

# WOODFORD BRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

**Adopted 4.2.1999**

## INTRODUCTION

The suggestions detailed below form part of a longer term programme for change which will enhance the Woodford Bridge Conservation Area. There is a desire to give the area an overall sense of identity by the use of materials, landscaping and approach to design.

The proposals are dealt with in groups and in sections according to the type of enhancement.

It is hoped that traders and local people will be inspired by the proposals and that some of the funding would come from them. It should be noted that a partnership arrangement with the Woodford Bridge traders has already resulted in some improvements, and this joint effort with the Council is praiseworthy. Similarly an opportunity to coordinate the overall aspirations for the area with future developers is now in place. In particular, Highways Officers have designed a scheme for the slip road between Chigwell Road and Manor Road which will be funded by a developer involving the use of materials sympathetic to the Conservation Area.

1. Extension of Conservation Area to include nos. 5 –12 Wallers Close.
  - 1.1 It is proposed that the Conservation Area is extended eastwards to include the row of cottages known as 5-12 Wallers Close.
  - 1.2 These cottages were built to house workers in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century assisted by the first vicar of St. Paul's Church. In architectural style they are a pleasant row of side to side brick and slate cottages. Their setting has a pleasant appearance with small gardens attached to each plot.
  - 1.3 Apart from the replacement windows which slightly spoil the original design, they remain relatively unspoilt. It would be regrettable if any extensions or changes to their simple form took place.
  - 1.4 Inclusion in the Conservation Area would not only highlight the historic significance of the cottages, but would also offer a safeguard against ad hoc works to them. The main justification for including them in the Conservation Area is to show the historic fabric of the community of Woodford Bridge and it would be regrettable if these simple cottages were lost.
2. Extension of Conservation Area to include nos. 602 – 622 Chigwell Road, open land from the M11 motorway, Ashton Playing Field Gates and Pavillion.
  - 2.1 It is proposed that the Conservation Area is extended westwards to include the above land and properties.

- 2.2 Although the open grassland and motorway embankment between the M11 Motorway and Ashton Playing Fields is unlikely to be the subject of development it creates a green border to the west entrance of the Conservation Area. This also fulfils the need to provide “Green Corridors” by protecting this embankment as a potential habitat for wildlife as part of the motorway embankment and low lying land.
- 2.3 The gateposts and railings to the Ashton Playing Fields are a fine example of decorative metalwork of 1930’s signalling the sports field. They were opened in 1937 to celebrate the incorporation of the Borough of Wanstead and Woodford. As part of local history they ought to be included in the Conservation Area.
- 2.4 Similarly, although much altered the Pavilion itself bears all the architectural style of the 1930’s. By including this building in the Conservation Area it is hoped that the building can be protected from further alterations which might spoil the original design intentions.
- 2.5 As money became available it might be possible to consider restoring the Pavilion to its former design. By far the most effective way to achieve this would be the restoration of the original “crittal” style windows.
- 2.6 The row of properties from the Pavilion entrance to the existing boundary of the Conservation Area ought to be included so that there is a consistency of enhancement of all the shops. The proposal for the shopfronts is dealt with in a separate section of this Enhancement Scheme.
- 2.7 Part of the justification for the inclusion of shopfront guidance and to include this row of shops in the area is to attempt to rationalise the shopfronts and their treatment all along the Chigwell Road in order to improve the area as a whole. It is not clear why these shops were not included in the past but as the start of the Conservation Area it makes sense to offer design guidance and to improve the hard and soft landscaping in this stretch of the road as well as further east.
3. Shopfronts to Chigwell Road.
  - 3.1 By far the largest impact to the Conservation Area are shopfronts. In this Conservation Area there are four clear groups of shops of definite architectural style. To give a sense of group identity it is proposed that a series of design guides appropriate to each group becomes a blueprint for any changes in the future.
  - 3.2 The overall desire however is to lessen the impact of advertising fascias and to coordinate the appearance of shops which are similar in architectural style. If successful the terraces of shops will read as a considered grouping rather than separate individuals.
  - 3.3 The four distinct groups appear in the Shopfront Design guide

section which accompanies this document. They are:-

- (i) the shops at the lower end of Chigwell Road nos. 602 – 622 these are relatively modern frontages – however behind the relatively modern facades is evidence that this row of properties are Edwardian. The existence of consoles between shops reinforce this;
- (ii) the groups of commercial premises from 628 – 646 contain a mix of commercial and residential properties including a garage repair business;
- (iii) the row of gable fronted Edwardian and modern shops from 648-690. These are reasonably uniform in appearance. Despite minor alterations it would appear that these were originally houses but were converted to shops on the ground floor early on in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century;
- (iv) the group of hipped roofed properties from 696-728. These are relatively uniform in structure but have been treated externally in radically different ways.

It is hoped that there could be a design approach to rationalise the groups, and this would require some discussion between the proprietors.

- 4. Shop forecourts and pavements to Chigwell Road.
  - 4.1 The area in front of the long frontage of shops from the western extreme of the existing Conservation Area to the end of the line of shops at the White Hart public house is very broad. At the moment the surface pavement, although in reasonable condition, does nothing to enhance the area being a bland series of bays of tarmac and patches of repairs due to the presence of many services beneath the pavement.
  - 4.2 This pace allows a great opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area by treating the whole of the north side of the road with similar surface materials, planting and street lighting. The suggested material is flagstone paving and brick planters or dwarf walls dividing the shop forecourts.
  - 4.3 Beyond the White Hart Public House in the easterly direction the frontage is narrower but could benefit from a scaled down treatment in the same manner. Likewise the western section of Chigwell Road is a narrower pavement but could be improved by the same new surface treatments. This will have the effect of tying the whole shopping area together and giving the visitor a sense that they are in a Conservation Area.
  - 4.4 Proposals:-
    - 4.4.1 Lighting. There are already some black traditional lamp posts along the middle third of this area. It would be better if they could be installed all the way from the western end of the street to the far eastern extent of the shops

on the north side of the road. The lamps are merely to light the footway and cannot replace lamps that for safety reasons must illuminate the highway. However these essential large lamps could be placed on the opposite side of the road and decorative lamps could be installed on the shopping side for consistency.

- 4.4.2 Planting. There are already some planters along the eastern end of the line of shops. This again could be extended to the western end of Chigwell Road. The choice of materials for these planters must be consistent to pull the area together. In addition there would need to be a maintenance programme or commitment by the shop owners established in order to keep the planters in an acceptable condition. One of the ways could be by sponsorship of the planters by local business for example.
- 4.4.3 Hanging Baskets. Another small but effective way to soften the streetscape is to introduce hanging baskets to the street on the lamp posts and on the shopfronts above the fascia. Although these require a higher level of maintenance than planters they do have the effect of lifting the area by adding colour and life. For shopfronts see the separate section.
- 4.4.4 Pavement. By far the most effective way to smarten the area in front of the shops and to unify it would be the use of traditional paving. The proposal would be to treat the whole of the Chigwell road from the entrance to the Pavilion to the last shop frontage at the eastern end facing the Green with the same paving slabs. This unifying treatment of the pavement would lift the appearance of the area radically.
- 4.4.5 If it were possible to use old reclaimed slabs all the better, if not then the use of pre-cast concrete paving of square module (e.g. 600 x 600mm) laid in a regular offset pattern would be a simple but effective approach; or a mix of paving slabs and paviors. This would define the urban side of the road and the shopping area, leaving the opposite side of the road as the greener and more rural side.
- 4.4.6 Some more trees to create an avenue and shade to the shopping side of the street would also be a good idea. Careful planning of trees and lamps would need to take place due to the presence of a large number of services under the pavement but a simple alternating pattern would be effective. There is also the need to protect any new trees from the unfortunate acts of vandalism with appropriate tree guards. It is possible to have fairly large trees contained in planters above service level. A survey of the existing trees and identification of suitable sites for new trees needs to be explored.

From the evidence of service covers, inspection caps and patched sections of pavement along the majority of Chigwell Road, there is a need to co-ordinate services.

In anticipation of works to services beneath the pavement it is suggested that a service corridor is established which can be surfaced in a material that

is easily lifted and returned to its former appearance – this might be achieved by a trench covered with brick paviors or less attractively by “black top” that is able to be patched.

5. Parking Bays to Shops on Chigwell Road.
  - 5.1 As part of an approach to landscaping at the position of shop forecourts and pavement mentioned above, a much tidier approach to street parking could be adopted. There has already been some improvement along part of the Chigwell Road but this could be extended from the western to the eastern extremes of the road to unify it.
  - 5.2 A suggestion for enhancement of this area is through the use of paviors and dropped kerbs that could greatly improve the present rather random approach to parking and deliveries. Again this would tie in with the overall desire to bring the area together. In addition the use of granite sets within the formal parking bays will make a distinction between the pavement and the parking areas; and smarten the street appearance.
  - 5.3 There are several properties that use the shop forecourt as parking bays and this ought to be discouraged, since strictly speaking the cars have to cross the pavement in order to park on the forefront. To allow parking, one idea might be to adopt the forecourt as pavement and to provide in the now widened area a place for parking off the highway. This clearly will require some negotiation with property owners along the road.
  - 5.4 In order for this to be successful the entire length of the road from east to west should be looked at. At the moment some of the most attractive improvements are concentrated between nos. 648 and 690 and as money becomes available there ought to be more rationalisation below and above this section. A small slip road at the fork between Chigwell Road and Manor Road has been coordinated with that aim in mind. The developer of a small housing estate to the rear of Chigwell Road has been encouraged to amend the parking facilities and position of the bus stop. This partnership with the Planning Service, Highways Section and developers is a positive partnership towards a common goal of enhancement for the Conservation Area.
6. Traffic Calming to Chigwell Road.
  - 6.1 The traffic travelling along Chigwell Road is busy at all times of the day. Although a main road it may be possible to install traffic calming methods to at least slow the rate of flow through the Conservation Area.
  - 6.2 One way of achieving the slowing down of traffic can be to install road humps at suitably spaced intervals however the classification of this road would oppose this type of installation. What would be appropriate however would be the provision of a contrasting material to alter the

sensation of driving over it and thus causing the motorist to slow down; these could be in granite sets or other appropriate materials to match the paving and road. The noise of rumbling of tyres can be achieved with blocks of granite with wide joints between.

- 6.3 Another method which can be employed could be to lower the speed from 30mph to 20mph within the whole of the Conservation Area. This might be extended some way along Manor Road to prepare the traffic for entry into the Conservation Area. The introduction of a 20mph zone would require permission from the Government Office for London.
7. Exterior Decoration of Public Houses.
  - 7.1 As part of the enhancement proposals the use of more traditional colours is encouraged for shopfronts – see separate section on Shopfront Design. To continue this approach the colours on Public Houses also need to be given some thought.
  - 7.2 For example the White Hart Public House could be encouraged to replace the rather garnish red paint currently used to more appropriate traditional colours taken from the limitations available at the time the building was constructed or perhaps heritage colours.
  - 7.3 The use of corporate livery by companies owning properties in Conservation Areas can often spoil the traditional look of an area. In this case the bright red of the corporate sign seems inappropriate against the Victorian architecture.
  - 7.4 Since the name of the Public House contains the word “White” and the top part of the gable has been picked out in black and white one suggestion would be to continue black and white theme as the whole of the colour scheme, or for white and green.
  - 7.5 The placing of signage within the limits of the existing fascia would also be an appropriate way to enhance the front elevation. Behind the new fascia sign the chances are that the existing lettering still exists. (Please see old photograph of the White Hart when it was the White Hart Hotel.) There seems to be a tendency to “down” buildings in signage and to attract attention in garnish colours or huge signs that detract from the building. This is unacceptable in a Conservation Area.

Poorly considered signage has the effect of producing glaring contrasts between those buildings where bright large and modern signage catch ones attention and those buildings where their historic or architectural importance is enhanced.
8. Planting to frontage of Crooked Billet Public House.
  - 8.1 The open nature of the car park to this public house presents a bland frontage to the road. There is already a narrow planting strip at the

boundary but it is virtually empty. Therefore it would be quite straight forward to improve the appearance of the landscape by encouraging some planting in these plots. The softening effect of planting along a boundary cannot be underestimated – there is an additional bonus that cars behind a screen of planting are less vulnerable to vandalism.

