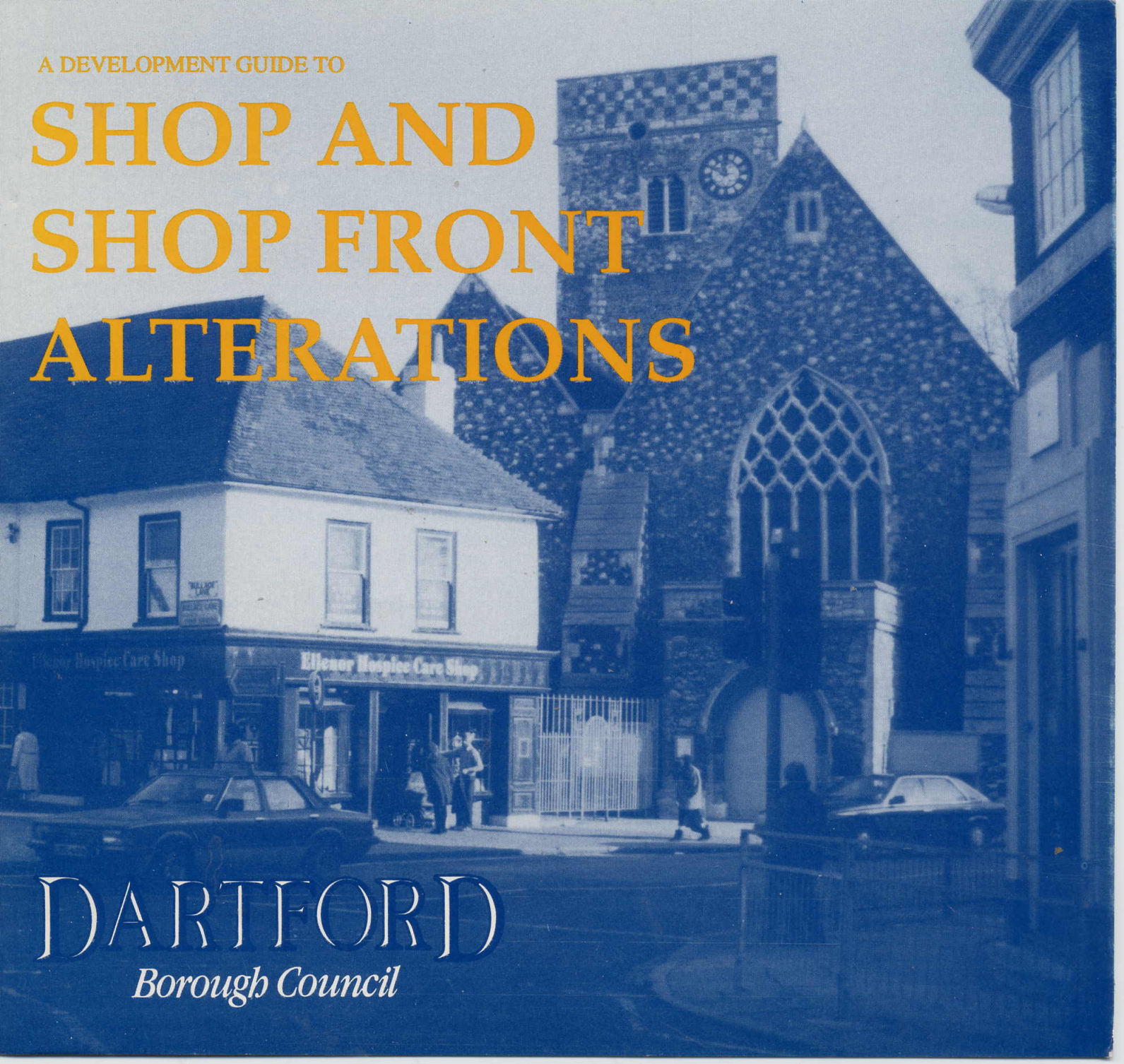


A DEVELOPMENT GUIDE TO

# SHOP AND SHOP FRONT ALTERATIONS

DARTFORD  
*Borough Council*



## When is Planning Permission Required?

All extensions to shop premises and alterations to shop fronts require Planning Permission. If the premises is a Listed Building then Listed Building consent will also be required. Changes in the *type* of a shop can be made without the need for Planning Permission but advice should be sought from the Planning and Design Division if you are unsure.

## Fascia/Sign Design

The fascia is an important focal part of the shop front and its style and proportion should relate to the surrounding buildings. An over-large or visually inappropriate fascia can detract from the continuity of the street scene.

