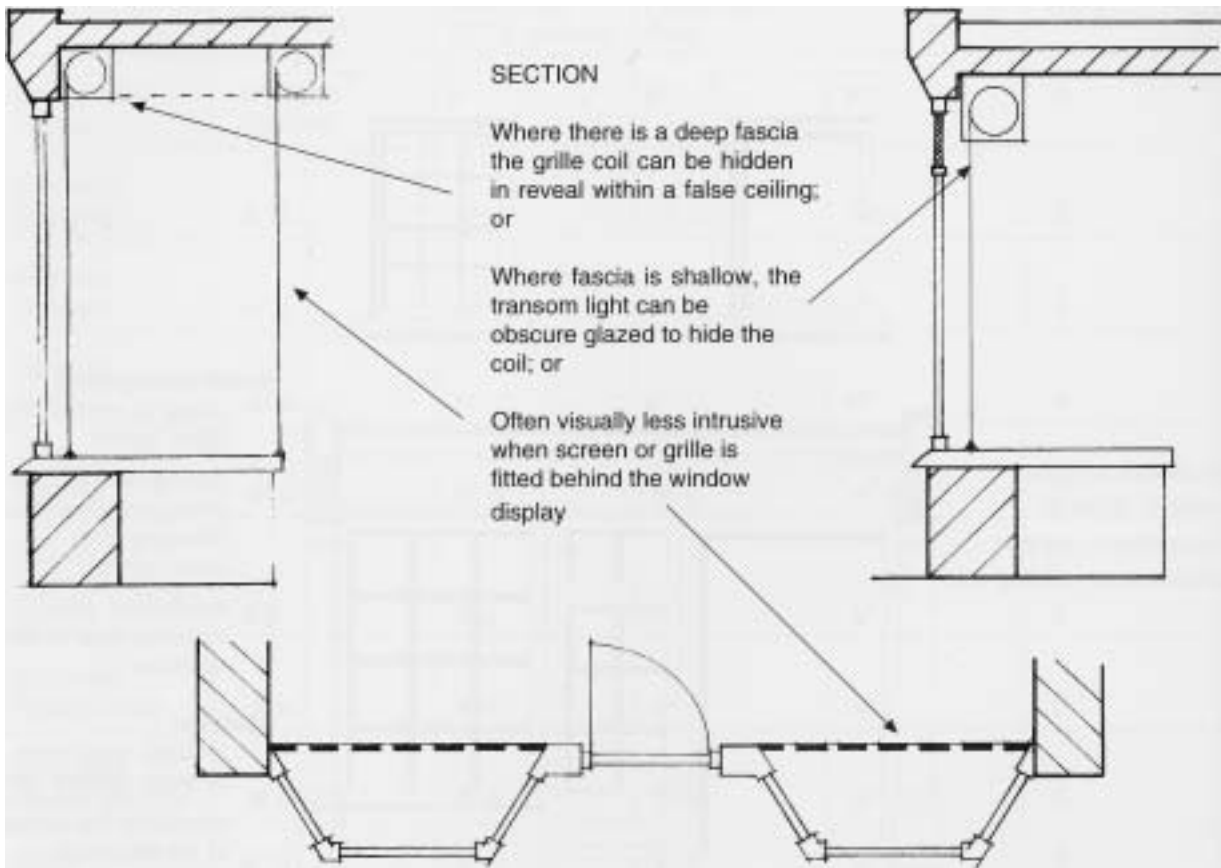
Anti-shatter film holds glass together when it is broken. Whilst this is not as effective as laminated glass, it may slow down intruders and so prevent opportunist theft from the window.

Reducing the area of glazing

Reducing the amount of glazing, or dividing the window into smaller panes can also be effective. Windows divided with reinforced glazing bars can prevent access to the building. Smaller panes are also cheaper to replace if broken. However, dividing the windows up will only be acceptable if the resulting appearance is appropriate to the character of the whole building, and is unlikely to be approved on Listed Buildings unless the shopfront is of little interest.