9. Sign on wall of Church Hall to St. Paul's on the Green.
  - 9.1 The large painted sign would appear to be excessively large on the side of the church hall building and detracts from the attractive school building architectural style. A smaller hand painted sign would be more appropriate for a Conservation Area.
10. Exterior decoration to Prince Regent Hotel.
  - 10.1 The front elevation of this Grade II Listed hotel has been painted recently (in 1997) in a dark cream with its Doric columns picket out in white that appears rather odd. It might be better if all of the window frames, portico and columns were painted white in a uniform colour scheme.. changes in colour to Listed Buildings require Listed Building Consent.
11. Westons Garage, Chigwell Road.
  - 11.1 The garage frontage needs to be unified and tidied up. One approach would be to add a long gable front to disguise the roofscape behind the properties that form the garage. The fascia sign could also span between all of the properties of a suitable depth which does not dominate it.
12. Road signage clutter.
  - 12.1 There are several places where signage needs to be rationalised. One of the commonest distractions in a Conservation Area is the accumulation of clutter due to signage that is uncoordinated or that is excessive. Rationalisation of essential signs using a limited number of posts is one way to reduce this clutter or by requiring street furniture to function in more than one way such as a bollard that can support a traffic sign. One example at the top end of Chigwell Road is a fairly small sign supported by a tall post that would appear to be excessively large. This could be reduced in height. With the proposed new black lamps there is an opportunity to attach signs to the post rather than add another post nearby.
  - 12.2 Wherever possible it would be better to use “heritage” type signs within the Conservation Area. For example the black and gold signs often seen in Conservation Areas could be introduced here. This would match the black traditional lamps that have recently been installed but care has to be taken to limit the number of different styles and colours within one area to avoid adding to existing clutter.

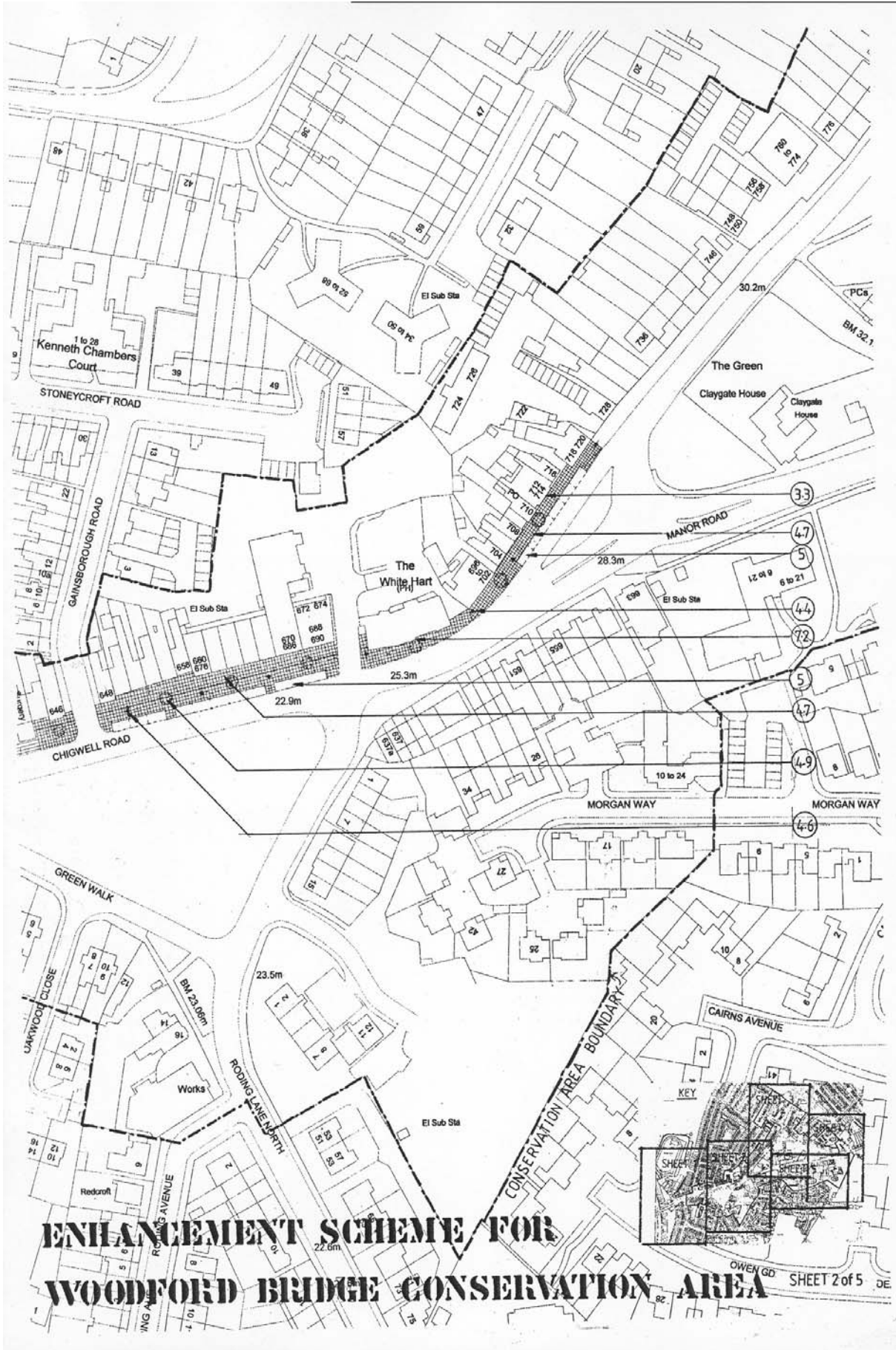
- 12.3 There is almost always an opportunity to audit street furniture and to rationalise signs and lighting in a conservation area so that there is less furniture but the furniture that is used had a multiple function.
- 12.4 More rubbish bins are needed all along the Chigwell Road and if there are to be seating areas it would be a good idea to place some bins nearby. These ought to be in the same colour as other street furniture.
- 13. Consistency of materials in street furniture.
  - 13.1 Wherever possible the most attractive and appropriate approach to street furniture in a Conservation Area is to work within a limited palette of styles and colours. Some timber bollards have already been introduced into the area. Wherever possible new posts should use the same materials, and over time when old posts become damaged they can be replaced with new timber ones. The consistency of materials is a successful unifying element to a Conservation Area.
- 14. Seating Areas.
  - 14.1 In the expanses of green within the Conservation Area there could be some simple bench seating installed for people to enjoy. Since the traffic is busy at most times of the day it would be better if these were located in quieter parts of the greens.
- 15. Cycle Racks.
  - 15.1 The provision of bike racks is to be encouraged in the area of Chigwell Road containing shops. Again this must tie in with the use of similar materials and colour.
- 16. Conservation Area Indicator Sign.
  - 16.1 It is proposed that there is a sign installed as one enters the Conservation Area from the main approaches at the top and bottom end of the Conservation Area. It would be an attractive addition to the area and might encourage a certain pride in the area. The signage ought to be designed with a logo that identifies it.



