City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Local Development Framework for Bradford

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Shopfront Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document

A guide to encourage high standards of design in the retail environment, to inform professionals involved in designing retail premises, shopfronts and signage as well as property owners and Council officers.

October 2007

Executive Summary

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has drafted this design guidance in response to many comments received during the consultation exercise undertaken as part of the Conservation Area Appraisal programme, and requests from Civic Societies for more comprehensive design guidance for shopfronts and security.

This guidance will serve as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) expanding upon policies within the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (RUDP) adopted in October 2005. Specifically the guide supports The Plan's Principal Policy UDP3 concerning the Quality of the Built Environment, Policy D13 concerning shopfront design and also a number of Design and Built Heritage Polices fully identified in Appendix 1.

Opening with an insight into the origins and evolution of shopfronts as we know them today, this guide then moves on to define the 4 key elements of a shopfront which have resulted from this historical evolution and which should combine to create a satisfactory design fit for today. The relationship between the shopfront and the building and environment it occupies is explored, before more specific issues including signage, canopies, security and access are considered. The guide includes a number of design principles which will be used in conjunction with the Policies of the RUDP to determine the acceptability of planning proposals presented to the Council.

This guide has been produced to improve the design of retail premises, shop fronts and signage whenever the opportunity arises. It acknowledges the part that corporate branding must play but seeks to avoid the monotonous similarity evident in many towns that can reduce local competitiveness and distinctiveness. It seeks to encourage entrepreneurship and economic success for local businesses by recognising and encouraging the part that good design can play. By acknowledging the strengths of retailing and good design against the backdrop of our buildings and streetscapes, this guide is intended to stimulate the prosperity of individual shops, high streets and other retail areas for the good of the District as a whole.

Early 20th century shopfront, Ben Rhydding

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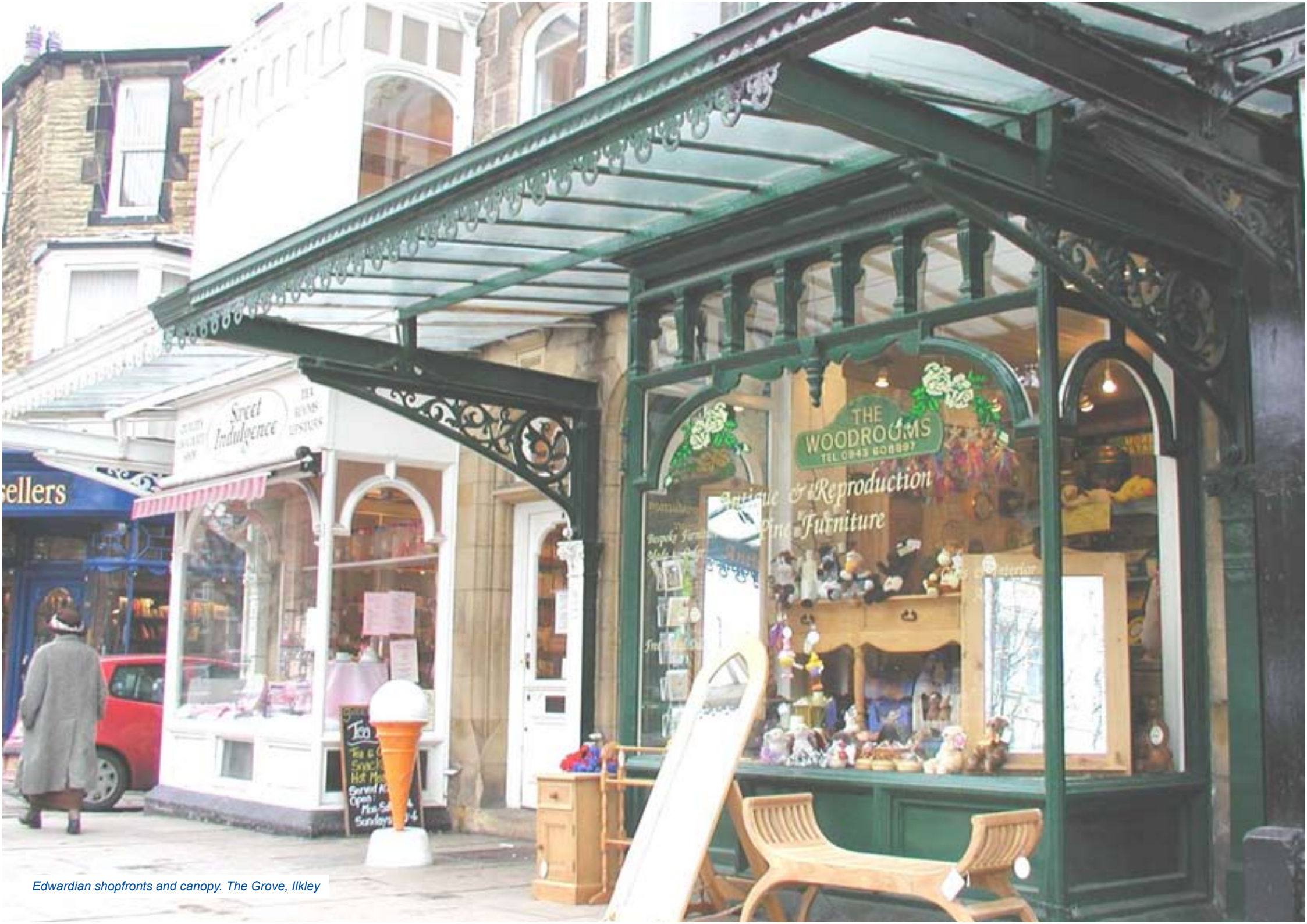


Edwardian shopfronts and canopy. The Grove, Ilkley

Introduction

1

1.1 The Purpose and Status of the Shopfront Design Guide

The Government has set new targets for Planning and Design. Planning Policy Statement (PPS)1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) defines six key principles of which (iv) states: 'Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design ... Design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted'.

In its Corporate Plan, the Council has set six priorities, three of those are supported by following the guidance in this document:

- *Creating a more prosperous District.*
- *Safer and stronger communities.*
- *Improving the environment.*

We are constantly striving to enhance the District, and it is partly through improving the appearance of our retail areas that we can attract more investment and stimulate economic growth. Consequently the built environment will become more pleasant and visually appealing, and also safer through the implementation of more appropriate security measures

The Council has produced this Guide in response to public concern that identified a lack of specific design guidance. This was voiced during the Conservation Area Appraisal programme which was implemented across the District. The guidance will replace that which previously existed and will support the primary design policies within the Replacement Unitary Development Plan.

This Guide is not intended to lead to all shops looking the same, or to stifle flair or entrepreneurial spirit. However, having consideration for the appearance of a shop, as well as respect for the effect it has on its surroundings can produce benefits for the business and assist the economic prosperity of the area.

1.2 Status of the Shopfront Design Guide

This Guide will serve as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supporting the saved policies of the Replacment Unitary Development Plan (RUDP). Specifically the SPD expands upon Principle Policy UDP 3 together with Design Policies D1, D9, D13 and Built Heritage Policies BH4, BH4A, BH5, BH6, BH8 and BH13. Further relevant policies are defined in Appendix 1.

The Replacement UDP is to be superseded by a Local Development Framework (LDF), and this

Guide will continue to support the design policies within the LDF.

This Guide will be used as a material consideration together with the relevant policies in the Replacement UDP to determine the acceptability of proposals in relation to commercial and retail properties. The Guidance will also be used to support approriate enforcement action in the event that planning controls are flouted.

1.3 The Importance of Shopfronts

Shopping is an essential part of our lives, and inevitably shops form a large part of our towns, cities and streetscapes. The design and appearance of shops has a huge impact on the appearance of individual buildings, streets, localities and in turn our everyday environment as a whole. This impact can be positive, with attractive, lively and dignified streets, or all too commonly negative, being jumbled, shabby or just plain ugly.

