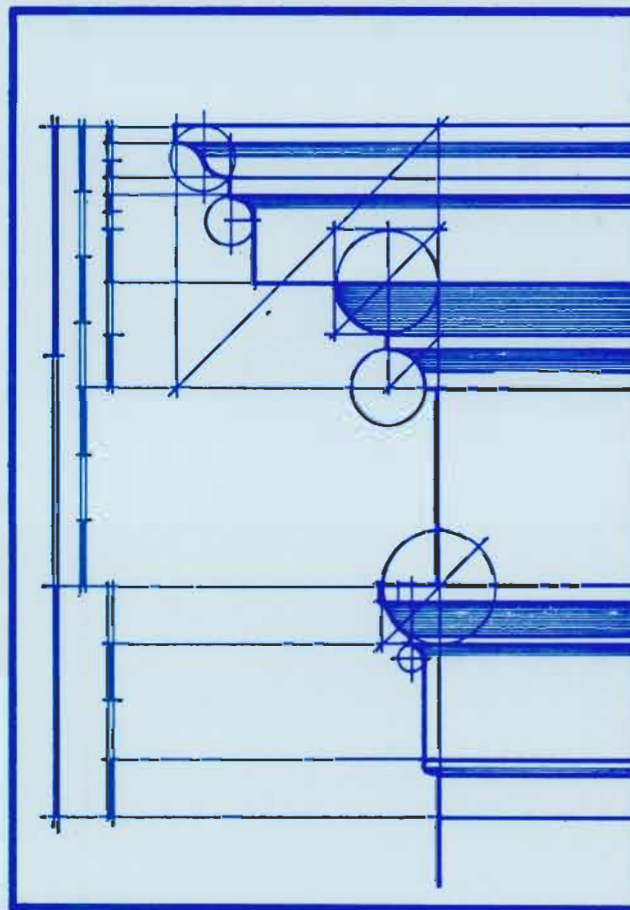




# THE DESIGN OF SHOPFRONTS

## SIGNS AND SECURITY MEASURES



**South Somerset District Council**

Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT

*Conservation and Environment Unit*

# THE DESIGN OF SHOPFRONTS, SIGNS AND SECURITY MEASURES

CONTENTS:	PAGE
Introduction	2
The Building and its Setting	2
Existing Shopfronts	2
Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings	3
Is Planning Permission Necessary?	3
Historic Principles	5
Design of New Shopfronts	5
- Elements of shopfront design	7
- Fascias	7
- Lettering	9
- House style and corporate image	11
- Stall risers	13
- Windows and doors	13
- Canopies and blinds	13
- Projecting signs	15
- Illumination	17
- Colour	19
- Access	19
Shops in Use	19
Materials for Shopfronts	20
Security	21
Applications for Planning Permission What Information Will Be Needed?	30

## **INTRODUCTION**

Shopfronts and their associated signs and advertisements play a very important part in the appearance of the commercial areas of our towns. Most of the buildings in these areas contain a shopfront on the ground floor which is the principal focus of attention and falls in the direct line of sight for people in the street. A shopfront is of course designed to attract attention but its effectiveness depends upon the quality of its design and the display within its windows. The projection of an image of quality and confidence is better achieved by careful design which shows respect for the characteristics of the building and its street than by the use of garish colours and strident effects, introduced solely to catch the eye.

This design guidance has been prepared in support of the policies contained in the South Somerset Local Plan and, having been subject to consultation, carries the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance under the terms of Planning Policy Guidance note 12.

The principles set out in this booklet apply throughout the district but it is not intended that they should be treated as blueprints. The advice is offered as guidance to help towards achieving successful designs and each proposal will be judged on its own merits. Good contemporary designs which are appropriate and relate well to their surroundings are as likely to be supported as strongly traditional designs.

Shops in the Quedam in Yeovil are controlled by specific requirements set out in a separate document although the design principles in this booklet are still relevant. Obtain advice from the Area South Planning Manager in the first instance.

## **THE BUILDING AND ITS SETTING**

The design of a shopfront must relate to the architectural design of the building into which it is to fit. It must be designed to unify the whole and not divorce the ground floor from the remainder of the building. The complete frontage represents the public face of the building and forms part of the street scene in its wider context. In order to avoid incongruous clashes of scale, form or colour the features of the adjacent buildings must be taken into account.

## **EXISTING SHOPFRONTS**

A good quality existing shopfront which contributes positively to the character of the building and its setting should be retained whenever possible. This does not only apply to older styles; there are good examples of more recent shopfronts which are a familiar part of the local scene and add to its richness and variety. They

may not necessarily be listed buildings. Bear in mind that it is often cheaper to repair an existing shopfront than to replace it. Many shops retain interesting earlier features of good quality beneath later additions. These may be capable of reuse to form the basis for the refurbishment of an older shopfront.

## CONSERVATION AREAS AND LISTED BUILDINGS

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character should be preserved or enhanced. There are over 80 conservation areas in the district and many contain shops or shopping areas.

A listed building is a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. Specific consent known as listed building consent is required for any work of alteration or demolition. It is a criminal offence to carry out such works without consent. There are over 5,000 entries in the South Somerset list including many shops and commercial premises.

Your area planning office can advise you as to whether your shop is either listed or is situated in a conservation area.

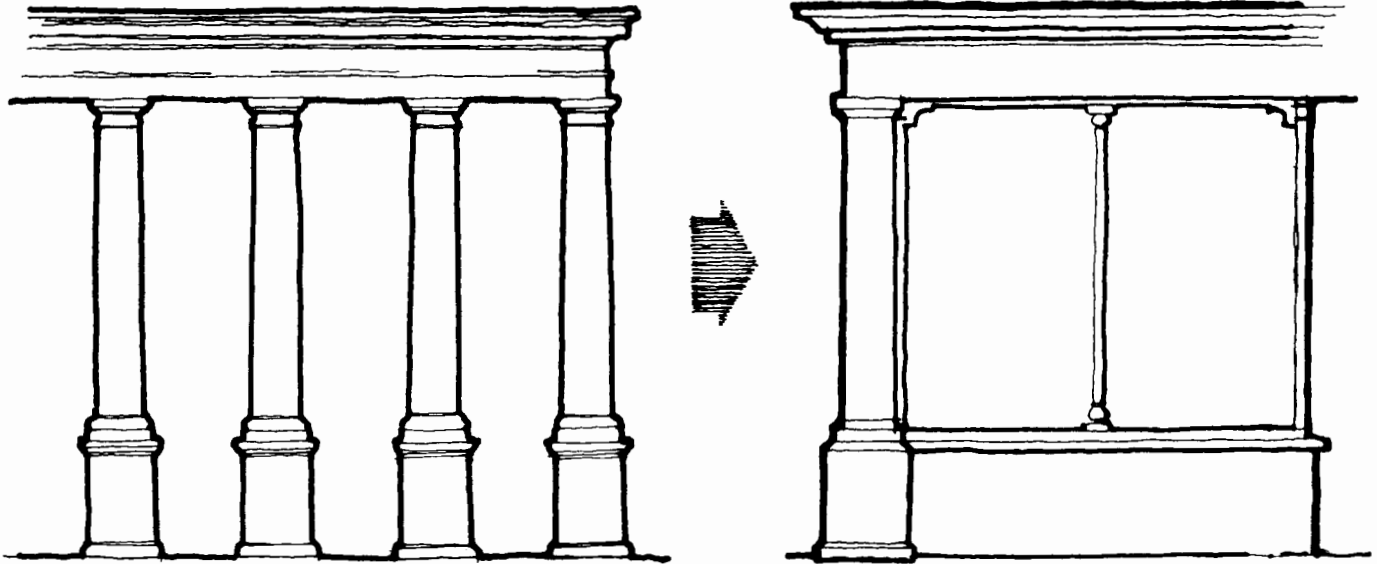
Where a building is listed or located in a conservation area the highest standards of design and construction will be expected and special requirements may apply. The retention and repair of good quality shopfronts even if not original will usually be expected. In some circumstances there may be a case for the replacement of poor quality or badly designed shopfronts with appropriate new installations, provided it can be shown that the result will be an enhancement of the building and its setting.

## IS PLANNING PERMISSION NECESSARY?

The installation of a new shopfront or the alteration of an existing shopfront is development which requires planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

In addition other permissions may be required:

- Advertisements and signs are controlled by the Control of Advertisements Regulations. Obtain advice from your area planning office before proceeding.
- Listed building consent will usually be needed if the building is listed.
- Conservation area consent will be needed if the proposal involves demolition or the complete



CLASSICAL PRINCIPLES adapted to SHOPFRONT DESIGN

DISTINCTIVE 20th CENTURY DESIGNS SHOULD BE RETAINED: THEY ADD TO THE DIVERSITY AND INTEREST OF A STREET.....



