

15.14 Letters, figures, symbols or similar features in the design of an advertisement may be permissible under the Advertisement Regulations if they do not exceed 750 mm height (300 mm in any Area of Special Control of Advertisements). Such dimensions would normally be sufficient for most purposes.

AD10 To prevent an inappropriate visual relationship between lettering and buildings consent will not normally be given for advertisements where the lettering, symbols, figures or similar features are greater than 750mm in height (300mm in an Area of Special Advertisement Control should the council designate such areas in future).

ILLUMINATION

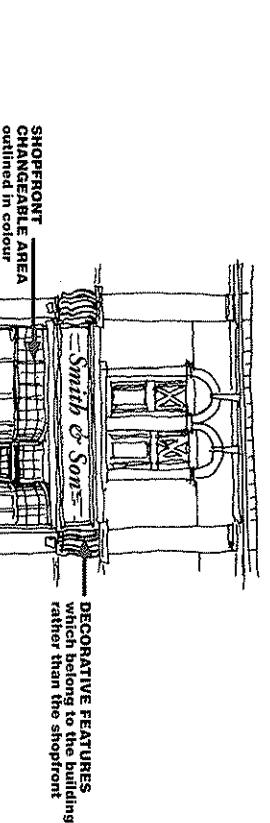
15.15 Illumination of signs can contribute to the street scene where the illumination is treated as an integral part of the overall design and not merely a means of drawing attention to an advertisement. The most acceptable way of illuminating box signs and advertisements is by internally illuminating the letters or characters rather than their background. This method may be permissible (subject to certain restrictions) under the Advertisement Regulations.

AD11 To prevent excessive prominence consent will not normally be given for internally lit advertisements on upper storeys or those where the background is illuminated.

AD12 To prevent visual dominance consent will not normally be given for more than one internally illuminated fascia and projecting sign per shopfront.

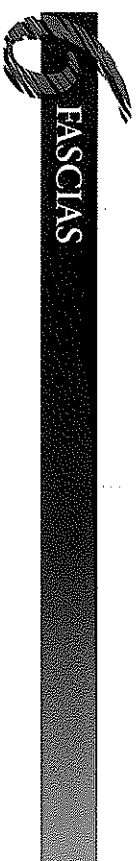
AD13 To avoid inconsistent design, consent will not normally be given for internally illuminated advertisements on walls which do not contain a shop window.

15.16 External lighting can often give greater character to fascia signs and other forms of advertising. Swan neck lamps are particularly popular with pubs. Subtle external lighting can also be used to enhance the appearance of the building itself at night.



5.2 Where shops occupy buildings not originally designed for such use, the "changeable area" will initially be more difficult to define. A suitable guide may be provided by existing windows and doors or decorative string courses which readily divide the building into distinct areas. Indeed there may be some older buildings where a defined "changeable area" will not be appropriate. Changes to the frontage of such buildings will be considered on their merits although alterations are likely to be restricted to a minimum.

SF1 New shopfront designs which do not incorporate a readily identifiable changeable area will not normally be permitted.



6.1 These should read as an integral part of the shop, reflecting the overall proportions of the shopfront and dimensions of the building as a whole. A traditional fascia is rarely more than 400 mm (16") deep and only on larger Victorian or Edwardian shopfronts would a fascia be up to 600 mm (24") deep. Too many modern shopfronts are "top heavy" disregarding the need to keep all of the shopfront in proportion. Whilst very deep fascias will result in a heavy, clumsy appearance, very wide ones will over emphasise the horizontal. Measures to visually break up very long fascias should be introduced into the design of new shopfronts for buildings with wide frontages.

6.2 On traditional shopfronts a properly detailed cornice will give protection to the fascia, give depth and interest to the shopfront and can provide visual support for the building above. Fascias should be kept well below the first floor window sills.

6.3 On modern shopfronts box fascias have become highly standardised and frequently take the form of a natural aluminium frame containing brightly coloured acrylic panels. These materials do not blend well with traditional buildings comprised of brick, timber, plaster or other hand made finishes. Modern box fascias attached to older buildings are invariably bulky, obscure details of the building, seldom sit comfortably and appear as built on appendages.

