



Supplementary Planning Document:

Draft Commercial Extension and Alterations

September 2025

Accessibility statement

If you require this document in a different format, please email

 **planmaking@hackney.gov.uk**

We will consider your request and get back to you in the next five working days.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hackney is home to a vibrant and growing economy and has seen a continual growth of new businesses within the Borough. In 2023 to 2024 Hackney's businesses grew by 3.2 % compared to the Inner London level of 1.5 %. This demonstrates that Hackney continues to be an attractive environment for businesses to grow. As set out in the draft Economic Development Plan (2025–2030) the Council will support and enable good growth. From a planning perspective this can be in the form of providing guidance to existing businesses, and other non-residential owners and occupiers on how to adapt and extend their building to enable them to continue to grow sustainably within Hackney.
- 1.2 This document sets out the Council's guidance for ensuring that good design and sustainability are central to proposals for altering and extending commercial buildings. The document will provide guidance on the following:
- **Extensions and alterations to commercial buildings.**
 - **Treatment of plant and equipment.**
 - **How to make buildings more accessible.**
 - **Shopfront design guidance**
 - **Alterations to shopfronts following a change of use.**
 - **Advertisements.**
- 1.3 Each section of the document provides design principles to be applied to proposals with a design guide response and examples to support the design approach.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.4 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to inform the design process through to the assessment of any planning applications on non-residential properties. The document is to be applied to applications across Hackney.
- 1.5 Given the sustained demand for business expansion in the Borough there is a need to enable these businesses to grow and develop sustainably. This document seeks to support this growth by providing guidance on how commercial premises can be extended or altered to meet the current and future needs of their users, while meeting Hackney's policy requirements on achieving high design quality. The document will also provide guidance on how to make buildings more accessible to users.
- 1.6 Shopfronts are highly visible, prominent, and important elements of Hackney's streetscape because they are located at ground floor level, usually spanning the entire width of a building and providing activity to the public realm. Many busy and well known public spaces in the Borough are lined with shopfronts, and each has their own special history and character. This guidance informs the design of replacement shopfronts, alterations to shopfronts and design treatment of conversions of shops to residential. This document also provides guidance on advertisements which play a part in shaping the character of an area.

- 1.7 The guidance contained in this document has been based on an analysis of the existing townscape and built character within the Borough together with an understanding of the Borough's commercial building stock and an examination of how it can be extended or altered in the most appropriate manner.
- 1.8 This document is intended for use in the determination of planning applications by providing applicants, agents, architects, planners, local residents and stakeholders with guidance for undertaking extension and alterations to purpose-built non-residential buildings. On adoption this document will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications together with the emerging Area Action Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents.

HOW DOES THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) FIT WITH OTHER PLANNING POLICY

- 1.9 The following planning policies and guidance have been used to inform this SPD. This SPD forms part of a wider planning policy framework (see figure 1.1 below). Any planning application must be consistent with the Development Plan Documents. These include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), London Plan, Hackney Local Plan and the London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan.
- 1.10 The SPD builds upon and provides more detailed advice and guidance on policies located within the Hackney Local Plan which align with the NPPF and London Plan. An SPD cannot introduce new planning policies as it does not form part of the Development Plan. On adoption, the

SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, together with the NPPF, London Plan, Local Plan and emerging Area Action Plans and other Supplementary Planning Documents..

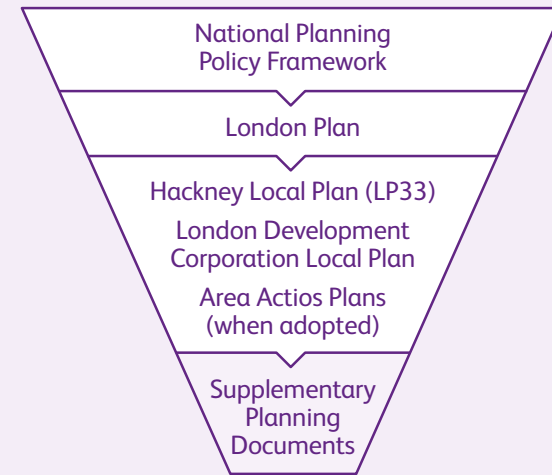


Figure 1.1 – Planning Policy Framework hierarchy

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 1.10 The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The most relevant parts of the NPPF for the purposes of this document are:
- **Chapter 6 Building a strong, competitive economy**
 - **Chapter 7 Ensuring the vitality of town centres**
 - **Section 12 Achieving well-designed places**
 - **Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

The NPPF is available on the Gov.uk website:

 bit.ly/Nppf

London Plan

1.12 The London Plan (2021) sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20–25 years and the Mayor’s vision for good growth. It contains a number of policies which relate to high quality of design. These include:

- **D1 London’s form, character and capacity for growth**
- **D3 Optimising Site Capacity through a design-led approach**
- **HC1 Heritage conservation and growth**

1.13 Additional policies which can be used to determine planning application for non-residential extensions and alterations include but are not limited to:

- **D4 Delivering good design**
- **D5 Inclusive design**
- **G5 Urban greening**
- **G6 Biodiversity and Access to Nature**
- **SI 1 Improving air quality**

1.14 The London Plan is available on the Mayor of London’s website:

 london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/london-plan

Hackney Local Plan 2033 (LP33)

1.15 The Hackney Local Plan 2033 (2020), also known as LP33, is the key strategic planning document used to direct and guide development in the Borough up to 2033. It contains a number of policies which relate to high quality design. These include:

- **LP1 Design Quality and Local Character**
- **LP2 Development and Amenity**
- **LP3 Designated Heritage Assets**
- **LP4 Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

1.16 Additional policies which can be used to determine planning application for non-residential extensions and alterations include but are not limited to:

- **LP17 Housing Design**
- **LP46 Protection and Enhancement of Green Infrastructure**
- **LP47 Biodiversity and Sites of Importance of Nature Conservation**
- **LP53 Water and Flooding**
- **LP54 Overheating and Adapting to Climate Change**
- **LP55 Mitigating Climate Change**
- **LP58 Improving the Environment Pollution**

1.17 The Hackney Local Plan is available on the Council’s website:

 hackney.gov.uk/lp33

London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan 2020 to 2036

1.18 On 1 December 2024, planning powers returned from the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) to the London Borough of Hackney. This means Hackney will be responsible for processing and assessing all planning applications within this area.

