

Interim Planning Guidance

Shop Front Security Within the Town Centre

INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE

As part of the Local Plan process, supplementary planning guidance was prepared to supplement policies and proposals in the Local Plan. The Borough Council consulted the public on the guidance at the draft deposit and revised draft deposit stages of the Local Plan preparation process. Some of the comments on the Draft Deposit Guidance were taken into account in formulating the Revised Draft Guidance.

It was not appropriate for the Borough Council to adopt the guidance as supplementary planning guidance because this can only supplement an adopted local plan and the Tamworth Local Plan 2001-2011 will not be adopted until 2006. Furthermore, under the new development plan system, supplementary planning guidance has been replaced with supplementary planning documents.

This guidance was approved as interim planning guidance by the Borough Council's Cabinet on 15th August 2005. Appropriate guidance will be replaced with supplementary planning documents in due course. This is in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme that came into effect in March 2005.

August 2005



INTRODUCTION

This design note is in response to growing concern about vandalism and security, which has resulted in increased demand for security shutters to shop fronts within the town centre. Damage and vandalism are recognised as a problem by the Borough Council, but there is a clear need to take a balanced view between the need for security and that of protecting the character and appearance of the Town Centre Conservation Area.

PLANNING POSITION

When a development involves a material change in the appearance of a shop front, planning permission is needed, eg with the addition of permanent shutters or removable grilles. The Council can take enforcement action if unacceptable grilles or shutters are erected.

SECURITY MEASURES

The character of shop fronts can be dramatically altered by the addition of security shutters. These guidelines are intended to minimise the impact of security measures whilst recognising their

obvious importance. When considering the installation of any security measures, account should be taken of the closed circuit television system installed and monitored by the Borough Council within the town centre to aid security and reduce crime and disorder.

STRENGTHENED OR LAMINATED GLASS

This should be considered as a first option. Most retail display windows are composed of clear float glass, which is easily broken. The incidence of damage and theft can be reduced by the use of laminated glass. This glass does not break, but rather fragments while remaining intact even after violent impact. Planning permission is not required for this work.

SHOP FRONT DESIGN

Where a new shop front is being installed, or an existing one modified, the use of additional glazing bars across the proposed display area can provide additional strength to otherwise vulnerable expanses of glass. In the case of historic shop fronts, mullions were often used to break up the display area. In more recent times, these glazing bars have often been removed, and shopkeepers could therefore consider restoring the shop front to its original design. Also, where the existing shop front is to be altered, the use of properly proportioned stall risers should be included, which not only improve the overall appearance of the

shop front but also act as a deterrent to ram raiders.

Additional glazing bars can increase the strength of glazing within traditional shop fronts

DEMOUNTABLE GRILLES

These may be considered only where external protection is absolutely necessary. They should be of open mesh construction with openings small enough to deflect missiles while maintaining a clear view of the goods on display. Only the display area of the shop should be covered. The grilles should be easily portable, with any attachment to the window frame simple but firm. They should be powder coated in a dark colour appropriate to the frontage.

Demountable grilles must be easy to carry

INTERNAL ROLLER SHUTTERS OR GRILLES

These can be considered where they are fixed immediately behind the glass. During opening hours they can either be rolled out of sight or stored elsewhere. With the installation of new shop fronts, applicants should consider making such grilles on integral part of the design. Planning permission is not required as long as no alterations are made to the exterior of the shop.

Collapsible Gates may be used where the installation of an internally mounted roller shutter or grille is not feasible. When open the gates should be contained behind the pilasters of the shop front.

Internal mountings are concealed behind the display window

When open, collapsible gates are concealed behind pilasters or frontage

TRADITIONAL WOODEN SOLID SHUTTERS

These will only be considered acceptable where they are to be included as an integral part of a traditional shop front. They should be painted to match the shop front.

LATTICE OR PERFORATED ROLLER SHUTTERS

These will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that none of the alternative options are feasible. In all cases the shutter boxes and accompanying channel guides must be contained within the shop front. Shutter boxes added to the front of existing shop fronts are unacceptable. Perforated shutters shall only be considered acceptable where lights remain on with the display area and where goods are clearly visible during the hours when the shutter is closed. Perforated shutters will not be acceptable where there is no opportunity or intention to display goods once the shop has closed. All fixed and removable grilles, shutters, guides and fixings must be colour finished in a manner appropriate to the shop front.

Roller grilles or shutters that come in front of the shop window will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. It is generally accepted that solid aluminium shutters, when closed create an intimidating and unattractive environment. Their installation undermines efforts to

enhance the external appearance of the commercial centre of the town. The use of solid aluminium shutters is therefore totally unacceptable.

Various types of perforated shutters exist:

Running wire

Scissor mesh

Collapsible