6.4 Planning Policy Guidance Note 19 makes it clear that "designers should be prepared to compromise on matters of 'corporate' design where it is unsuitable in a particularly sensitive area." However, it is not normally the corporate lettering or company logo themselves which cause concern but the size of the fascia onto which they are incorporated and their proportional relationship with the rest of the building. Modifications may therefore be required to enable corporate images to be satisfactorily inserted into a particular location whilst still being instantly recognisable by the shopper.



SF2 New fascia panels which do not fit into the frame of the existing fascia board or which overlap or conceal architectural details will not normally be permitted.

SF3 New fascia panels that are greater than 600mm (24") deep or which do not respect the scale of surrounding fascias and the building to which it is attached will not normally be permitted.

SF4 Fascia panels spanning more than one building which do not retain the individuality of each building will not normally be permitted.



WINDOW SIGNS

15.10 Sign writing painted directly onto glass was a feature of the late nineteenth century and is still used today, often to denote businesses at upper floors. In the case of non-retail ground floor occupiers such as bookmakers, hairdressers and solicitors, imaginative signwriting on the window can help to avoid the deadening effect on the street scene created by their lack of internal window display. The colours used should not detract from the appearance of the building.

AD9 Consent will not normally be given for external advertisements on windows which do not relate to the scale and proportions of the window or the design of the building within which it is set.

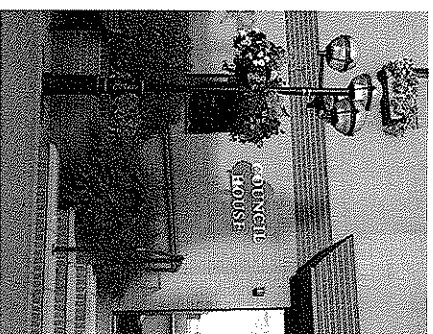
LETTERING

15.11 Lettering can evoke an image and provide decorative interest. The choice of lettering and illustration can reflect the use and character of the shop and should also take into account the character of the building. Fascia lettering should convey the essential message of the retailer. The shop name alone will normally have most effect, and additional lettering (normally advertising) is generally only confusing and will detract from the shopfront.



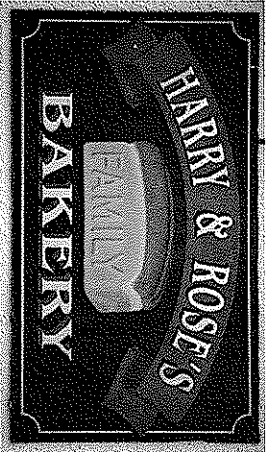
15.12 Lettering is normally best either signwritten directly onto wooden fascias or if carried out in a traditional manner, applied as individual letters. Colours are important: gilding or strong tones on a dark background reflect light, and are clearly visible at night. Rich effects can be achieved by shading and blocking of letters.

15.13 Individual letters can be useful particularly where there is no fascia and the lettering is attached to the natural materials of the building. Simple solid shapes will normally be appropriate and the traditional gilded lettering with a half round section is particularly appropriate for pubs and hotels.

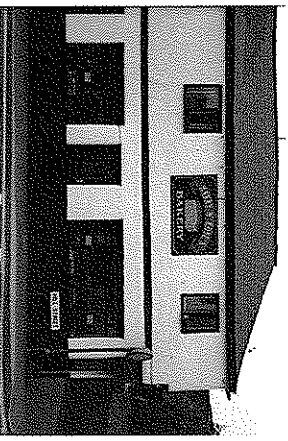


WALL SIGNS

15.8 In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was occasional practice of shopkeepers to fix a boarded wooden frame by iron spikes above the fascia as an alternative location for the occupier's name and trade. This was generally the practice when the existing fascia was too narrow to adequately identify the business and where the advertisement space was restricted. Very occasionally advertisements were painted directly onto the brickwork.