GOOD CONTEMPORARY DESIGNS CAN ALSO ADD TO THE QUALITY OF THE STREET..... PARTICULARLY WHERE THEY REFLECT THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDINGS AND DRAW ON TRADITIONAL PRINCIPLES

removal of a shopfront from an unlisted building within a conservation area.

It is always advisable to obtain advice regarding the consents necessary from your area planning office at an early stage.

Note that the addition of external security measures (e.g. grilles, alarm units) will require planning permission. See page 21.

## HISTORIC PRINCIPLES

The concept of the shopfront as we know it today evolved in the 18th century using the classical architectural principles in fashion at the time. This proved to be successful in achieving a satisfactory relationship between the shopfront and the building as a whole. The various classical elements were used in a variety of ways to create a frame for the window displays and to emphasize the entrance to the shop. Since that time the same ideas of proportion and balance based upon classical orders have been used in countless adaptations and continue to inspire designers today. While this may not be the only way to design a shopfront, many successful contemporary designs have their origin in the same principles.

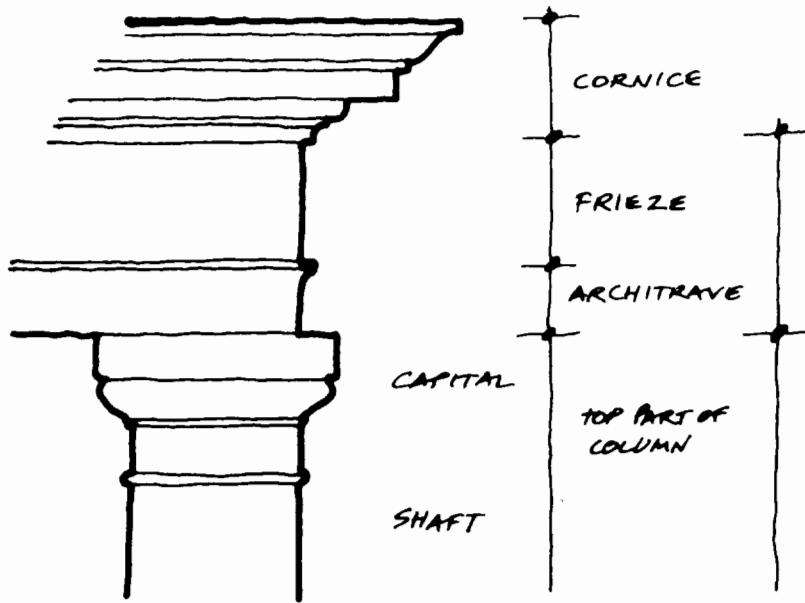
The shopfront's purpose is to display goods for sale in an attractive manner. The surrounds to the windows containing the display act as a visual frame and set off the display in a similar way a picture frame enhances a picture. Just as an unframed picture often has less impact than one framed, so the impact of a sales display can be enhanced by its setting within an attractive shopfront. Poor quality, badly proportioned and discordantly designed shopfronts will let down the display and project a poor image for the shop.

The principle of providing a visual frame is also important for the architectural appearance of the whole building frontage. The upper part of the building needs to appear to be supported at ground level. The shopfront frame when appropriately designed acts to do this.

## DESIGN OF NEW SHOPFRONTS

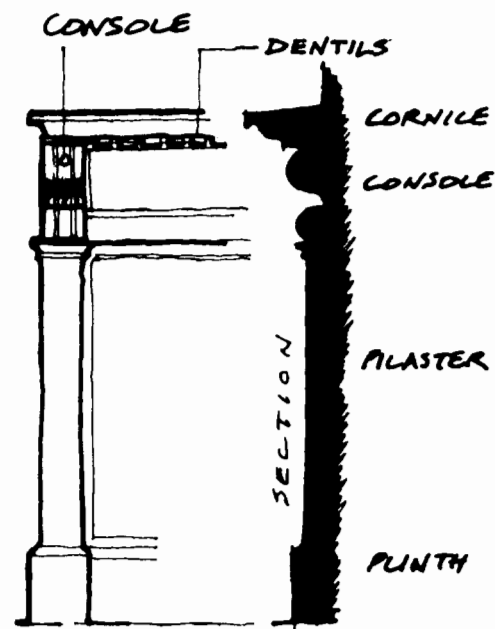
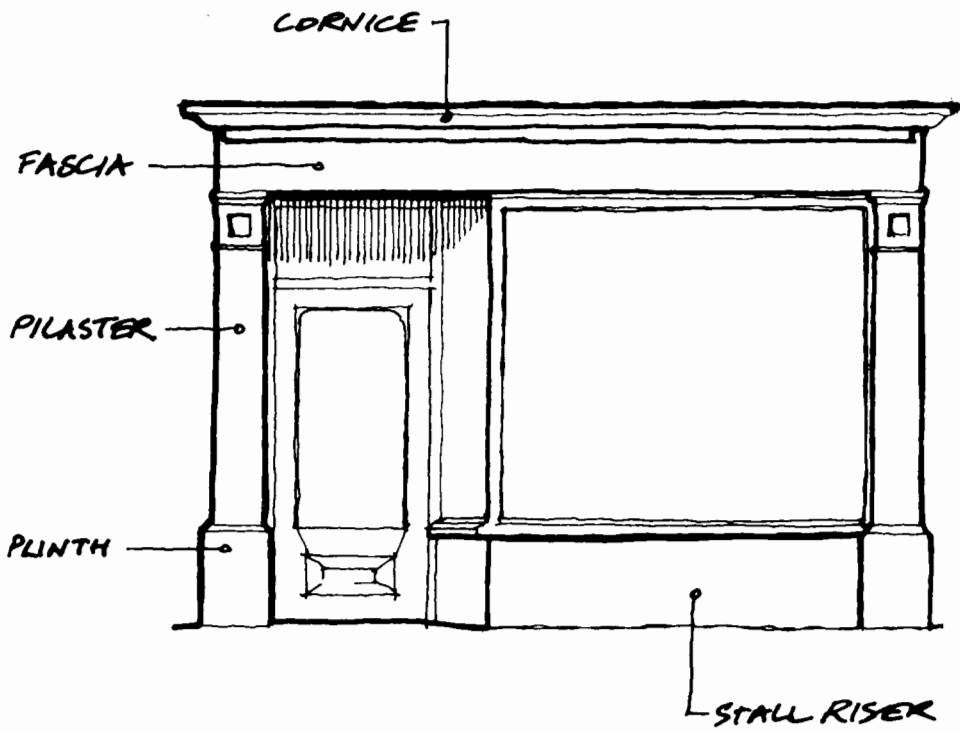
These historic principles can be used today either for the reproduction of a traditional-style shopfront for a historic setting or, by creative interpretation, as the basis for a shopfront in a contemporary building.

In all circumstances, a design which demonstrates an understanding of appropriate details and the application of the principles of proportion will be more likely to achieve a satisfactory result.



IN A SHOPFRONT THIS OFTEN  
BECOMES THE FASCIA

COLUMNS ARE OFTEN  
FLATTENED INTO PILASTERS  
IN A TRADITIONAL  
SHOPFRONT



ELEMENTS of a TRADITIONAL  
SHOPFRONT

Remember that a shopfront is subject to close inspection by the public and its detailed appearance as a piece of quality construction needs to be designed with as much care as its general proportions.

Carefully considered details and mouldings do not necessarily add much to the cost but can add considerably to an impression of quality.

## ELEMENTS OF SHOPFRONT DESIGN

The visual frame traditionally consists of a *fascia* providing space for advertising protected from the weather by an overhanging *cornice* above and acting visually as the horizontal beam which supports the building above. The sides of the frame which suggest support for the fascia and cornice are often finished to represent *columns* either as true free standing columns or, more commonly, flat-faced *pilasters* whose design is based upon the classical column. Pilasters are used in the design to visually express the structure, to mark the separation of one building and its shop from the next and sometimes to emphasize the shop entrance.

The frame is completed by the *stall riser* which provides physical protection at ground level and gives visual weight to the base of the composition.

## FASCIAS

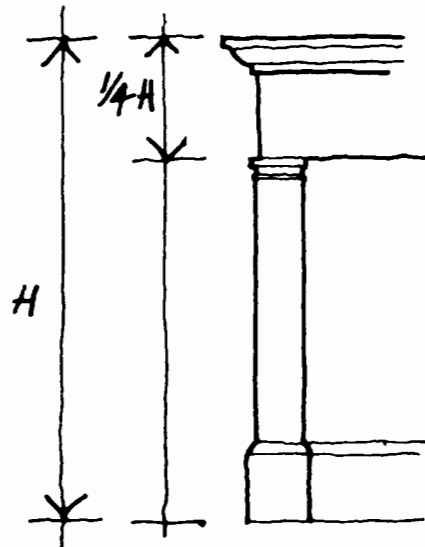
Of all the parts of a shopfront the fascia probably has the greatest effect upon the street scene.

