
LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING



Design Aid

SHOP FRONT SECURITY



SHOP FRONT SECURITY DESIGN GUIDE

1. INTRODUCTION

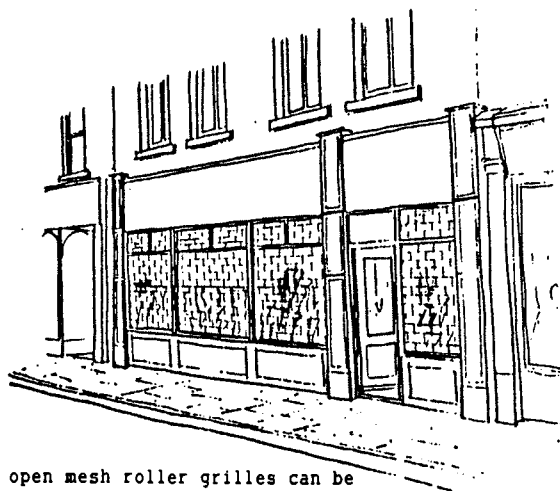
The City Council is sympathetic to the needs of shopkeepers to protect their shopfronts in the face of increasing risks of a smash and grab raid. It is also keen to ensure that shopping areas remain attractive after the shops have closed, especially as it wishes to promote increased leisure uses of these areas outside normal shop hours.

The purpose of this guide is to help shopkeepers to carry out effective shopfront security where they consider it necessary, in ways that will not adversely affect the appearance of shopfronts and shopping areas. It reviews the different types of shopfront security that are available, indicates whether planning permission would be required and comments on the likelihood of an application being approved for the different types. The guide also gives contacts for further information about specific cases and sets out the possible penalties for doing work without the necessary Planning Permission.

2. REVIEW OF SHOPFRONT SECURITY OPTIONS

- 2.1. **SECURITY GLASS.** Laminated glass has a plastic layer incorporated into its construction and has the capacity to remain intact even when broken. The use of this material will always be acceptable in unlisted buildings and will not need Planning Permission. However, if the building is listed, check with the Planning Department to see if Listed Building Consent is required.

Laminated glass is not normally noticeable. Does not require Planning Permission and only in exceptional cases will Listed Building Consent be needed.



Internal open mesh roller grilles can be fitted discreetly behind windows. Do not require Planning Permission but Listed Building Consent may be needed.

- 2.2. **INTERNAL GRILLE.** Open mesh roller grilles can be fitted unobtrusively behind the glass shopfront with all the housings set into the fabric of the building. They will always be acceptable in unlisted buildings and will not need Planning Permission. However, if the building is listed, check with the Planning Department to see if Listed Building Consent is required.

2.3. **EXTERNAL GRILLE.** External mesh roller grilles and rigid demountable mesh panels are much more obtrusive than internal grilles and are therefore less likely to be acceptable. In conservation areas, prime shopping areas and in cases of listed buildings this type will generally not be acceptable across the entire shopfront, although an exception may be made for doorways which are the most vulnerable area. Outside the above areas external mesh roller grilles will be considered. Shutter box housings should always be incorporated into the shopfront, usually behind the fascia. All external grilles will require Planning Permission.



Rigid demountable mesh panels are more obtrusive than internal grilles and so are unsuited to sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings.



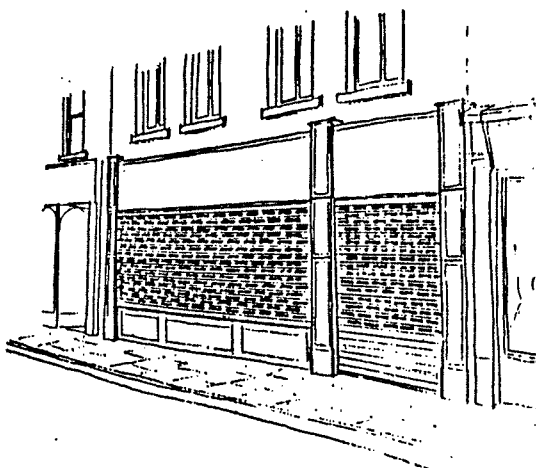
External mesh roller grilles are more obtrusive than internal grilles and so are less suited to sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent will be required.



External mesh roller grilles with external shutter boxes are **NOT ACCEPTABLE**. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent will be required.

2.4. **EXTERNAL ROLLER SHUTTER.** These are usually solid or slightly perforated. They present a blank frontage with minimal visual interest that detract from the general quality of the shopping street. For this reason they will only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances eg. for a shop that is an exceptionally high risk and is located on a non sensitive area. They will always require Planning Permission and where this is granted it is likely to be conditional upon details such as suitable colour. External roller shutters will never be acceptable on listed buildings.

2.5. **EXTERNAL SOLID DEMOUNTABLE PANELS.** Same comments as for 2.4 above.



External roller shutters even with vision holes/slots are **NOT ACCEPTABLE** except in exceptional circumstances in non-sensitive locations. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent will be required.