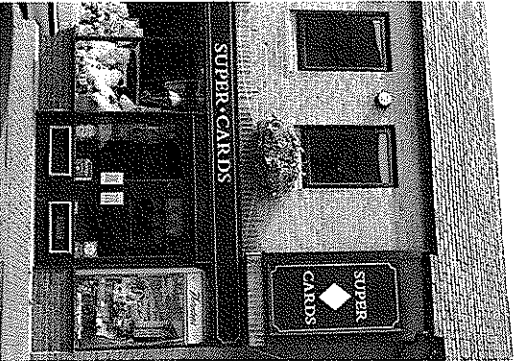


15.9 Wall signs are difficult to handle because of the temptation to use large areas and lose control over the simple message that should be conveyed. Their use will therefore only be permissible if they are suitably framed and they respect the proportions of the building as a whole.



AD7 The selective use of mounted signs will be acceptable on traditional buildings where they are incorporated within a frame and their size, design, colouring and position do not detract from the appearance of the individual building or the overall street scene.

AD8 To ensure a suitable visual setting, consent will not normally be given for mounted signs on modern buildings unless they are to be incorporated into areas designed for that purpose.



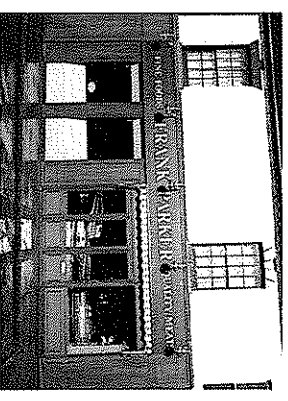
SF5 Where an existing shop front is replaced, a reduction in the depth in the new fascia design will be required where the existing depth is considered excessive and detrimental to the appearance of the building.

6.5 Fascias have a dual role to play in that not only do they display the name of the shop but they can in themselves be an advertisement. The latter aspect is dealt with in a later section.

STALLRISERS

7.1 Windows with stallrisers are a traditional feature within the Borough. They provide the building with a visible anchor to the ground and were originally introduced to give low level protection to the window from the weather for which a good sill detail was required. Today they protect against damage from mechanised street cleaning and for that purpose must be constructed of robust materials such as brick, tile or stone. Steel framing in stallrisers will provide resistance to ram-raiding. Windows without stallrisers are unlikely to be acceptable except in special locations such as inside covered shopping arcades where a less vigorous cleaning regime is used.

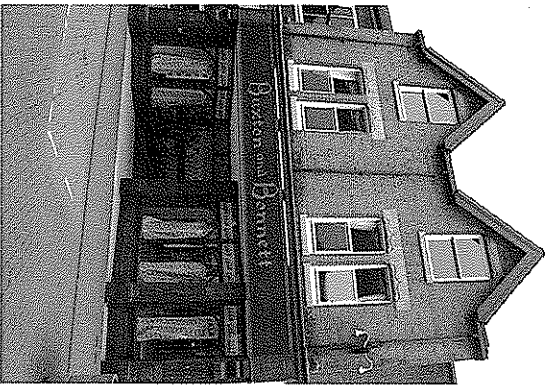
7.2 Stallrisers vary in height. Some retailers such as jewellers, electrical retailers and butchers favour very deep stallrisers for security (they can deter ramraiders) and hygiene reasons respectively. These will normally be acceptable although they should reflect the proportions of the building as a whole and not just the changeable area. Such features will be closely scrutinised and a high standard of workmanship and materials will be required. The removal of traffic from shopping areas has again enabled an uninterrupted view across the street and deep stallrisers should not dominate the streetscene.



SF6 Shopfronts without stallrisers or ones less than 225mm (3 bricks) deep will not normally be permitted.