The fascia functions as part of the frame for the display and to provide a place to advertise the name of the shop. Fascia designs should suit the character of the building as a whole and be in proportion to it.

- New shopfront designs will be expected to incorporate a fascia unless a high quality unified design for a particular situation can be shown not to require one.
- New fascias should not be applied over existing ones. The boxed-out appearance which results is generally undesirable.
- The fascia must not obstruct other significant elements of the building. The top of the fascia or cornice should be clear of the first floor window cills.
- The fascia should not be too deep. Traditional fascias are usually no more than 380mm deep. As a guide, keep the fascia and cornice element of the shopfront to less than one quarter of the height of the whole shopfront.

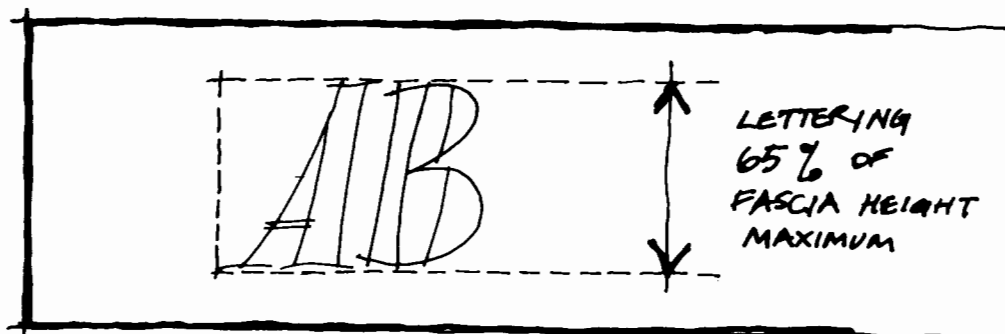


## FASCIA DEPTH



THE DEPTH OF THE FASCIA  
AND CORNICE SHOULD BE  
NO MORE THAN  $\frac{1}{4}$  THE  
HEIGHT OF THE SHOPFRONT

## LETTERING ON THE FASCIA



← LETTERING OVER 75% OF FASCIA  
LENGTH MAXIMUM.

- A fascia usually requires a visual "cap" in the form of a projecting cornice. This will also serve to protect the fascia and the shopfront from the weather.
- The fascia should not be used as an advertising hoarding. Avoid the use of sponsored fascia signs advertising other products in addition to the name of the trade or trader.
- Wherever possible avoid the use of projecting box fascias, whether internally illuminated or not, particularly in conservation areas and on listed buildings.

## **LETTERING**

Fascia lettering is a key component of a design and needs designing and executing carefully as an integrated part of the whole shopfront.

The style of lettering should be selected to suit the nature of the building, the content of the wording, the shop itself and its setting.

Lettering should normally be confined to the shop fascia and identify the name of the shop only. Too much lettering and information crowded onto a fascia sign greatly reduces its effectiveness and results in clutter and confusion.

Keep lettering in proportion to the length and depth of the fascia. A sufficient margin above and below the actual letters and space on either side are necessary to ensure the visual effectiveness of the sign.

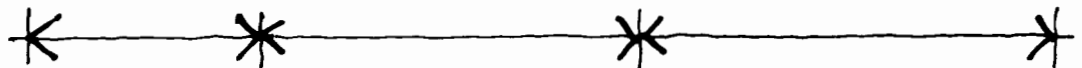
To have visual impact lettering does not need to be enormous. Over large lettering and signs can easily give a shop a poor image and appear overpowering in the street scene.

Take account of the distance at which the sign will be read. There is no point in large lettering if the street is narrow. In practice, 150mm high lettering can easily be read at an adequate distance in the average street. Remember, projecting lettering is hard to read at oblique angles and so may not be effective in narrow streets.

Where a shop has no fascia the application of individual letters to the wall between ground and first floor level may be appropriate. Lettering or fixing signs above the usual shop fascia level will not normally be permitted, except in the case of some hanging signs.



AVOID LOSS OF IDENTITY OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS  
IN A STREET BY AMALGAMATION .....



ALWAYS RETAIN IDENTITY OF  
SEPARATE ELEMENTS OF A  
BUILDING .....

.... AND THE INDIVIDUALITY  
OF EACH SEPARATE BUILDING ...

Where a business is located on an upper floor, only lettering applied directly to windows will usually be permitted. Such signs should be simply designed and not overcrowd the window area. Individual letters should be limited to 100mm in height. Generally avoid lettering and signs applied to ground floor windows.

### **LETTERING TECHNIQUES**

Hand painted sign writing on a timber fascia is the traditional method of lettering a shopfront, and remains one of the most adaptable and effective. The range of styles is almost unlimited and images of great decorative interest and character can be easily achieved by a competent sign writer. Gold or light coloured letters on a dark background are effective in all lights and particularly suit traditional shopfronts.

An image of quality can also be created with profiled wooden or cast brass letters. Flat plastic cut-out letters usually look cheap and undignified and their plain reflective surfaces are not always appropriate.

In conservation areas and on listed buildings painted sign writing will usually be the best solution.

### **HOUSE STYLE AND CORPORATE IMAGE**

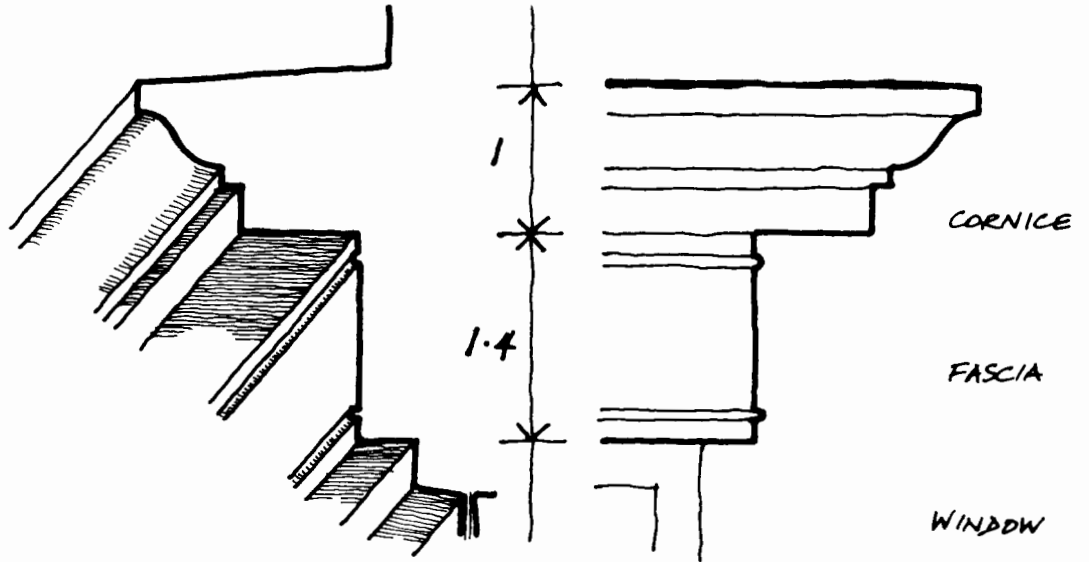
Companies with multiple retail outlets will be expected to adopt a flexible approach to the design of their shopfronts and signs.

Imposition of standardised solutions which disregard the form and character of the individual building and its setting has resulted in many a poor design. Almost all house styles can be adapted to suit a particular situation without serious loss of a familiar identity. The general principles for design set out here will provide adequate opportunity for multiples to express their identity while still respecting the design and setting of their shop.

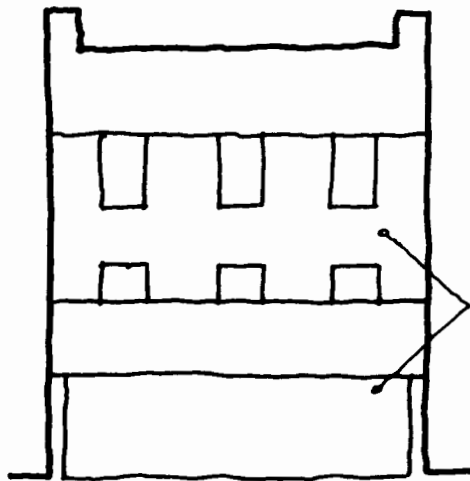
Do not carry fascias across more than one building in an attempt to increase the visual impact of a shop. The individuality of each building should be respected by treating each frontage separately even if internally they are all part of one shop.