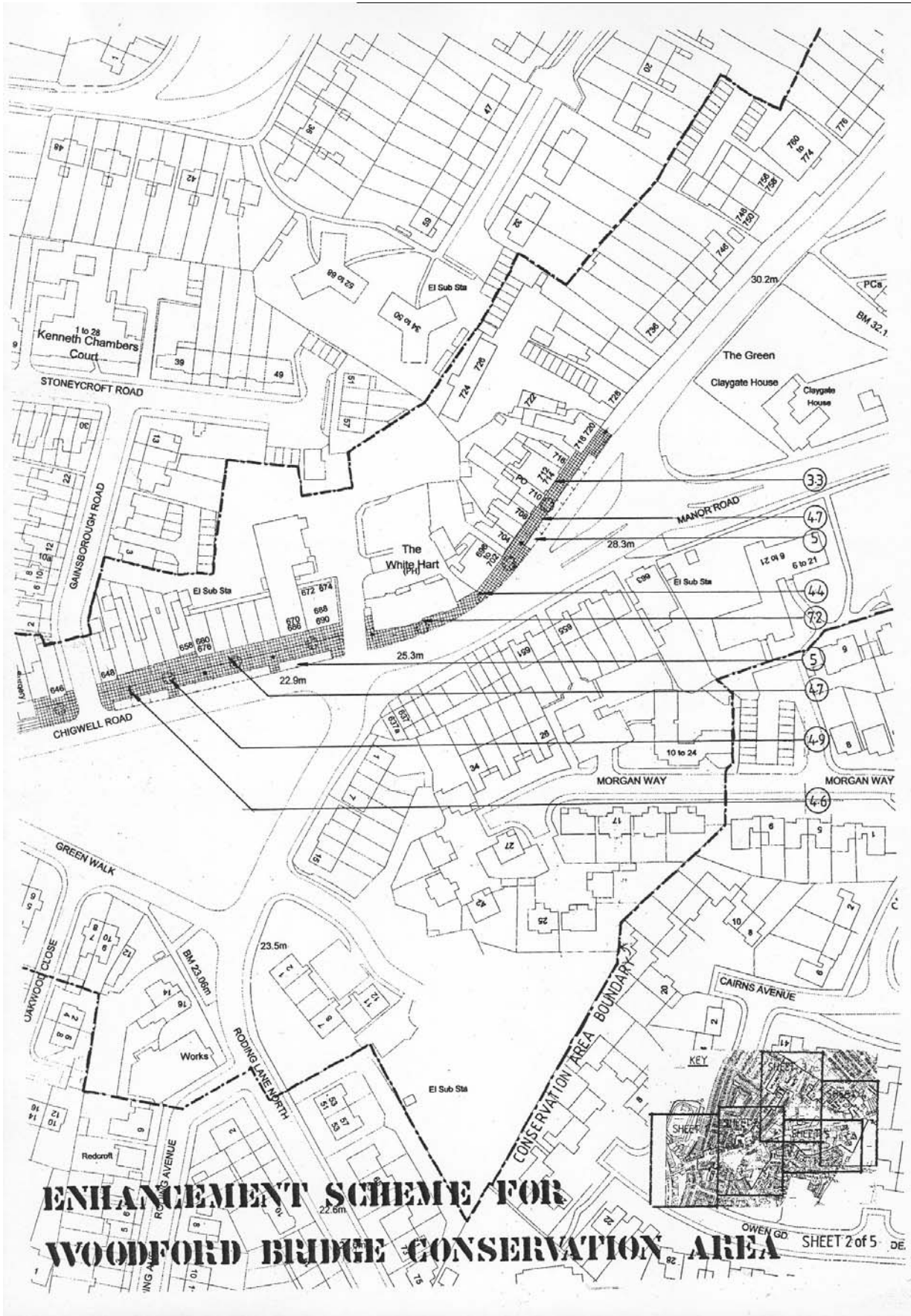


**ENHANCEMENT SCHEME FOR  
WOODFORD BRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA**

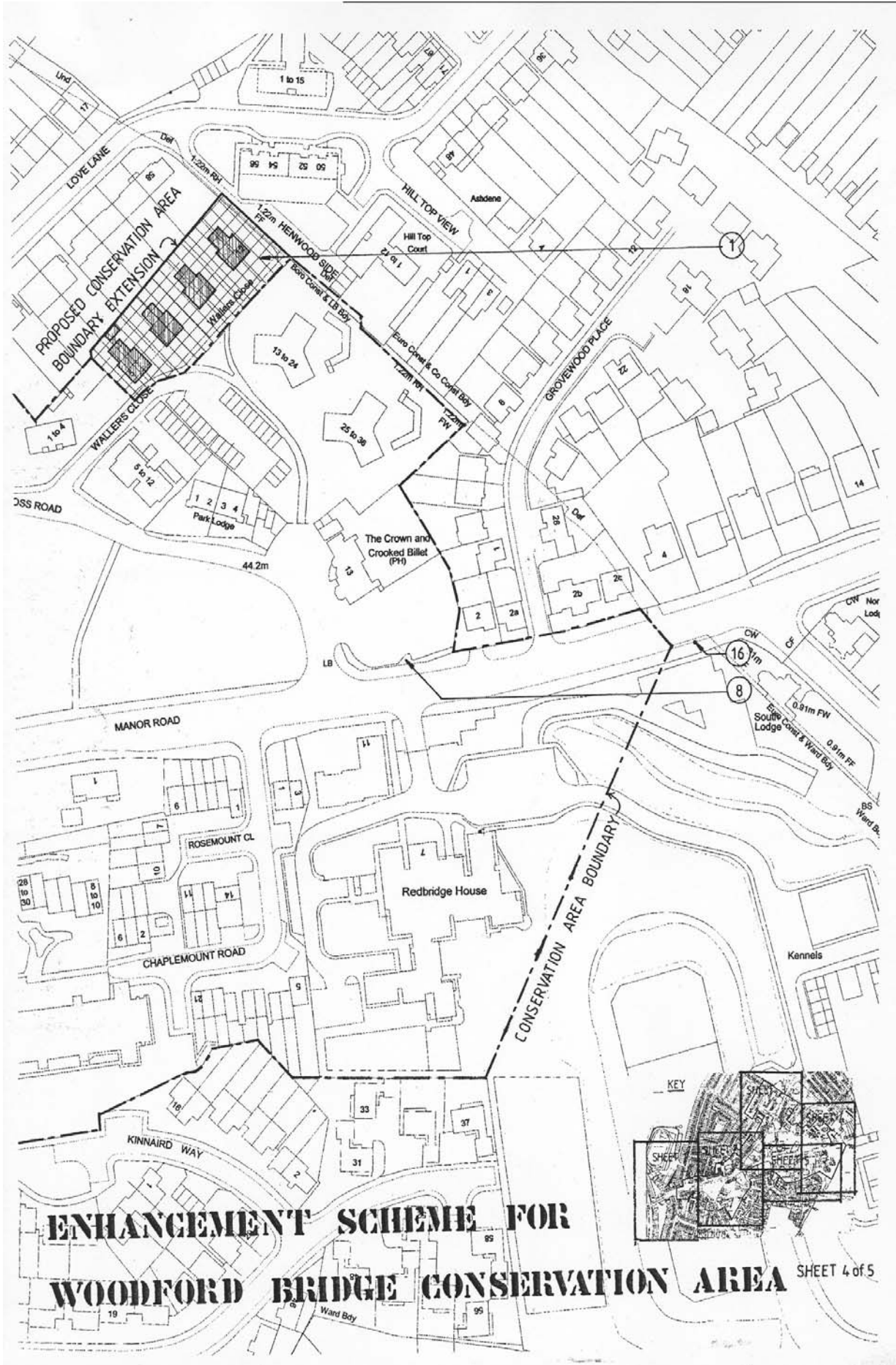
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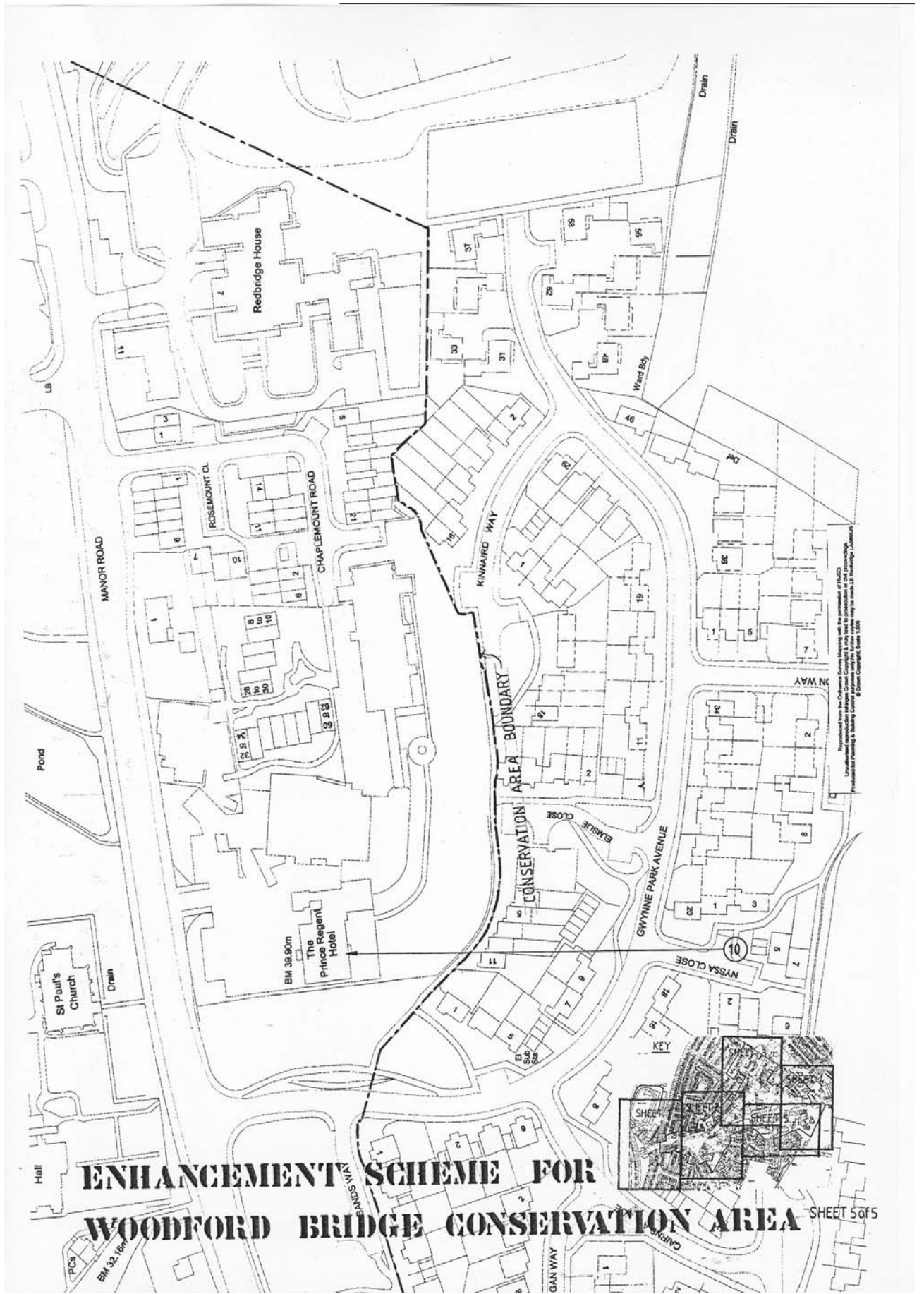
**ENHANCEMENT SCHEME FOR  
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**ENHANCEMENT SCHEME FOR  
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WOODFORD BRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA** SHEET 4 of 5



APPENDIX 1.

# **SHOPFRONTS**

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### **SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDE - INTRODUCTION**

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**ii) Catalogue of acceptable designs**
- C. i) VICTORIAN / EDWARDIAN SHOPFRONTS**  
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- D. i) MODERN MOVEMENT SHOPFRONTS**  
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- E. COMMON ERRORS IN SHOPFRONT DESIGN – OR  
HOW NOT TO DO IT**
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- H. ALTERATIONS TO BUILDINGS IN A CONSERVATION  
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## SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDE - INTRODUCTION

This design guide has been created primarily as guidance for traditional shopfronts in a Conservation Area. However the principles set out here would apply equally well to a design approach for any shop, particularly for a building of a specific architectural style described within this guide. The idea is that there is an overall respect for the historic nature of the building and appropriate use of details and elements to enhance the streetscape and to create a harmonised shopping environment.

There are three distinct architectural eras which carry appropriate details and elements within them.

These are:

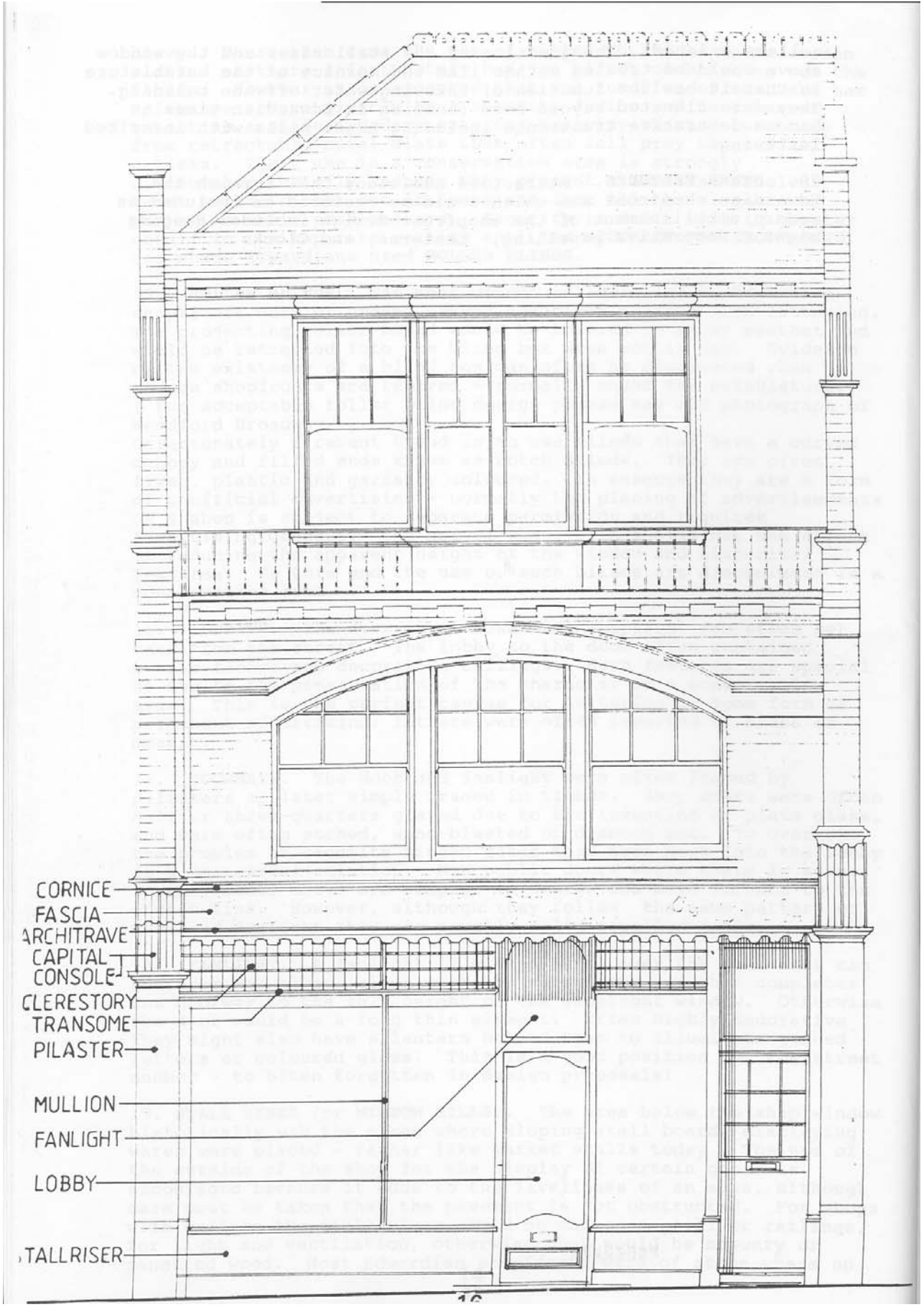
1. **CLASSICAL** – this group includes:
  - 1.1 Mid Georgian (1750 – 1775)
  - 1.2 Late Georgian (1755 – 1800)
  - 1.3 Regency and William IV (1800 – 1837)
  - 1.4 Victorian/Edwardian/Early George V Classical (1837 – 1914)
  - 1.5 Neo-Georgian (1918 – 1955)
  - 1.6 New Classical (1975 – present)
  
2. **VICTORIAN /EDWARDIAN** – this group includes:
  - 2.1 Early Victorian (1837 – 1870)
  - 2.2 Late Victorian (1870 – 1901)
  - 2.3 Edwardian and Early George V (1901 – 1914)
  - 2.4 New Victorian/Edwardian (1988 – present)
  
3. – **MODERN MOVEMENT** - this group includes:
  - 3.1 Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Modern
  - 3.2 Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Modern.

It is not always essential to know the exact historical category detailed above however there is some merit in discussing with a Conservation Officer or the Local History Librarian for assistance.

The design of shopfronts is a changing process this guide does not attempt to recreate exact historical pieces but to encourage references to the appropriate era.

For simplicity the guide is divided into the three general periods detailed above and are described above and are described in turn. There are examples of the style for each period and a description of the details and elements which created it. The combination of these elements and not just the token use of a few details makes a successful design proposal.

For Conservation Areas it is desirable that measures are made to restore elements lost during previous alterations. Any work that restores the existing features are actively encouraged and conversely any work which removes historic elements will be discouraged. Likewise where all of the design elements are lost it is hoped that this guide will assist in the enhancement of the shopfront by retaining a traditional approach to any new proposal.



CORNICE

FASCIA

ARCHITRAVE

CAPITAL

CONSOLE

CLERESTORY

TRANSOME

PILASTER

MULLION

FANLIGHT

LOBBY

TALLRISER



## **A. STANDARD SHOP ELEMENTS**

### **1. ENTABLATURE**

This is the part of the shop façade that contains the cornice, fascia and architrave. Based firmly on classical Greek architecture (ie the top part of a temple above columns) each element has a distinct function and are not merely decorative.