Commercial competition has always been a key part of retail trading. However with supermarkets reaching a position of monopoly on convenience shopping, many smaller businesses are literally fighting to survive. This pressure leads many to feel the need to shout to advertise their presence, with all too frequently no consideration for the visual impact or the wider implications. Other pressures including keeping down costs on property maintenance and security concerns can result in cluttered, tatty and bleak streets, which do not encourage shoppers or other businesses to invest. Whilst we might not take much notice of what the building we go into looks like or the details of the shopfront, if the area is uninviting or the shop grim, people will think twice. Thus by their actions, businesses are inadvertently undoing what they are trying to achieve.

1.4 Key Elements

The key elements of shopfront design will each be considered *(see section 3 page 13)*:

- *Elements of the shopfront*
- *Retention of historic features and streetscapes*
- *Shopfront design having respect for the building and its surroundings*
- *Signage*
- *Security*
- *Access*
- *Listed buildings*
- *Conservation Areas*

1.5 Consultation

This draft Guide has undergone a full formal consultation to ensure that it has the broad support of all whom it will impact upon and who have been involved in its production. In this way it will become a more inclusive document with enduring effectiveness ensured.

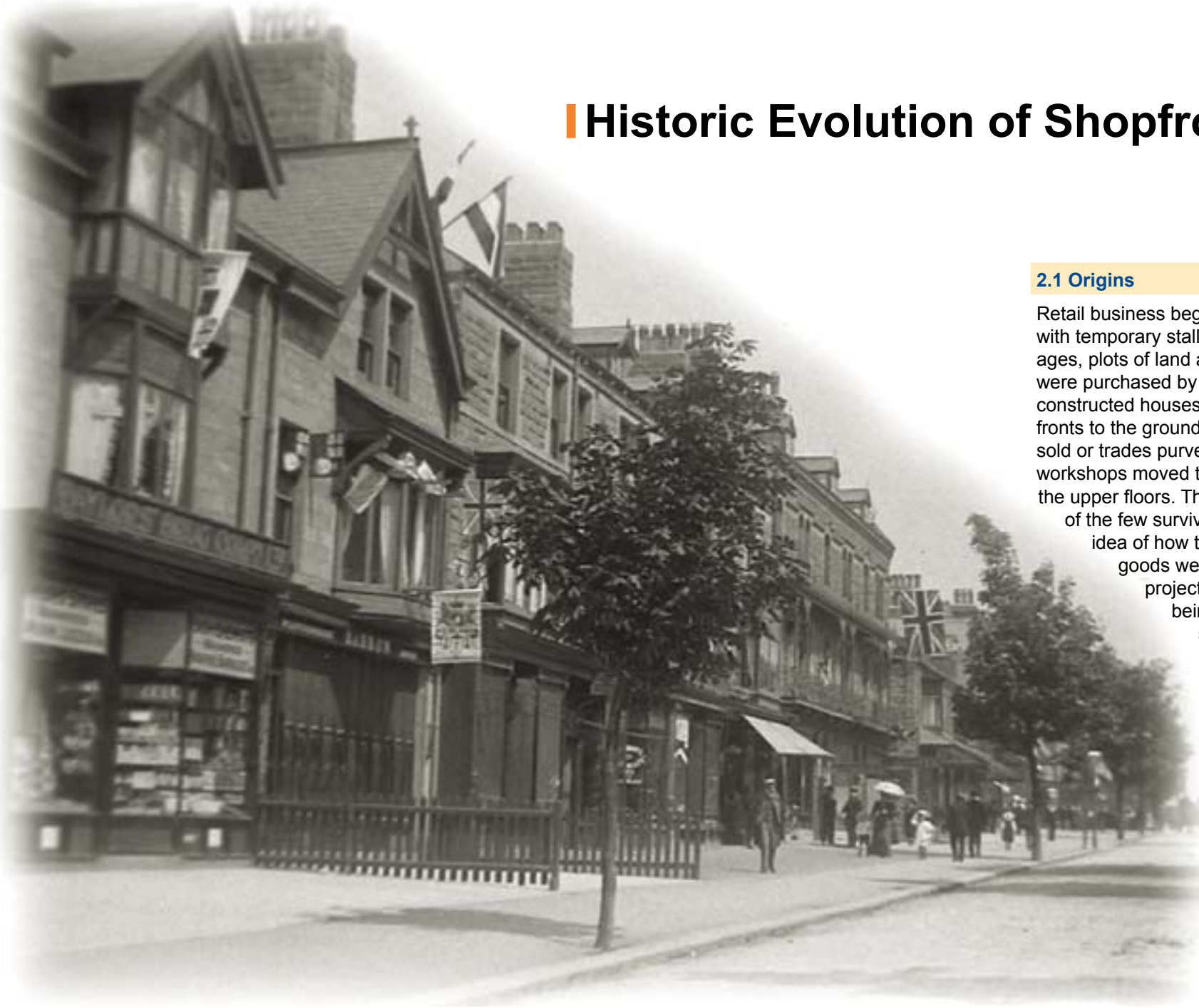
A full 6 week period was available for consultation, with the following groups included in those invited to comment:

- *Civic Amenity Bodies*
- *English Heritage*
- *Local Civic Bodies*
- *Local Retail Groups*
- *Council Area Centre Managers*
- *The Police*
- *Councillors*
- *The Association of British Insurers*
- *Access Bodies*

The Guide was available to view on the Council's website and on deposit at Planning Offices and main libraries.

Top: Lilycroft Road, Bradford early 20th century
Left: As it is now

Historic Evolution of Shopfronts 2



The Grove, Ilkley c.1905

2.1 Origins

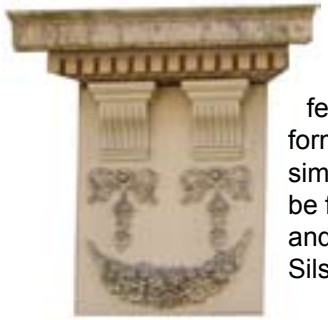
Retail business began in open street markets with temporary stalls. From this, in the middle ages, plots of land around the market place were purchased by traders and craftsmen who constructed houses. These usually had open fronts to the ground floor from which goods were sold or trades purveyed. As trade developed, workshops moved to the rear of the building or the upper floors. The Shambles in York is one of the few surviving examples giving some idea of how the buildings looked. The goods were often displayed on shelves projecting into the street, with these being protected by wooden shutters at night.

By the beginning of the 17th century, shops in the larger towns were beginning to erect shopfronts with the open area above the stall being enclosed by a glazed screen, windows and doors. Thus the form of the shopfront was created - the stall riser beneath the stall, or cill, the window, the door and the fascia above.

2.2 Evolution

The recognisable shopfront originated in the 18th century, following the architectural fashions of the day, the Classical style. In the 18th century glass was still blown and spun into sheets of limited size (crown glass), with the bulls eye of these sheets actually being the waste or lowest grade of glass. As only small panes were possible this resulted in windows being divided up by glazing bars, into what is commonly known as the 'Georgian' style. The shopfront was based on the Classical principle typified by a temple front: the plinth being the stall riser, the outer columns as pilasters, the frieze above became the fascia and the architrave and cornice acted to throw rainwater clear.

The earliest forms of shopfronts were simply windows larger than domestic proportions with an emphasised surround - usually incorporating pilasters and a cornice. This was then added to the doorway to emphasise that also, and later the two were brought under one fascia and cornice with pilasters flanking the openings. The amount of elaboration obviously depended on the location, with more elaborate shopfronts being prevalent in established or affluent towns, and also on the occupant, with manual craftsmen generally occupying simpler premises. As Bradford, Keighley and other settlements grew predominantly in the 19th century, the District has few examples from these formative times. Some very simple examples can however be found in the older villages and towns such as Addingham, Silsden,Bingley or Haworth.



2.3 The Nineteenth Century

Shopfront design evolved as architectural fashions changed and with technological advances. The recessed doorway became almost a standard feature from the late 18th century onwards, allowing shelter for customers and providing a greater window display area. The delicate Classical features of the Georgian period were overtaken by more elaborate designs of the early Victorian. From the 1820s cylinder glass became available, allowing larger panes, usually divided with vertical glazing bars with the moulding on the outside. Where large panes were not available, panes were simply butted together.