Premises which do not usually require formal window displays such as banks, building societies and betting shops need to be very carefully designed to provide a front with a character that is not blank and hostile. In general, this is best achieved by reducing the glass area and increasing the area of solid framing around it. The framing will require careful detailing, possibly with panelling or embellishment, if it is to avoid appearing crude and bulky. It will not be acceptable to simply blank off an existing large area of glass or apply solid

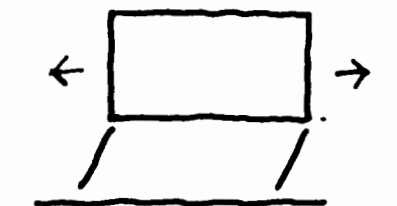
TYPICAL CORNICE DETAIL for a SMALL SHOPFRONT



DESIGN SHOP FRONTS WITH THE WHOLE BUILDING IN MIND.....



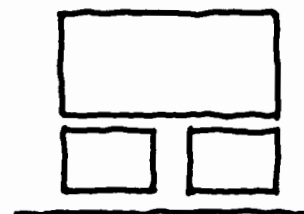
VISUALLY WEAK.....



....LACKS APPEARANCE OF SUPPORT AND STABILITY... SHOP FRONT UPRIGHTS TOO SLENDER



VISUALLY STRONG.... AND BALANCED



APPEARANCE OF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY WEIGHT OF DETAIL AT GROUND LEVEL

panels behind the glass.

Automatic cash dispensers must be carefully integrated into the design of the whole front in a discreet and functional way. Prominent surrounds in bright acrylic or with prominent advertising should be avoided.

### ***STALL RISERS***

Stall risers are generally incorporated into traditional designs and function both to protect the base of the shopfront and give it visual weight and strength. The use of a stall riser is also an advantage from the point of view of security in physically strengthening the shopfront and reducing the size of the glazed opening.

It is generally recommended that stall risers are incorporated into designs for new fronts.

The stall riser can be reinforced as a safeguard against ram-raiding.

Suitable finish materials are:

- timber panelling painted
- ashlar stone
- render
- brick in some situations

Generally avoid:

- rubble stone
- polished stone
- marbles, granites and other non-local stones
- mosaics, ceramic tiles, acrylic sheet, composite or tongued and grooved boards.

### ***WINDOWS AND DOORS***

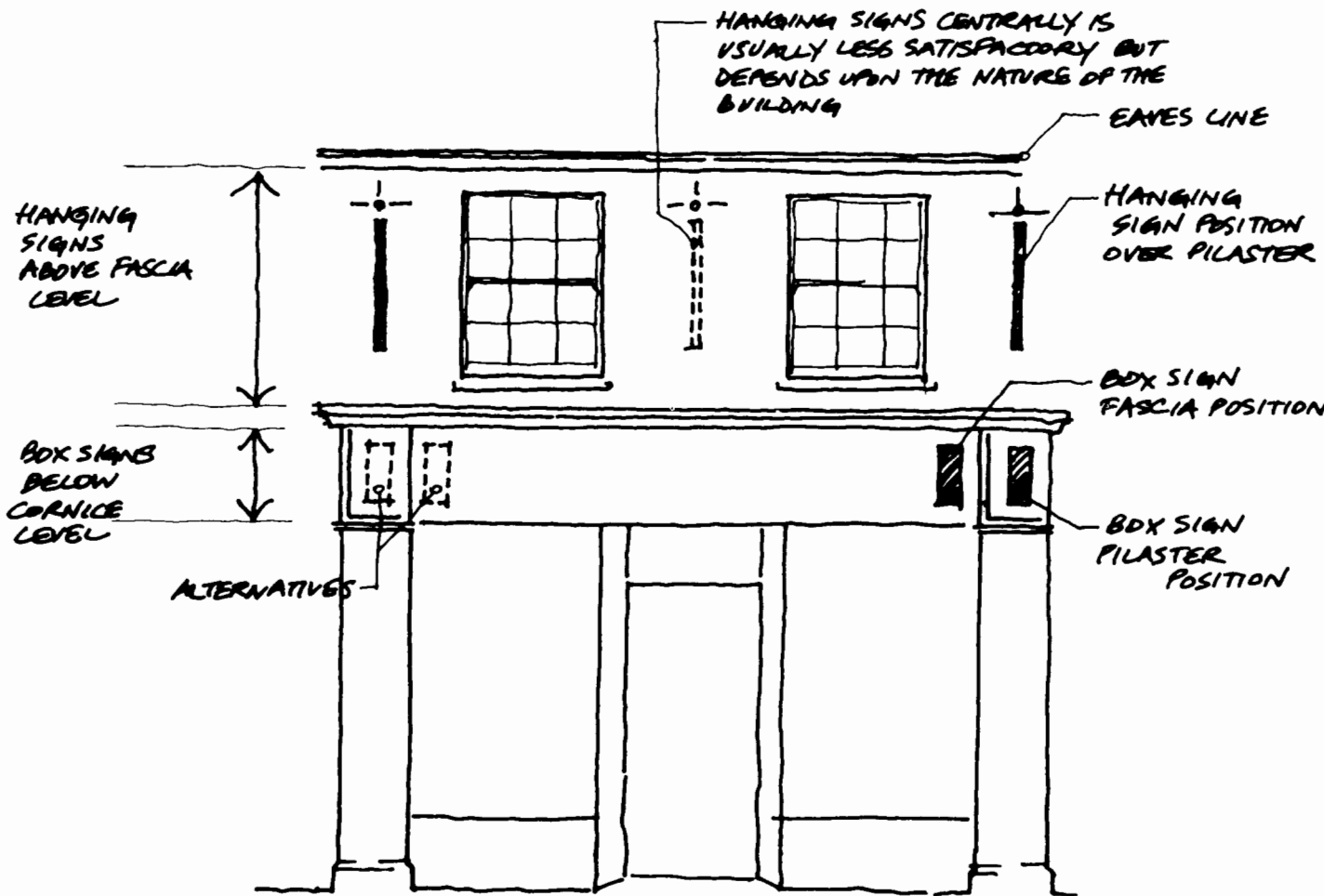
Very large areas of glass are best avoided in favour of subdivided areas. Subdivision helps the creation of human scale to the frontage and can be a means of helping the design reflect the rest of the building, give a stronger visual appearance and aid security.

### ***CANOPIES AND BLINDS***

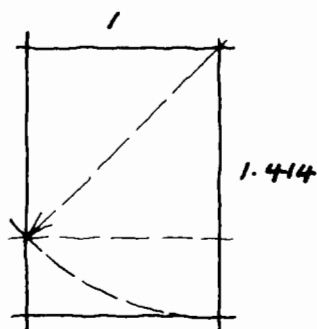
Canopies and blinds act to provide shelter and protect the shop display from damage by sunshine. They should not be introduced as a form of advertising space but always be functional and retractable.

Premises which face north or are situated in very narrow streets should have no need for blinds. Occasionally a canopy may be required to offer shelter to goods displayed on a private forecourt, but this should also be retractable.

# PROJECTING SIGNS



## PROPORTION for SIGNS



$1 : \sqrt{2}$   
 $1 : 1.414$   
 600 : 860  
 700 : 990

MANY BUILDINGS ARE DESIGNED USING ONE OF THE RULES OF PROPORTION EVOLVED TO PRODUCE HARMONIOUS PROPORTIONS - USEFUL IN THE DESIGN OF SIGNS TO ACHIEVE A SATISFYING SHAPE

THIS IS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RECTANGLE IN THE PROPORTION  $1 : \sqrt{2}$  (A ROOT 2 RECTANGLE) WHICH WILL PRODUCE A WELL-BALANCED SHAPE FOR A SIGN WITH A VERTICAL EMPHASIS.

Design the housing for the retractable blind to form an integrated part of the shopfront fascia. This way the blind will relate to the form of the shopfront. Dutch blinds are rarely appropriate since their form when open and the shape of the housing is unlikely to relate well to an existing shopfront.

Materials for blinds should be non-reflective. Wet-look material, shiny plastics, garish or fluorescent colours are unsuitable as additions to almost any shopfront.

## PROJECTING SIGNS

### Projecting box signs

These will not usually be permitted in conservation areas or on listed buildings whether internally illuminated or not.

This type of sign should be limited in size to

- 900mm projection x 300mm deep
- 750mm projection x 375mm deep
- A size between these dimensions

Projecting box signs should be located no higher than the top of the fascia or cornice.

### Hanging signs

These will be in the form of a free-swinging board hanging from a projecting bracket.