### **2. CORNICE**

The cornice has the primary function of throwing rain away from the façade; visually it adds strength to the top of the shopfront and it makes a distinction from the rest of the building. In an ideal proposal this is the most forward part of the façade. Too often in new proposals the cornice is covered up – quite often they can be reinstated.

### **3. FASCIA**

The fascia, or from classical architecture the frieze, is the middle part of the entablature. On a Greek temple this would be where blocks of large masonry spanned between columns; later this area became a canvas for decorative friezes and carved references mimicking timber construction. Shopfronts evolving from this became the horizontal band for lettering. It is important to respect the classical proportions of this element in relation to the height of the façade and should be very slim. Too often deep and dominating fascias spoil the proportions of shopfronts. They can often reach ridiculous depths. (See illustration).

### **4. ARCHITRAVE**

The architrave is the bottom element of the entablature, and in order to give the impression of strength at its base would be carved with mouldings. In shop design this became the frame around the lettering panel and visually completed the entablature as a margin to the window below it.

### **5. COLUMNS**

Columns derived directly from buildings of the ancient world. A series of strict orders emerged that are used again and again in architecture of every era – and are recognized as the classical approach to design – columns being a fundamental method of supporting a building. Sometimes they are used within shopfronts as supports for windows and are completed by capitals at their top to give the appearance of strength. In Edwardian times they would be used to form colonnades, by the 20<sup>th</sup> century they remain only as moulded vertical elements.

### **6. CAPITALS**

Derived from classical construction, capitals had a purely structural function in that they widened the top of the column so that the span of stone between each one was reduced. By Edwardian times they may be omitted or replaced by consoles (see below) but are sometimes seen beneath the entablature to add strength to any columns if they appear. Capitals and columns are really one element in effect to be used together. Where they are used they refer directly to the classical orders or simplifications therefore commonly Corinthian, Doric and Ionic.

### **7. PILASTERS**

A flattened simplification of the classical column. They form the uprights either side of the shopfront and are completed by the inclusion of consoles above them. They can be very simple in design for example sheets of polished granite or might be highly decorative for example with carvings or reeds to mimic classical columns. The covering up or the removal of these is actively discouraged. Where a shopfront occupies two bays across two properties the pilasters must be retained. Pilasters form the margin between the shopfront and the rest of a building or a neighbouring shop.

## **8. CONSOLES**

An adaption of the classical column described above. The consoles are the 'bookends' to the entablature of the shopfront and are simply a decorative bracket. They often describe a double curve derived loosely from the Ionic capital or might be a bracket containing a carved acanthus leaf at its head. (See illustration). Where a shop occupies two properties they should not be covered up or removed.

## **9. SHOP WINDOWS**

In Georgian times when glass was available in relatively small panes, the windows of a shop would be made up of a series of glazing bars forming a window of domestic scale ranging up to large window that took over the shop front. There were also projecting bays to catch the eye of passers-by in the street.

The most common design of Edwardian shopfronts were flat-fronted bays or bays projecting out from the building line. From this frontage were often curved windows sweeping inwards to the door lobby set back some distance from the front of the building. Curved glass was a result of considerable advances in materials science and the invention of plate glass.

## **10. PLATE GLASS**

Plate glass allowed larger window panes compared to earlier shopfronts. The glass was supported vertically by timber sections known as mullions. The design for these supports were refined over time to become elegant colonnetes with capitals.

So despite the advances of glass technology, shop design still drew its references from classical architecture. This is important to bear in mind when submitting design proposals for a new shopfront.

The fact that the whole of the shopfront can be glazed with one pane of glass does not mean that this is suitable for windows in a Conservation Area; on the contrary, the bare expanse of a large window without subtle detail has a blank and uninteresting face to the street – often looking like fish tanks! (For security measures with glass see separate section entitled **(SECURITY FOR SHOPFRONTS)**)

## **11. MULLIONS**

These are the vertical supports for glass. In traditional design these ranged from ornate slim columns with capitals displaying delicate fretwork to simple moulded timber sections into which the timber slotted. Whether ornate or simple the shopfront would always be subdivided by mullions into bays. The general rule of thumb is that a single pane of glass is orientated in the portrait and not in the landscape direction thus enhancing the tall elegance that typifies both the Georgian classical and the Edwardian era.

## **12. TRANSOMES**

In the classical shopfronts of the 18<sup>th</sup> century a horizontal bar called the transom containing slots was often installed in the upper part of the window. The slots held shutters to cover the window after trading hours.

In Edwardian times shutters no longer featured in shopfront design but the division of the window remained with the transom in the same proportions. Above the transom was a glazed panel to bring light into the shop known as the clerestory.

In modern shopfronts therefore, although the original slots have gone the inclusion of the transom is encouraged, as it divides the window for display from the window to illuminate or to ventilate the shop.

## **13. CLERESTORY**

This high level glazed panel above the transom was often decorated with leaded lights or with gold lettering behind black glass or with coloured glass, and were commonly subdivided by glazing bars.

This area of the window is an ideal place for additional lettering since it is at high level above the display area of the shop window.

This can also be the site for ventilation of the shop window which can sometimes have condensation forming within the display area. For shops selling perishable goods the use of ventilation panels can form part of the design as a whole.

#### **14. SHUTTERS**

In the Classical period each window on a shopfront would have had an external shutter that closed up the shop at night. They would either lifting shutters which were lifted in and out of slots and stored during trading hours or would be folding shutters that folded back in an elegant series of hinged panels, supports, bars and keeps.

With the increase in the size of windows the use of shutters diminished and by Edwardian times had virtually disappeared. Larger expanses of glass meant that these details were lost because the shutters became oversized and heavy.

There then came the use of roller shutters: these wooden slatted shutters unfortunately had the effect of blanking out the façade. However it is accepted that the function of shutters has relevance today: firstly as a security device and to a lesser extent as a shade.

Modern external security shutters are made from retractable metal slats that often fall prey to graffiti artists. Their use in a Conservation Area is strongly discouraged, chiefly because they present a hard and faceless front to the street out of hours and lack all the elegance of design of their predecessors. Security is dealt with in greater detail in the separate section entitled **SECURITY FOR SHOPFRONTS**. For shade on a traditional shopfront **ROLLER BLINDS** are ideal.

#### **15. ROLLER BLINDS**

The most common roller blind in Edwardian shopfronts were of undyed canvas sometimes painted with lettering. The projecting roller blind would be lowered in sunny weather and would be retracted into the blind box when not in use. Evidence of the existence of a blind box can often be discovered when modern shopfronts are removed – normally under the entablature.

Unfortunately a recent trend is to use blinds that have a curved canopy and filled ends known as Dutch Blinds. They are often fixed, plastic and garishly coloured. In essence they are a form of unofficial advertising – normally the placing of advertisements on a shop is subject to separate permission and requires Advertising Consent. The use of these blinds also has the effect of reducing the apparent height of the window and of hiding historical features. To this end the use of such blinds are discouraged in a Conservation Area.

#### **16. LOBBIES**

The door in a traditional shopfront was often set back from the street to give the shopfront modelling. The lobby to the door often contained mosaic floors and decorative ceilings. Such features are special to the character of a Conservation Area and are best preserved.

When considering a new traditional shopfront this is the perfect canvas for lettering or some form of permanent advertising: letters were often inserted of brass or mosaic.

For some shopkeepers the lobby can be a concern at night because it is back from the street plane. This problem has existed throughout the history of shopfronts and a simple lockable iron gate which folds back during trading hours could be considered.

#### **17. DOORWAYS**

The door and fanlight were often framed by pilasters or later simply framed in timber. Shop doors were often half or three-quarters glazed due to the invention of plate glass, and were often etched, sand-

blasted or diamond cut.. To overcome the problem of security, hinged gates that turn back into the lobby is a successful solution.

Non public doors where there is access to apartments above are simpler in design and more forward to the street line. However, although they follow the same pattern of door and fanlight they are usually solid panelled doors.

## **18. FANLIGHT**

A fanlight is glazed panel over the door that can but does not always align with the clerestory and that completes the doorway to the full height of the shopfront window. Otherwise the door would be a long thin element.

The fanlight can often be highly decorative and might have a lantern behind it to illuminate etched letters or coloured glass. This is a good position for the street number – too often forgotten in design proposals!

## **19. STALL RISER (or WINDOW SILLS)**

The area below the shop window historically was the place where sloping stall boards displaying wares were placed – rather like market stalls today. The use of the outside of the shop for the display of certain goods is encouraged because it adds to the liveliness of an area, although care must be taken that the pavement is not obstructed.

For shops with cellars the stall riser would be an open grill or railings, for light and ventilation, otherwise they would be masonry or panelled wood. Most traditional shopfronts were of stone where no cellars existed.

The junction of the stall riser and the window above would be treated rather like the cornice of the entablature in that it has the function of throwing water off the building. They were elevated beyond mere function in more flamboyant architectural eras to become decorative treatments including brass sills with inscribed lettering.

Quite often in modern interpretations of shopfront design and where the use of off-the-peg shopfronts are installed the stall-riser is reduced to a small upstand above the ground. This is rarely successful because it denies the opportunity for display to the street and unless vigilant in ones tidiness the window can look scruffy because the whole of the window structure and contents are seen.

The other problem with a ceiling to floor window without a stallriser is that many of the practical necessities of a window are given no consideration and often have to be installed later in a clumsy manner. For example using all of the elements of a shop window correctly provides a means to ventilate a window via the stall-riser.

## **20. LETTERING**

There is an excellent opportunity to enhance a shopfront design by the use of traditional lettering.

For Classical shopfronts the lettering was the type face known as the “English Letter”, because of its boldness and clarity it is ideal for buildings. The style is easily recognised by strong verticals and very slender horizontals.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century they were also the type faces used known as “Clarendon”. “Egyptian” and “Grotesque”. Traditional lettering can be made more attractive by the use of shading and highlighting to make them look three-dimensional. For real three-dimensions stock letters carved from wood (often gilded) were applied to the fascia. This tradition is very attractive and has relevance today as a means of advertising the name of the shop.

Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the use of decorative “art nouveau” and the “art deco” styles were used. The important points to remember with lettering is that it should be historically credible, ideally historically appropriate to the architecture it decorates, well proportioned, simple and direct.

## **21. OTHER FEATURES**

Attractive additions that furnish the traditional shopfront and which could be restored or included as modern embellishment of the shopfront design include:

Hanging Signs,  
Decorative Panelling,  
Lanterns, and  
Clocks.

The best approach to these additional features is to look at historic tradesmen signs and old drawings of shopfronts.

## **C. EDWARDIAN SHOPFRONTS**

The elements of shopfronts are discussed in a part A of this document. This section provides more detail specific to the character of an Edwardian design.

### **1. ENTABLATURE**

This is the part of the shop façade that contains the cornice, fascia and architrave. Based firmly on classical Greek architecture (i.e. the top part of a temple above columns) each element has a distinct function and are not merely decorative.

### **2. CORNICE**

The cornice has the primary function of throwing rain away from the façade; visually it adds strength to the top of the shopfront and it makes a distinction from the rest of the building. In an ideal proposal this is the most forward part of the façade. Too often in new proposals the cornice is covered up – quite often they can be reinstated.

### **3. FASCIA**

The fascia, or from classical architecture the frieze, is the middle part of the entablature. On a Greek temple this would be where blocks of large masonry spanned between columns; later this became a canvas for decorative friezes and carved references mimicking timber construction.

Shopfronts evolving from this became the horizontal band for lettering. It is important to respect the classical proportions of this element in relation to the height of the façade and should be very slim. Too often deep and dominating fascias spoil the proportions of shopfronts. They can often reach ridiculous depths.

### **4. ARCHITRAVE**

The architrave is the bottom element of the entablature, and in order to give the impression of strength at its base would be carved with mouldings. In Edwardian design this became the frame around the lettering panel and visually completed the entablature as a margin to the window below it.

### **5. COLUMNS**

Sometimes columns are used within shopfronts as supports for windows and are completed by capitals at their top to give the appearance of strength. In Edwardian times where emphasis was given to the vertical – and elegance was achieved by tall slim building elements the columns were reduced to reed like proportions often referred to as colonnettes. They would also be used as decorative supports for glazed colonnades which became popular shopping precincts of the era.

### **6. CAPITALS**

In Edwardian design consoles may be omitted or replaced by consoles (see below) but are sometimes seen beneath the entablature to add strength to any columns if they appear. Capitals and columns are really one element in effect to be used together. Where they are used they refer directly to the classical orders or simplifications thereof: commonly Corinthian, Doric and Ionic.