- 1.19 The London Development Corporation Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance will still apply to the area that the London Development Corporation covered until we replace them with a future Hackney Local Plan. These Policies include but are not limited to:
- **Policy BN.1: Responding to place**
 - **Policy BN.6: Requiring inclusive design**
 - **Policy BN.10: Protecting key views**
 - **Policy BN.11: Air quality**
 - **Policy BN.12: Noise**
 - **Policy BN.16: Designing advertisements**
 - **Policy BN.17: Conserving or Enhancing Heritage Assets**
 - **Policy SP.5: A sustainable and healthy place to live and work**
 - **Policy 1.2: Promoting Hackney Wick and Fish Island's unique identity and appearance**
 - **Policy 1.3: Connecting Hackney Wick and Fish Island**
- 1.20 This Supplementary Planning Document will also be used in the assessment of planning applications for any residential alteration and extensions proposals within the London Borough of Hackney. This includes the area that the London Development Corporation covered.

WHO IS THIS DOCUMENT FOR?

- 1.21 The document is designed to be used by a range of audiences who play a key role in creating and assessing planning applications including:

- **Owners and/or occupiers of commercial buildings in a non-residential setting who are interested in extending and altering their properties.**
- **Architects, Planning Agents and Developers when designing proposals.**
- **Development Management Officers when considering planning applications and pre-applications.**
- **Conservation and Urban Design Officers, when commenting on planning applications.**
- **Organisations that the Council consults on planning applications such as Conservation Area Advisory Committee, local amenity groups and Historic England.**
- **Members of the public who wish to comment and review planning applications.**
- **Planning Inspectors when considering a planning application at appeal.**

- 1.22 This SPD is to be used in all applications for buildings purpose-built for non-residential use. For properties which were originally residential in use and have later been converted to a non-residential use or for a building which historically had a commercial ground floor and residential upper floors, the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD should be referred to.
- 1.23 In buildings with a commercial ground floor and residential above the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD would apply to any extension or alteration to the residential element, and the Commercial Extensions and Alterations should be referred to for any extensions or alterations to the commercial element.

WHAT PLANNING PERMISSIONS DO I NEED?

1.24 It's likely you will need planning permission if you're:

- **Building something new.**
- **Extending or altering a building used as flats or a commercial building.**
- **Changing the use of all or part of a building.**

1.25 In addition to planning permission, Listed Building Consent will be required for any external or internal works to a listed building.

Changing buildings from office to residential use

1.26 You can change some buildings from office to residential use without planning permission. This depends on where the property is in Hackney. .

To view the map showing office to residential use areas, please visit:

 bit.ly/officetoresidential

1.27 You will need prior approval covering:

- **Flooding**
- **Highways**
- **Transport issues**
- **Contamination**

1.28 Prior approval means an applicant has to get an agreement from the Council. This states which parts of the development are acceptable before work can proceed.

1.29 For more information on how to check if you need planning permission, please visit:

 hackney.gov.uk/planning-permission

Pre Application and Planning Performance Agreements

1.30 Applicants are advised to seek pre-application advice on development proposals to ensure they are well designed and comply with planning policies to increase your chances of making a successful planning application. In submitting for pre-application advice it will:

- **Help with getting a quicker decision on your application.**
- **Identify elements of the proposal that may require amending.**
- **Identify additional information to submit with any application.**
- **Ensure you understand the policies under which your application would be assessed against.**
- **Identify what consultations you should carry out before applying.**
- **Inform you of any planning obligations that may be relevant.**

1.31 More information regarding the pre-application service and how to use the service is available on the Council's website. Please visit:

 hackney.gov.uk/pre-application

- 1.32 Planning performance agreements (PPAs) are generally used on major applications or applications which are more complex. More information regarding PPAs and how to use the service is available on the Councils website. Please visit:

 [**hackney.gov.uk/ppa**](https://hackney.gov.uk/ppa)

Submitting an application

- 1.33 Before submitting an application you should discuss the proposals with your immediate neighbours who may be affected. This may help to resolve any objections or concerns they may have, which otherwise might be raised when you submit your application.
- 1.34 To apply for planning permission you need to submit a planning application. All planning applications are required to be submitted on a standard form and can be submitted online through the Planning Portal. Please visit:

 [**planningportal.co.uk/applications**](https://planningportal.co.uk/applications)

- 1.35 Additionally, further information on how to submit a planning application can be found on our website. Please visit:

 [**hackney.gov.uk/submit-planning-application**](https://hackney.gov.uk/submit-planning-application)

Building control

- 1.36 Some works will be subject to building control regulations, particularly with regards to foundations, lateral restraint and fire protection. A separate application must be made for the necessary approvals, this can be done via the Council. For more information, please visit:

 [**hackney.gov.uk/building-control**](https://hackney.gov.uk/building-control)

- 1.37 To check if your property requires Building Regulations Approval please visit:

 [**gov.uk/building-regulations-approval/when-you-dont-need-approval**](https://gov.uk/building-regulations-approval/when-you-dont-need-approval)

- 1.38 When applying for planning permission it is essential to remember that, in order to ensure that your proposal can be built, it must also comply with the Building Regulations.



2. Commercial alterations and extensions

- 2.1 The applicant of any large commercial extension is advised to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement, which will include collaborative meetings with planning officers to help positively shape the proposal.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CONTEXT

- 2.2 All commercial extensions and alterations must be of the highest architectural and urban design quality. This can be demonstrated though:
- **Having regard to the height, form and massing of neighbouring buildings with the aim of showing a positive response to the context.**
 - **Responding positively to the character of the area, reflecting or complementing that character.**
 - **Considering impacts on any affected views, avoiding obstructing or negatively affecting local or city-wide views and panoramas.**
 - **Avoiding negatively affecting the amenity of adjacent buildings or the environmental or climatic conditions in nearby public streets and open spaces.**
 - **Considering any relevant Conservation Area Management Plan which will give guidance on design requirements for a new building in a historic environment.**
 - **Delivering public benefits for schemes considered to result in harm to designated heritage assets, such as public realm enhancement and access improvements to help outweigh harm.**



✓ Figure 2.1 – A contemporary commercial extension complementing the character of its context and retaining and refurbishing an existing building.

Pearson Lloyd in collaboration with Cassion Castle, Hackney Design Awards 2022.



✓ Figure 2.2 – A 3 storey extension to a 1960s office in Shoreditch.

