

Conwy Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

LDP3: Shop Front Security

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Shop fronts are critical in establishing the character and appearance of shopping frontages. Conwy County Borough Council attaches considerable importance to suitably designed shop fronts, not only to preserve the character of buildings, but also to retain the overall attractiveness of streets and to maintain their commercial viability. Inappropriate developments can have a severe detrimental effect not only on the building but also the street scene, and the street's trading potential.

1.2 In recent years, the need for shop front security has become increasingly important. To combat the rising threat of theft and vandalism, a number of measures have been introduced to existing and in replacement shop fronts. Unfortunately, the use of certain security measures, particularly solid roller shutters, has had a serious harmful impact on



the appearance of buildings and on the character of some streets within Conwy's towns and villages.

1.3 As an attractive street frontage benefits trade and the local economy, it is essential that property owners use appropriate security measures which have the minimum effect on the street scene.

This guide sets out what forms of shop front security will and will not be acceptable to the Council.

2. PLANNING POLICY CFS/8 – SHOPPING STREET FRONTAGE SECURITY

2.1 Planning and Listed Building applications submitted to the Council will be determined in accordance with the following policy:

“Planning permission or Listed Building Consent will not be granted for the installation of solid or perforated roller shutters on fronts of shops, or on other properties in shopping street frontages. The Council will normally grant planning permission or Listed Building Consent for external roller grilles and

removable grilles on shop fronts and commercial properties where the grilles are integrated into the design of the shop front, have minimal visual impact and are compatible with the rest of the elevation of the building and the street scene.”

3. THE APPROACH TO SHOP SECURITY

3.1 Security measures can take many forms, not all of which directly involve the shop front. The correct solution will depend on the purpose of the security, burglary, vandalism or both. A good property security system may comprise a whole range of possible measures including:

- door and window lock reinforcement;
- prevention of access via roof, side and rear;
- alarms;
- closed-circuit television;
- security lights and interior / exterior lighting generally;
- shop front security itself.

3.2 Other forms of security include installing street furniture, such as bollards, pillars and railings as deterrents to "ramming". These may require permission and Council officers will advise on this.

4. GLASS

4.1 Three types of glass are available, but only two offer safety and security: laminated and toughened glass.

Float glass is the most basic and cheapest but offers minimal security protection, dependent on its thickness.

Laminated glass, produced by combining two or more sheets of float glass with one or more layers of polyvinyl butryal (PVB), is the most visually acceptable and will not break easily.

Toughened glass is heat-treated and can be made up to 5 times stronger than ordinary glass – but cannot be cut or drilled on site. It is the most effective and expensive form of glass for shop front window protection.

- 4.2 The use of laminated or toughened glass is the first solution to be considered, particularly for historic shop fronts still having the original glass, which may break relatively easily with minimal impact. No additional fixings are required and planning permission is not required to install strengthened glass.
- 4.3 **Anti shatter film** is tough, transparent and relatively easy to apply to existing glazing and is cheaper than replacing windows with laminated or toughened glass. Its main benefit is in holding shards of glass together when a window is broken. It also adds some resistance, which may help to foil smash-and-grab raids. However anti-shatter film is not as effective as laminated glass.
- 4.4 Shop fronts containing high-risk goods, for example, jewellery and electrical items, may require a greater thickness of laminated glass or toughened laminate. Such glass also has the advantage of absorbing ultra violet light, which can damage displayed goods.
- 4.5 **Window sizes** Traditional shop fronts with smaller panes of glass can be more difficult to break into than modern extensive areas of glazing. The introduction or re-instatement of glazing bars, mullions and stall risers provides greater strength to a shop window or door and, when used together with strengthened glass, can provide sufficient protection for most shop fronts. Smaller panes of glass are also cheaper to replace. Where appropriate, window mullions can be strengthened with metal T-sections. It is advisable to contact the Council before carrying out such works, as they may require planning permission or listed building consent.

5. GRILLES AND SHUTTERS

- 5.1 Security should be considered when a shop front is being designed or refurbished so that security measures can be successfully integrated into the design. In considering any security solution, particularly grilles and shutters, it is important to take into account the impact they will have on the appearance of the shop front, on the building as a whole and on the overall street scene. The security measure chosen should be that which minimises any harmful effect whilst achieving the necessary level of security. Grilles, both internal and external, enable window shopping or passive surveillance of the premises from the street. Lights left on within the shop can act as a further security deterrent. If shutters are necessary, they should be internal and not external.