### **7. PILASTERS**

A flattened simplification of the classical column. They form the uprights either side of the shopfront and are completed by the inclusion of consoles above them. They can be very simple in design for example sheets of polished granite or might be highly decorative for example with carvings or reeds to mimic classical columns. The covering up or the removal of these is actively discouraged. Where a shopfront occupies two bays across two properties the pilasters must be retained.

### **8. CONSOLES**

An adaptation of the classical column described above. The consoles are the 'bookends' to the entablature of the shopfront and are simply a decorative bracket. They often describe a double curve derived loosely from the Ionic capital or might be a bracket containing a carved acanthus leaf at its head. (See illustration). Where a shop occupies two properties they should not be covered up or removed.

## **9. SHOP WINDOWS**

The most common design of Edwardian shopfronts were flat-fronted bays or bays projecting out from the building line. From this frontage were often curved glass windows sweeping inwards to the door lobby set back some distance from the front of the building. Curved glass was a result of considerable advances in material science and the invention of plate glass.

## **10. PLATE GLASS**

Plate glass allowed larger window panes compared to earlier shopfronts. The glass was supported vertically by timber sections known as mullions. The design for these supports were refined over time to become elegant colonnettes with capitals. So despite the advances of glass technology, shop design still drew its references from classical architecture.

The celebration of the quantum leap in the strength of glass sheet is inappropriate in the finer streetscape of an Edwardian terrace. (For security measures with glass see separate section entitled **SECURITY FOR SHOPFRONTS.**)

## **11. MULLIONS**

These are the vertical supports for glass. In Edwardian design these ranged from ornate slim columns with capitals displaying delicate fretwork to simple moulded timber sections into which the timber slotted. Whether ornate or simple the shopfront would always be subdivided by mullions into bays. The general rule of thumb is that a single pane of glass is oriented in the portrait and not in the landscape direction thus enhancing the tall elegance that typifies the Edwardian era.

## **12. TRANSOMES**

A legacy of the classical shopfronts of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century was the addition of a horizontal bar called the transom in the upper part of the window into which shutters slotted to cover the window. In Edwardian times shutters no longer featured in shopfront design but the division of the window remained with the transom in the same proportions. Above the transom the glazed panel to bring light into the shop is known as the clerestory. The transom acted as a division between this top light and the display window and often marked a point where more flourish and decorative features were expressed.

## **13. CLERESTORIES**

As mentioned in the above, this section of the shop window became an opportunity to express lavish decorative features such as glazing bars figuratively expressed into organic shapes, cut and bevelled glass and leaded lights. Often there would be leaded lights or gold lettering behind black or coloured glass, and were commonly subdivided by glazing bars. This area of the window is also an ideal place for additional lettering since it is at high level above the display area of the shop window.

## **14. SHUTTERS**

With the increase in the size of windows the use of shutters diminished and by Edwardian times had virtually disappeared. Larger expanses of glass meant that these details were lost because the shutters became oversized and heavy. There then came the use of roller shutters: these wooden slatted shutters unfortunately had the effect of blanking out the façade. However it is accepted that the function of shutters has relevance today: firstly as a security device and to a lesser extent as a shade. Security is dealt with in greater detail in the separate section entitled **SECURITY FOR SHOPFRONTS.** For shade, Edwardians used **ROLLER BLINDS.**

## **15. ROLLER BLINDS**

The most common roller blind in Edwardian shopfronts were of undyed canvas sometimes painted with lettering. The projecting roller blind would be lowered in sunny weather and would be retracted into the blind box when not in use. Evidence of the existence of a blind box can often be discovered when modern shopfronts are removed – normally under the entablature.

## **16. LOBBIES**

The door in an Edwardian shopfront was often set back from the street. The lobby to the door often contained mosaic floors and decorative ceilings. Such features are special to the preservation of the character of a Conservation Area. This is the perfect canvas for lettering or some form of permanent advertising: letters were often inserted of brass mosaic.

## **17. DOORWAYS**

The door and fanlight were often framed by pilasters or later simple framed in timber. Shop doors were often half or three-quarters glazed due to the invention of plate glass, and were often etched, sand-blasted or diamond cut. To overcome the problem of security, hinged gates that turn back into the lobby is a successful solution. Non public doors where there is access to apartments above are simpler in design and more forward to the street line. However, although they follow the same pattern of door and fanlight they are usually solid panelled doors.

## **18. FANLIGHT**

A fanlight is glazed panel over the door that can but does not always align with the clerestory and that completes the doorway to the full height of the shopfront window. Otherwise the door would be a long thin element. Often highly decorative they might also have a lantern behind them to illuminate etched letters or coloured glass. This is a good position for the street number – to often forgotten in design proposals!

## **19. STALL RISER ( below WINDOW SILLS)**

Most Edwardian shopfronts were of stone where no cellars existed. The junction of the stall riser and the window above would be treated rather like the cornice of the entablature in that it has the function of throwing water off the building. They were elevated beyond mere function in Edwardian times to become decorative treatments including brass sills with inscribed lettering.

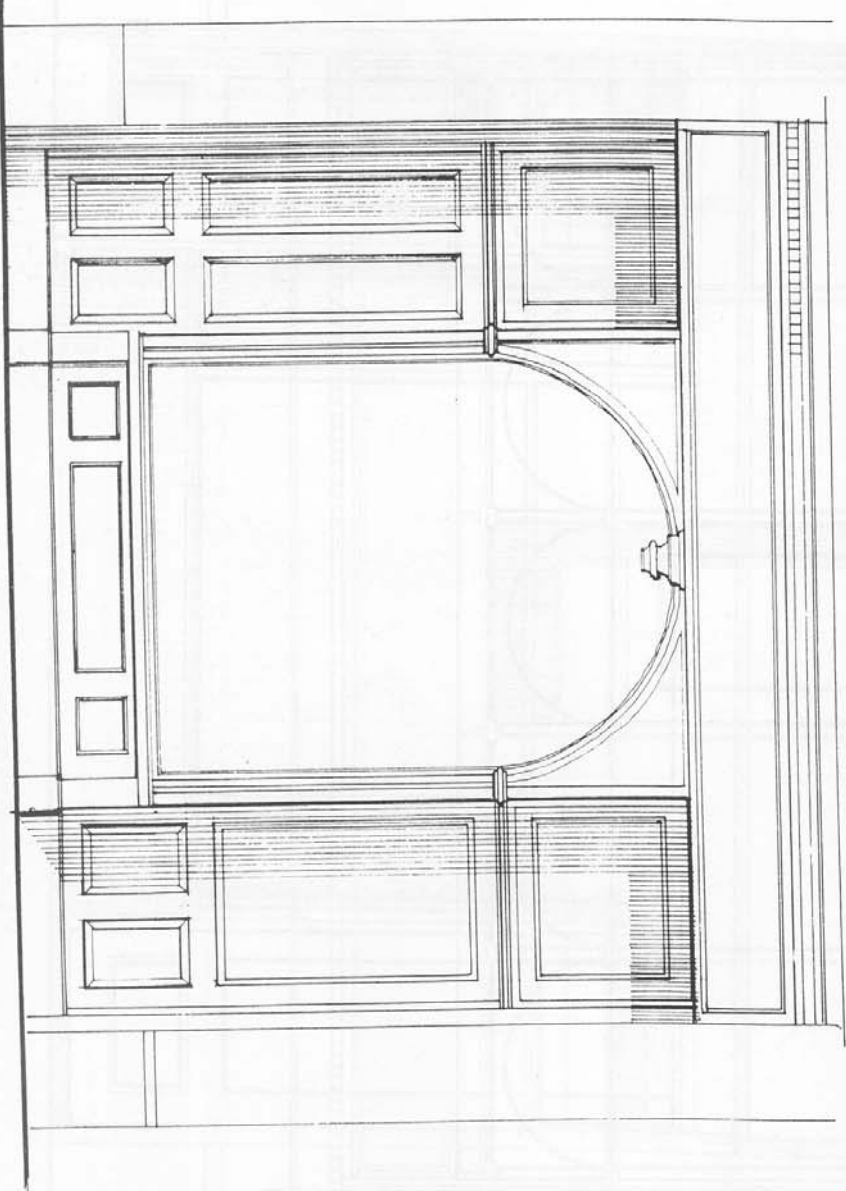
## **20. OTHER FEATURES**

Attractive additions that furnish the Edwardian shopfront and which could be restored or included as modern embellishment of the shopfront design include:

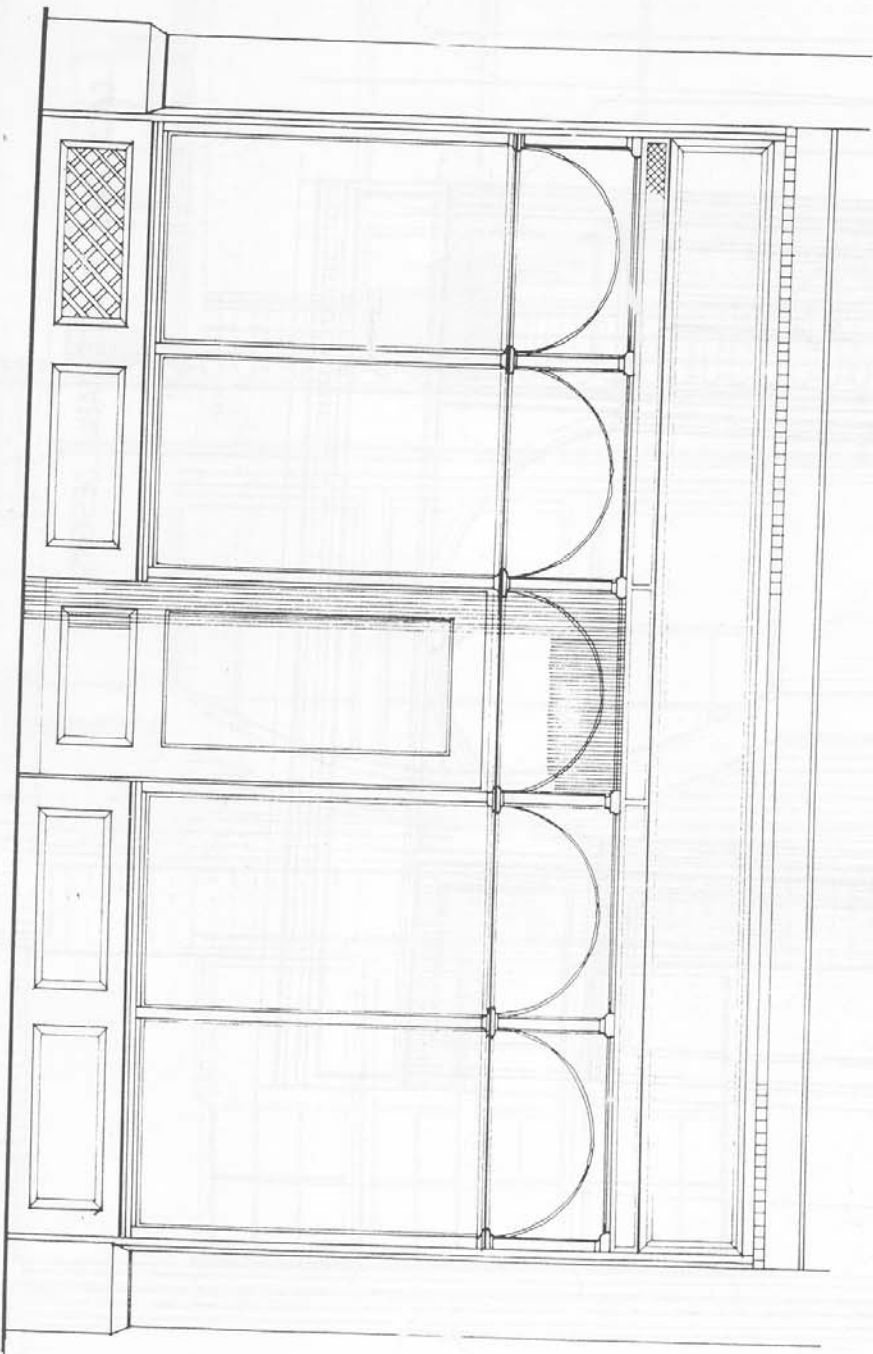
Hanging baskets,  
Lanterns, and  
Clocks.