ARCHITECTURE

2.3 Hackney encourages architecture in a wide variety of styles from traditional to innovative contemporary. This can be achieved through:

- **Demonstrating high quality architecture and design, following guidance set out in Policy LP1 of the Hackney Local Plan (Design Quality and Local Character), and demonstrating buildability;**
- **A bespoke architectural response to the host building and the local context, with a clear logic behind design choices;**
- **Aiming to create a cohesive and balanced whole and a sense of completeness;**
- **Creating a positive relationship between host and extension, relating to elements of the host building, for example through rhythm, style and character; architectural language, material, colour, and/or proportions;**
- **Bringing improvements to the host building while maintaining any positive architectural features;**
- **Having an uncluttered, simple roof profile with all rooftop elements forming an integral part of the overall building form (see later sections on rooftops and plant).**

2.4 In most cases:

- **A less obtrusive extension is likely to be more appropriate. This type of extension would be well-designed using high quality materials, and have a clear relationship with the character of the host building in order to minimise its visual impact. Such an extension could repeat patterns seen in existing floors such as using similar materials, fenestration patterns or extending elevations upwards. It may also be architecturally sympathetic to the host building to use a roof-form related to the host's age or style.**
- **Repeating a pattern or form of extension seen on similar buildings nearby is likely to be more acceptable.**

2.5 In certain circumstances:

- **A more conspicuous extension may be appropriate where there is a strong urban design or architectural justification.**
- **Changes to the host building could be justified as part of a cohesive architectural approach.**
- **A contrasting relationship with the main building may be appropriate for developments with public or civic importance, or where there is a justification for an enhanced landmark role in the townscape. However, all extensions should have a cohesive relationship with the host building and have regard to the other guidelines in this document.**



✓ Figure 2.3 – A contemporary three storey extension to a modern building, incorporating solar shading.



✓ Figure 2.4 – A bold, contrasting, theatrical extension intended to create a landmark, with a relationship to colours and function of the host.



✓ Figure 2.5 – A two storey extension to a former commercial building which creates a cohesive development of appropriate overall scale.
(Rory Gardiner, 31/44 Architects).



✓ Figure 2.6 – A bold extension reflecting the forms of the host building and in a contrasting material.



✓ Figure 2.7 – A three storey timber framed office extension to a former distillery, including two storeys of matching window and brick and one glazed storey.



✓ Figure 2.8 – Retention of existing and extension above is cohesive, related and contemporary.



✓ Figure – 2.9 An iconic mixed-use extension as part of a globally significant building.

(Photo Credit: Hackercatxxy, CC BY-SA 4.0 bit.ly/4ntGg6f via Wikimedia Commons)

FORM, HEIGHT, SCALE AND MASSING

2.6 In most cases:

- The form of an extension should have a clear relationship with the form of the main building and the composition of new and old should be cohesive.
- An extension should not dominate, overwhelm or diminish the host building
- Upward extensions should aim to create a building with a clearly defined top.
- An existing building may represent the maximum capacity of the site due to a consistent scale in the local context or its architectural value and modifications may need to be restricted to refurbishment or low level interventions. This is often the case in conservation areas or with historic buildings or their settings.
- An upward extension would be acceptable if it would create a new massing which is more reflective of the heights of adjoining buildings.

2.7 In some cases:

- More contrasting forms could be acceptable provided there is a complementary relationship and a convincing justification.
- Depending on the context, upward extensions can be set back to reduce the impact of height, or extend directly from the existing elevations if additional visible height would be positive.



✓ Figure 2.10 – Some buildings are unsuitable for upwards extensions. This historic building is a complete architectural composition in an area of consistent height where an extension would have a negative impact on the roofscape.



✓ Figure 2.11 – This tower, in an area considered suitable for tall buildings, has been extended by thirteen lightweight storeys. The entire building has been refurbished in a consistent style to create a cohesive whole.



✗ Figure 2.12 – An upward extension which is overscaled and diminishes the significance of nearby historic buildings.



✗ Figure 2.13 – A predominantly glass extension with a poor relationship to the host building.

MATERIALS

2.8 Extensions should use high quality materials which:

- Are durable and have a long life expectancy, and remain attractive as they age and weather.
- Complement the character of the local context.
- Are sustainable in terms of environmental impact, embodied and operational carbon impacts. This applies as much to internal construction materials as exterior materials.
- Are simple and recyclable. Plastic cladding or complex layered cladding should be avoided, while masonry and simple metals will be encouraged.
- Aim to be light, or non-heat absorbing in colour, to reduce overheating risk.
- Aim to include a biodiverse green roof.
- Include parapets or facade overruns to avoid ad hoc safety railings and to conceal plant etc.
- Are appropriate and compatible with the host building:
 - When extending a traditional masonry building or a modern or contemporary building, similar materials or materials of the same texture and colour can help to create a seamless relationship between new and old and are likely to be most appropriate.
 - There may be flexibility in the use of contemporary, high quality, sustainable and durable materials which are complementary but different from the materials of the host building.
 - Where it is appropriate to develop a bolder design, materials can be contrasting especially if there are other aspects of the design where the relationship between old and new is more harmonious.



✓ Figure 2.14 – An unobtrusive three storey extension reflecting the character of the host building and using matching materials.



✓ Figure 2.15 – Extension in contrasting materials with a good character relationship with the host building.
Ian Chalk Architects, Hackney Design Awards 2022

ENVIRONMENT

2.9 All development should protect and where possible enhance biodiversity leading to a net gain. For a commercial extension this would include aiming to:

- **Avoid loss of trees and habitats.**
- **Incorporate urban greening measures.**
- **Result in minimal overshadowing impact on habitats, particularly Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCS), and trees.**



3. Plant and equipment

- 3.1 Building plant and equipment includes mechanical (heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, air handling units, fans and ductwork etc.), electrical (PVs, ASHP etc.), and public health systems (water tanks, drainage systems etc.) that support commercial and mixed-use buildings.
- 3.2 Given the borough's dense, historic environment, these systems should be discreetly integrated to reduce visual impact, noise, and disruption.
- 3.3 Hackney promotes early design coordination, careful siting and appropriate screening to protect local character and residential amenity.
- 3.4 All building plant and equipment should:
- Be designed as an integral part of the building and considered at an early design stage, where appropriate.
 - Be screened using parapet walls where possible, which also avoids the need for perimeter safety railings.
 - Be partially or fully recessed into the top floor if likely to create excessive height or bulk at roof level.
 - Support a simple, uncluttered roofline, with elements such as plant enclosures, solar panels, lift overruns, and safety features carefully integrated into the overall form and minimised in their visual impact from the street.

- Avoid prominent placement on primary elevations or rooflines visible from public viewpoints.
- Be located to reduce noise, vibration, and odour impacts, especially near residential properties or public spaces.



✓ Figure 3.1 – Rooftop plant surrounded with a semi transparent mesh screen as a considered part of the architecture.



Figure 3.2 – Visible rooftop plant enclosure designed as an integrated part of the architecture.

DUCTS AND EXHAUSTS

3.5 Ducts and exhausts should:

- Be positioned toward the centre of the roof to minimise visibility from the street;
- Avoid false treatments, such as, brick slips or camouflage cladding, which can often draw more attention and appear inauthentic;
- Be of untreated metal if located at the rear or side elevations that have limited visibility from the public realm;
- In more sensitive heritage contexts, should be finished in a colour that is muted, black or similar to the colour of the main building;
- Be designed to reduce visual impact through careful placement, scale, and colour, rather than overly elaborate concealment;
- Avoid running diagonally across façades or interrupting key architectural features;
- Be coordinated with other building services and fixings to avoid visual clutter;
- Terminate at least 1m above the eaves to prevent amenity impacts.