2.4 High Victorian

Greater pressure on land in town centres led to taller buildings, and a corresponding increase in the height of shopfronts. Availability of plate glass from the mid 19th century eliminated the need for timber mullions, although their use continued, and the upper part of the window was frequently

Late Victorian shopfront, Silsden

divided off by horizontal transoms, with coloured glass or more decorative joinery above.

Advances in the use of cast iron led to its use for decorative elements or sometimes the whole shopfront, with the benefits of increased delicacy of detail. The fascia, previously vertical, now in some instances became angled downwards to allow for greater visibility. The pilasters at the outer edges of the front developed, either forming part of the masonry or in applied timber panels, often fluted or more elaborately decorated. These were capped by either a Classically derived capital, or a timber console bracket 'supporting' the fascia. Later in the Victorian period these developed to provide a stop to the horizontal fascia. The console bracket became an opportunity for the joiner or shopfitter to display his skill, with scrolls, foliage, fruit or beasts with these sometimes denoting the trade of the occupant.

The role of blinds developed from them being located within the shop and obscuring goods, to being utilised as a canopy blind. A canvas

roll often displaying the shop name, which was housed in a timber box either as part of the shopfront or added above the fascia. These became more commonplace in later Victorian times as advertising the business became more prevalent. In addition to the fascia and window dressing, it was also commonplace for lettering to be applied to the upper walls, gables, or additional timber signs.

The use of icons as adverts was common - the 3 gold globes of the pawnbroker, painted wooden fish for the fishmonger, a large pair of scissors for the barber or a pestle and mortar for the chemist. These originated in medieval times when many people were unable to read..

Street displays were not uncommon, particularly by ironmongers. Butchers and fishmongers were typified by a full width vertical sliding sash which could be opened to enable the wares to be displayed to the street. Above the window and door would be a fret cut timber or cast iron grille to allow ventilation. The butchers and gamekeepers invariably also had a metal rail above the window from which to hang produce before the days of traffic pollution and hygiene concerns. Tiles and glazed faience became popular for both internal and external use, with decorative scenes in tiles common in butchers or fishmongers, and also on the stallriser. The use of tiles or mosaic for thresholds within which the business name was inlaid was frequent.

2.5 The Twentieth Century

The last two decades of the 19th century saw a reaction against what was perceived as the excesses of elaboration typical of mid Victorian design. This led to the Arts and Crafts movement with the emphasis on purist and authentic details together with craft skills. This led to subtle changes in shopfronts, including them becoming taller, with lower stall risers and narrower fascias, decorated with transom lights such as leaded glazing or arcading, simplified console brackets, deeply recessed doorways with curved glass to the corners and more glazing to the doors. Thus many of the shopfronts which might be considered Victorian could likely date from the Edwardian period. There are in addition more individual and radical frontages from this time reflecting the trends for simplicity or purism.

Edwardian exuberance, Ilkley

The First World War heralded dramatic changes in design with a strong reaction against all retrospective styles in favour of a bold and modern image. New materials such as vitrolite (a self coloured glass) became popular for stall risers and pilasters, chrome metalwork and lettering typified more simple designs with large expanses of glass. Where this applied to earlier buildings it instigated a loss of harmony between building and shopfront. Frequently the horizontal or minimalist style was in contrast to a more elaborate building. However, the best examples from this period are now equally deserving of retention.

The Second World War fuelled the desire for fresh new designs and provided plenty of opportunity for new development. 19th century elaboration was seen as oppressive and old fashioned. The Modernist movement brought severely functional designs in concrete, aluminium and plastic, and where these were imposed on older buildings, there was usually little recognition of the style or appearance of the parent building. The growth of high street multiples and corporate images that rigorously kept up with fashion compounded this. The use of plastic for signs, greater illumination and increasing competition resulted in bright, gaudy shops with little respect for their location or aesthetic impact.

2.6 Return to Guiding Principles

Modern fashion changes rapidly, and in some circles image follows suit. The 1980s saw a return to nostalgia for the past, together with a growing realisation that established and traditional styles create a satisfying and popular environment. Traditional styles have been resurrected in some areas, albeit with varying levels of accuracy. This can be seen as the latest fashion fad, but equally Georgian, Victorian or Arts and Crafts were fashions, albeit longer lived. This nostalgia can create designs which lack local identity and character, unless carefully handled or without historic research where appropriate. In many locations though, it is simply a lack of aesthetic appreciation and diverse trading pressures which can result in unattractive streetscapes. It is this which needs addressing through guidance to achieve centres and streets that are attractive, distinctive and inviting.

Left: Good new shopfront using traditional principles.
Above: Striking modern appearance but maintaining key elements and well related to building.

Elements of a Shopfront

3

Wells Road, Ilkley illustrating all elements in harmony

Regardless of the period of construction, a shopfront nearly always incorporates 4 key elements. These must be applicable to the context of the shopfront itself, and by relating to each other create an acceptable appearance.

3.1 Stallriser, cill and window

The stallriser protects the frontage from knocks and splashes, and can also be used to increase security provision.

- A wide variety of materials have been used: stone, brick, tiles or timber with recessed panels.
- A timber stallriser should not be constructed as a flat panel with applied moulding, but should be of traditional construction with recessed panels with fielded edges and bolection moulding.
- To achieve a shopfront of optimum visual proportions, the stallriser should not exceed 20% of the overall shopfront height.
- The cill needs to be fairly robust to support the window and throw off knocks and water. It should not generally project forward of any pilasters or the opening in which the shopfront is installed.

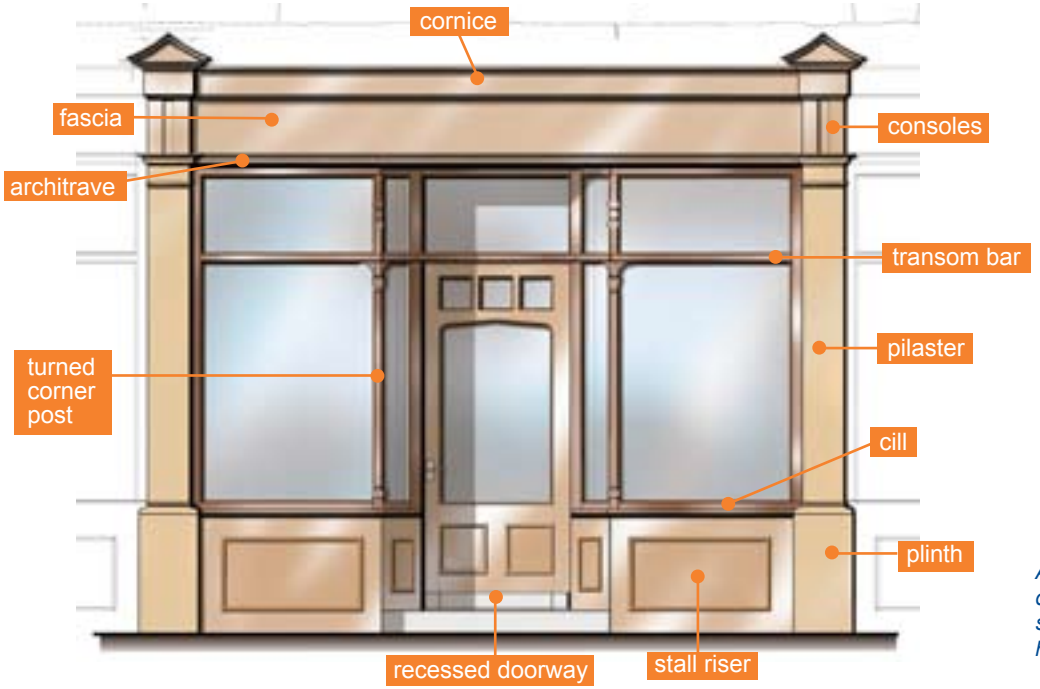
- The height of the window is generally governed by the size of the structural opening.
- The visual proportions of the glazing are greatly improved if it has a vertical emphasis, i.e. the panes of glass are taller than they are wide. This can be achieved by dividing the window vertically with mullions if required.
- Mullions may also be used to relate the shopfront to the building above. In addition to this, a transom rail can be added across the upper part of the mullion to form clerestory lights.