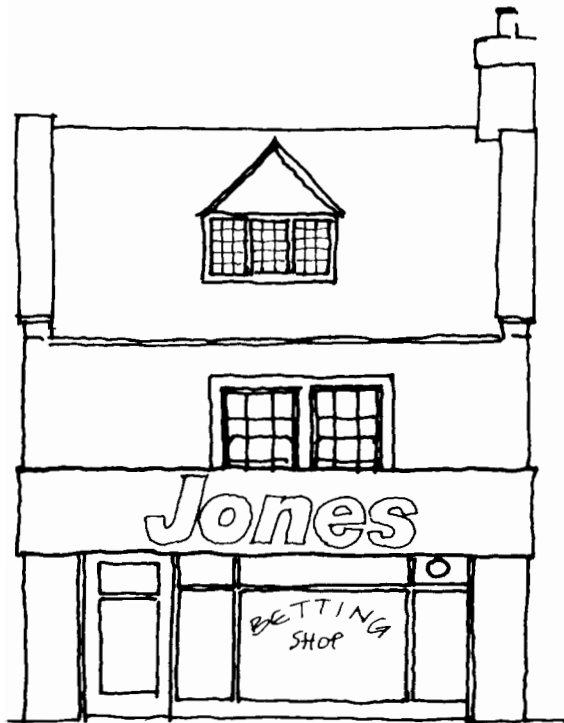
The design of the sign and the bracket must both be of high quality. The shape of the sign will usually have a vertical emphasis but the use of a symbol rather than a board to denote the trade may be appropriate in some cases.

Normally only one sign per building will be permitted.

Hanging boards should be no larger than:  
600mm wide x 860mm high for two storey buildings;  
700mm wide x 990mm high for three storey buildings.  
The size must relate to the scale of the building, the shopfront and its situation, not be too intrusive or too small to be effective.

Hanging signs are usually best located to hang above and clear of the fascia and cornice, with the bracket mounted between the first floor and ceiling levels. Positions on or near to party walls are usually better than central positions but the nature of the building and its surroundings will be the final determinant.





AVOID FASCIA SIGNS WHICH ARE TOO LARGE FOR THE BUILDING.....  
.....THE WHOLE SHOPFRONT MUST RELATE TO THE SCALE AND DESIGN  
OF THE BUILDING .

Internally illuminated hanging signs are not usually acceptable but external illumination may be included provided that it is carefully designed as part of the whole sign. In conservation areas and on listed buildings illumination may not be appropriate at all.

External lights must be arranged to avoid the danger of dazzling passers by and drivers of vehicles and shining into neighbours' windows.

All signs projecting over the public footway must have at least 2.2m clearance, although there may be more flexibility in pedestrian precincts. In situations where the footway is narrow, the maximum projection may need to be reduced to avoid an obstruction. Signs which project within 450mm of the edge of the footway will need to provide 5.1m clearance for vehicles.

## ILLUMINATION

Generally it is preferable to illuminate the display rather than the shopfront itself but it is accepted that illumination of signs and fascias will be appropriate in some situations.

In conservation areas and for listed buildings illuminated signs will usually only be considered for premises which are open during the evenings. Lighting must be carefully and unobtrusively designed to respect the building and be appropriate to the area.

Internally illuminated fascia signs can be visually overpowering in the street scene and project a poor image. They should only be used if strictly limited to a fascia located as an integral part of the actual shopfront. They will never be acceptable spread across the whole building frontage in an uncontained manner. Careful attention to the edges of these signs is essential as exposed strips of aluminium trim will always result in a cheap and crude appearance.

Internally illuminated fascias will not be permitted in conservation areas or on listed buildings.

Fascias can be lit effectively with external sources, but care is needed to avoid the lights themselves becoming prominent features on the face of the building.

Individual letters halo illuminated or internally lit can be bulky, brash and difficult to read from the side. A flat fascia sign is often easier to read and, well designed, can give a better image.

MANY STREETS ARE MADE UP OF WELL-PROPORTIONED OLDER BUILDINGS WHOSE CHARACTER HAS BEEN ERRODED BY BADLY-DESIGNED ALTERATIONS, SIGNS AND ADDITIONS....



GOOD DESIGN AND CAREFUL ATTENTION TO DETAIL CAN IMPROVE APPEARANCE AND ADD TO A SHOPPING STREET'S SENSE OF QUALITY



## COLOUR

Shopfront colour should have regard for the colour qualities of the building as a whole and that of neighbouring buildings and their setting, in order to avoid clashing contrasts.

The local distinctiveness of a place is partly determined by its colours; the colours of the surrounding landscape, the colour of local materials and local traditions of paint colour, all contribute to a local sense of place which can be strengthened by continuity of use. Shopfronts can add to this, perhaps by the use of a locally distinctive colour or variation upon it. In some situations, particularly on a listed building or within a conservation area, some colours may not be appropriate. Corporate colour styles may need to be modified to take this into account. Listed building consent may be needed for repainting a listed building: seek advice.

Selecting colour requires skill and judgement. This is particularly so for strong colours which well selected may add vitality and interest to a street, or appear too strident and intrusive if chosen without care.

Dark coloured shopfronts will often help to highlight the display area especially if well lit. Fluorescent colours will be out of place almost everywhere.

## ACCESS

New shopfronts should always accommodate the needs of disabled people. Wherever possible steps should be avoided and doors arranged to be both wide enough for and capable of being opened by people in wheelchairs.

Ramps should not be steeper than 1:12. Small changes in level may be possible within the footway outside the shop. Consult the Highway Authority for the area. Doors should provide a clear opening width of 850mm and door handles be located to suit people in wheelchairs.

Glass doors within extensive areas of glazing can cause difficulties for the partially sighted. The inclusion of stall risers to the shopfront, glazing bars and subdivision can make a shopfront more legible.

## SHOPS IN USE

- Windows should not be used for extensive display of temporary posters: they can give a low quality image. If posters are needed, the display of a few, well positioned and designed will be more effective than filling the windows.

## **MATERIALS FOR SHOPFRONTS**

- The display of goods outside a shopfront can look attractive if well organised, but take care to avoid displaying too much which could result in a chaotic appearance. Do not obstruct the public highway or footway with displays. Pavement displays can normally only be sited on privately owned forecourts.

The selection for materials for a shopfront must always take account of the style and design of the proposed front, the building in which it is to be fitted and its setting.

### **Timber**

- Do not use too many different materials in the design.
- It is generally preferable to use non-reflective finishes. Wherever possible avoid the use of plastics, mosaics, polished stone, ceramic tiles, smoked or mirror glass.
- The traditional material for shopfronts. The most versatile and appropriate material for all situations, whether a historic setting, a conservation area, a listed building or for a contemporary design. Infinite choice available in colour and design.
- Should be finished with paint as a general rule. Varnish or stain may occasionally be suitable but not in conservation areas or for listed buildings.
- Avoid tropical hardwoods and all timber from non-sustainable resources.
- Timber can normally be inexpensively altered and easily repainted for a fresh look.

### **Stone**

- Appropriate in all parts of South Somerset but usually only in the form of smooth ashlar. Random or rough rubble finishes are not suited to shopfronts. Take care with the selection of the type of stone. Use stone types local to the area for preference.
- For listed buildings and in conservation areas full details of the stone coursing, bedding, jointing, pointing and mortar mix will be required.

### **Brick**

- May look out of place unless the building itself is constructed of brick.

- Each opening in a stone or brick building needs the wall's means of support above to be visibly expressed, whether as a beam or lintel or some form of arch.
- Render**
- Only suitable for stall risers or, if executed to the highest possible standard to emulate ashlar stone. Consider using an appropriate self-coloured mix rather than relying on painting with its long-term maintenance commitment.
- Aluminium**
- Much used for modern shopfronts but avoid the use of self-coloured and anodized aluminium whenever possible. Powder coated finishes have a much better appearance and are available in a wide range of colours.
  - Aluminium is not normally suitable for listed buildings.
- Steel**
- Generally avoid the use of unfinished galvanized steel. Powder coating is available and can provide a good finish in a wide colour range.
- Chrome plate, stainless steel and other polished metals**
- Usually too hard and shiny in appearance but can be suited to very specific design solutions.
- Plastics**
- Much used for modern signs, fascias and lettering. Care is needed in design and selection to avoid a thin, harsh, shiny appearance and with detailing the finish at the edges of sheets.
  - Not usually appropriate in conservation areas or for listed buildings.

## **SECURITY**

The character and appearance of existing shopfronts can be radically altered by the addition of external shutters, box housings, guide tracks, locking devices etc. Such alterations can have a detrimental effect upon the character of a whole street or area especially when several shopfronts situated close together are affected. Out of shopping hours a close-shuttered shopping street will present a drab, lifeless and even hostile atmosphere which, while offering a degree of security to the individual shop premises, is not in the best interests of a town's image. There is a need for balance between the provision of adequate security and the maintenance of the quality of the environment of shopping areas. Always discuss your proposals and requirements with your insurance company and the Area Planning Manager before carrying out any work.