✗ Figure 3.3 – Unacceptable highly visible ducting on the public frontage of a building.



✓ Figure 3.4 – Example of simple acceptable ducting usually seen to the rear of a commercial building.

GUTTERS AND DRAINPIPES

3.6 Gutters and drainpipes should:

- Be integrated into the façade design from the outset and finished in a colour that complements the building.
- Use metal materials, particularly in Conservation Areas, where they are more appropriate and help preserve historic character.
- Be built in metal over plastic, as they typically offer greater durability and visual quality.



✓ Figure 3.5 – Continuous integrated gutters placed at the corners of the building and made out of powder coated metal.



✓ Figure 3.6 – Drip details are integrated in the facade articulation.

3.3 PV PANELS

3.7 PV panels should:

- Be sited in the least visually intrusive location, typically roof-mounted and set back from parapets.
- Be arranged in a neat, consistent layout that aligns with the building's structure and avoids visual clutter.
- Should not project significantly above the roofline.
- Have low profile frames on flat roofs and are not visible from street level.
- Should be mounted close to the roof covering and follow the roof's pitch on pitched roofs.
- Use non-reflective, matte finishes to reduce glare.
- Avoid using bright or contrasting colours; black or dark-framed panels are preferred.
- Be compatible with other rooftop services (e.g. plant, ductwork, green roofs) in a coordinated layout.
- If located in any other elevation, be a considered part of the architectural design.

3.8 For technical considerations please refer to:

 hackney.gov.uk/retrofit-spd



✓ Figure 3.7 – Hackney Empire Grade II* listed PV's located in the middle of the roof and not noticeable from the street or surrounding buildings.
(Photo Credit Hackney Light and Power)



✓ Figure 3.8 – Hackney Light and Power – The solar panels, installed at the West Reservoir Centre by Spirit Energy, are set to generate 77,000kWh of power per year, covering all of the centre's electricity needs. The PV panels are located away from the edges of the roof.

AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMPS (ASHP)

3.9 Air source heat pumps should:

- Be located on non-prominent façades, such as rear or internal courtyard elevations or at roof level.
- Avoid primary street frontages, heritage façades, or locations visible from key townscape views.
- Be appropriately scaled to suit the size and function of the building.
- Be enclosed or screened using materials that are sympathetic to the host building and setting, or within an enclosure designed as an integral part of the architecture of a scheme.
- Be positioned away from windows, balconies, and neighbouring dwellings to reduce noise intrusion.
- Be accompanied by a noise impact assessment where located near sensitive uses.

For technical considerations please refer to Working Draft Retrofit SPD September 2025:

 hackney.gov.uk/retrofit-spd

OTHER SERVICES

3.10 Roof-level services (e.g. air conditioning condensers, ventilation stacks) should:

- Be screened or enclosed using louvred panels, parapets, or climbing plants that are designed to match or compliment the host building.
- Be set back from the roof edge and located on the rear elevations to minimise visibility from street level.

Meter boxes and satellite dishes should:

- Be carefully designed and positioned to reduce visual impact and complement the building and local character. This includes consideration of their size, colour, materials, and placement.
- Be concealed where possible or finished in a colour that matches the building.



4. Accessibility

4.1 Accessibility is the ability of all people, including older people and disabled people, those with young children and those carrying luggage and shopping, to reach, move around and use places and facilities with ease. All business owners in the borough should ensure that their commercial premises are able to meet the changing and diverse needs of the boroughs residents. Improvements to the accessibility and inclusivity of any non-residential building should be considered as part of any works to alter or extend their premises. These works are not only required by Building Control and the Equality Act but they also make good business sense by allowing a wide range of customers and employees to access the premises.

4.2 Much of the work needed to improve accessibility is internal and therefore does not normally require any kind of permission whilst many external alterations fall under permitted development. This section of the SPD outlines the various ways that commercial buildings can be adapted to make them more accessible and inclusive to a wider range of users whilst outlining the relevant requirements around planning policy and planning permission.

BENEFITS OF BUILDING INCLUSIVELY

4.3 Inclusive design offers numerous advantages, such as:

- **Increased usability:** Inclusive buildings cater to people of all ages and abilities, providing a more comfortable and user-friendly environment.
- **Promotes diversity and inclusion:** Accessible spaces encourage a sense of belonging and equality for all individuals, regardless of their physical capabilities.
- **Positive impact on businesses:** Companies that implement inclusive design can attract a broader customer base and improve their reputation.

THE 7 PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE DESIGN

- 4.4 Inclusive design is guided by a set of seven principles, which help to ensure that spaces are truly accessible to all:

- 1/ Equitable use:**
Designing spaces that are usable by everyone, regardless of ability.
- 2/ Flexibility in use:**
Providing multiple ways to use a space, so that it can accommodate a wide range of preferences and abilities.
- 3/ Simple and intuitive use:**
Creating spaces that are easy to understand and navigate, regardless of experience or cognitive ability.
- 4/ Perceptible information:**
Ensuring that information is clearly communicated, regardless of the user's sensory abilities.
- 5/ Tolerance for error:**
Designing spaces that minimise hazards and the potential for accidents.
- 6/ Low physical effort:**
Creating spaces that can be used with minimal physical effort.
- 7/ Size and space for approach and use:**
Providing enough space for users to move around and interact with the environment.

EQUALITY ACT

- 4.5 The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous equalities legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The new legislation requires employers and service providers to undertake reasonable adjustments to any physical feature within their premises which could put a disabled person at a disadvantage when compared to a non-disabled person. This means that business owners should consider how they can reasonably make their premises accessible and usable for anyone with a specific need who is likely to be a user of the building. Compliance with the requirements of Part M of Building control does not mean the broader obligations and duties of the Equality Act have been met.

HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.6 The Council supports applications for the improvement of the accessibility and inclusivity of heritage assets, however, this should be balanced with the need to preserve the significance of a heritage asset. For commercial buildings within Conservation Areas external works, such as alterations to the entrance, will be assessed for their impact on the character of building and the surrounding conservation area. For alterations to Listed Buildings, Listed Building Consent will be required for both internal and external works and therefore applicants must demonstrate that improvements to accessibility do not compromise the significance of the building.
- 4.7 For further guidance please refer to the Historic England document Easy Access to Historic Buildings (2015), please visit:




bit.ly/easyaccesshistoricbuildings

PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE BUILDINGS

- 4.8 When undertaking any project to alter or extend a building accessibility should be considered at an early point in the design process to ensure that it remains a core principle of the project and is not treated as an afterthought. Furthermore, the needs of any end users who are likely to use the building need to be considered as this will greatly influence how the scheme is designed. Finally the development should be inclusive, aiming to not create barriers for disabled people, the elderly or people with pushchairs using the public realm around the site.
- 4.9 Before applying for planning permission applicants are encouraged to submit a pre-application to discuss accessibility with the council's planning officers. Officers will be able to advise on the acceptability of proposals and whether they will require planning permission.
- 4.10 The following tables outline the different methods that applicants can employ to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of a building with each method including a description of whether planning will be required and the likelihood of approval.