3.2 Doors and doorways

- Shop doorways were traditionally recessed until the 1950s to afford shelter and more window space.
- The use of flush doors on shopfronts in an older building frequently leads to a flat or weak appearance. The form of the doorway needs to respect the character of the building.
- Security can be a concern with recessed doorways. To combat this they should be lit, or even protected by folding gates as in the past.
- The door itself should clearly reflect the period and character of the shopfront, and if replacement is required, a standard door is rarely suitable.

3.3 Pilasters

The pilaster is directly derived from the Classical column. It serves to separate each shop from its neighbour, and defines the width of the shopfront by representing the line of the dividing party wall.



Addition of enhanced detailing to create a shopfront suitable for heritage areas

- It provides visual support to the cornice and encloses the fascia.
- The pilaster usually stands on a slightly wider plinth and has a corbel or console at the top.
- The pilaster is usually between 150-200mm wide and should not exceed 300mm.

3.4 Cornice, fascia and architrave

The cornice defines the top of the shopfront, and practically protects the front from water falling from above.

- The cornice is usually comprised of more or less ornate mouldings. If the fascia does not have enclosing console brackets, the cornice should have returns back to the wall.
- The fascia beneath the cornice is the proper location for signage. On Georgian and early Victorian shopfronts this will be vertical, but later became angled downwards to the pavement to enable greater visibility.
- To provide the most favourable appearance the fascia height should not exceed 20% of the total shopfront height.
- The architrave forms the lower edge of the fascia and is formed of a simpler horizontal moulding than the cornice.

It should be noted that these elements are not just restricted to shopfronts on historic buildings or heritage environments. Using elements that are in relation to and in combination with the style and character of any building will result in a shopfront which is appropriate to its location and the parent building.

The Principles of Good Design

4

The primary consideration in achieving a well designed shopfront is that it should be conceived as part of the whole building into which it is installed. The following design principles will be considered by the Council in determining the suitability of proposals for changes to shopfronts.

4.1 Retention of Historic Features and Streetscapes

It should be noted that alterations to and the replacement of shopfronts will require planning permission. This does not just apply in conservation areas. If the shop is part of a listed building, listed building consent will also be required.

- Before an existing shopfront is discarded, consideration should be given to its condition, quality and relevance, and why it may need replacing. Even if it has been altered, it may still be repairable, or original details may exist behind later cladding. Restoration of these would likely result in a shopfront that is more appropriate to the building and its location. The craftsmanship involved in older shopfronts is unlikely to be able to be recreated today, and it is rare that a shopfront needs to be entirely replaced for practical reasons.
- The correct details for an older building can usually be determined from either the surviving evidence, neighbouring or similar buildings, the style and proportions of the building, or even old photographs.
- The wider impact of the shopfront on the streetscape rather than just an individual building needs consideration. A good shopfront from any period will provide a positive

A shopfront with no respect for the building: Incorrect proportions, horizontal emphasis, weak design and drab appearance.

image for the business and potentially increase revenue. It will also enhance the street, and set an example which other owners will hopefully follow. However, a badly designed shopfront or one which is obtrusive in the street can have a far greater effect in harming the appearance of the street, upsetting its harmony and harming attractiveness of other businesses in the area.

- Where evidence or guidance for shopfronts is taken from neighbouring buildings, care should be taken to avoid repetition. If the shop forms part of a uniform row, it is likely that the shopfronts would have been the same. However, if the street is made up of diverse buildings of differing periods and styles, variety is needed between shopfronts to ensure interest, as the character of historic areas often derives from irregularity.

4.2 Respect the Building

Once the options of restoration, repair and revealing any original detailing have been explored, careful consideration is needed to the design of the proposed shopfront. This should be guided by the building of which it is part as well as the location. In historic areas or buildings, photographic, archival or nearby evidence may be useful.

- The shopfront should be designed to complement the building of which it is part and not in isolation from it. The key elements constituted by the stallriser, doorway, pilasters, fascia and cornice need to be considered as a whole and in architectural unity with the building.
- This will involve considerations of the building's proportions, its scale and its detailing. The building width and subdivision between diverse buildings should be reflected in the shopfronts and not obliterated.
- The vertical emphases of the building in window lines, bays, or pilasters should again be carried down to ground level through the shopfront to achieve a frontage with unity. This vertical emphasis also provides visual support for the building above rather than leaving it 'floating' above a weak shopfront.
- The shopfront should not extend the full width of the building. A pier of the main elevation material - brick or stone, should extend down to ground level at either side providing a visual enclosure to the shopfront but also relating it to the building above. Where this is not possible, pilasters should be used to provide this vertical emphasis.
- There should be a reasonable gap between the top of the shopfront and the cills of the first floor windows above to reduce the appearance of the shopfront having 'chopped' the building in two horizontally. Generally the creation of a horizontal emphasis by using large areas of plate glass and deep fascias is not appropriate in traditional shopping streets.
- The main elements of the shopfront should be in proportion to each other. Therefore if just the sign or stallriser is being replaced, or the whole frontage, this needs equal consideration. The stallriser should generally not exceed 20% of the overall height of the shopfront, and the entablature (cornice, fascia/ sign and architrave) should also not exceed 20%. Common features which occur in adjacent shops or along a street should be respected, such as bay widths, stallriser height, fascia depth and the vertical subdivision of glazing by mullions.

4.3 Timeless Design Principles

Whilst the guidelines here draw upon established ideas, these are of equal relevance to shopfronts in modern buildings or of contemporary design. The shopfront still needs to be designed as an entity with the building and to incorporate the essential design principles. Contemporary modern design can be used to good effect where shopfronts are integrated into new development. Equally there is scope for good modern design in historic facades if respect is paid to the architectural form of the building and to its surroundings.

4.4 The Bigger Picture

The special character of a shopping street is derived from either uniformity in design or architectural style or a variety of styles which produces distinctiveness and interest. The quality of the street as a whole needs to be considered

A modern design used effectively in a traditional building

Bradford - high quality materials in a high profile location, simple traditional design respecting a listed building and accomodating corporate imaging

as part of each proposal to alter a shopfront, with the aim of any proposal harmonising with and enhancing the character of the street scene as well as the building itself. Making a shop stand out from its surroundings may not always attract shoppers as desired. Respect for the appearance of the street will result in a better looking retail environment with resultant benefits for all stakeholders.

Corporate images can rarely be applied undiluted in traditional or historic shopping areas, and the image will need to be adapted to suit the location and the building. However, a new design with merit would be considered if it resulted in an improvement over the previous appearance.

4.5 Materials

- Shopfronts should generally be constructed from timber, allowing better quality and more refined detailing. However, on contemporary designs or in relation to specific architectural styles,there is scope for the use of other materials.
- Where aluminium is used, generally on more modern buildings, this should always have a powder coated coloured finish.
- The stallriser, usually in timber, can also be constructed of ashlar masonry to relate the frontage to the building but also to provide a more robust protection from ram-raiding. The pier dividing the shop from adjacent premises should also be in the principal material of the building.
- There is occasionally scope for polished granite in stallrisers and piers when this is properly related to the architectural style and period of the building.
- There may also be potential for fully glazed shopfronts where properly related to the building, or simple modern stone designs.
- The use of plastic for any element of a shopfront is very rarely appropriate.

4.6 Colour

- In certain locations, usually heritage areas, careful selection of colour is important. Restrained shades of maroon, dark green, black, blue, brown and grey are more suitable, whilst lighter colours tend to appear intrusive and also quickly look dirty and need more frequent maintenance.
- Stone where intended to be exposed should retain its natural finish. If paint has been applied in the past and to remove this would result in damage, the masonry should be overpainted in a Yorkshire stone colour.