8 WINDOWS

8.1 These should be of an appropriate scale to reflect the proportions of the building within which they are set. Windows can provide a sense of rhythm along the street frontage. Window frames should be used to contain and set off the internal display and this can only be achieved by good quality materials and workmanship. Metal frames with badly cut and fitting corners or wood with poorly mitred joints should be avoided. Large undivided areas of glass should be broken up by glazing bars and doors. The method of subdivision should suit the character of the shopfront and building. Display windows should normally be restricted to the ground floor and internally facing displays should be avoided. Wherever practicable, bulk supplies of target commodities should be held in a separate internal, physically secure area well away from all perimeters as advised by the Association of British Insurers. This will limit the amount of stock readily available to thieves using the window as a means of entry.



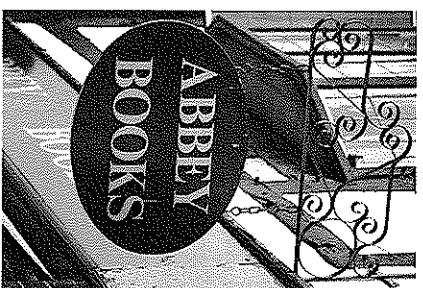
8.2 Glazing is essential in any shop window because it allows goods to be displayed and may also enable potential customers to see into the shop and gain some idea of what else might be available. Glass is the most appropriate material but ordinary glass has serious drawbacks unless modified. Toughened or laminated glass should be used as they are safer for customers and passers by. They also improve security (see para9.2). Laminated glass should be professionally fitted to ensure it does not flex under attack or pop out of its frame.

SF7 Shopfronts which include windows of an inappropriate size in relation to the frontage of the building in which they will be set will not normally be permitted.

SF8 The enlargement of existing windows above ground floor level for display purposes will not normally be permitted.

HANGING SIGNS

15.6 Although these can add to the general interest of a street scene, too many can create clutter. Traditionally designed flat hanging signs attached to plain or decorative iron brackets are particularly appropriate on older buildings. Signs should be carefully sited so as not to be a hazard to pedestrians. Where they denote businesses at upper floors or shops set back under a canopy they should hang clear of the building and be positioned no higher than the middle of the second storey.



15.7 The sign should not detract from the scale proportions and character of the building by being over large or ridiculously small. Normally no more than 450 mm (1'6") to 600 mm (2') (or 0.35 sq m in area) will be sufficient. Occasionally exceptions may be justified on an individual basis. An alternative is a hanging object associated with the trade of the occupier such as was traditionally done for a chemists (bottle) and barber (striped pole). These add interest to shopping areas and their use will be supported, provided they are of good quality materials and workmanship.



AD5 Consent will not normally be given for hanging signs which detract from the character, scale and proportions of the building to which they will be attached, or where the cumulative effect of such signs creates clutter.

AD6 To give a consistent appearance within new shopping arcades, consent will not normally be permitted for hanging signs unless they conform to a uniform size, shape and position.

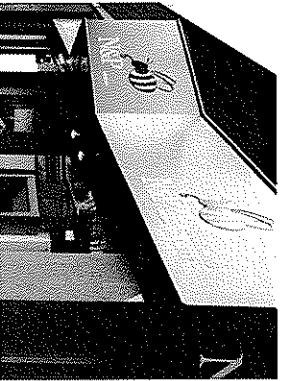


AD1 To ensure a satisfactory relationship with the building, consent will not normally be given for fascia signs which project more than 250mm from the wall.

15.4 In certain modern developments fascia box signs may be situated in special positions such as the edge of balconies covering a pavement. Such positions are acceptable provided the sign respects the proportions of the structure to which it is attached. Indeed when done successfully such signs can enliven repetitive buildings.

PROJECTING BOX SIGNS

15.5 Normally one box sign will be sufficient. More than one will only be acceptable in special locations such as on shops with a very wide or double street frontage or where the building is recessed. Ideally they should be positioned consistently along the street, either all to the right or all to the left of the fascia. Proportionally they should represent turning the fascia through 90°. Projecting box signs and signs forming a projecting part of the fascia will not be appropriate on traditional shopfronts and should not be used on the upper storeys of any building. By their nature projecting signs can only display a limited amount of information. Signs that project a picture or symbol tend to be the most successful. The use of hanging signs and objects (described in the next section) is often preferable to box signs which, particularly when illuminated are often standardised.