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES	PLANNING REQUIREMENTS
Approach routes	
Level access should be provided, where a ramp is required it should have a shallow gradient and landings if the ramp is long. Ideally both ramped and stepped access should be provided.	Requirement for planning permission will depend on scale. Where planning permission is required ramps will normally be supported unless they result in the loss of characteristic features. ●
Steps and ramps should both be accompanied by a handrail.	Planning permission normally not required as long as the railing is not higher than 1 metre. Where planning permission is required handrails will normally be supported unless they result in the loss of characteristic features. ●
The surfaces of approach are of sufficient width, unobstructed and are constructed from firm, durable and slip resistant materials. The access routes should also maintain consistency in materials used and should incorporate highlighting and colour contrast.	Planning permission will generally not be required so long as the cumulative area covered by hard surfacing within the curtilage of the premises (other than hard surfaces already existing on 6th April 2010) does not exceed 50 square metres and the surfacing is porous or allows runoff to a porous surface. Where planning permission is required schemes to improve the accessibility of paths will generally be supported so long as a sufficient amount of soft landscaping is retained. ●
Tactile surfaces with colour contrast.	Requirement for planning permission will depend on scale however they are likely to be supported. ●
Well illuminated and clearly identified approach.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Visual, auditory, and tactile cues.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Clearly displayed address.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●

KEY: ● Acceptable ● Likely acceptable ● Likely not acceptable

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES	PLANNING REQUIREMENTS
Parking	
Parking spaces located as close as possible to accessible entrances.	<p>Planning permission required. </p> <p>The Council supports car free development, therefore in order to reduce car usage and promote active travel, on-site parking is limited to parking for disabled users. This is required to be provided in accordance with best practice standards, as set out in the London Plan and essential operational or servicing needs as justified through a Transport Assessment.</p>
Suitably sized, positioned and demarcated spaces.	
Dropped kerbs onto a level obstruction free route to the accessible entrance.	
Appropriately located, signed and visible dropping off point.	
Information about parking on website.	

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES	PLANNING REQUIREMENTS
Entrance	
At least one entrance door which is accessible to all which is clearly signposted entrances.	See other criteria.
Level area in front of the door clear of any door swings.	Requirement for planning permission and likelihood of approval will depend on scale and the impact of works on the character of the building. ●
Level threshold over the door.	Alterations to doors will not require planning permission so long as they match the external appearance of the existing door. ●
Provision of canopies over doors.	Planning permission required. Support for canopies will be subject to their impact upon the character of the building and surrounding area. ●
Easy to open and sufficiently wide entrance doors.	Alterations to doors will not require planning permission so long as they match the external appearance of the existing door. Alterations to the size of a door opening will require planning permission. The door should measure 1000mm minimum clear door width in new buildings and 775mm door width in existing buildings where a new shopfront or alterations to a shopfront are proposed. Where permission is required changes to doors will be supported so long as they preserve the character of the building. ●
Provision of electronic entrance doors.	Alterations to doors will not require planning permission so long as they match the external appearance of the existing door. ●
Colour contrast between the doors, doorframes and architraves with surrounding surfaces. Glazed doors should be clearly visible.	Planning permission will not be required unless the site falls within an area with an article four direction. ●
Entrance phones.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES	PLANNING REQUIREMENTS
Lobbies	
Need to be of sufficient size and the right shape to allow a wheelchair user to move clear of one door before opening the second door with space for at least one companion.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Smooth floor surface that does not impede movement, avoid dips or changing surfaces.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Entrance matting to be sufficient to allow at least one whole wheel rotation of a wheelchair wheel and mats/wells should be level with the floor.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Receptions	
Should be easily identifiable.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Provide hearing enhancement systems and lowered wheelchair accessible counters with manoeuvring space for wheelchair users.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Provide unisex wheelchair accessible WC before security line.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Reduce hard surfaces that cause noise reverberation and the floor surface should be slip resistant.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES	PLANNING REQUIREMENTS
Internal circulation	
Minimise the use of self closing doors.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Visual contrast between walls, ceiling and floors.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Acoustic design which is not too reverberant or too absorbent.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
All floors should be accessible by a passenger lift or in exceptional circumstances a platform lift.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Both ramps and steps should be used to provide access over an internal change of level.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Sufficiently wide internal corridors and doors.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Lighting should provide an even level of light, be free of glare and should be adjustable.	Alterations to internal and external light sources do not require planning permission. ● Alterations to the size of window openings or the installation of rooflights will require planning permission.

ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES	PLANNING REQUIREMENTS
Facilities	
All audience and spectator facilities should provide seating options that are suitable a range of different needs, are accessible, provide clear lines of sight and are not segregated.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Refreshment facilities should be accessible and useable by all.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Hotels, motels and student accommodation should provide wheelchair accessible accommodation and facilities.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Storage space should be convenient and accessible.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Blind and curtains should have automatic or remotely controlled opening devices such as rods or pull cords.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Sockets, switches and other utilities should achieve ease of operation, visibility, height, consistency and freedom from obstruction.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Provide colour contrast on internal surfaces.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
Suitable sanitary accommodation should be available to everybody, including sanitary accommodation designed for wheelchair users, ambulant disabled people, people of either sex with babies and small children or people encumbered by luggage. Detailed guidance for the requirements for sanitary facilities can be found in Section 5, volume 2 of Approved Document M.	Acceptable and permission not required. ●
External space	
Step-free access to outside space to ensure that this space is usable by all occupiers.	Requirement for planning permission will depend on scale. Small ramps will likely be supported whilst larger ramps that result in the loss of characteristic features will not. ●

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 4.11 Plans submitted as part of any planning application for commercial development should clearly show how the development will facilitate accessibility by outlining design features to be incorporated into the proposal. Design and Access Statements should outline site specific constraints to accessibility and how the proposal aims to overcome these challenges. Where it is not possible to achieve the highest standards of accessibility due to site limitations the Design and Access Statement should outline why the highest standards cannot be met and how the development mitigates this. Planning Practice Guidance states that the level of detail in a Design and Access Statement should be proportionate to the complexity of the application. For an application involving the alteration or extension of an existing commercial building the level of information required should not be substantial.