Design Principle 1

Where traditional details are evident or likely to survive, the Council will seek the retention of these and their incorporation in the proposed development.

Relevant RUDP Policies:

D9; D15; BH4; BH4A; BH5; BH8

Design Principle 2

Proposals for new shopfronts or alterations to existing frontages should follow the following principles:

a) New shopfronts in existing buildings should be integrated with the form, style and character of the building façade and its neighbours, respecting its proportions and details and using materials appropriate to the building.

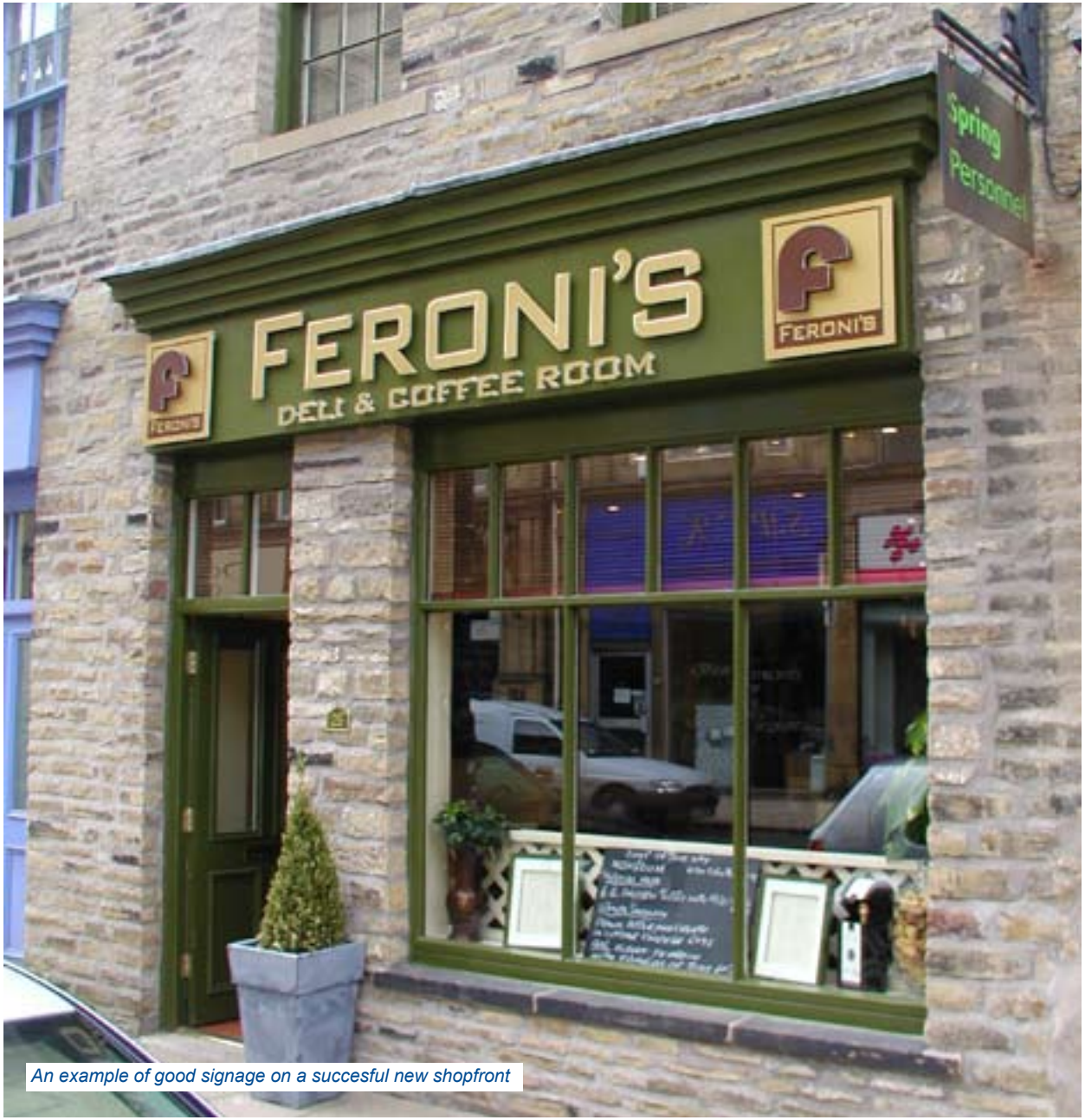
b) The proposals incorporate the key elements of shopfront design, proportionately in relation to each other.

c) The proposals do not detract from the character or appearance of the shopfront or the streetscape.

d) Where a shopfront occupies more than one building or unit, the division between the two is identifiable and the fascia maintains this separation.

Relevant RUDP Policies:

D1; D9; D10; D11; D13; BH4; BH4A; BH5; BH7; BH8; BH13



An example of good signage on a succesful new shopfront

Signs 5

Adequate signage is essential for successful retailing, but the design and positioning of signs and advertisements will have a crucial effect on the character and appearance of buildings and streets, influencing their appeal or lack of.

Outdooor Advertisement Control is considered in PPG 19, where the overarching emphasis is to "contribute positively to the appearance of an attractive and cared for environment...". Advertisements are assessed against considerations of amenity and public safety.

5.1 Fascia Signs

Guiding Principles:

- Signs should be considered as an integral element of the design of a shopfront and not added as an afterthought. A well designed shop sign can provide individuality and identity without being discordant in the surroundings.
- On most existing shopfronts, the fascia is the principal location for a sign and the dimensions will be set by the design of the frontage.
- On traditional timber shopfronts, fascias are made of timber with hand painted or individually applied lettering.

- Gilded letters or strong colours on a dark background reflect light and increase visibility at night. Shading, shadowing or blocking of letters can also be used by signwriters to provide individuality.

- On listed buildings and in conservation areas, the use of individually mounted letters or symbols mounted onto fascias or the elevation might be considered as a less intrusive solution, but will need to respect the heritage asset.

What to Avoid:

- The fascia should not obscure upper transom windows of the shopfront or decorative cornices which are intended to contain it.
- Existing stone or timber cornices or consoles should never be destroyed to accommodate new signage.
- The use of plastic fascia signs in conservation areas or on listed buildings is rarely appropriate.
- Temporary banners will always need consent on listed buildings and properties in conservation areas and are not desirable in view of their invasive fixing methods and negative visual impact.

If the premises are not a listed building then signage can be changed without the need for advertisement consent, with certain provisos. However, if illumination is to be added, then consent will be normally required.

5.2 Illumination

Illumination of fascias needs very careful consideration.

- Internally illuminated box signs will always require advertisement consent and the strident visual impact and obtrusive nature of the box needs careful consideration. Such signs will not be approved on listed buildings or in conservation areas.
- The use of halo lighting behind individual letters, small spot lights or a compact strip light to illuminate the fascia will result in a better visual appearance.
- The use of individual internally illuminated letters might be considered less intrusive than a box sign in some locations.

5.3 Hanging and projecting signs

- In a conservation area traditional hanging signs can enhance the character and interest of historic areas. Especially attractive are symbols denoting the trade of the shop, such as a pawnbrokers, barbers pole, a tea pot denoting a café or an animal for a butchers. Hanging boards are also an established part of traditional streets.
- If appropriate in terms of visual amenity, one hanging sign is normally acceptable. The sign should be of a size not to be over-intrusive, and to relate to others in the vicinity.
- Lighting should be by means of a slim strip light.

- The sign should be located with careful regard for the architecture of the building, usually level with first floor windows, or between the architrave and cornice of the fascia, although the bottom edge of the sign must be a minimum of 2.6 metres above the pavement.
- There may be instances where the character of the building or street is such that any form of hanging sign is not appropriate.

5.4 Projecting internally illuminated signs

Such signs may conflict with the visual amenity of listed buildings and conservation areas, and frequently do not accord with the special qualities of these assets which heritage policies seek to protect. Where these signs are acceptable, they should be related to the building, located on the pilaster within the fascia height.