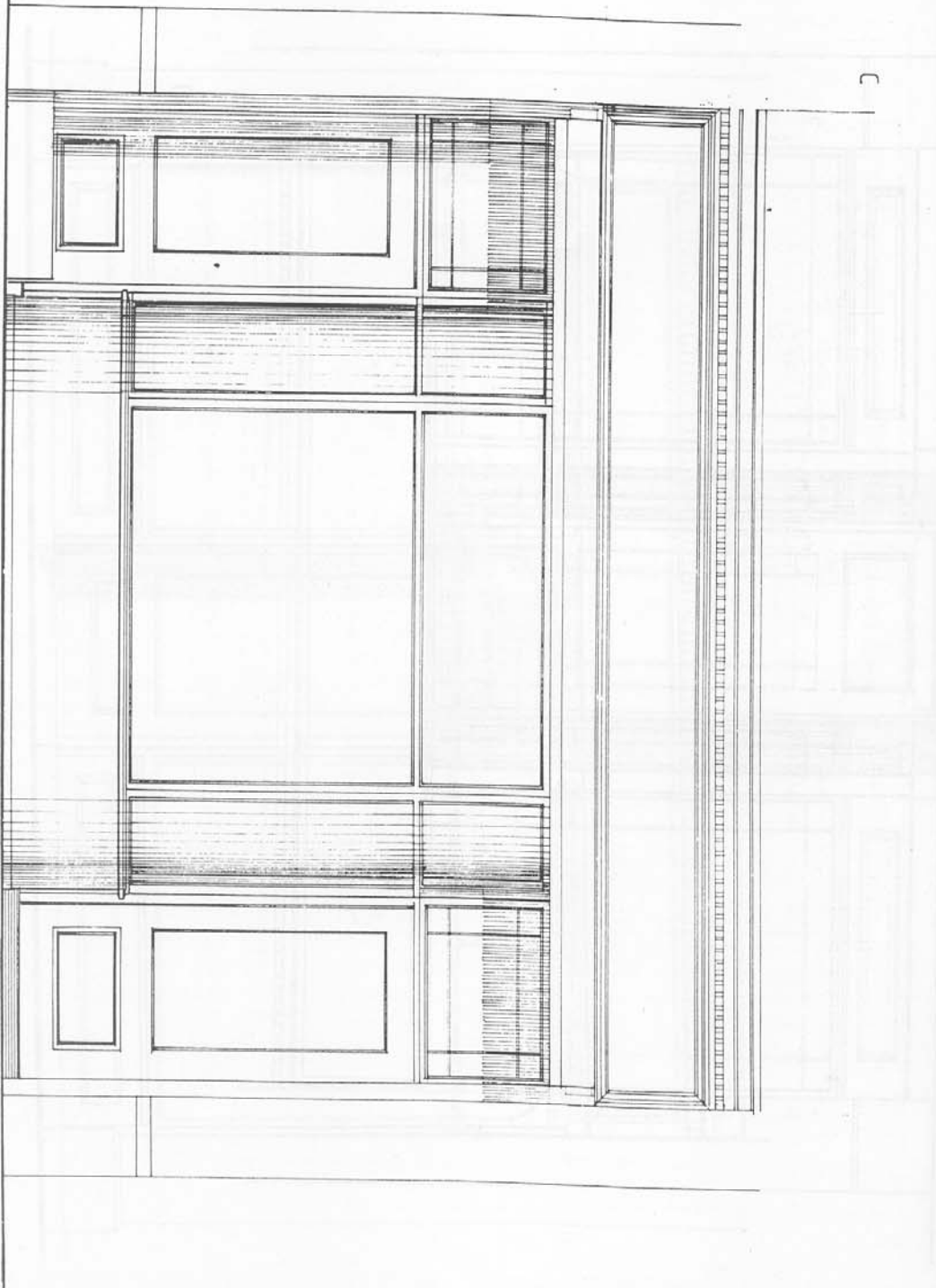


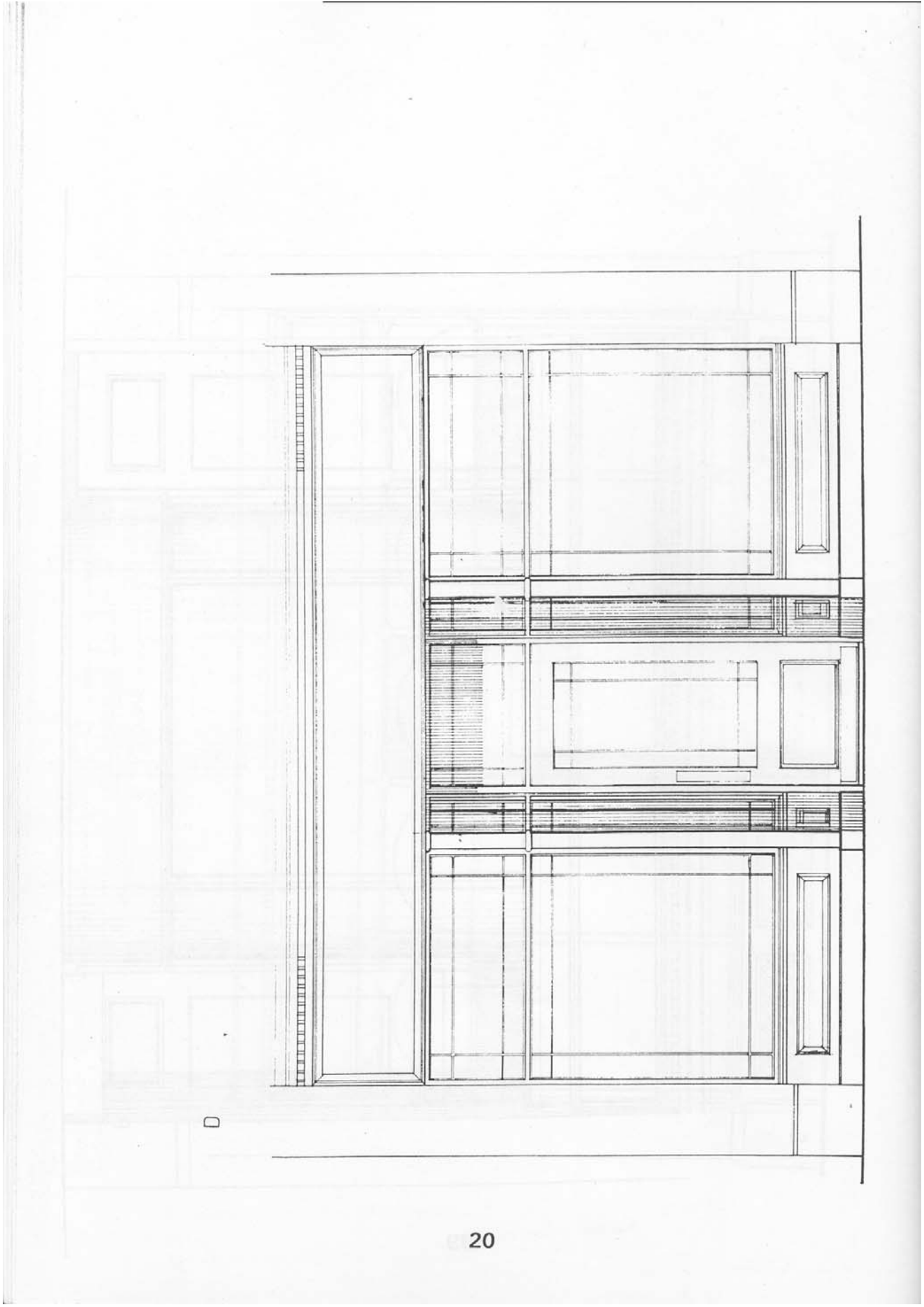
CATALOGUE OF ACCEPTABLE DESIGNS - 1



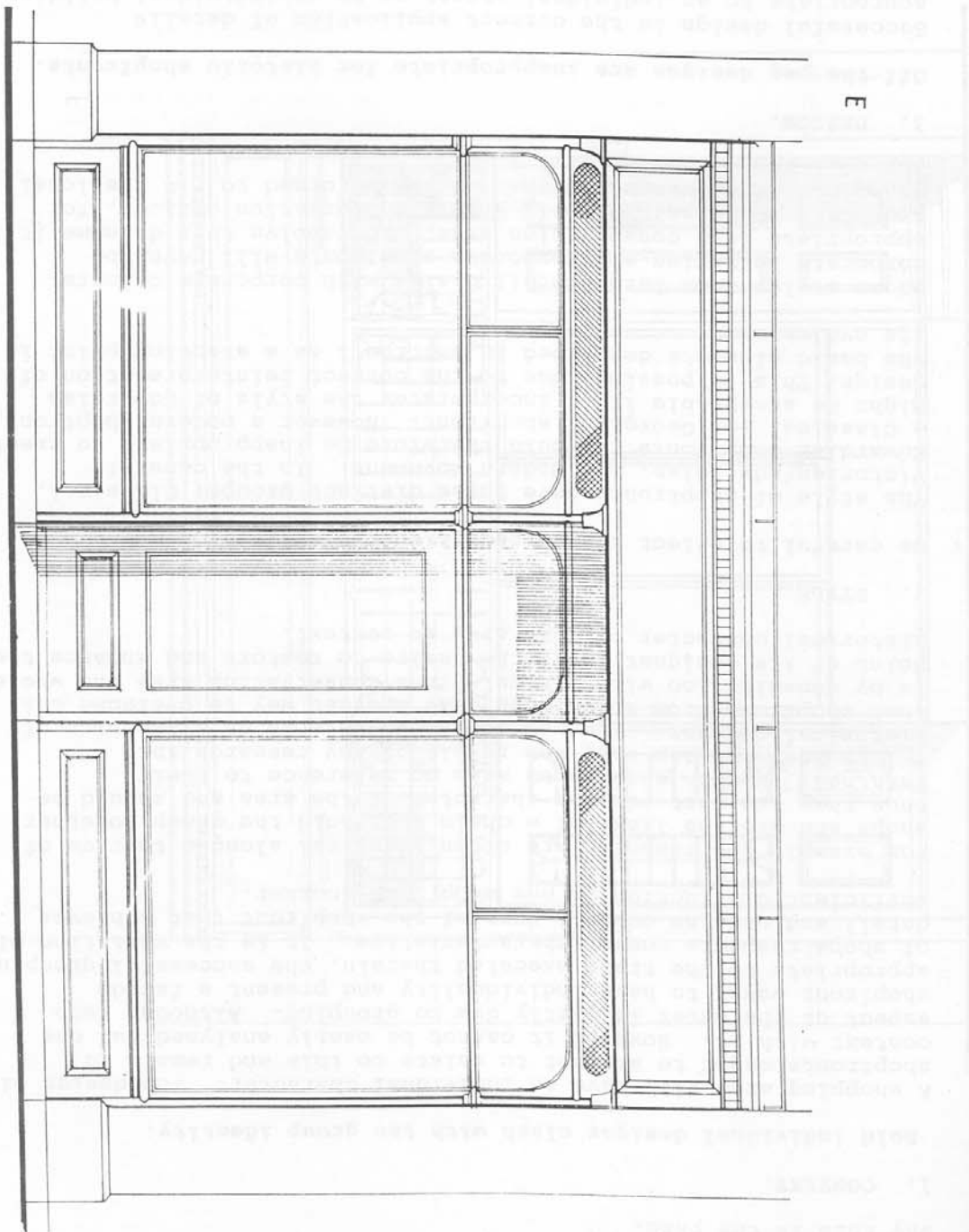
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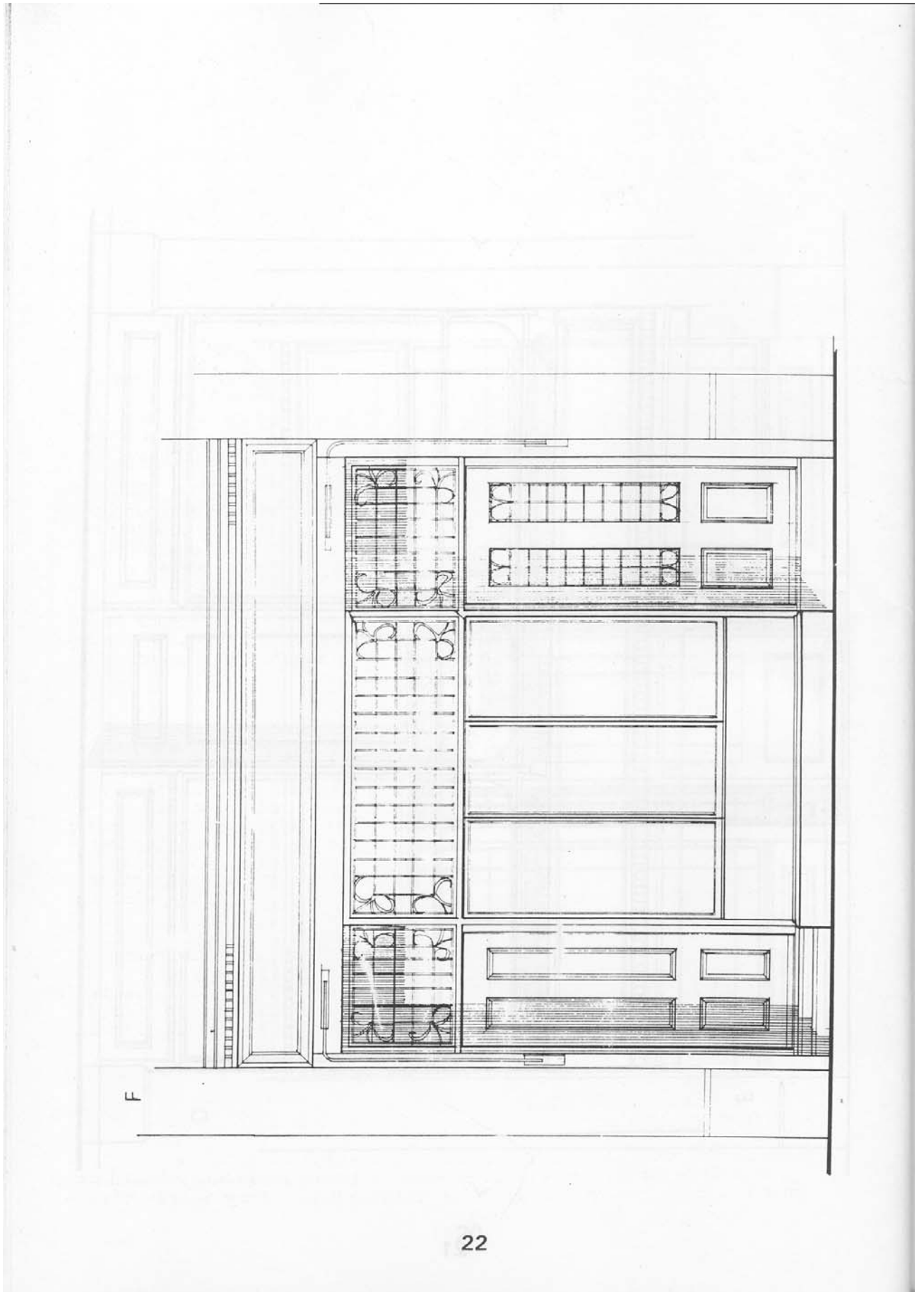