- 4.12 For further guidance on Design and Access Statements, please visit:

 [**bit.ly/DandAstatements**](https://bit.ly/DandAstatements)

BUILDING CONTROL CONTEXT

- 4.13 Building control regulations have minimum standards for design, construction and alterations that apply to almost all buildings. You are advised to consult the building regulations to review the current requirements in relation to accessibility. To find out more about the building regulations covering access to buildings, please visit:

 [**bit.ly/buildingregulationsaccess**](https://bit.ly/buildingregulationsaccess)



5. Shopfront design guide

INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 Shopfronts are highly visible, prominent, and important elements of Hackney's streetscape because they are located at ground floor level, usually spanning the entire width of a building, often projecting into the street. Many of the routes within the Borough are lined with shop fronts. These are typically busy and well known public places, each with their own special history and character.
- 5.2 This chapter is designed to provide guidance on replacement of shopfronts, alterations to shopfronts (including signs and fascias) and conversions of shops to residential.

PLANNING PERMISSIONS AND CONSENTS REQUIRED

Planning permission

- 5.3 The complete replacement of shopfronts and/or significant alterations, generally requires planning consent. Advertisements or external painting for the purposes of advertisement or direction, may require a separate application for advertisement consent.
- 5.4 Whilst, routine maintenance works, such as redecoration in a similar colour scheme, cleaning, or like-for-like repairs does not usually require planning consent. The following are examples of work that would require a planning application:

- The wholesale replacement of an existing shopfront.
- Material alterations, such as, the installation of security shutters or canopies.
- The removal of historic features.

- 5.5 The planning process will consider the commercial needs of the retailer/ occupiers, how they wish to present their business and the needs of the shopfront, building, and street scene. Whilst there are no prescribed colours for individual areas, the choice of colour and finish should be appropriate to the historic context, enhancing both the building and its surroundings.

Listed buildings

- 5.6 Any alterations to shopfronts that are part of a listed building will require listed building consent. This includes minor alterations, such as:
- The removal of paint or cladding materials.
 - The replacement of doors and windows.
 - The installation or removal of fascias, shutters, hanging signs, and awnings.
 - The installation of new services, such as lighting and alarms.

5.7 Listed building consent is required to change the colour of a shopfront on a listed building if the change materially affects its character and appearance. For example, if the colour of the building changes significantly, consent would be required. However, if the colour has a slight variation within the same colour range, consent would not normally be required.

5.8 Items which do not require consent:

- **Like-for-like small scale repairs.**
- **Redecoration.**
- **Regular maintenance.**

Pre-application advice

5.9 Pre-Application Advice is recommended if you are unsure whether consent is required, or would like to understand whether proposals would be considered acceptable. Please visit our website here for more information on how you can seek pre-application advice.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES: EXISTING AND NEW SHOPFRONTS

5.10 The primary function of a shopfront is to display goods for sale or advertise what is offered by the individual shop to their best advantage. It also projects an image of the shop and contributes to the general street scene. Therefore, it is often in the shop owners interest to ensure that the shopfront makes a positive contribution to the environment. Many shopfronts were designed as an integral part of the building, with designs often based on classical proportions, with various elements forming a balanced composition within the building as a whole.

5.11 Over the years many shopfronts have been altered and are now out of keeping with existing building and street scenes. Often such alterations are of poor design in their own right.

5.12 Design principles:

- **Where traditional or historic shopfronts exist these should be retained:**

These shopfronts often positively contribute to the character of the area. Many traditional shopfronts only need repair to give many future years, even where the original shopfront has been removed, much of the architectural framework often survives, sometimes covered by modern fascia and signs. When located within Conservation Areas proposals should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

- **Elements of positive design on neighbouring shopfronts should be incorporated into replacements:**

This ensures that the new design contributes positively to the wider townscape. Elements to include are scale, alignment and symmetry. Inappropriate signs, door and window types, materials and colours may compromise an otherwise characterful street.

- **A shopfront should not be designed in isolation** but considered as part of the architectural composition of the whole building and the design should complement the period and style of the building onto which it is fitted. It should also consider the character and appearance of the other shopfronts on the street.

- **Shopfront elements should emphasise the division of the building** and visually suggest a method of support for the facade above. Shops operating from more than one adjacent unit should retain the sub-division of shopfronts to respect the integrity of the individual buildings.

SHOPFRONT DESIGN

- 5.13 A traditional shopfront is based on a number of key architectural features that link together to form a framework. These features will be discussed in the following section and are identified in Figure 5.1 for quick and easy reference.

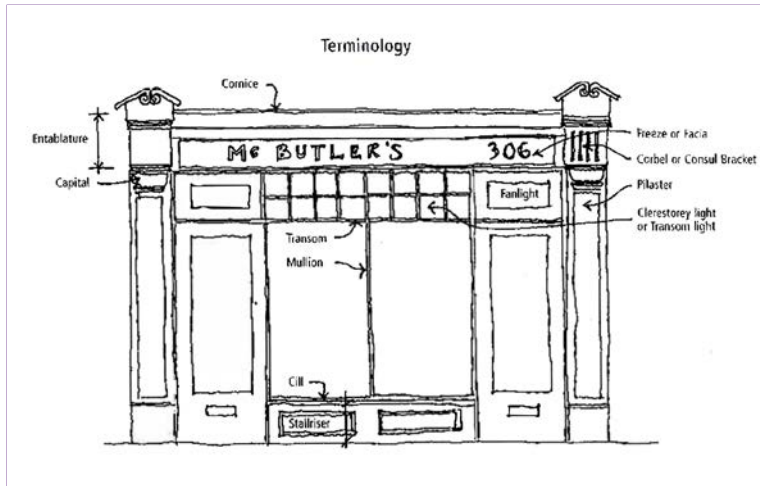


Figure 5.1. – Showing the terminology of traditional design elements of shopfronts

Fascia

- 5.14 The fascia is a key part of the shopfront. It is important that its size and detailing is in-keeping with the wider shopfront and the proportions of the whole building.
- 5.15 The fascia should be proportionate in depth to the wider shopfront and host building. An excessively large fascia appears unsightly and creates an imbalance of proportions. spacing should be retained between the top of the fascia and the bottom of the first-floor windows to avoid the shopfront encroaching on the first floor which creates a visual conflict.

5.16 Design principles:

- Hand-painted fascia boards are usually appropriate for historic or traditional properties, especially on listed buildings.
- Fascia boards should avoid the use of reflective, acrylic or plastic materials as they are low quality, fail to weather well and are not sustainable. It is recommended that timber is used instead.
- Fascia boards should contain the name of the business. Repetition of information or excess wording is to be avoided, as this creates a confused and cluttered appearance.
- Where a false ceiling is proposed inside a shop it may not be acceptable to alter the fascia depth in line with it. Careful detailing of the window design, using opaque glass or setting the false ceiling back within the shop can be a way of dealing with the change of level.
- Internally illuminated fascia boxes and fascias with scrolling or flashing lighting are often inappropriate. The use of acrylic or fluorescent materials in fascias is also inappropriate.