Large areas of plate glass which run almost to the floor are easy to damage and expensive to replace. Installing a stallriser reduces the area of glass, makes it harder to kick, and is a good defence against ram-raids (see section 6).

4. Internal screens and grilles



IN PLAN

Grilles and shutters fitted behind the display are often a secure and visually acceptable way of protecting shops with bay or bow windows

Screens

Internal screens can be fitted behind the window display. They are very effective in stopping intruders getting into the main part of the shop, especially where there are bay- or bow-windows. When purpose-made, they can be an attractive part of the shop's decoration. They can be permanent or demountable though, because they are internal, they cannot prevent damage to the windows, or theft of the window display. In Listed Buildings they are often the best solution, although care is needed to retain intact any internal features of interest, such as panelling.

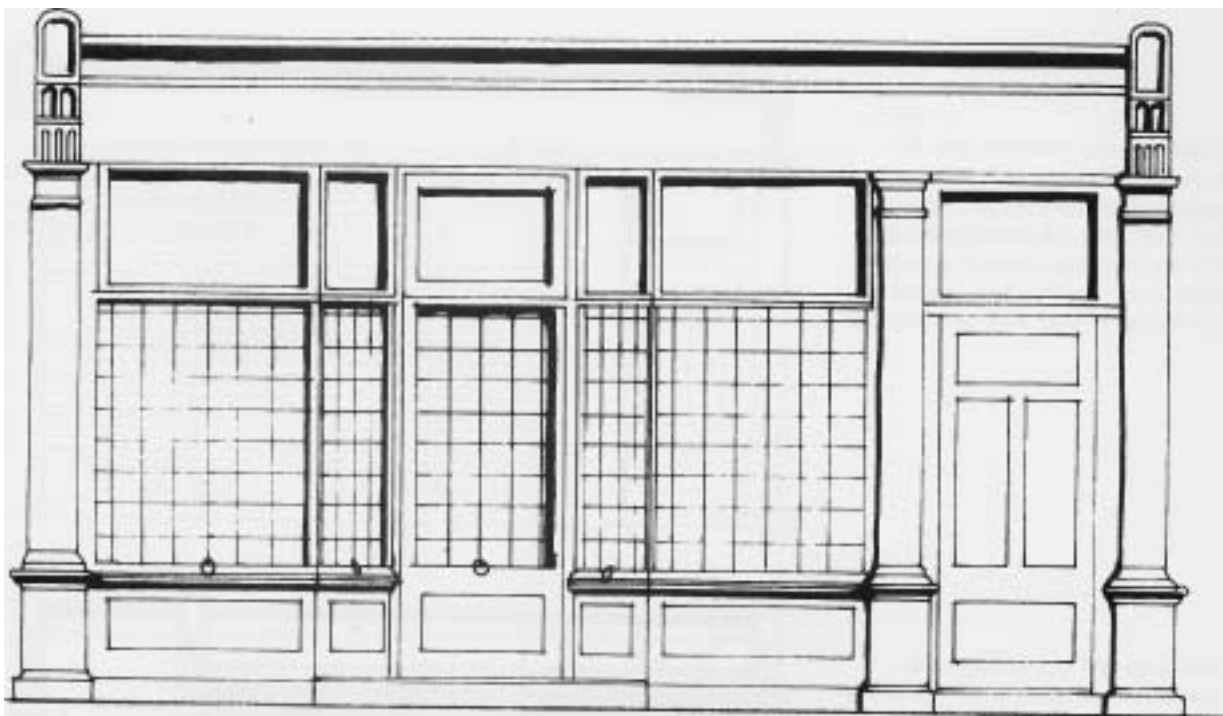
Grilles

Internal grilles can be of the roller type, and so need a housing for the coil. This can be fitted behind the window display (as with a screen). If fitted closer to the glass, the coil housing should not be seen from outside. This can be done by fitting it within an existing false ceiling, within the window soffit, or by using darkened glass in the transom windows.