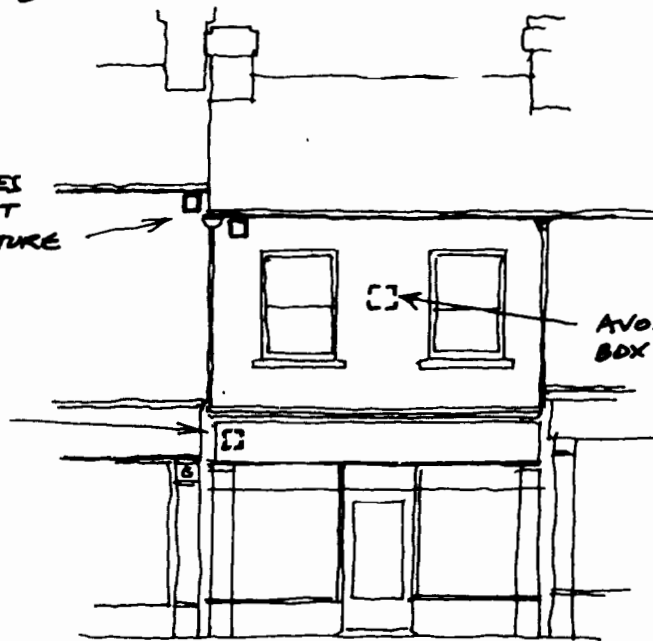
- Planning permission is required for installation, alterations or replacement of shutters or grilles on the exterior of a building.
- Where a building is a listed building any alteration which affects its special architectural or historic character either externally or internally requires listed building consent as well as planning permission. This will apply to all types of grilles or shutters.
- Internal security grilles will not normally require planning permission but will need listed building consent.
- Alarm boxes and other external fittings will normally require planning permission and in the case of a listed building, listed building consent as well.
- All proposals will be judged on merit taking into account the need for security, the likely effect upon the shopfront and building itself, the adjacent buildings and the locality or streetscene.
- Planning permission may be granted on a personal or temporary basis in order to avoid certain security measures which may be needed for a particular business being retained when no longer required.
- Security measures should always be appropriate to the likely risk. Before deciding upon any one measure it is advisable to consider the security of the building as a whole taking advice from the police and insurance company. In many instances break-ins take place at the rear of premises while the fronts are often more at risk from casual vandalism.
- Visible and illuminated shop window displays contribute significantly to the general attractiveness of the street and permit after-hours window shopping. Maintaining internally illuminated displays both in the windows and within the shop will add to light levels in the street after dark acting as an additional measure of security as well as enabling police supervision of the interior of the premises. Therefore measures which do not obscure the window display are preferred.

## **General Principles**

## SITING ALARM BOXES

POSITIONS UNDER EAVES  
LEAVE BOX VISIBLE BUT  
NOT A PROMINENT FEATURE

FASCIA POSITIONS  
DO NOT PROVIDE  
SUFFICIENT SECURITY  
FOR THE ALARM  
UNIT ITSELF



AVOID POSITIONS WHERE  
BOX WILL BE TOO  
PROMINENT



## **Security Measures for Shopfronts**

The following security measures may be appropriate depending upon circumstances. They are listed in order of preference from the point of view of limiting their detrimental appearance on shopfronts and shopping streets. All the measures are recognised by the Association of British Insurers although the degree of security each provides is different.

### **Internal systems**

#### **Alarm systems**

Alarm systems can be linked directly to the police, triggered by a contact, infra-red or movement activated device.

Take care over the siting of alarm boxes. They should be visible but not intrusive and sited to be inaccessible without the use of ladders. Suitable locations will depend upon the nature of the individual building but just below eaves level is often the easiest and least prominent site. The boxes may be required to be painted a colour to suit the building or the setting.

#### *Special Glass*

Toughened, laminated or anti-bandit glass can be used in place of ordinary float glass.

The strength and effectiveness of special glass depends upon thickness and type. The frame strength should also be adequate in relation to the strength of the glass.

Planning permission would not normally be required to replace glass unless the replacement is etched, smoked or reflective. Early shop fronts on listed buildings may contain old glass which it is desirable to retain and listed building consent will usually be needed to make changes.

#### *Internal Grilles*

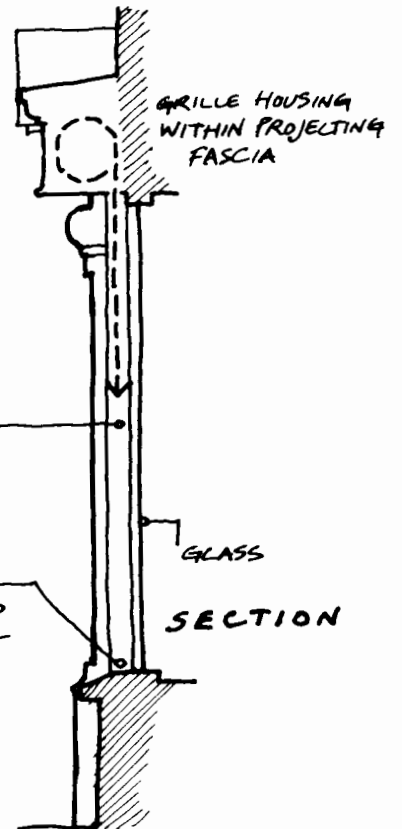
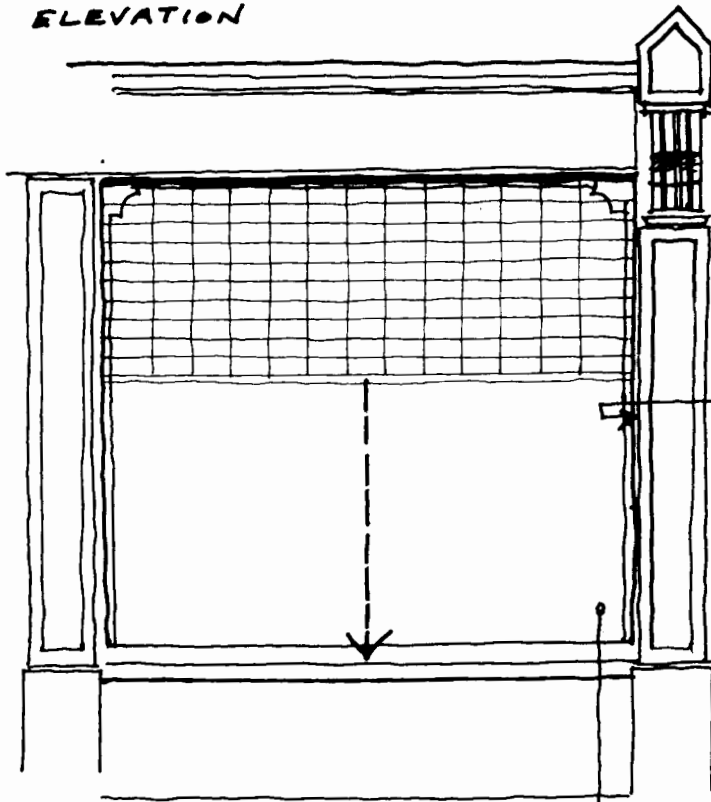
Internal portcullis grilles of open mesh will maintain the effectiveness of the window display and permit visual security. Careful attention must be paid to the arrangement of guide tracks and housing especially in the case of listed buildings. The housing may possibly be fitted either above the ceiling lining or below a stall riser to keep it out of sight. Always use the lightest grille appropriate and have it finished to a suitable colour. Dark colours are less prominent.

This system provides reasonable protection against 'smash and grab' raids because the glass must be broken raising the alarm before the grille can be tackled.