✗ Figure 5.2 – Fascia hidden by large scale lettering and cluttered signage that is not in keeping with the shopfront design.



✓ Figure 5.3 – A shopfront with discreet lettering contained within the fascia, and with all historic shopfront elements.

Cornice

- 5.17 A cornice is a horizontal decorative timber moulding which sits above the fascia at the top of the shopfront. It serves an aesthetic function but also enables rain water to discharge appropriately.
- 5.18 Design principles
- **Cornices should be retained as part of any repair or shopfront refurbishment.**
 - **Where a traditional style shopfront is being reinstated a cornice it is recommended that a cornice is added.**

Stallrisers

- 5.19 The stallriser is the solid band at ground floor level which provides the base for the shopfront window to sit on. They also provide protection to the lower part of the window from weather and passing foot traffic. Stallrisers historically sat on a plinth or splash back which could be constructed of stone or brick. The majority of stallrisers in Hackney are timber.
- 5.20 Design principles
- **Panelled stall risers are a traditional feature but panelling should not be tacked on as this lacks depth. Stall-risers which run over long stretches should be subdivided into panels to add visual interest.**
 - **A projecting sill window should sit above the stallriser.**
 - **If suitably designed services can be sensitively integrated such as ventilation through the incorporation of grilles.**
 - **The height of the stallriser should link to the rest of the shopfront and neighbouring buildings that retain their historic features.**

Pilaster

5.21 Pilasters often form part of the architectural surround to the building and provide vertical emphasis to the shopfront. In typical Victorian shopfronts they tended to be heavier with more ornate console brackets. They can be constructed of timber, stone or render.

5.22 Design principles

- **Pilasters should be retained when new shopfronts are fitted.**
- **Where shopfronts run over several buildings, pilasters should be integrated on each individual building.**

Console brackets

5.23 Console brackets, or corbels, are decorative timber sections which sit at the top of the pilasters and visually integrate the fascia and cornice with the pilasters.

5.24 Design principles

- **Where there are neighbouring buildings which share a similar shopfront design, there should always be two console brackets where the buildings meet, helping to define each property.**

Windows

5.25 Windows form an important part of any shopfront and have a dramatic impact on the wider townscape. Traditional windows often feature smaller panes of glass, mounted in timber glazing bars, in what is considered a typical 'Georgian' pattern. Later windows tend to feature larger panes of glass, with vertical timber rails (mullions) or horizontal timber rails (transoms) which provide structural stability and visually break up the expanse of glazing.

5.26 Design principles

- **The proportions of the glazing should relate to the host building and balance with other features. Where possible original proportions should be reinstated.**
- **Original features such as cills, transoms and fan lights should be retained.**
- **Large uninterrupted expanses of glass should be avoided. Vertical divisions built into any new shopfront should complement the building into which it is fitted.**

Doors

5.27 The design of the door should be considered as a part of the overall design of the shopfront.

5.28 Design principles

- **Doors should retain the proportions of the original openings.**
- **Where recessed doorways have survived, these should be retained.**
- **Doors should complement the design of the shopfront. Often the bottom panel should relate to the stallriser. Traditional door designs are typically four panelled with the upper section often glazed. A large upper glazed panel with a small kick plate is also commonly seen. They should be painted the same colour as the windows.**



✓ Figure 5.4 – This traditional shopfront includes a recessed threshold and traditional shop door.

Recessed thresholds

- 5.29 Many historic shops have recessed thresholds, some with ornate tiles or mosaics to the ground. Where these survive, they should be retained.

Materials

- 5.30 Shopfronts on historic and traditional buildings should only be constructed of traditional and natural high quality materials. Such materials could include timber, stone, marble, brass or cast iron.

The materials palette will vary depending on the age, style and location of the property, but it must be appropriate to the building and show careful consideration to historical accuracy and local tradition.

- 5.31 Design principles

- **Historic shopfronts were usually constructed from hardwood and were painted. Some materials that are used in replacement shopfronts are not appropriate to historic shopfronts. These include modern materials such as plastic, aluminium and acrylic sheeting.**
- **Modern shopfronts should be constructed of high quality materials. Some appropriate materials may be timber, stone, brass, marble, stainless steel or chrome.**
- **The choice of architectural ironmongery such as letterboxes, nameplates and kick plates is also important. Poor quality or inappropriate designs can easily spoil the appearance of the shopfront.**

Buildings designed to have a uniform appearance

- 5.32 Some terraces and groups of buildings in Hackney were designed and constructed at the same time to have a uniform appearance. Examples of this include Dalston Lane Terrace and terraces on Broadway Market. Shopfronts within these buildings should be designed to retain this uniformity as originally designed.



✓ Figure 5.5 – A reconstruction of traditional shopfronts with a uniform design related to the appearance of the terrace.

• Awnings

- 5.33 Canopies and blinds can be a lively addition to the street scene, provided they are designed as an integral part of the shopfront rather than an afterthought. Whilst retractable roller awnings are traditional and unobtrusive, many remain unused and in need of repair in existing shopfronts.
- 5.34 Design principles:
- Where original roller awnings remain, these should be reinstated rather than replaced.
 - New canopy or blinds should not obscure architectural details, as this can be very detrimental.
 - Continental ‘Dutch’ canopies will not be permitted. Straight canvas canopies with well detailed retractable rollers incorporated into the shopfront will be preferred in most situations.
 - Blind boxes should be integrated into the overall shopfront and preferably flush with the fascia and installed without damaging the entablature.

Projecting and hanging signs

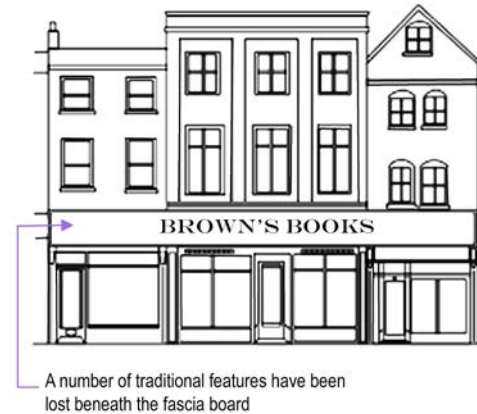
- 5.35 Traditional hanging signs, when of an appropriate design and size, can enhance the streetscape. The appearance and material of the sign should preferably be of a similar style, and made from a similar material, as the fascia.
- 5.36 Modern projecting box signs are unsightly and obtrusive and disrupt the streetscape in historic areas.
- 5.37 Design principles
- **Within Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings the use of oversized or illuminated projecting box signs is not normally acceptable as these generally fail to preserve the street scene.**
 - **Projecting signs should be positioned centrally on a pilaster, preferably at the same height or slightly above the fascia sign, and certainly no lower than 2.6m above the pavement to the underside of the sign.**
 - **Only one projecting sign per shop will be permitted, generally hung at fascia level.**
 - **Internally illuminated box signs are not appropriate. Fixed brackets are preferred and should be of a design which complements the character of the building.**

Fascia sign

- 5.38 Fascias play an important part of our townscape but can easily be overbearing and add to the clutter of Hackney’s streets.