Installation

All grilles need runners. These should be painted to match the rest of the shop. Care is needed to avoid damage to internal features, especially in Listed Buildings.

5. External timber shutters, demountable grilles and gates



Demountable grilles have the advantage that they can be fitted without affecting the principal components of the shopfront. The disadvantages are that they are ugly, especially when bent and damaged, and they have to be lifted into place by employees

Timber Shutters

Solid timber shutters were probably the earliest measures used to protect shopfronts, though none are thought to survive in Cambridge. If evidence can be found to guide the design of accurate replicas, it may be appropriate to reinstate these on Listed and other traditional buildings. Shutters need to be light enough to be moved by shop workers, and daytime storage space will be needed for them.

Removable Grilles

Demountable grilles are normally made of steel mesh. They are taken down when the shop opens, and manhandled into place and padlocked when closed. They allow views into the shop, but can look ugly. You may have to justify installing such grilles, and you should:

- finish the grilles in a colour appropriate to the shop
- store the grilles out of sight in the shop during the day
- install a separate grille for each display window
- provide simple and unobtrusive locking mechanisms

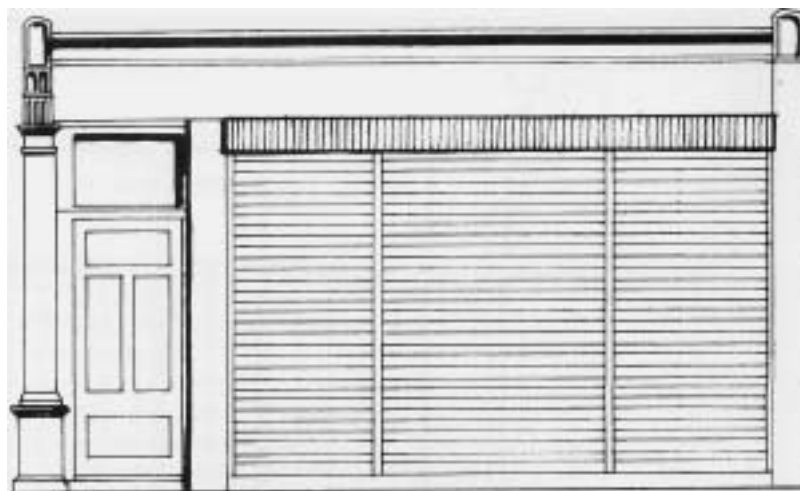
Gates

Decorative gates were often used during Victorian times to prevent people loitering in recessed doorways, though they should not enclose or open over the highway. They are usually made of iron and are available in a variety of styles. They can be a good way of protecting doorways if:

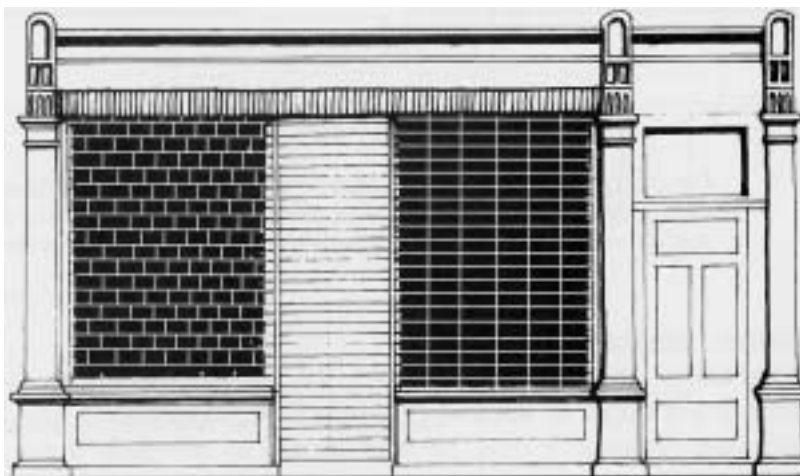
- the style and colour suit the rest of the building
- the gates, guides and locks are not obtrusive when the gates are open

6. External roller grilles and shutters

Solid external shutters give the building a dead and hostile appearance. The proportions of the shopfront are totally lost when the shutter runs down to ground level. The coil housing beneath the fascia is ugly and conspicuous.