D



Sectional design for the above mentioned building  
 showing the arrangement of the various parts  
 and the position of the windows and doors

It consists of three windows and a door  
 and is designed to show the internal  
 structure of the building



F

The successful design of modern shopfronts contains elements that have evolved from historical features from the previous three centuries of shop design. What makes a modern shopfront appropriate for a Conservation Area is the successful application of these shopfront elements combined with an appropriate style for that specific Conservation Area.

The elements of shopfronts have strong reasons for their existence, to do with weather, maximising display, and of course reference to classical architecture most particularly for Greek temples. It would seem that these translated perfectly for shop design and are the blueprint for shopfronts as we know today.

The proposals for a modern shopfront will contain elements that have existed in Classical and Edward/Victorian shopfront design but refined and made subtle to meet modern architecture.

However within a Conservation Area the elements should ideally suit the architecture which surrounds it and will therefore almost certainly be from the Classical Shopfront Design Guide for Georgian buildings, Edwardian Shopfront Design Guide for Victorian/Edwardian buildings and Modern Shopfront Design Guide for modern buildings.

This section deals with modern buildings or shopfronts wishing to use modern style





## **E. COMMON ERRORS IN SHOPFRONT DESIGN – OR HOW NOT TO DO IT**

There is always a difficulty in assessing what is good design practice in a conservation area. The approach may have used all the elements described in the above sections and yet due to a number of factors does not work. This section attempts to explore why this is the case.

### **1. CONTEXT.**

Bold individual designs clash with the group identity.

A shopping area will have an individual character. The design of shopfronts ought to attempt to relate to this and remain in context with it. However it cannot be easily analysed but one aspect of character is partly due to grouping. Although each shopfront ought to have individuality and present a façade appropriate to the trade executed therein, the successful grouping of shops respects common characteristics. It is the variation of detail and not the overall form of the shopfront that achieves sufficient distinction of one shop from another.

For example the consoles are often identical along a terrace of shops and are the links of a chain that hold the group together thus they are part of the character of the area and should be retained.

Modern shopfronts make no reference to their neighbours, nor are they the result of any research into historical context. The net result of this is an alienation of that shopfront from the group. The easiest way to overcome this is by consultation with others.

In a Conservation Area the whole point of its designation is the desire to restore and enhance the historical character of that area in context.

### **2. STYLE**

Be careful to select the correct historic era.

The style of shopfronts have three distinct groups: Classical, Victorian/Edwardian, and Modern Movement. So for example in the case of Edwardian shopfronts it might be inappropriate to create a Classical (or Georgian) shopfront.

However it is not as clear cut for a mixed group of architectural styles within a conservation area. A good rule of thumb is to go with the architectural era of the original building as far as possible if there is evidence of architectural features.

But the shopfront does not have to be a historic replica for example a modern shopfront might be acceptable if it incorporates the style of Classical or Edwardian design. This is possible due to the correct reinterpretation of the basic elements described in Section A – Standard Shop Elements as a starting point in its evolution.

House styles from large retail chains with corporate colours, corporate lettering and corporate shopfronts will never be appropriate in a Conservation Area. To resolve this dilemma it is important to consult closely with a Conservation Officer, for example, and to establish what can be reformed to fit the local style.

### **3. DESIGN**

Off-the-peg designs are inappropriate for historic shopfronts.

Successful design is the correct application of details appropriate to an individual street or to an individual building (providing it harmonises with its neighbours).

Many manufacturers supply off-the-peg shopfronts. Apart from the blandness so often found in standard shopfronts, precious historical features can be lost during their installation. The contractors often knock out the whole shopfront and inset a new one without respect – this is wholly unacceptable to a Conservation Area.

Assuming proposals respect their surroundings even this has its pitfalls if proportion and scale are wrong. There is no easy solution. Successful application of details also requires restraint. **DETAILING** never means **CLUTTERING**.

There is no merit in stuffing as many fanciful features onto a shopfront in the hope that they will somehow magically form a good solution, in fact simplicity is more successful. A shopfront can be elaborate in detail but very simple in design. That is not to say that traditional design was austere, in fact a wide range of decorative techniques were used but with consistency and clarity in their execution.

#### **4. WINDOW HEIGHT**

Lowering ceiling heights is inelegant.

The loss of height of a shop window is a common occurrence in shop refurbishment. This spoils the elegance of the shopfront. Part of the reason why this occurs is that a new suspended ceiling is installed at a height much lower than the original. To combat this problem, if lowering the ceiling is necessary, then this should be done as far back from the window as possible and with a step down to the new ceiling further into the shop.

#### **5. FASCIA DEPTH**

Deep fascias spoil shopfront proportions.

The recent approach to fascia signs is disturbing for conservation. They have become exaggerated in depth to the point where they are the dominant element.

In traditional shopfronts vertical emphasis is lost with deep fascias and they appear crude and clumsy. The trend is blamed squarely on the desire to increase advertising space. It is a fallacy to think that the bigger the sign the more customers will be drawn into the shop, in fact a well-designed sign in the correct position and in the right proportion is altogether more attractive. Moreover, repeat custom is more likely to be based on the quality of service and nothing to do with the size of the sign.

Sometimes a new fascia sign is installed below the entablature. This gives the façade of the building the impression that it has slipped down. As a rule of thumb, the correct proportion of the depth of the fascia in relation to the height of the shopfront is in the ratio of 1:9 and the correct position of the fascia is within the entablature of the shopfront (see section A – Standard Shop Elements).

#### **6. WINDOW SIZE**

Avoid large plain windows.

Large expanses of single sheets of glass that fill the shopfront and have sills at floor level are unacceptable in a Conservation Area. The overall effect is one of a fish tank. The elevation should aim to have varying levels of interest that a large sheet of glass does not achieve.

The problem of the overall appearance is also exaggerated out of hours in that unless the window design is scrupulously tidy and well kept the overall impression can be that of a stock room.

From a practical viewpoint, the use of a large expanse of glass means that when a pane is broken the whole pane has to be replaced; smaller panes are cheaper.

Another practical angle is the need to ventilate a window. This aspect is often omitted and then as a build up of condensation occurs this is when a mechanical ventilator is cut into the window. An altogether more pleasing approach and which works well in traditional shopfront design is the use of natural ventilation incorporated into the design at an early stage. Grills within the clerestory or in the stall-riser are good locations.

#### **7. ENTRANCE SIZE**

Large openings spoil the proportions of the shopfront.

The widening of doorways to oversize proportions, or to the point where the entrance is simply an opening across the whole shopfront is unacceptable, likewise the installation of large sliding doors. There is no merit in this approach to design and a more traditional approach is always more pleasing in a historic building.

In the restaurant design there may be a desire to have a façade that opens up to the street. However this can only be achieved successfully by a series of folding back windows at the correct sill height. Careful detailing is essential.

## **8. COLOUR**

Garish colours do not suit a Conservation Area.

Although variety in the use of colour is encouraged, the choices are best restricted within a palette of colours appropriate to the group and historically correct for the era. Garish colours are inappropriate to a Conservation Area.

There is a colour palette appropriate to a given historic era based upon the research and chemical analysis of layers of paint. More importantly in many ways, is the need to be consistent and in harmony with your neighbours.

A good approach would be to consult with other businesses in the Conservation Area and particularly if the property forms part of a terrace the need for consistency is even more crucial.

The use of garish colours in one situation where neighbours have used subtle colours are quite unattractive.

## **9. LIGHTING**

Illuminated signs and bold lighting are inappropriate to historic buildings.

It is always tempting to over-illuminate the façade of a building. Whilst the installation of lights on the outside of the building is to some extent welcome, certain types of lighting definitely are not acceptable to a Conservation Area. These include back-illuminated plastic and Perspex signs.

Traditionally, lamps were used to illuminate the shopfront and for modern tradesman the desire is to put some kind of illumination onto the front. However the most sensitive approach for these installations is to use discreet design with a concealed or low-key light source. Try to conceal all cables and light gear. Swan-necked lamps in appropriate materials might be acceptable but will be viewed on it's merits.

## **10. INTERNAL DISPLAY**

Removal of front display areas is discouraged – there should be a transition between the inside and the outside of a shop.

The loss of the window display area at the front of the shop is regrettable. It has the effect of making no difference between the inside and the outside of a shop and has no special area for display.

A proprietor usually realises the importance of this designated area but by squeezing it out he produces a confusion of roles. There is the placing of display goods to bring the customer in, on the one hand, and the placing of stock on the other. Advertising materials, goods, boxes, promotions and stickers all compete in this area.

It is simpler to stick with tradition and to use the area for display only. Potential out-of-hours advertising is also lost because the space looks messy and unappealing.

## **11. EXTERNAL SHUTTERS**

Avoid external roll down shutters.

The use of external roll down shutters is extremely damaging to the overall appearance of a Conservation Area containing shops. Metal security shutters blank the shopfront to the point of hostility. Security is an important issue and is dealt with in greater detail in Section F – Security for Shopfronts – of this design guide, the contents of which show clearly that there is no real justification for roll down shutters on a shop.

## **12. HISTORY**

Avoid removal of historic features.

There is an opportunity during work to a shopfront to reinstate or to retain original elements. Conversely, wholesale removal of an historic shopfront is discouraged and in the case of Listed Buildings may be a criminal offence.

The loss of the top margin of the elevation, ie the cornice, is regrettable and design proposals should always attempt to reinstate them. Cornices provide not only separation from the upper part of the building, but also have the function of throwing water off the façade.

There is also the tendency to blank off the cornice and obscure the depth of entablature by the installation of new and over-sized fascias. This has the greatest impact on shop design and is perhaps the commonest complaint by conservationists.

The margins enclosing a shopfront, known as consoles, are often obscured by the installation of a modern shopfront or lost due to insensitive demolition. The retention of these features or their reintroduction is actively encouraged.

### **13. ORNAMENT**

Bland elevations lacking interest are unacceptable.

Various levels of interest in the design of a shopfront is attractive. Apart from pleasing and correct proportions, it is more appropriate to the group identity if characteristics are repeated and enhanced.

So for example, a new mosaic floor in the entrance lobby which takes its inspiration from similar ones in the street is encouraged. Always enhance original features rather than conceal them.

### **14. MATERIALS**

Modern synthetics are usually inappropriate in a Conservation Area.