AD2 To prevent visual clutter consent will not normally be given for more than one projecting box sign per shopfront.

AD3 To prevent an inconsistent appearance consent will not normally be given for projecting box signs positioned on upper storeys.

AD4 To maintain a consistent appearance consent will not normally be given for projecting box signs which are of proportions greater than the depth of the existing fascia.



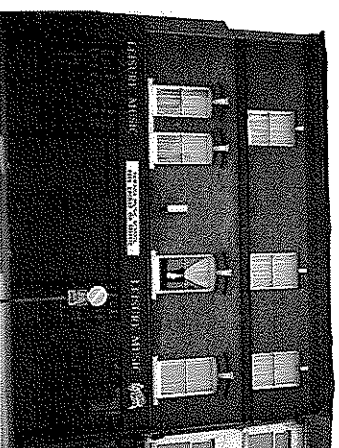
SECURITY SHUTTERS

9.1 The character of a shopfront can be dramatically altered by the attachment of external security shutters which is why they require planning permission. Even when raised or removed, roller boxes and side rails can remain clearly visible. When lowered or fixed the whole ground floor of a building may be obscured. Care is needed to ensure shopping areas do not present a "boarded up" appearance. This creates an unwelcome atmosphere for people wishing to use the area's facilities at night, and undermines town centre and other environmental improvements carried out by the Council.

9.2 Whilst it sympathises with problems caused to shopkeepers by indiscriminate damage to shopfronts, the Council is concerned by the spreading use of visually inappropriate security measures. Alternatives such as the installation of laminated glass, internal or removable shutters and the introduction of additional glazing bars to strengthen an otherwise vulnerable expanse of glass should first be investigated. Strong well designed millions can reduce damage incurred by ramraiders. The latter can be designed to make the shopfront stronger whilst not detracting from the visibility of the goods on display.



Where strengthened glass is used attention should be drawn to the fact as that in itself is a deterrent. New products such as resilient transparent shutters are continually becoming available as technology improves. In particularly sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas the most important objective is the retention and enhancement of the character of the building and the area.



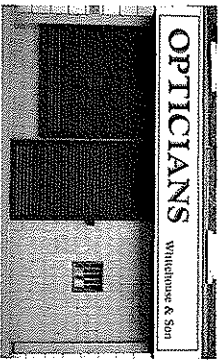
9.3 Where external shutters are proposed care must be taken to integrate them with the shopfront and the building as a whole and to minimise their impact on the street or shopping area. Shutters should not fill the whole of the changeable area. Doors and windows should be shuttered separately and in different materials and colours if necessary. New shopfront designs should ensure that windows are sufficiently recessed to accommodate the shutter box and the shutter which when down should sit on the top of the stallriser. The window frame should be sufficiently robust to incorporate the shutter's side rails. Wherever practical views into, and the passage of light from the interior, particularly at night, should be achieved.

9.4 The colour of shutters, their boxes, channel guides and accompanying fittings should also be taken into account. Colours co-ordinating with the house style and in particular the fascia will be expected. Imaginative but sensitive use of bright colours and murals will be encouraged to break up a large expanse of shuttering, particularly on buildings of no architectural merit. Colour coating or anodising will be essential to enable easy removal of graffiti.

SF9 Applications for new shopfronts which do not incorporate security measures as an integral part of their design will not normally be permitted.

SF10 Applications for the installation of external security shutters will not normally be permitted unless the following criteria are met:-

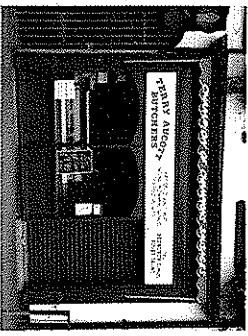
(a) the external coverage of the building by the shutter box and side rail has been kept to the minimum necessary to secure the building from unauthorised entry or damage;



(b) the shutter allows views into and light out from the interior of the shop;

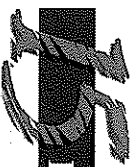
(c) the shutter, its box and associated fixtures and fittings are of a colour to complement the building or existing fascia; and

(d) the colour is applied by a method which reduces adhesion of graffiti and is easily maintained.