#### **External systems - *shutters, grilles etc***

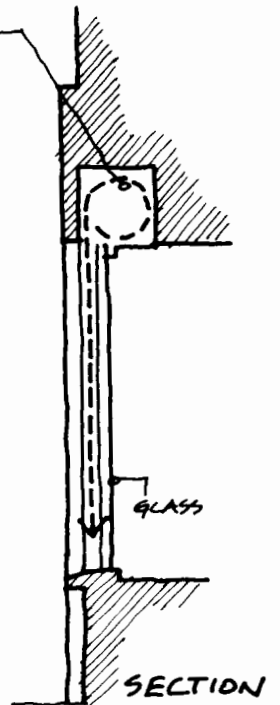
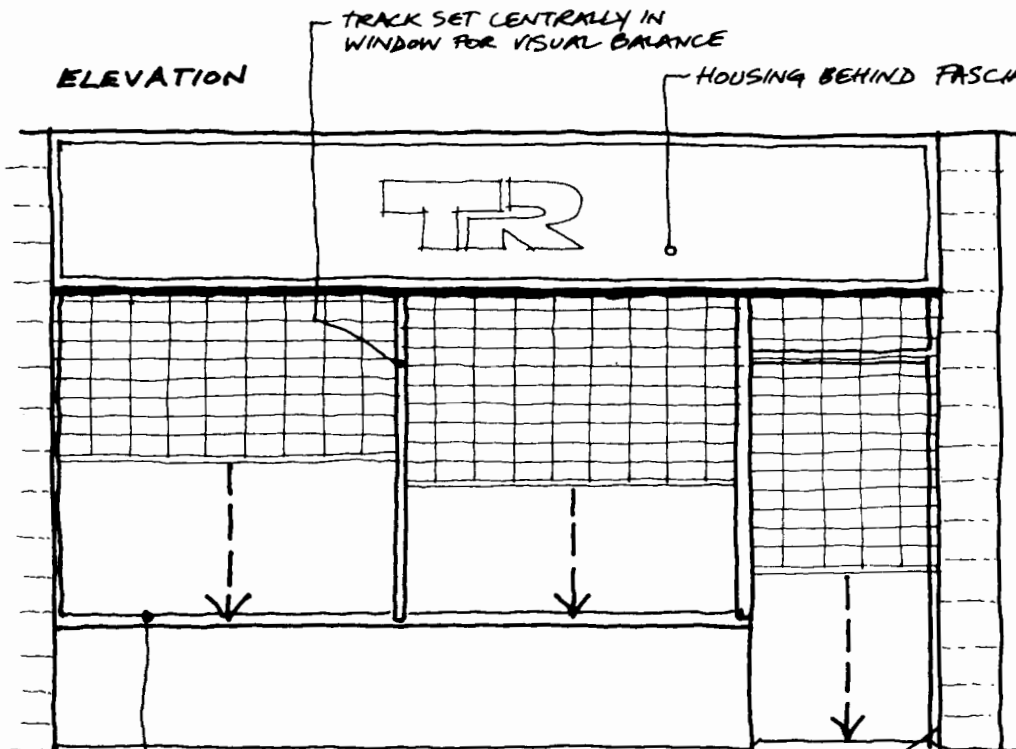
Planning permission for external systems will only be granted where the need is justified and other measures can be shown to be inadequate or inappropriate.

ELEVATION



GRILLE IS CONTAINED WITHIN THE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE SHOPFRONT

ELEVATION



GRILLE EXTENDS TO TOP OF CILL (EXCEPT OVER ENTRANCE DOOR) REDUCED DROP REDUCES SIZE OF ROLLER. THREE SECTIONS INTEGRATE WITH DESIGN OF SHOPFRONT

TRACKS RECESSED BEHIND PILASTERS

Requirements:

- The system is designed as an integral part of the shop front and does not detract from any architectural features.
- The shop window display remains visible at all times.
- The Colour finish matches the shop front.

*Removeable external grilles*

These are usually 25mm open mesh with a mild steel frame and secured to fixed channels with security padlocks. The grilles are designed to be removed during trading hours so must be light enough to manhandle easily. A Storage area is needed. This system can usually be fitted to an existing shop front. It may be the only appropriate external protection which is suitable for shop fronts in listed buildings or in conservation areas without replacing the shop front. Planning conditions requiring the removal of these grills during trading hours will usually be applied. Care must be taken with the design of fixings to ensure that they do not damage the architectural character of the shop front nor leave dangerous projections.

*External portcullis rolling grilles of open mesh*

Very careful attention must be paid to the siting of guide tracks, fixing devices and above all the box housing and motor control gear in order to satisfactorily integrate them into the design of the shop front as a whole.

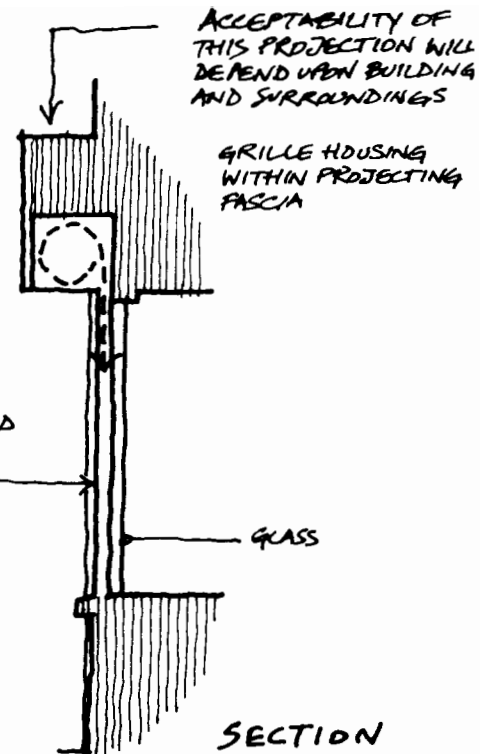
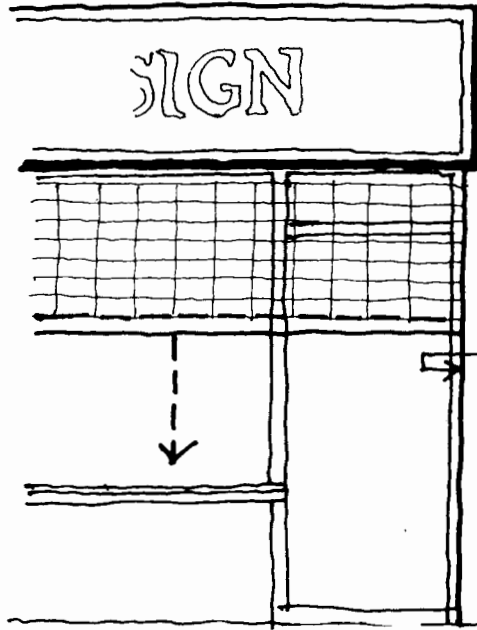
Generally it will be necessary to alter the design of the shop front to accommodate this type of installation. The housing will have to be placed behind the fascia and guide tracks fitted within window mullions. The system is unlikely to be appropriate for a listed building unless a shop front replacement is agreed and the device is carefully designed as an integral part of the new front.

The grille mesh should be rectilinear in form (not brick bond) and the grilles should not obscure shop front details such as pilasters and stall risers but be designed to fit between and protect the glass areas.

*External translucent rolling shutters*

These follow the form of the rolling grille but with glazed panels introduced to form a complete screen. The window display remains reasonably visible and visual security is maintained. Requirements similar to those for external portcullis grilles will apply to the detailing of this system but it is unlikely to be appropriate on listed

ELEVATION

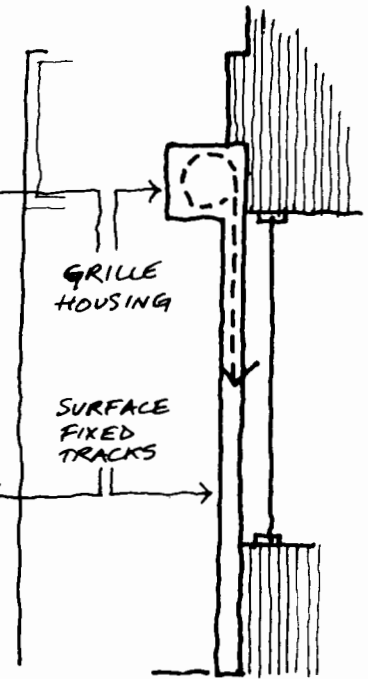
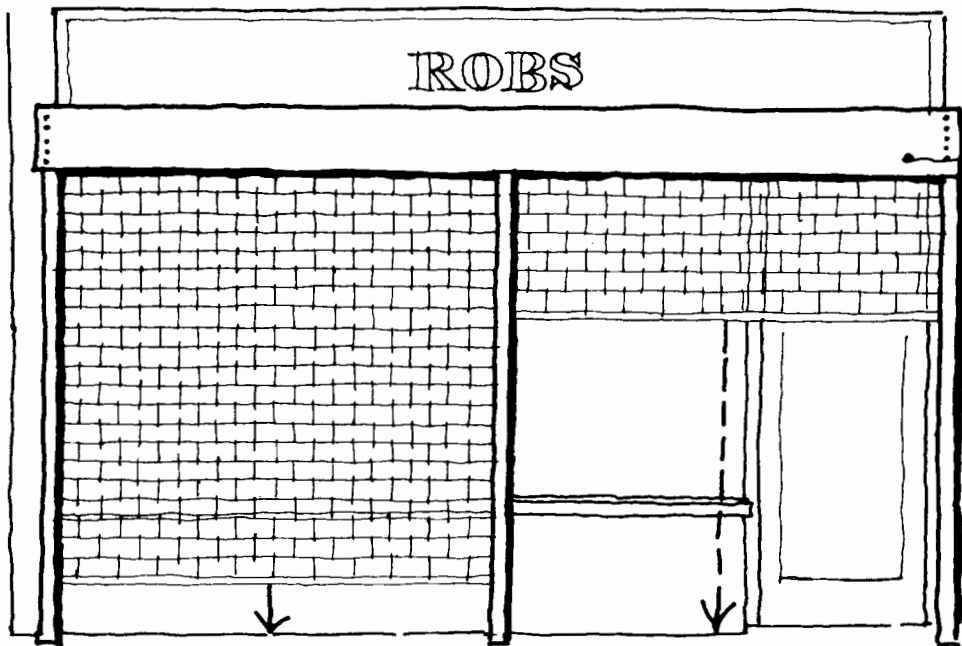


ACCEPTABILITY OF THIS PROJECTION WILL DEPEND UPON BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS

IN SOME CASES IT MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO INSTALL A PROJECTING FASCIA TO DISGUISE THE ROLLER HOUSING

UNACCEPTABLE SOLUTION:  
GRILLE HOUSING CRUDELY ADDED OVER EXISTING FASCIA  
AND TRACKS SURFACE FIXED

ELEVATION



TRACK GUIDES NOT SITED TO RELATE TO DESIGN OF SHOPFRONT

SECTION

buildings or in conservation areas and only in special circumstances elsewhere.

