

Shopfront design sheets 1 - 6

6. Canopies, blinds and security

Informal Guidance to Support SPG3 and SPG4

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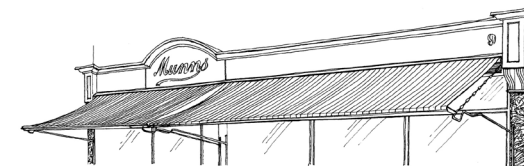
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Design sheet 6: Canopies, blinds and security

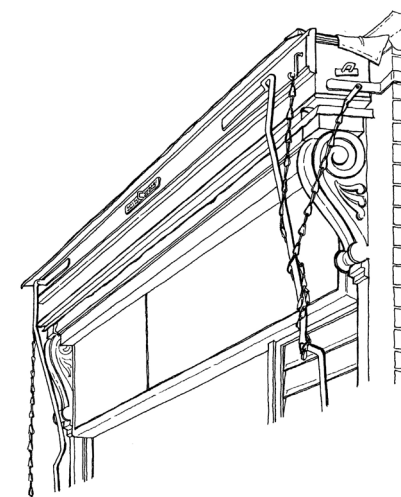
Canopies & Blinds

Many traditional shopfronts had retractable roller blinds to protect goods from sunlight and to provide shelter for pedestrians. In the past blinds were not used for advertisement purposes, whereas today, many modern type of blinds, such as the 'balloon' or 'Dutch' blinds, are essentially seen as a means to increase advertising. They are alien (and in many cases an obtrusive feature) in historic areas and are in general not acceptable on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas.

- Where traditional canvas blinds and blind boxes are still in place, these should be retained and restored.
- New blinds should be integrated within the design and construction of the shopfront. They should be positioned below the fascia so as not to obstruct the view of the shop name and, when retracted, should sit flush with the fascia.
- New blinds should be fixed in a way that they do not conceal any key architectural elements of the shopfront.
- New blinds should always be retractable when not required and ideally be of a traditional roller design. Fixed blinds or Dutch blinds are generally not acceptable.
- Blinds should be made of canvas or other non-reflective material. Shiny plastic materials used for fixed Dutch blinds are unlikely to find approval.
- The colour of the new blind should complement the colour scheme of the fascia and shopfront.



Traditional retractable blind. The blind should not be used to increase advertising space.



New blinds should be made of canvas and be fixed in a way that they do not conceal any key architectural features

Security

Detailed advice on shopfront security and type of consent and permissions required is in Gravesham Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 4: 'Security measures for shopfront and commercial premises'. Please read in conjunction with the following notes, which highlight security measures that are generally seen as acceptable in the context of Listed Building, conservation areas and historic streets where the Council will apply higher standards when considering planning applications.

The need for security

There are three major elements of crime that need to be considered: theft, vandalism and ram raiding. The level of risk depends on a variety of factors, such as the nature of the business and its location, the way the street is laid out and lit, and the level of liveliness of the area outside normal shopping hours. Investigate the nature of the threats first before deciding on the most appropriate form of protection. The Architectural Liaison Officer at the Kent County Constabulary may advise you on any particular problems in your area. Click here for advice from Kent Police on [How to protect your business](#)

Security measures

The appearance of shops after normal business hours has an important impact on shoppers and visitors perception of an area. Drastic security measures such as external solid roller shutters have a deadening effect and create a hostile environment that can make an area unattractive to customers. It is important that security measures are integrated without spoiling the character and appearance of the building and the area. The following general principles apply:

- Where a new shopfront is proposed, security measures should be an integral part of the design.
- Where a new shopfront is proposed, use the design of the shop frame itself for protection. Shop windows that are divided into several panes by mullions and transoms tend to be less susceptible to wilful damage and are cheaper and easier to replace.



Solid roller shutters have a deadening effect and create a hostile environments that can make an area unattractive to customers

- Enhancing security on an existing shopfront is more difficult. Ensure that additional security measures are incorporated without causing any obvious and compromising alteration to the appearance of the building or the shopfront.

Security by Glazing

Glazing is an integral part of any shopfront design though its ability to serve as a security measure is often overlooked. There are various types of glazing materials available that can enhance security, i.e. toughened glass and laminated glass, and their use should be considered first to any other solution.

Internal security grilles

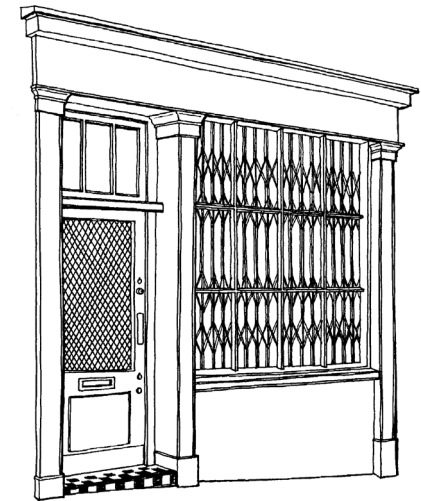
The use of internal grilles is generally the next most favourable solution. They are retractable during shopping hours and can be fitted discreetly behind the shop window. The installation of internal grilles does not require planning permission, although it will require Listed Building Consent if the shop is part of a Listed Building.

Removable/demountable mesh grilles

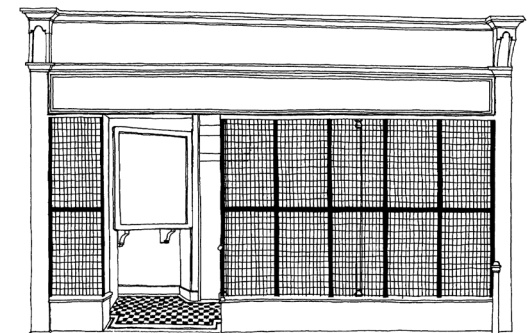
Fixed over the shop window and the entrance, removable mesh grilles are a traditional means of providing security. They do not require any box housing and can be stored inside the building when not in use. Subject to an agreed design, material, and colour removable/demountable mesh grilles are a preferred option.

Wooden shutters

Traditionally wooden shutters that could be removed during the day or folded back to the sides were used to protect shop windows. Where these still exist, they should be retained. In historic conservation areas the use of wooden shutters is an acceptable alternative to steel shutters should a high risk of vandalism require a solid protection to the outside of the shop window.



Internal security grille fitted behind the shop window are retractable during shopping hours



Removeable/demountable mesh grilles are a traditional method of providing security. these do not require any housing and can be stored inside the building when not in use

External Roller Grilles and Shutters

External Roller Grilles may be considered but internal roller grilles will always be the preferred solution. Solid metal shutters are not acceptable at all, no matter what type of design. They will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where evidence, supported by the police, has proven that there is a particular security problem in the area and all other appropriate security measures have failed to address this.

Where external grilles or shutters are found to be acceptable they must have the shutter box recessed into the shop. Traditionally this has been behind the fascia panel. Where this cannot be accommodated, an opaque transom light can be introduced to conceal the shutter box.

Careful consideration should be given to the positioning of the shutter guides in the shop frame. They should be integrated into the shopfront design or be removable, and colour coated to match the shopfront.

Alarm Boxes

Burglar alarm boxes tend to be rather unattractive devices. They should be sited as unobtrusively as possible and must not obscure or damage any architectural details. The best location tends to be immediately above the fascia at one end, or, if the box is placed on the shop front itself, at one corner within the depth of the fascia. They should be painted to match the background colour.

Further information:

- Gravesham Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance 4: 'Security measures for shopfront and commercial premises':
- English Historic Towns Forum: Details of Good Practice in Shopfront Design