### General

The obscuration of original detail and cornices destroys the architectural unity of the building and the street and is therefore unacceptable.

The fascia should provide a visual link between the horizontal elements already present in adjacent properties.

The number and size of signs in Conservation Areas is to be kept to a minimum. Guidance is given in the Local Plan (Appendix 20, Section 2).

### Materials

The materials and colours selected should be compatible with the building and those of surrounding shop fronts and buildings. The use of acrylic and shiny materials, and the use of fluorescent colours is inappropriate, particularly in Conservation Areas; a painted timber fascia and painted lettering should be used. [Local Plan Policy B13].

In all cases the lettering should be in proportion to the fascia size, and generally only show the name of the shop, trade and the street number.

### Illumination

In Conservation Areas the use of internally illuminated fascias will be resisted. Instead the use of plain fascias and directed light sources, back lit lettering or halo lit letters is preferred. The use of open-type neon tubing, or intermittent illumination will not be allowed.

Elsewhere, the above guidelines are preferred but each case will be considered on the merit of the whole scheme.

Generally any illuminated fascia/sign shall not cause glare-illumination and should be sufficient for identification purposes only. In all cases, the design shall present a neat appearance in daylight with all switchgear and wiring concealed.

## Projecting Signs

All projecting signs must comply with the Town and Country Planning Act (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 1992. Some signs will have Deemed Consent if they comply with the Regulations on size, illumination, location and use. Separate guidance on signs is available in "Outdoor Advertisements and Signs", obtainable from the Civic Centre.

Within Conservation Areas the use of projecting illuminated box signs is inappropriate. Hanging signs suspended on brackets can enhance the architectural quality of the shopfront and street, provided the guidelines below are followed.

These should be externally illuminated lighting from a strip light fitting at the top of the sign. Elsewhere, the use of box signs should be of suitable material and design, and located at fascia level. A sign should relate to the character, scale and architectural features of the building onto which it is placed and should be placed centrally on a pilaster or column at fascia level. No more than one sign per shop will be permitted if the size does not exceed 0.75 m<sup>2</sup>. If this size is exceeded or the sign is illuminated, advertisement consent will be required.

## Blinds

Care is needed in the selection of a suitable blind and fabric for the building, especially in Conservation Areas. On Listed Buildings the correct detailing and traditional craftsmanship will also be required, if a blind is appropriate at all.

Traditional roller blinds are suitable for some 18th and 19th century buildings, provided the detailing of the building lends itself to this type of installation. Similarly,



### Design considerations

Left: Examples of good relationships to the street and facade.

Right: Examples of bad relationships.

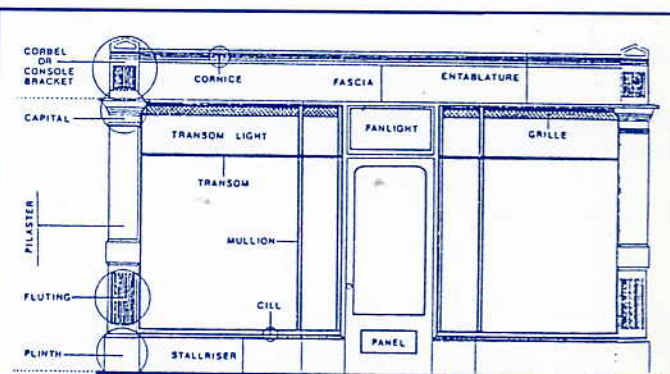


### Blinds

Good example



Bad example



### Parts of a shop front

### Contacts

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Planning and Design Division at the Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford DA1 1DR  
Tel: 0322 343434.

some 20th century buildings are robust enough to take a rigid canopy-type blind or rollerblind. The fitting of such blinds must not be taken in isolation but must relate to the street scene and character of the area.

The use of bright fluorescent or glossy materials in Conservation Areas will not be allowed; the preferred material being canvas with a matt finish.

Blinds will not be acceptable above first floor cill level, unless the building is specifically designed to accommodate them or they are a renewal.

### **Security Shutters**

Security shutters normally require Planning Permission. Roller shutters will not normally be given consent as they do not contribute to the street scene. In sensitive streets and buildings where there is a need for increased security internally fitted open grille shutters should be provided.

### **Open-Fronted Shops**

Removal of shopfront features to create an open-fronted shop can detract from the integrity of the building and the street, and will be resisted.