5.5 Other options

- Advertisements on gable ends, or signs above cill level of first floor windows are usually not acceptable. There is limited precedent for

advertisements painted direct onto masonry gables or individual letters fixed to elevations, and each case will be taken on its merits.

- The overall number of signs displayed on a building should be limited and coordinated to avoid a cluttered appearance harming the building and streetscape.
- Where space on fascias or signs is limited, there may be scope for lettering or transfers on the glazing of the shopfront, either in the upper transom area or the main windows. This again needs consideration to colour and effect to avoid a cluttered or excessively garish appearance.

5.6 Canopies and blinds

- The original purpose of blinds was to protect goods from deterioration by sunlight. They helped to keep the interior of the shop cool, and to protect customers and window shoppers from the rain. The traditional canvas roller blind came into use in the late 18th century, the roller box usually mounted on top of the cornice.
- In the mid-19th century the boxes became integrated into the shopfront, above the sign but beneath the cornice. Usually striped, with the shop proprietor identified in lettering, they form an attractive and integral part of traditional shopfronts, but can be retracted when not required leaving the shopfront fully visible.
- More recently, from the 1960s, rigid or folding Dutch canopies have become common. The material, usually plastic is stretched over a metal frame in a curved form. These are usually fixed in place, obscuring part of the shopfront. They look especially discordant on historic buildings due to materials and shape.
- **If the blind or canopy does not carry an advertisement, it requires planning permission.**
- **If it does carry advertising it requires advertisement consent in addition to planning permission.**
- Listed building consent would be required for any type of blind on a listed building, and modern Dutch canopies will not be accepted on historic buildings or in conservation areas.
- Modern roller blinds or canopies can be acceptable where properly related to the building, and if they do not obscure architectural detail, but will not be approved above first floor window cill level. Plastic or glossy materials should generally be avoided as discordant in the streetscape.
- Any blind should project to no more than 1 metre behind the kerb line, and must provide a minimum clearance above the pavement (including any stays or supports) of 2.14 metres.

Fixed canopies conceal shopfronts and harm the unity of the building

Design Principle 3

Proposals to display signs or advertisements should meet the following criteria:

a) The size, design and number of any advertisements respect the character, scale, design and location of the building and shopfront on which it is displayed, and the streetscene.

b) The advertisement is properly related to and integrated into the shopfront which it serves.

c) With regard to a listed building, conservation area or other sensitive area the advertisements are not internally illuminated and do not adversely affect the character or appearance of the special asset.

Relevant RUDP Policies:

D10; D11; D13; D15; BH4; BH4A; BH6; BH8; BH13

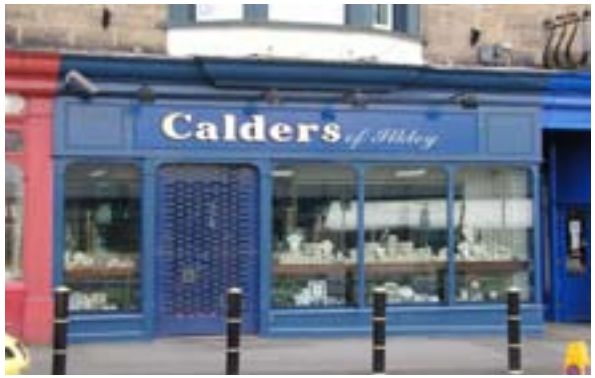
Victoria's
Victoria's

Security

6

Attractive, vibrant and varied retail areas are vital to creating a desirable environment in which to live and to encourage further investment. It is also important that shopping areas remain attractive outside normal shopping hours, to create a positive image to visitors and to encourage custom through window shopping.

- The need for security to protect businesses is now perceived to be almost essential. In addition to 'smash and grab' raids on the obvious high value/small size type goods such as jewellery, a wider range of goods is now being targeted and other methods including ram-raiding have become more prevalent, together with cases of vandalism of windows and anti-social behaviour.
- Whilst the Council fully appreciates the concerns of retailers and the insurance pressures they face, it also wishes to ensure the district's shopping areas are attractive and welcoming when the shops are closed, with people feeling safe at all times.
- The use of solid steel roller shutters, especially if left with a bare galvanised finish, creates a depressing, shabby and hostile appearance.
- Police advice and other research confirms that solid shutters create more problems than they solve, creating an environment of fear, deterring public from an area and removing the natural deterrent of activity, thus encouraging the problems they seek to deter.
- The Council encourages the use of a combination of methods to achieve a secure, welcoming and attractive shopping environment. Where possible, these will not involve visible alterations to the buildings. This can be achieved by a comprehensive approach to crime reduction in an area, rather than piecemeal diverse attempts by individual business owners. CCTV schemes can provide benefits over a wide area with little detrimental impact to appearance. Individual CCTV instalations either within premises or installed on the exterior of the premises may assist security.
- Traffic management schemes which direct vehicles away from principal shopping areas should be encouraged where these do not have an adverse effect on the vitality of the area or its appearance if an area of special character. Also, street furniture such as planters, seats and trees can be used to separate traffic from shop units, but needs to be considered as part of a comprehensive environmental scheme with consideration for pedestrian safety, those with disabilities, and the appearance of the locality to avoid unecessary clutter. Piece-meal use of bollards is not encouraged, and their erection will require approval by the highways authority if



Above: Appropriate levels of security in a conservation area.

Left : Acceptable security measures on a listed building.

located on the footway, and planning permission if not on the highway.

6.1 Security by Design

- The Council will encourage, where appropriate, the comprehensive design of a shopfront to include security features.
- Stallrisers should be included as part of the essential visual appearance of any shopfront, but also have the effect of deterring ram-raids. The stallriser can be designed to incorporate concealed posts and beams to reinforce its construction and effectiveness.
- The shopfront can be divided up with suitably designed vertical mullions, to reinforce the glass, and reduce glazed areas thus reducing the cost of glass replacement. Such changes will require planning permission, but will be acceptable if properly designed. Combined with the use of laminated glass, this can considerably improve the resistance to break-ins.
- Dependant on the site and layout of the property, railings or gates may be appropriate. Suitably designed railings may be appropriate to define or protect private frontages. Secondary doorways to the rear of premises, or recessed doorways to shopfronts can be protected by steel gates, provided that these are designed sympathetically to the building. Rear windows may also be protected by bars providing this does not detract from the appearance of the building or character of the area. In all cases, planning permission will be required.
- Sensors linking windows directly to alarms or CCTV have very limited impact on the

Security gates forming an integral part of the design solution

appearance on properties and would not normally require planning permission. Alarm boxes should be located having regard to the appearance of the shopfront.

6.2 Shutters

- When applications are made for new shopfronts, applicants will be expected to demonstrate the incorporation of adequate security measures, or that the design can sympathetically accommodate such measures at a later date.
- Where additional protection measures are proposed to shopfronts, the Council considers the transparency of these measures to enable the window display to be seen, and the ability for light to diffuse through them onto the street to be essential requirements.
- External solid roller shutters are commonly perceived as a cure-all for security. Design and appearance often seem to be a secondary consideration resulting in visual blight on properties and whole shopping areas. External roller shutters always require planning permission. The Council will oppose the use of solid external shutters, bare metal finishes and external roller shutter boxes on listed buildings, in conservation areas and in any retail areas as defined in the Replacement UDP.
- Internal shutters of the lattice, trellis or brick bond type, located between the window display and the glass do not require planning permission. The suitability for listed buildings should be confirmed prior to installation. In all cases, when shutters are in place, the illumination of window displays creates a less hostile appearance.