ADVERTISEMENTS

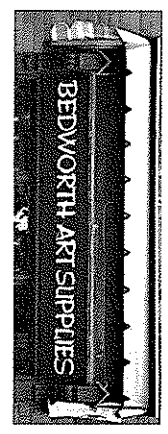
14.1 Provided they remain within the parameters set by the regulations, most businesses can advertise their services and activities without consent. It is only when advertisements over and above those parameters are sought, that consent is required because there may be an adverse effect on the visual amenity of an area and on highway safety. Each application has to be considered on its individual merits, taking those aspects into account. The guidelines set out the circumstances in which it is likely that an advertisement will have a detrimental impact of the visual amenity of an area.



BUILDINGS CONTAINING SHOPS

15.1 Advertisements can make a significant contribution to the character of an area but poorly designed incongruous signs can be visually intrusive. Fascia advertisements and projecting and hanging signs should always be designed to complement the style of the building and the shopfront.

FASCIA SIGNS



15.2 The materials, detail and proportions of a fascia sign must be well related to the background (not merely the surface the sign is set out on but the larger backdrop of the building as a whole) in order to avoid a disruptive and uncoordinated appearance. The choice of lettering and illustration can reflect the use and character of the shop. Too many advertisements will detract from the building and they will be less effective in attracting custom.



15.3 The colours and material finishes for a box fascia should match or relate to those of the shopfront, with particular attention being paid to the detailing of the edge of the box which should act as a frame to set off the advert. Where only the letters on a box fascia are to be illuminated, consent may not be required provided the box does not project more than 250mm from the wall. This dimension will normally be sufficient for most purposes.

13.2 Regular maintenance is essential if shopfronts are to remain attractive. Neglect will lead to decay and unnecessary expenditure on repairs and replacement. Shopkeepers are urged to consult the booklet 'Care & Maintenance of Shopfronts, Fittings & Interiors' produced by the National Association of Shopfitters.

13.3 Most shopping streets have empty shops. To avoid them detracting from the character of the street, owners should ensure that maintenance and repair is continued pending a change of tenant.. Measures should be taken to avoid vandalism. This can often be done by providing an imaginative mural instead of blank boarding.

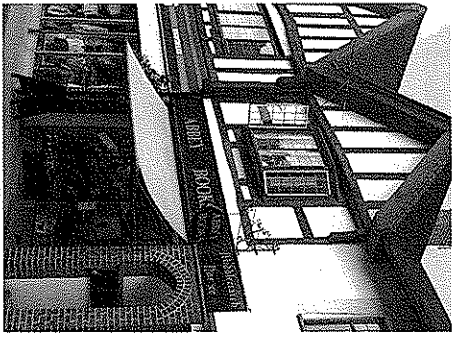
SF18 The use of good quality materials which can be easily maintained will be encouraged.

SF19 Where shops are likely to remain empty for some time, landlords are encouraged to adopt imaginative temporary measures to enhance their appearance such as murals depicting street scenes which may make an area less threatening after normal shopping hours.



CANOPIES AND BLINDS

10.1 Blinds have a practical purpose as they protect goods from damage by sunlight. Normally there is no need for them on north facing elevations or in narrow streets. Traditional canopies were made of canvas and were only pulled down when required. When not in use they were neatly incorporated within the fascia cornice. The current trend is for Dutch blinds or balloon canopies which are usually erected as a means of increasing advertising space. Their structure tends to obscure the fascia and introduces a dominant shape which is out of character with the street.



10.2 As with all elements of the shopfront, thought must be given as to how best the blind box can be integrated within the overall design of the shopfront. The use of plastics, wet-look or stretch fabrics will be strongly discouraged on traditional shopfronts which are faced mostly with matt and non-reflective materials. Care must be taken to maintain adequate headroom for pedestrians passing underneath.