Although still highly intrusive, perforated shutters which fix to the stallriser top and have guides fixed at the side of the pilasters at least retain some of the building's character. Similarly, the coil housing fitted within the fascia is a great improvement. Patterns which have a vertical emphasis fit best with the character of traditional buildings rather than brick-bond designs.



External roller grilles

A range of styles of external roller grilles is available, but all have horizontal patterns which seldom suit the character of traditional buildings. Justification for the fitting of such shutters may be required, and the following criteria must be met:

- the fascia, stallriser and pilasters will not be covered by the grille
- runners for the grilles will be fitted to pilasters or glazing bars and painted to match
- the coil housing will be concealed behind the fascia or fitted flush beneath it and painted to match
- the grille will be finished in a colour appropriate to the rest of the shop
- the coil housing or guides must not damage or hide any important architectural features of the shopfront

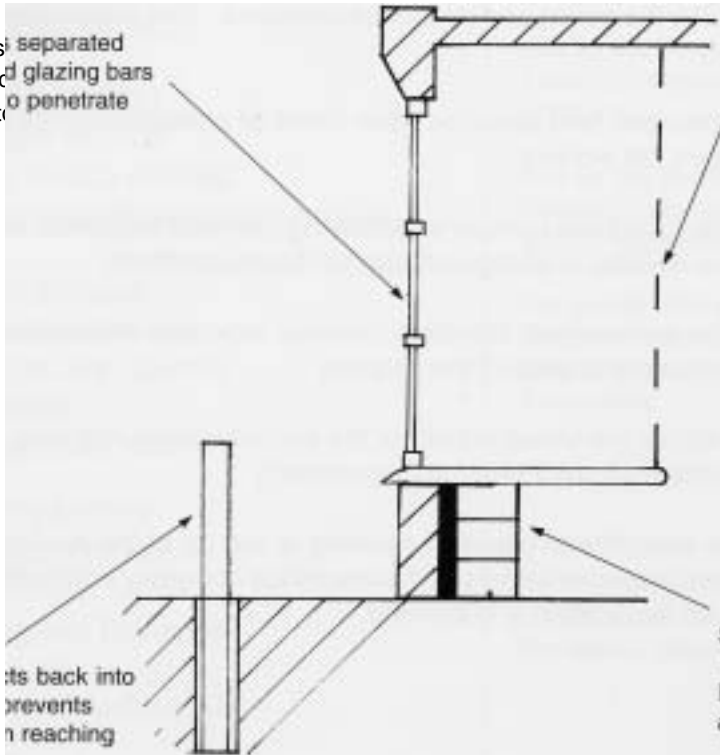
Solid roller shutters

Solid external roller shutters give buildings a dead and hostile appearance when closed. They do not allow views into the shop, and do not allow surveillance by the emergency services. Solid roller shutters will only be approved if you can show that no other form of protection will be adequate (see section 8). Shutters incorporating clear perspex panels arranged in a pattern which reflects the vertical emphasis of buildings are preferred. Fixing solid external shutters should be carried out as detailed above for grilles. Shutters should be painted in a colour appropriate to the rest of the shop.

7. Protection against ram raids

WINDOW

Small panes separated by reinforced glazing bars are difficult to penetrate



GRILLE

Placed behind the window display, means that even if raiders get through the window, they cannot get into the shop

STALLRISER

Reinforced using steel work and blocks

Altering the shopfront

Adequate protection against ram raiding can normally be achieved by a combination of measures to strengthen the shopfront, without using solid external shutters. For example, building a stallriser with a steel or block frame, subdividing the glazing and door, strengthening both the frame and glass, or installing a sturdy screen behind the window display.