#### *External rolling shutters*

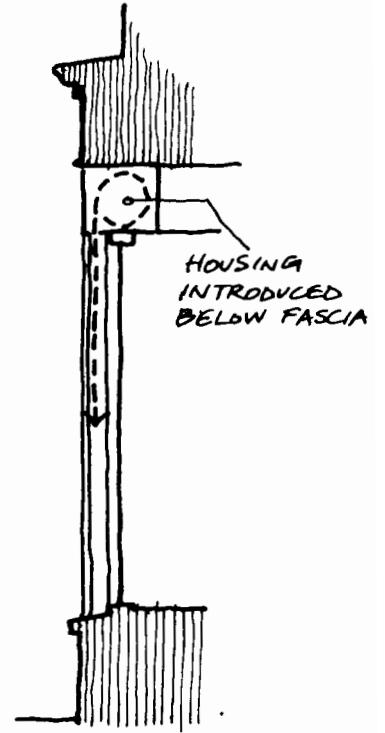
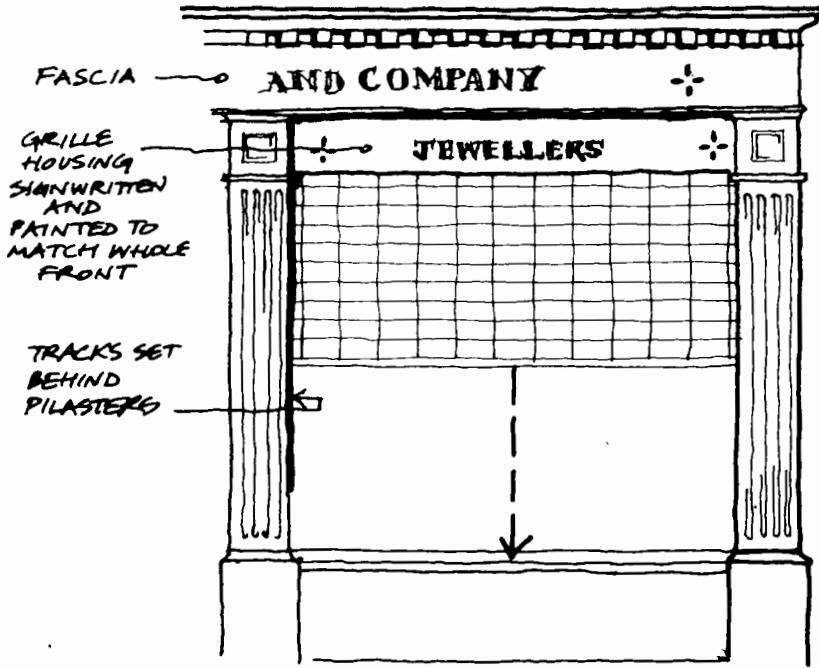
Usually aluminium or steel comprising of interlocking horizontal slats. The slats are generally solid or partly perforated. There is a fine mesh type also available which, with sufficient internal lighting allows the interior of the premises to remain visible after dark. By day however the appearance of this type is similar to a solid shutter.

This type of fitting, while probably the most secure, is the most visually intrusive and unattractive when in a closed position and will be most likely to result in the unwelcoming out of hours appearance the council wishes to avoid. Approval will not normally be granted for this type of fitting unless very special circumstances prevail. Any planning permission granted is likely to be temporary.

#### **Other Measures**

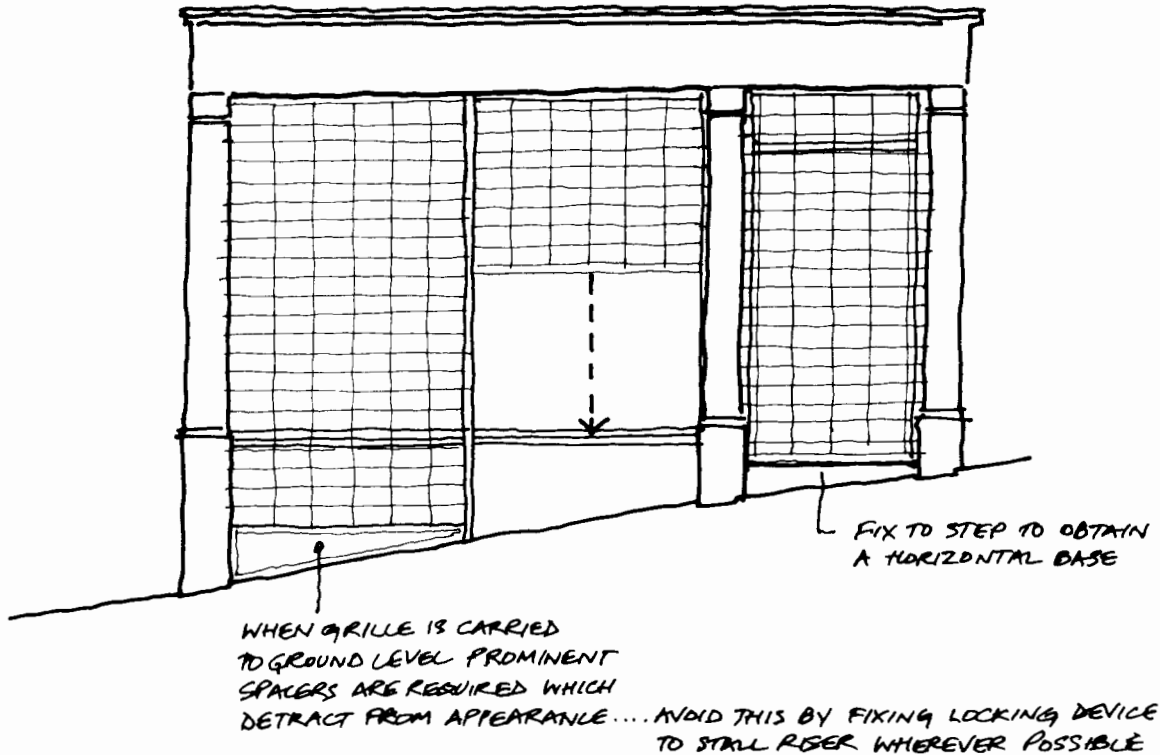
- Externally mounted solid timber shutters were sometimes used on early shop fronts. These were either removable, folding or hinged. This approach will be suitable only in a very few traditionally designed shop fronts.
- Some areas are experiencing 'ram raids' where vehicles are used to break through shop frontages to gain access to the contents. Most ram raids take place on shops with glass areas extending to the floor level for obvious reasons. The most satisfactory counter measure for this is for the shop front to incorporate a stall riser, suitably reinforced if necessary.
- The use of upper floors for residential purposes can give the benefit of the presence of people on the site after hours and will help to generate activity within town centres in the evenings and at weekends which can help to reduce vandalism and crime.

ELEVATION



SECTION

SLOPING SITES



## **APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION**

### **WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE NEEDED?**

Planning applications for new shopfronts should include:

- Fully detailed plans and full elevation drawings of the whole building frontage, showing the new shopfront to a scale of no smaller than 1:50.
- Full details of all materials proposed.

In conservation areas or when the building is listed, this information should be supplemented by:

- Elevation drawings showing the complete neighbouring buildings in relation to the proposal no smaller than 1:50 scale.
- A detailed elevation of the proposed shopfront to a scale of no smaller than 1:25.
- Full coverage of details including sections through cornices, fascia, blind boxes, window frames and glazing bars, stall riser, doors and pilasters and security grille enclosures at a scale of 1:5 or 1:10.
- Full details of all materials and colours proposed.

For further information please contact the Area Planning Manager for the area in which the building is situated.

This guide has been prepared by South Somerset District Council's Conservation and Environment Unit and written and illustrated by Adron Duckworth.

## **South Somerset District Council**

**Conservation and Environment Unit**

**Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT**

**Tel: (01935) 462462**