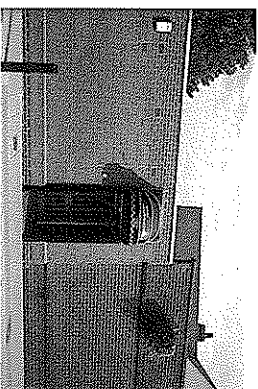
SF11 Dutch blinds, balloon canopies and plastic canopies will not normally be permitted on traditional shopfronts. In these areas external blinds should be of canvas with the traditional flat roller or fan mechanism.

SF12 Wherever possible canopies should be retractable. The colour, materials, storage and size should be in keeping with the scale and character of the building.

SF13 Canopies and blinds will not normally be permitted above fascia level.

SF14 On modern shopfronts canopies and blinds will not normally be permitted unless the following criteria are met:-

- (a) they do not obscure any important architectural feature;
- (b) the materials used are sympathetic to those of the building as a whole;
- (c) they do not create a dominant feature in the street scene; and
- (d) they enhance rather than detract from the appearance of the building; or where they accentuate the entrance to a building which has an otherwise plain frontage.



DOORS / ENTRANCES

11.1 The entrance into a shop should be clearly identifiable and inviting. It should also be accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Automatic, easily opened doors and doors held open (in good weather) are an advantage to the disabled and those with pushchairs. The ideal situation is a flush surface rather than a step and this can best be achieved by either an internal or external ramp. Small changes in level between the pavement and the shop floor can be overcome by raising the footpath outside (which will require the agreement of the highway authority) or be accommodated within a recessed entrance. Where steps, doors and staircases form an important feature of an historic building and merit retention, innovative solutions will be required which both increase accessibility and respect the character of the building.

11.2 Totally glazed areas create a confusing environment for the partially sighted who find it difficult to distinguish the position of the shopfront threshold. The use of stallrisers and glazing bars on windows provide a useful visual cue. Doors should therefore be framed, have a glazed panel which provides good visibility when entering and leaving the shop, and have a solid base panel which reflects the height of the window stallriser.

11.3 Details such as the required height of door handles and other features to assist the disabled can be found in the revised Building Regulations part M.

SF15 Wholly glazed doors which do not incorporate a solid base panel to match the height of the window stallriser will not normally be permitted.



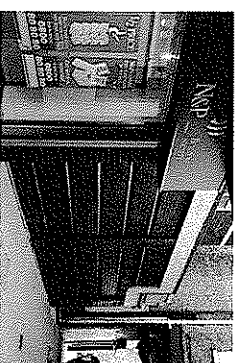
SF16 New shopfronts which do not satisfactorily incorporate features to meet the needs of disabled shoppers will not normally be permitted.

BLANK WALLS

12.1 Where buildings are located on a corner plot with only one shopfront, or their internal arrangement requires a solid wall rather than windows, care must be taken to deter use of such blank areas by graffiti artists. This can be done in several ways:

- by using textured surfaces;
- by introducing relief panels into the brickwork;
- by the positioning of an advertisement panel;
- by providing a mural using anti graffiti paint;
- or by constructing a trellis up which plants are encouraged to grow.

Any measure will require good quality materials, workmanship and maintenance.



SF17 Permission will not normally be granted for shopfronts which include large expanses of flat wall at ground floor level.

MATERIALS AND MAINTENANCE

13.1 As a general rule the fewer materials used the better the shopfront design will be. Timber was the standard shopfront material of previous centuries and it still is the most versatile of materials. It can be worked into almost any profile, is durable and repainting can freshen up or change the appearance of a shopfront at minimum cost. More recently new materials such as acrylic sheeting and satin anodised aluminium have been used in various forms for most features of a shopfront from fascia to stallriser. It is however possible, with careful design, to use these materials with success on or near traditional buildings, as different colours, finishes and textures are now more readily available.