### **Burglar Alarms**

Although a necessity, positioning of such items requires consideration. Ideally they should be incorporated into a modern shop front. In traditional shop fronts a more appropriate location would be within a small modification to the stall riser.

### **Changing the type of shop**

The various types of retail shop are statutorily defined in Use Class A1 by the Use Classes Order 1987. However, shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles, launderettes or amusement centres fall outside this Use Class. Other uses that are seen to be generally compatible with and appropriate to provide within shopping areas are similarly categorised. These comprise

of funeral and professional services (Class A2 such as banks and building societies), and businesses engaged in the sale of food and drink (Class A3 - namely restaurants, public houses, snack bars and shops for the sale of hot food).

Apart from some limited permitted changes between these Classes the need for Planning Permission will usually arise in changing from one class use to another. The use classes are more specifically defined as follows:

#### ***Class A1 - Shops: Use for all or any of the following purposes:***

For the retail sale of goods other than hot food  
As a post office  
For the sale of tickets or as a travel agency  
For the sale of sandwiches or other cold food for consumption off the premises  
For hairdressing  
For the direction of funerals  
For the display of goods for sale  
For the hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles  
For the washing or cleaning of clothes or fabrics on the premises  
For the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired.

#### ***Class A2 - Financial and Professional Services***

Use for the provision of financial services  
Professional services (other than health or medical services), or  
Any other services (including use as a betting office) which is appropriate to provide in a shopping area  
Where the services are provided principally to visiting members of the public.

#### ***Class A3 - Food and Drink***

Use for the sale of food or drink for consumption on the premises or of hot food for consumption off the premises.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

You may find the following questions/answers on planning issues useful:

**Q: If I want to build onto my house do I need planning or building permission? Is there a fee involved? Does the Council inspect the work?**

*A: The answer to all of the above questions is usually yes. Please telephone 0322 343203/4 for further help.*

**Q: Where should I start?**

*A: Appointments can be made on 0322 343203.*

**Q: Can I obtain written help and all the forms I need from the Council?**

*A: Yes. Please telephone 0322 343203/4 for further help.*

**Q: Why can't the Council grant me planning permission immediately?**

*A: All applications are either approved or rejected by the elected Members of the Development Control Sub-Committee who sit on average once a month, or by senior officers but always after consultation with neighbours and other interested parties.*

**Q: Can I be advised about building regulations for private or commercial use?**

*A: Yes. All you need to do is phone or write to make an appointment, telephone 0322 343203. The Building Control officers are always available on weekdays between 0900-1030 hrs and usually between 1600-1700 hrs.*

**Q: If I receive a letter from the Council concerning someone else's application which affects me can I still seek advice?**

*A: Yes. Whether it's regarding your own application, an application you object to or simply for advice on what to do if an application is refused, telephone 0322 343212/343291/343051/*

**Q: Does the Council control preservation orders on trees and the landscape?**

*A: Yes. For information and advice, telephone 0322 343231*

**Q: If I believe someone is acting without planning or building permission, what can I do?**

*A: Contact the Council. We have officers who deal specifically with such problems individually. Telephone 0322 343215 or 343074*

**Q: Is there an overall plan for the Borough?**

*A: Yes. It's called the 'Local Plan'. Copies (which include detailed maps) may be purchased from the Civic Centre. If you have a specific query, please telephone 0322 343202/343214.*

**Q: If I want to enquire about a listed building should I first approach the Council?**

*A: Yes. We have a listed buildings register, grants information and conservation advice. Telephone 0322 343207 or 343269.*

**Q: If I consider a structure to be dangerous, what can I do?**

*A: The Council will inspect the building and if necessary place a demolition order on a dangerous building. Telephone 0322 343216. In an emergency, telephone 0322 343434 at any time.*

**Q: What about disabled access?**

*A: Disabled access has very high priority on all new buildings to which the public have access and can help determine a successful application. Telephone 0322 343216 for detailed information.*

**Q: When do I need an entertainment licence?**

*A: Telephone 0322 343216 for advice and detailed information.*

**Office hours:**

**Monday to Thursday: 8.45 am to 5.15 pm**

**Friday: 8.45 am to 4.45 pm**

*Please be patient as the office is always busy*



*Fresh Food Delicatessen*

K. J. ANDERSON & SON  
FISHMONGERS

*For further information on any planning query, please contact:*

Planning & Design Division

Dartford Borough Council

Civic Centre

Home Gardens

Dartford

DA1 1DR

Telephone: 0322 343434