The negative visual impact of bare metal external roller shutters

- Mesh grilles hung or placed in runners in front of windows and doors do not require planning permission, provided that they can be removed daily and stored out of sight, that they are of a dark colour and that the fixing method does not detract from the shopfront. Listed building consent would normally be required.
- External shutters of the lattice, brick-bond, trellis or transparent polycarbonate type will require planning permission but may be considered acceptable subject to the roller box being concealed behind the fascia or incorporated within the shopfront construction, the shutter guides being recessed within the jambs of the shop aperture, and the use of an acceptable colour or finish. Any solid portion required at the bottom of the shutter must be no higher than the stallriser, or if a full depth window, a maximum of 300mm in height.
- The benefit of shutters with a high degree of transparency is that light from inside the shop can project onto the street even when the shop is closed, and the window display can still be seen, encouraging passers-by into the area. These solutions may not be accepted on listed buildings or in conservation areas, but options can be discussed.
- External roller shutters with perforated (small holes) or punched (rectangular holes) slats will be treated as solid shutters due to their visual effect when closed. Only in very exceptional circumstances will solid shutters be permitted. In such cases it will need to be demonstrated that:

  a) The shutter and roller box form a composite part of the design of the shopfront and do not detract from its appearance or the overall appearance of the area.

  b) The site is not a listed building.

  c) The site is not within a conservation area.

  d) The site is not within a recognised shopping centre as defined by the Council's Replacement Unitary Development Plan.

  e) The shop is located in an exceptionally high risk area. The Planning Department would normally seek independent confirmation of this from the Police and insurers.

  f) Other security measures are in place and have not proved suitable.

In such circumstances shutters, preferably perforated or punched, may be acceptable, but will always require to be powder coated to the colour of the shopfront and have a hidden roller box. The vertical runner will need to be hidden behind the pilasters or by related mouldings and should be painted to match the shopfront. Planning permission will be required.

Design Principle 4

There will be a strong presumption against the provision of external roller shutters, bare metal roller shutters and external shutter boxes on all retail premises in the District, and with special reference to Listed Buildings, premises in conservation areas and premises in retail areas as defined in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan.

Relevant RUDP Policies

D1; D4; D10; D11; BH4; BH4A; BH5; BH8

Design Principle 5

In circumstances where alternative solutions cannot be achieved, external roller shutters should be of transparent form, and bare metal finishes and external roller shutter boxes will not be accepted.

Relevant RUDP Policies

D1; D4; D10; D11; BH7; BH8

Access

7

When alterations are being made to a shopfront, the opportunity is available to improve access for all, with special consideration for those with disabilities and parents with prams.

Approved Document M of the Building Regulations (Access to and Use of Buildings, 2004 Edition) came into force on 1st October 2004. This requires service providers, i.e. business owners to:

"take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide a reasonable means of avoiding a physical feature of their premises which makes it unreasonably difficult or impossible for disabled people to make use of their services".

The general principles are that steps should be avoided where possible, with ramps provided to shopfloor level. Ramps, entrance areas and shopfloors should have a non-slip surface. Tactile paving can be used to denote a change in level or steps, with handrails protecting level changes.

Doorways should have a minimum opening of 850mm, ideally with doors capable of opening both ways but without obstructing the footway or over a step, and should be capable of being opened by people of limited strength or in wheelchairs. Frameless glass doors should be avoided, but where large areas of glass are used there should be a contrasting colour or sign to

increase awareness for the young or partially sighted.

Accommodating access to listed buildings or in conservation areas can be difficult to resolve and may lead to compromises. Innovative solutions which respect both the need for access and the character of the building will be necessary. The Council's Conservation Officers will be pleased to advise.

For further information on access, contact the Council's Building Control Officers (*see p35*).

Design Principle 6

Where development involves the substantial replacement of a shopfront or refurbishment of retail premises, reasonable efforts should be made to achieve primary access to the premises which is available to all in an equitable and unobstructed manner. This should be achieved within the ownership of the premises and without unreasonably harming the appearance of the property or the streetscape.

Relevant RUDP Policies

D1; D3

The Need for Permission

8

A shop here is defined as any street-level premises with a fascia sign and/or a display window, and includes non-retail premises such as betting offices, restaurants, take-aways, amusement centres, estate agents, building societies and other businesses in a shopping area.

- A shopfront may be redecorated or the signage (un-illuminated) may be changed without the need for planning permission.
- Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, significant alterations, or new shopfronts require planning permission.
- Signs will often also require a separate application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

It should be noted that for submissions for changes to shopfronts or signage, the Council will expect a high standard of information and comprehensive detail from suitably qualified designers, fully and clearly showing the proposed works and their impact on the site where they are located.

Planning applications for works to shopfronts and signs should include:

- Fully detailed plans of both the existing and proposed appearance at a scale of not less than 1:50.
- Sections showing dimensions and details such as security provision at a larger scale are also usually necessary.
- Details of proposed materials, finishes and intended colours.
- Full details of all signs with intended illumination, materials and colour.

Where Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are concerned, photographs of the existing situation are of great assistance.

All applications will be judged on their individual merits, together with regard to the design principles in this document. Surrounding buildings and the wider visual environment will be considered to ensure a solution which enhances and complements its setting.

8.1 Listed Buildings

It is an criminal offence under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to alter, extend or demolish any part of a listed building without first obtaining Listed Building Consent. This will be required for any

changes affecting the appearance of a shopfront, including alterations, a replacement door, security measures or signs.

The Council will seek to retain historic or traditional details on listed buildings, and where opportunities arise, will seek the reinstatement of correct or appropriate traditional details to enhance the buildings. However, the Council will endeavour to accommodate business owners' wishes as far as possible whilst having regard for the special character of the building.

8.2 Conservation Areas

It is also a criminal offence under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to demolish an unlisted building in a conservation area. Commercial properties do not enjoy permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, and as such any alterations within conservation areas will require planning permission.

The Council will seek designs in conservation areas which reflect the character of the area, of traditional materials, scale and appearance, unless it can be demonstrated that a contemporary alternative will maintain and preserve the character and appearance of the area.

Internally illuminated signs, external security shutters and fixed blinds will be resisted in conservation areas.

8.3 Building Regulations

A Building Regulations application is required for the installation alteration or modification of a shopfront. Together with access considerations, issues of structural support, means of escape and the choice of glazing will need to be determined.

Main Street, Haworth

Appendix 1

Policies within the Replacement Unitary Development Plan Relevant to Shopfront Development (Adopted October 2005)

The full text is available on the Council's website at www.bradford.gov.uk/environment/land_and_premises/

Principal Policies

UDP3

New Development will need to ensure that the quality of the built and natural environment is maintained and where practical improved. In particular development should:

1) Promote sustainable design and enshrine the principles of good urban design.

2) Maintain or enhance heritage assets, environmental resources and biodiversity.

3) Maintain or enhance the character or quality of the environment.

Urban Renaissance

Policy UR3

Development will be permitted provided that it does not have an adverse effect on:

- *The surrounding environment; or*
- *The occupants of adjoining land.*

Town centres, Retail and Leisure Developments

Policy CT3

The re-use or redevelopment of property for residential purposes in the city and town centres will be permitted provided the ground floor of the development remains available for retail, leisure, or other service uses appropriate to the function of the centre if the ground floor of the property is currently used or was last used for these purposes.

Policy CT4

Developments within the central shopping areas should safeguard existing arcades and canopies over adjoining footways and/or incorporate new ones where this can be achieved without seriously detracting from the appearance of the development or the wider streetscape.

Design

Policy D1

All development proposals should make a positive contribution to the environment and quality of life through high quality design, layout and landscaping. In particular they should:

1) be well related to the existing character of the locality in terms of design, scale, massing, height and materials.

Policy D3

Development proposals including change of use should ensure adequate means of access for people with physical disabilities to buildings and their cartilages with respect to the following types of buildings:

- *Shops*
- *Community facilities*
- *Health facilities*
- *Places of entertainment*
- *Places of work*

And any other buildings with public access.

Policy D4

Development proposals should be designed to ensure a safe and secure environment and reduce the opportunities for crime.

Policy D9

Development proposals within or which would affect the appearance of Bradford City Centre or the town centres of Bingley, Ilkley, Keighley and

Shipley should satisfy the following criteria:

1) In terms of architectural design, development should respond to the urban character, reinforcing local distinctiveness, but also taking the opportunity to create innovative design solutions based on an understanding of the urban context.

2) Not detract from the setting of important buildings or landmarks.