Street furniture

Outside the shop, street furniture can be positioned to stop vehicles getting near to the shop. You will need the Highway Authority's permission to put bollards, or any other obstacle on a highway or footpath, and this will only be considered where there is a risk of ram raids. If you want to install bollards or any other external features, consider the needs of the visually impaired, wheel chair users and people with prams when siting them. Telescopic bollards which can be retracted back into the ground during the day should be used. Radical measures to protect against ram raiding will need justification (see Section 8). Measures which adversely affect the architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building, or the appearance of a building in a Conservation Area are unlikely to be acceptable.

8. Justification for external shutters and grilles

The City Council recognises that in some cases exceptional security measures are needed if the shopkeeper is to retain his livelihood. However as the appearance of external grilles or shutters often harms the character of the individual building or the area as a whole, their installation must be fully justified and supported by the police and insurance company. This justification will need to:

- explain the particular problem, and describe other forms of protection which have been used, and why they have not worked
- include a letter from the insurance company identifying previous incidents, and setting out what measures are needed to safeguard against future incidents
- include a letter from the police which identifies previous incidents and sets out what measures are felt appropriate to protect the property
- explain how you will reduce the visual impact of the security measures (see above sections and seek advice from the Planning Department)

We recommend that in these exceptional cases, a meeting is set up at the earliest possible opportunity with the shopkeeper, representatives of the insurance company and police, and the Planning Department before an application is submitted.

9. Applying for permission to install security measures

Planning Permission

This is required for all forms of external shutter, and for any other measure which affects the building's appearance. Bollards or street furniture may also need Planning Permission and approval by the Highway Authority.

Listed Building Consent

This will be required for alterations to Listed Buildings, including external shutters, internal measures which are highly visible, affect the character of the building, or involve the disturbance of historic fabric. Please contact the Planning Department for advice, and remember that Listed Building Consent is required **in addition to** Planning Permission.

Conservation Area Consent

This will be required when works to unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas involve demolition. Contact the Planning Department for further advice, and remember that Conservation Area Consent is required **as well as** Planning Permission.

Building Regulation Approval

Alterations which affect the structure of a building may need Building Regulation Approval. Again, this is needed in addition to other forms of consent.

Approval by the Highway Authority

Consent will be needed for items placed in the public highway.

Where to get advice

<p>Environment and Planning Cambridge City Council The Guildhall Cambridge CB2 3QJ Tel: 01223 457200 Fax: 01223 457109 Minicom: 01223 457050 Email: planning@cambridge.gov.uk</p>	<p>For advice on Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent ask for the Development Control Team.</p> <p>Ask for the Conservation Team for advice on Listed Buildings and Conservaton Areas, and grant aid.</p> <p>Ask for the Building Inspectors for advice on Building Regulation Approval and disabled access requirements.</p>
<p>Highways Division Environment and Planning Cambridge City Council The Guildhall Cambridge CB2 3QJ Tel: 01223 457372 Fax: 01223 457309</p>	<p>For advice where proposals involve work on footpaths and highways, and for questions relating to canopies, signs etc which overhang the footway.</p>
<p>Cleansing and Transport Environment and Planning Cambridge City Council The Guildhall Cambridge CB2 3QJ Tel: 01223 458282</p>	<p>For issues relating to waste disposal.</p>
<p>Cambridgeshire Constabulary Crime Management Unit Parkside Police Station Cambridge CB1 1JG Tel: 01223 358966 ext 3711 Fax: 01223 358966 ext 3431</p>	<p>For advice on measures which you can take to reduce the possibility of crime.</p>
<p>Royal Institute of British Architects (Eastern Region) Clients' Advisory Service 6 Kings Parade, Cambridge CB2 1SJ Tel: 01223 324157</p>	<p>For free advice on choosing an architect.</p>
<p>National Association of Shopfitters NAS House, 411 Limpsfield Road The Green Warlingham Surrey CR6 9HA Tel: 01883 624961 Fax: 01883 626841</p>	<p>For advice on choosing appropriate contractors.</p> <p>A booklet entitled 'Care and Maintenance of Shopfronts, Fittings and Interiors' is available from the NAS.</p>