A useful approach to new proposals is to refer to the materials used historically. Natural materials such as wood and stone behave in a different way to synthetics, and mixing one with the other is rarely successful.

There is also the environmental issue associated with non-degradable materials and those which produce the toxic waste in their manufacture. Proposals will be viewed much more sympathetically if they are shown to be environmentally friendly. The most obvious offenders are plastic blinds and PVCu windows.

## **E. SECURITY FOR SHOPFRONTS**

One of the commonest issues facing retailers in a Conservation Area is the “apparent” conflict of interest between conserving the historic nature of buildings and the practicalities necessary for insuring security.

This guide resolves this issue in a simple step-by-step approach.

First of all important questions need to be asked:

#### **1. Is the shop a target for theft?**

Clearly a shop selling jewellery or cameras is more likely to be targeted by crime than for example a bread shop although this is not denying the concern of all shopkeepers who wish to be confident that their building is safe, especially out of trading hours from impulse theft, vandalism and other crime.

#### **2. What are the methods employed by other shopkeepers in the area?**

The impact of security methods already employed is an important consideration. This is a delicate point, because your neighbour having a totally blanked out shopfront with external security grills does not set up a precedent for future shopfronts. In fact the use of these will be discouraged in a Conservation Area. Any future changes to existing shopfronts will be discouraged from using this method.

#### **3. What does the area look like at night?**

The overall impression of an area can actively encourage crime by implying that crime takes place – a “catch 22”. If after hours the streetscape looks more like a war zone it is unwelcoming and sinister and actually more likely to discourage people from being around at night who are in effect the best security methods and are free.

There is also the point that restaurants and off licences are good security for a neighbourhood because their trading hours are longer and the street has life at night.

#### **4. Does the area have a history of crime?**

This is a relative issue and has to be a realistic reaction to the known criminal activity of the area. It can have an effect on the type of security methods utilised. Clearly there is no point in, for example, installing anti ram-raiding measures if there has been no history of this in the district. There is no point in “using a sledgehammer to crack a nut” for an unlikely event and extreme measures can be expensive.

Once the relative probability of crime is established, the following hierarchy can be examined in step-by-step measures, from least impact to maximum impact and minor expense to major expense, in that order.

#### **COMMON SENSE** (Maximum Effect – Minimum or no Expense)

##### **Good practices deter theft.**

- Removal of valuables at the end of the trading day – but remember to present something decorative in their place.
- Lights left on in the shop out of trading hours is often enough to deter opportunism. They also help passers-by who may witness something unusual as they “window shop”.

#### **FILM applied to existing glass** (Minimum Effect – Minimum Expense)

- 12 microns minimum thickness.
- Must be applied to the edge of the glass behind the glazing surround: requires removal and reinstallation of the window because the edge of the film is a weak spot and must not be fixed to the edge of a window. The whole sheet will be pushed out on impact if the sheet is not lapped behind.
- This method is particularly useful for historic glass.

#### **TEMPERED GLASS replaces existing glazing** (Maximum Effect – Medium Expense)

- This glass has a sandwich of plastic material that resists impact and will not shatter.
- Available in many grades, up to bullet and bomb proof!
- Recommended thickness 7.5mm. Impact resistant to bricks, etc.
- Can be used for both windows and doors if these are vulnerable.
- This can be cut to size from off-the-peg sheets: does not have to be specially manufactured.
- The most effective method, but some shopkeepers believe that it is not enough of a deterrent because the window appears to have no security measures and could be targeted.
- Once hit, the window does need to be replaced. This is a good reason to opt for smaller areas of glass in modules forming the overall window to keep expenses low. In a Conservation Area small areas of glass are preferable; illustrations of the acceptable window designs for shopfronts appear in this guide.

#### **GRILLS** (Medium Effect – Maximum Expense)

- Externally fixed security grills in any form will be discouraged.

- The use of grills has to be seen as part of a security “system” and not installed without other measures.
- Lighting must be given consideration in conjunction with grills – ideally during non-trading hours there is a reasonable level of lighting so that the window does not appear “dead”. At night this also makes passing people feel secure.
- Where shutters are given planning permission, and this is only after careful consideration of the other security measures above, the position of them behind the glass is the next important consideration, ideally there are two positions to install them;
  - a) the shutters are placed behind the window display area well back from the glass forming a curtain behind the display area, or
  - b) immediately behind the glass.
- The percentage of light that is permitted to shine through the grill is crucial. Fine woven grills are not acceptable, the chain link type is alright but the rule of thumb ought to be how easily people can look into the shop. Interestingly, the more open in appearance they are the more secure they are. This is particularly true for passers-by who can witness intruders from the street.
- Try to include in the design a method of down-lighting the window area. The more attractive the lighting beyond the grill the less obtrusive the presence of the grill appears. Again this has the opposite effect than one might expect. The grill is the second line of defence, the tempered glass being the first, but the presence of a well lit display where light also spills onto the pavement is not attractive to thieves.

**CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) (Medium Effect – Maximum Expense)**

The installation of cameras in a Conservation Area is unlikely to be given permission. Not least because their presence is obtrusive and out of character with historic buildings. If the applicant can justify their presence, i.e. by a proven record of repeated attacks and have been advised by the Crime Prevention Officers that these are absolutely necessary then they may be given permission.

- Close scrutiny of the size and position of the camera will be given.
- If the camera is placed too high there is no face captured on film and yet the camera must be placed out of reach.
- Given the limitations of the camera angle, the camera must be placed at the most advantageous position to focus on the most vulnerable part of the façade given that it cannot capture the whole scene. Expert advice should be sought.
- Colour television is preferable to black and white.
- Placement of the camera in a vandal-proof housing is sensible.

**CRIME DETECTION EQUIPMENT AND METHODS (Medium Effect - High Expense)**

- Fog emitting device. This disorients the intruder by surrounding him/her with thick cloud, which might be enough to dissuade theft. Non-damaging to goods. Linked to alarm system. Odourless to prevent confusion for Fire Brigade.
- UV Spray. A fine spray is emitted into the air at the point of entry into the premises, containing a dye not noticeable during emission. Any stolen goods and the thief are marked with an undetectable dust unless viewed under UV light. Radical but effective in tracing goods and people!

**ANTI-RAMRAIDING MEASURES (Maximum Effect – Medium to Maximum Expense)**

**Generally, seek advice from police about this.**

- The stall-riser – a traditional feature of shopfront design – is an effective barrier against ram raids. In a traditional shopfront this was where the stall was placed on the outside of the shop to display wares. They now have a modern security use.

The problem generally is the effective height of this barrier against the car or van bonnet and crash bars. Unless a vehicle has been customised then a sill height of 900mm is effective. Clearly the stall riser has to be of solid construction.

- Bollards on the pavement installed between the road and the shopfront is another solution. However this is a Highways issue and would require close co-ordination and cooperation between the appropriate department, residents and proprietors. For bollards in a Conservation Area the design must be appropriate.

#### **OTHER SECURITY FEATURES (Low to Medium Effect – Low to Medium Cost)**

Other Security features that have an effect upon the appearance of shop fronts in a Conservation Area:

- Alarm boxes. Ideally these are placed in a discreet place.

There is an opportunity to blend the box into its background, for example by choosing to paint it to match the brickwork behind.

- Alarm lights. Unless very carefully detailed and located these can be obtrusive on the shopfront elevation.
- Wiring – can give the façade an untidy appearance; ideally choose a colour that blends into surroundings.

## **G. DISABLED ACCESS FOR SHOPS**

Shop owners have a statutory duty to provide reasonable access for people with disabilities. The most common concern for shops in a Conservation Area is that they may not be easily altered if they do not provide access already. There are several solutions to these problems:

### **1. Level changes between the street and shop floor**

If the correct use of a lobby has been incorporated into the design, then level changes can be taken up easily by the use of a ramp sloping from the door to the pavement.

A significant change in level may require a longer ramp, in which case the long run of slope can run along the front elevation provided that there is sufficient space at the pavement. This type of installation will normally require planning permission.

### **2. Doorways**

Adequate access for wheelchair users requires a minimum door width of 840mm. Door handles must be low enough for a person in a wheelchair, or the use of a push plate with a delayed action door closer, i.e. a door closer that does not slam shut nor one that has an action that is hard to open.

Mat wells must not produce a significant level change nor be of a material which causes wheels or sticks to get stuck in them.

Be sure to provide an uncluttered entrance into the shop to prevent poor sighted people from stumbling over obstacles that they do not expect.

## **H. ALTERATIONS TO BUILDINGS IN A CONSERVATION AREA**

### **MAIN PRINCIPLES**

1. Repair and reinstatement are preferable to replacement. However removal of unsympathetic alterations are desirable.
2. Maintain the character of the historic building by respecting its architectural style. This is also respect for proportions of the building.
3. Make reference to the character of the area and refer to the setting as a whole.
4. New extensions can be successfully added to a building providing that the materials, proportions, and details of the proposals are appropriate and never attempt to dominate or compete with the existing building.
5. Detailed knowledge of the history of the architectural style of the building is essential and therefore specialist knowledge and the commissioning of specialist builders is essential.
6. Accurate drawings of existing and proposed works to shopfronts in a Conservation Area are essential. This includes large scale details of architectural elements; scale 1:10 drawings of windows and doors such as carpenters drawings; sections and plans through the shopfront at a minimum scale of 1:20 which shows the extent of the works into the building, and any supporting drawings that give clear intentions of the project in order to understand and comment upon them.

The elements of the building are examined in turn in the following section entitled **BUILDING ELEMENTS**.

## **J. BUILDING ELEMENTS**

### **1. WALLS**

Alterations to wall surfaces can damage the overall appearance of the property if due care is not taken to examine the existing historic construction. Always attempt to match the existing materials, texture, colour, and quality of the existing walls or replace to the original material if this has been lost in later alterations to the building.

Avoid render unless this is historically correct for the building.

Retain and restore facing bricks, stonework, tile hanging, weatherboarding, half-timbering, panelling and decorative plaster-work.

### **2. DOORS / WINDOWS**

Copy or repeat original designs and with original materials.

Position new openings only where there were original openings.

Set the new door or window in the correct place in the wall depth according to the historic method.

Glazing bars, panelling, sills, and mouldings should be historically correct in size and detail and proportion.

For a new traditional shopfront, a detailed drawing would be required explaining the extent and detail of the work.



### **3. PLASTER AND RENDER**

Removal of render to expose rubblestone is not historically correct. However the use of rough cast, stick on stone, Tyrolean render, cement-based paint which is difficult to remove is discouraged. Never cover up original architectural features with render.

Lime-based render is the correct traditional method and is a specialist trade. The reason why this method is successful is that it is a breathable skin to the building and does not trap moisture behind it, which cement render does. Over time the interstitial condensation breaks down the fabric of the building. Lime-based render is also softer in appearance.

### **4. PAINTS**

Only use paint where there was an original intention to do so. For render the usual method would be to limewash and again is a specialist trade.

Downpipes should be painted in unobtrusive colours except for lead downpipes which should be left unpainted. Always try to be consistent with the pipes on one building and with pipes of a neighbour.

Gloss paints are usually relevant to window frames and some doors – a limit of palette between properties ought to be agreed.

Garish colours are inappropriate for a Conservation Area.

Wherever possible, attempt to use old pigment methods or choose from the wide range of heritage paints appropriate to the historical era.

### **5. CAST IRON**

Cast iron railings, downpipes, hopperheads and balconies are features of an historic building that must be retained. They are the details that make the building attractive and distinguished.

Repair of broken cast iron is encouraged.

Reinstatement of cast iron is encouraged even when such features have been lost for some time. Architectural salvage yards may be useful.

### **6. FIRE ESCAPES**

Where essential use materials and styles that are historically correct. Consult with Conservation Officers for advice on location and type.

### **7. PLUMBING**

Often the drainage of an historic building would be concealed within it. Where downpipes do exist they should be in traditional materials. New pipes, if they are essential, must never break through architectural features such as mouldings and decorative elements.

Wherever possible remove plastic pipes and restore to cast iron or lead.

### **8. ROOFS**

Pitch roofs are an important element of the building. Where original tiles have been lost there should be an attempt to find old ones to replace them. If the roof has to be stripped then the dominant slopes are the most important places to replace with reclaimed tiles and on inner slopes matching new ones can be used.

Always bear in mind the materials, colour, size and texture of the original.

Decorative features such as finials, ridge tiles, iron crestings and bargeboards should be retained.

## **9. PARAPETS**

Retain or restore parapets, balustrades, gables and moulded capping stone, These contribute greatly to the Conservation Area's overall appeal.