Policy D10

Development proposals alongside or highly visible from the transport corridors identified on the proposals map should maintain or where practical make a positive contribution to the environment or these corridors through:

1) High standards of design and the appearance of buildings.

Policy D11

On corridors defined as 'gateway roads' on the proposals maps development alongside or highly visible from these corridors should be of the highest possible standard in design, materials, landscaping and boundary treatment and shall take account of detailed gateway design guidance where applicable.

Policy D13

The development of new shopfront units will only be permitted if they satisfy the following criteria:

1) The design is consistent with the character and scale of the existing building, in terms of quality and its use of materials.

2) The shop fascia is designed in scale, in its depth and width, with the façade and street scene of which it forms part.

Policy D15

Consent will only be given for the display of an advertisement which respects the interests of public safety and amenity. Proposals will be assessed having regard to:

1) The characteristics of the locality

2) Features of scenic, historic, architectural, cultural or other special interest.

Built Heritage and the Historic Environment

Policy BH4

The alteration, extension or substantial demolition of listed buildings will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

1) Would not have any adverse effect upon the special architectural or historic interest of the building or its setting.

2) Is appropriate in terms of design, scale, detailing and materials.

3) Would minimise the loss of historic fabric of the building.

Policy BH4A

Proposals for development will not be permitted if they would harm the setting of a listed building.

Policy BH5

Where possible existing traditional shopfronts should be retained and restored. Proposals for the alteration of existing shopfronts or installation of new shopfronts on a listed building should be to a high standard of design and respect the character and appearance of the listed building. external roller shutters will not be granted permission on a listed building shopfront unless there is clear evidence of an original shutter housing and the shutter is traditionally detailed and in timber and/or metal of a traditional section.

Policy BH6

Consent for the display of advertisements on listed buildings or which would affect the setting of a listed building will be permitted only where:

1) The advertisement is appropriate in terms of its scale, design and materials and would not detract from the character or appearance of the buildings.

2) The advert is not an internally illuminated box.

3) If the proposed advertisement is to be externally illuminated, the design of the method of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the building.

4) Plastic fascia signs whether or not illuminated will not be granted consent on a listed building.

Policy BH7

Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas will be expected to be of the highest standards of design and to preserve or enhance the character or apperance of the conservation area.

Policy BH8

Within conservation areas proposals affecting existing shopfronts or proposals for new shopfronts must demonstrate a high standard of design and be sympathetic in scale, style and detail to the original building. Proposed external shutters, sun blinds and canopies must be sympathetic in style, colour and materials to the buildings to which they are attached and their architectural style. Blinds will not be permitted on buildings without a shopfront or fascia.

Policy BH13

Within conservation areas the Council will require the design of advertisements to be of a high standard, therefore:

1) Consent will be granted only where the proposal is in scale and character with the building on which it is located and with surrounding buildings. Where possible all new shopfronts, fascias, signs and letters should be made of natural/sympathetic materials.

2) Within conservation areas, internally illuminated box signs will not be permitted. Sensitively designed fascias or signs incorporating individually illuminated mounted letters on a suitable background may be acceptable in town centres where the scale, colour, design and intensity of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area.

3) Where unacceptable advertisements already exist in conservation areas, the Council will where appropriate take discontinuance action to secure their removal.

The earliest form of shopfront, Bingley

Glossary

See Section 3 *(page 14)* for illustration

Architrave: the lowest part of an entablature, the lower framing edge of a fascia or frieze.

Bolection Moulding: a moulding that covers the joint between two members with surfaces at different levels, and projects beyond both surfaces.

Cill: the lowest horizontal member of a window frame.

Console bracket: bracket supporting the upper members of a cornice.

Corbel: a block of masonry or material such as brick or wood which projects from a wall and supports a beam or other feature. A corbel may be carved or moulded.

Cornice: the upper projecting portion of an entablature.

Entablature: the upper part of a Classical architectural order, which rests upon the columns. Consists of an architrave, frieze (or fascia) and cornice.

Fascia: the flat surface above a shop window, on which the name of the shop or other sign may be displayed.

Frieze: the band or flat strip on an entablature, between the cornice and architrave.

Glazing bar: the metal or wooden members in a window which form the framework dividing individual panes of glass.

LDF: Local Development Framework. The successor to the Replacement Unitary Development Plan as the forward plan for development.

Mullion: a vertical member or rail dividing the lights of a window.

Pilaster: a rectangular column, projecting only slightly from a wall, usually forming a division between bays of a building or a stop to a shopfront or bay.

Plinth: the projecting base or moulding to any structure, pilaster or column.

RUDP: Replacement Unitary Development Plan. The forward plan for the Bradford District, adopted in October 2005.

Shopfront: a street-level frontage with a display window, usually serving a retail outlet but also including restaurants, amusement arcades, banks, building societies and other businesses in a shopping area.

Stallriser: the surface beneath the cill on a shopfront, providing protection to the structure as well as decoration. Clad in stone, tiles panelled timber or other finish.

Transom: a main horizontal member dividing a window opening, or the upper part of a shop window.

Contacts

More information on the Planning process, the need for Planning permission and Planning applications is available on-line at www.bradford.gov.uk/environment/land_and_premises/planning/public_access_for_planning.htm

Development Services

Development Services process all applications for Planning and Listed Building Consent, and provide advice on all planning matters. The Bradford district is divided into several teams for planning purposes:

Bradford West
Including Heaton, Manningham, Thornton, Clayton, Queensbury, Great Horton and Buttershaw.
Telephone: 01274 434605
Fax: 01274 722840
e-mail: planning.enquiries@bradford.gov.uk

Bradford City Centre
Telephone: 01274 434605
Fax: 01274 722840
e-mail: planning.enquiries@bradford.gov.uk

Bradford East
Including Thackley, Idle, Greengates, Eccleshill, Fagley, Bowling, Odsal, Low Moor and Wyke.
Telephone: 01274 434605
Fax: 01274 722840
e-mail: planning.enquiries@bradford.gov.uk

Shipley
Including Shipley, Bingley, Baildon, Wrose, Harden, Denholme, Cullingworth and Wilsden.
Telephone: 01274 437038
Fax: 01274 437090
e-mail: planning.shipley@bradford.gov.uk

Keighley
Including the Worth Valley, Riddlesden, Silsden, Steeton.
Telephone: 01535 618071
Fax: 01535 618450
e-mail: planning.keighley@bradford.gov.uk

Ilkley
Including Addingham, Burley in Wharfedale and Menston.
Telephone: 01943 436218
Fax: 01943 816763
e-mail: planning.shipley@bradford.gov.uk

Conservation and Design

The Conservation Team advises on matters relating to listed buildings, conservation area and design, and can assist with design of shopfronts and renovation of existing features.

Telephone: 01274 434551
Fax: 01274 433767
e-mail: conservation@bradford.gov.uk

Building Control

Building Control consider applications for Building Regulations, and control standards of construction, safe building environments, environmental standards in building, and access issues. Any new shopfront will require an application for Building Regulations. Two offices cover the District.

Bradford
Telephone: 01274 433807
Fax: 01274 722840

Keighley
Telephone: 01535 618010
Fax: 01535 618450

Acknowledgements

This policy document has been prepared with reference to comparable documents to ensure completeness and compatibility.

Shopfront
Civic Trust for the North East (Neville Whittaker), 1980

Shopfronts Design Guide
Birmingham City Council, April 1996

Shopfronts in Halifax Town Cente
Calderdale MBC, 1985

Book of Details & Good Practice in Shopfront Design
English Historic Towns Forum 1993

Shopfronts & Advertisements in Historic Towns
English Historic Towns Forum 1991

Shopfront Security Report
English Historic Towns Forum 1994

Shopfronts Design Guide
Harrogate Borough Council, March 1999

Security Design Guide for shops and other commercial properties
Leeds City Council

Shopfronts - A Design Review
Corporation of London, 1993

Shopfront Design Guide
Nottingham City Council, January 1995

Shopfronts - A Guide to Good Design
Thamesdown Borough Council, 1991

Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs
City of Westminster, May 1993