

Security Shutters for Shops and Business Premises in Conservation Areas

The Borough Council of Newcastle under Lyme resolved on 23 December 1992, to adopt as supplementary planning guidance, the policy guidelines below, for controlling security shutter developments in the conservation areas of the Borough. The guidance is particularly relevant to the Newcastle Town Centre Conservation Area because of the number of shops in the centre and subsequent demand for security measures. However, this guidance and the proposed local plan policy will apply to relevant properties in all the conservation areas of the Borough.

- 8.27 Commercial activities in Conservation Areas bring particular problems because of the special needs of businesses to advertise and to protect their goods. The right balance must be obtained to ensure that the vitality and viability of the businesses are protected without damage to the character of the Conservation Area. In most cases, the quality of the environment of the area is part of the attraction for the business and these objectives are therefore not in opposition.
- 8.28 It is quite practicable for attractive shop fronts to be incorporated into Conservation Areas so long as the design of the buildings is fully respected. Awnings, canopies and blinds may not always be acceptable and special care needs to be taken. Solid external metal security shutters, the use of which has increased in recent years can have a detrimental effect on the appearance of a building and general street scene. They are generally bland and uninteresting and, as such, can harm the character and attractiveness of a shopping street.

Guidance for potential applicants

Planning permission is required for the installation of external security devices, because they materially affect the appearance of buildings. In addition, if your property is a Listed Building, Listed Building Consent will be required for any external or internal security devices.

The following points are intended to guide anyone contemplating the installation of security shutters and grilles, to design and choose proposals that will fit in with the architectural detailing of the building and to be acceptable to the Council.

1. Planning permission for the installation of external security measures will be granted as the exception rather than the rule, and will only be allowed where the Council is satisfied that all other measures have been considered and there is a need for that level of security.
2. Lattice (open mesh) shutters are preferable (planning permission is not normally required if they are located behind the glass.) If they are to be mounted externally they will only be permitted where:-
 - they are designed to be an integral part of the shop front and do not detract from any architectural features;
 - they are painted or finished to match the shop front;
 - the guiderails and grille box are concealed within the elements of the shop front. (Features which are planted on externally and cover or obscure existing elements of the shop front are not acceptable)