Internal Lattice and 'Brick-Bond' Grilles

5.2 If a physical barrier within a shop front is necessary, the most appropriate option is an internal lattice or brick-bond grille. Internal grilles have a limited impact on the appearance of the shop front and do not normally require planning permission. The installation of internal grilles or shutters requires Listed Building Consent and will not be acceptable where the alterations have a harmful effect upon the character of the building.



5.3 The size and location of grilles will be determined by the window opening. They may be retracted during opening hours into box housings, usually located within or behind the window soffit.

5.4 The Council's preferred approach is to provide the security required by the use of internal grilles. Internal grilles can allow visual surveillance of the inside of the shop from outside and will not require planning permission. However, they may require Listed Building Consent.

External Lattice, 'Brick-Bond' and Open chain link Grilles

5.5 These grilles give visual control of the shop front. Whilst the installation of external lattice or brick bond grilles will require planning permission, in principle they are likely to comply with the Council's policy. They may be useful in protecting the curved windows of traditional shop fronts. However care will be required to ensure that the details are acceptable, in particular the grille thickness. Appropriate low level lighting can usefully be associated with this solution.



External shutters

- 5.6 External roller shutters can have a significant impact on the appearance of the building and the street scene depending on:
- the type – solid shutters have a much greater impact than grilles and can attract graffiti.
 - the colour and material – galvanized steel and bright colours have the greatest harmful effect.
 - the accommodation of the shutter box housing within the shop front.
 - the metal guides that form the perimeter of the shop front and retain the roller shutter to give the security.

Solid Roller Shutters

- 5.7 When closed, solid shutters detract from the visual appearance of individual buildings. The solid roller shutter, usually the cheapest version being galvanised steel, creates an entirely blank and featureless shop front, produces a 'dead frontage' within the street scene and creates a threatening fortress-like effect on the area. The use of solid external shutters also offers opportunities for fly posting and graffiti, which detract further from the attractiveness of the shopping centre.



Perforated or punched shutters

- 5.8 A shutter with holes punched into the shutter giving a degree of view through the shutter. Hole size varies generally from 2mm up to 8mm to give a visual control through the shutter at strategic positions.



Shutter boxes

- 5.9 Shutter boxes have a harmful impact on the visual aspect and quality of a shop front design and have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene. They project severely beyond the building footprint and give an ‘added-on’ appearance onto the shop front face. Wherever possible, these should be concealed within the shop front design.
- 5.10 The installation of solid and perforated roller shutters is contrary to the Council’s planning policy and consequently, permission will be refused.

6. DOORWAYS

- 6.1 Shop doors, particularly if glazed and recessed, are often the point of entry for burglars. To prevent this, the installation of lattice grilles is generally the preferred option. Alternatively recessed doorways may, be protected by demountable iron gates. The gates should be stored in a discrete position when not in use.



- 6.2 The use of lighting can also act as a deterrent in recessed doorways.

7. EXTERNAL ALARM BOXES, SENSORS AND CCTV

- 7.1 Installation of a standard size alarm box will not require planning permission. Listed Building Consent will be required if the building is Listed.
- 7.2 Window sensors can be linked to an alarm or a CCTV camera and are unlikely to require planning permission or Listed Building Consent if the building is Listed. CCTV cameras may need planning permission and will always need Listed Building Consent.

8. DO YOU NEED PLANNING PERMISSION?

- 8.1 Any change to commercial property that materially affects its external appearance including the erection of permanent security external grilles or shutters requires planning permission. Internal grilles, films and toughened glass do not generally need consent. Installation on Listed Buildings of special architectural or historic importance could also require Listed Building Consent.

9. HELP AND ADVICE

- 9.1 If you are thinking about adding security measures to your shop which may require permission you are strongly advised to discuss your proposals with a Planning Officer before placing an order with a supplier. The contact number is 01492 575247.
- 9.2 North Wales Police will also give you advice. Their contact number is 0300 330 0101.

10. GRILLES AND SHUTTERS – A SUMMARY GUIDE

A summary guide on Grilles and Shutters is provided below for ease of reference. Please note this is intended as a guide and should be read in conjunction with the remainder of this SPG. Each case will need to be considered on its own merits in line with Policy CFS/8 of the LDP. For advice on the requirement for planning permission for specific cases, please contact the Development Management Department on 01492 575247.

Type	Acceptable in principle?	Planning Permission Needed?
Internal Lattice/Brick bond Grilles 	Yes	Not usually, although Listed Building Consent will be needed for Listed Buildings.
External Lattice, Brick bond and open chain link Grilles and external demountable iron gates 	Yes	Yes
External Perforated shutters 	No	Yes
Solid Roller Shutters 	No	Yes