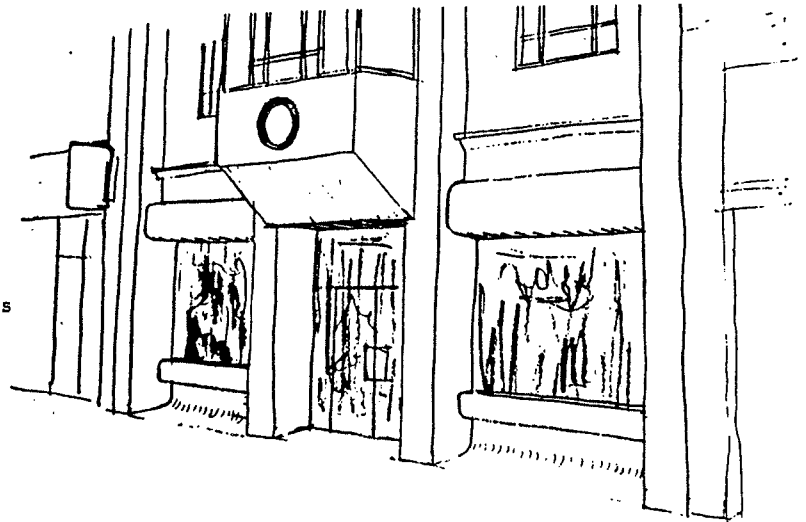


Both external roller shutters and external shutter boxes are **NOT ACCEPTABLE**. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent will be required.



Fully glazed shopfronts can be vulnerable to ram raiding.

- 2.6. **INTRODUCTION OF A STALLRISER.** A stallriser is the solid panel below the shopwindow that was usual on traditional shopfronts. The modern version could be heavily reinforced behind a decorative panel to resist a ram raid type attack. They will almost always be acceptable but will require Planning Permission and also Listed Building Consent if the building is listed.



Introducing stallrisers which can be reinforced makes shopfronts less attractive to ram-raiders.

- 2.7. **INTRODUCTION OF MULLIONS WITHIN A SHOPFRONT.** Mullions are vertical framing members that sub-divide a shopfront. They have the benefit of strengthening the glass by providing additional support and reducing the cost of replacing broken glass by reducing its size. They will almost always be acceptable in unlisted buildings but will require Planning Permission and also Listed Building Consent if the building is listed.



Mullions can only be used to reinforce the shopfront.

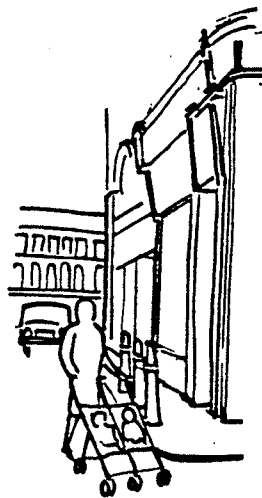
2.8. **PROVISION OF STREET FURNITURE TO A PRIVATE FORECOURT.** Substantial pieces of street furniture such as planters and bollards can act as a deterrent to would be ram raiders. Their acceptability will depend upon the visual quality of the furniture proposed and how it would relate to its surroundings.

A co-ordinated approach to a parade of shops is particularly important. Planning Permission may be required; check with the Planning Department whether your specific proposals will need consent.

Bollards and planters should be co-ordinated between adjoining forecourts owners.



2.9. **BOLLARDS IN THE PUBLIC FOOTPATH.** In the absence of a private forecourt, some shopkeepers have sought to have bollards erected in the public footpath immediately in front of their shop window to protect them from ram raiders. This solution, however, can reduce the effective width of the footpath, is another obstacle for the blind and partially sighted and is usually visual clutter. Such proposals require the consent of the City Engineer but will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. It would normally be necessary to demonstrate that the shopkeeper cannot adopt any of the other measures above to solve the problem himself/herself.



Bollards can cause obstruction to the footway especially if it is narrow.

- 2.10. **ARCADES AND MALLS.** Because vehicular access is not normally required it will usually be possible to prevent vehicular access altogether by the use of bollards at the entrances. The design of these bollards should be appropriate to the arcade or mall they protect. Concrete bollards would NOT be appropriate for the traditional Leeds arcades.
- 2.11. **A COMBINATION OF OPTIONS.** It may be appropriate to employ a combination of several of the above security options in order to provide effective security in a visually acceptable manner. The Local Police Crime Prevention Officer may be able to assist with advice on the security aspects.

3. FURTHER ASSISTANCE

It is difficult to be more specific about the likely acceptability of some options and the need for Planning Permission without examining specific proposals in detail. For further advice from the Planning Department, please telephone the appropriate number below:-

Central Leeds - (0532) 478168
South Leeds - 478058
East Leeds - 478079
West Leeds - 478013

It is appreciated that in some circumstances, such as following a raid, urgent decisions will have to be made. The Planning Department will aim to give speedy pre-application advice. It will also provide an informal assessment of the acceptability of a planning application within about a week of its receipt in cases of emergency. However the Council cannot by law issue a consent in less than three weeks. Any action taken as a result of an informal assessment but in advance of a formal decision has to be at the applicant's risk.

4. UNAUTHORISED SECURITY MEASURES

The Council is very concerned about the number of shopkeepers who have installed shopfront security measures without the necessary Planning Consent. Whilst a few may be granted on retrospective approval, many are considered unacceptable. The Planning Department will give serious consideration to taking planning enforcement action against unacceptable schemes. This can lead to a prosecution with a fine on conviction of up to £20,000 and also a prison sentence if the building is listed. Any alteration to the level of security will effect the insurance risk and consequently complying with enforcement action could lead to the total removal of insurance cover forcing the closure of the shop. Therefore it is very important to obtain all the necessary permissions before undertaking any work - from the Planning Department in the first instance and from your insurer before undertaking the remedial work.

It is hoped that one of the benefits of this guide will be that shopkeepers and the Planning Department will work more closely together in future to provide effective security in an environmentally acceptable manner in the interests of all.