5.39 Design principles

- Unnecessary duplication of the name or additional advertisement should be avoided.
- Signs should be contained within the fascia.
- Two adjoining shopfronts (or more if part of a terrace) of the same architectural phase should attempt to align their fascias in order to restore cohesion across the pair or group.
- If a shop occupies more than one building, the vertical division between the buildings should be retained. Separate fascia signs, rather than one long fascia sign across multiple units, will maintain a distinction between units.
- Internal illumination often dominates historic shopfronts and is rarely appropriate.
- Lighting should be carefully considered and be limited to halo, trough or spot lighting.
- On certain buildings such as banks, fascias may not be present. In such circumstances it may be appropriate for individual lettering to be applied directly to the wall between the ground and first floor levels or directly to, or behind the glass, of the shop window itself.



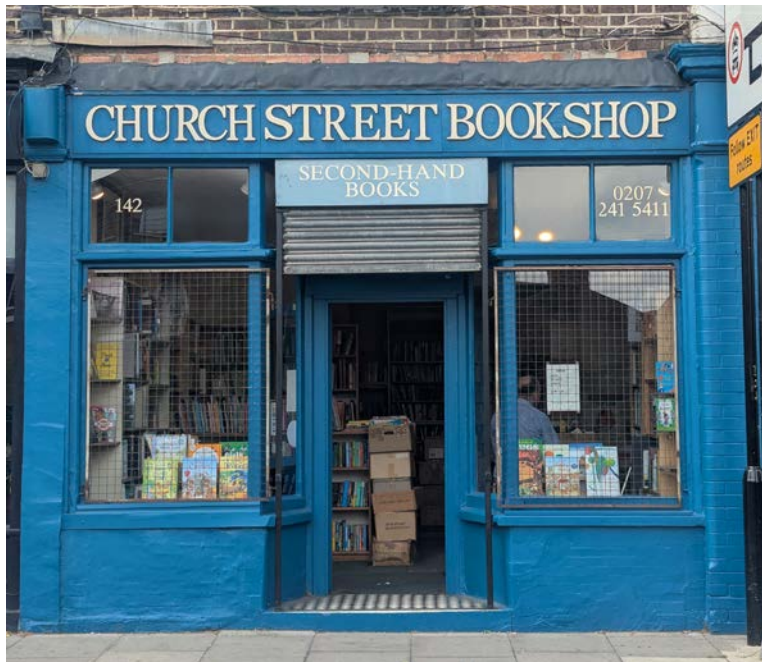
✗ Figure 5.6 – A number of traditional features have been lost beneath the fascia board.



✓ Figure 5.7 – Traditional features respected by signage.



✓ Figure 5.8 – A historic shopfront incorporating traditional features.



✓ Figure 5.9 – A traditional shopfront featuring all key features.

CONTEMPORARY BUILDINGS

- 5.40 Reproduction of traditional shopfront designs are usually inappropriate for modern properties as they generally ignore the character of the building within which they sit. Modern buildings can, however, pick up on the traditional elements of a shopfront and present them in a more modern style that picks up on the proportions of historic shopfronts
- 5.41 A modern shopfront must still have quality design, materials and workmanship. This is particularly important when the property is situated within a conservation area or adjacent to a listed building.
- 5.42 The proportions of the design and the correct use of materials are as important as with the design of a traditional shopfront. However, with modern buildings there is more scope for innovation and creativity, which could be a valuable contribution to the variety and interest of the street.
- 5.43 Design principles
- Full height glazing is rarely acceptable as this often appears incongruous within historic streetscapes.
 - Stallrisers provide a hard wearing base to the ground that can be easily cleaned and maintained.
 - With new developments sufficient space should be retained for signage that sits comfortably with the host building.
 - Where a building requires ventilation, this should be incorporated sensitively into the stallrisers.



✕ Figure 5.10 – A contemporary shopfront with limited space dedicated to signage, a lack of practical traditional elements such as stallrisers, and prominent security shutter boxes. Signage is placed above the fascia at different heights, creating a cluttered appearance.



✓ Figure 5.11 – A contemporary shop front featuring translucent external shutters, minimal use of decals and some traditional shop features including a fascia which does not interrupt the architecture of the building.

RAILWAY ARCHES

5.44 Brick railway viaducts are an established feature of some parts of Hackney and much to the character of those areas by virtue of the unified appearance and linear, repetitive features.

5.45 Design principles

- **Respect the unified appearance of the viaduct's brickwork structure.**
- **Sufficiently inset any infill shopfront or similar within the arch from the viaduct face so that the arch profile is emphasised.**
- **Contain fascia panels within the arch itself, only signage formed of individual applied letters will be acceptable on the brickwork.**
- **Design and specify for security and robustness.**
- **Include property numbers (these may be applied to the brickwork).**



✓ Figure 5.12 – A good quality modern retail frontage within a railway arch that maintains the overall form and opening size.



✗ Figure 5.13 – A cluttered commercial frontage within a railway arch which masks the shape and character of the opening.

CASH MACHINES/ATMS

- 5.46 Where ATMs are proposed on shopfronts their detailing should be carefully considered and well executed. On conventional shopfronts the ATM should fit into the glazing; solid panels or wall infill instead of glass is not acceptable.
- 5.47 On ornate buildings such as banks, care should be taken to ensure architectural features of value are not compromised by alterations to facilitate the installation. Applicants should provide sufficient detail to illustrate all associated alterations. In approving ATMs, the Council may condition that the façade be reinstated to its original appearance when the ATM is no longer required. This is especially important where historic facades have been affected. ATM illumination will generally be discouraged.

SECURITY

- 5.48 The installation of grilles and solid roller shutter blinds can have a negative impact on the street scene and can make closed shops look unattractive. However, it is acknowledged that in certain circumstances additional level of protection against theft and vandalism is required.

Window decals

- 5.49 The blanking out of premises windows with decals (film coverings), is not encouraged. This applies to most ground floor commercial uses where the animation brought by the uses and the natural surveillance they provide, are considered of value. There are a range of acceptable alternative security solutions for shop windows.

Security glass

- 5.50 This is laminated glass that has the capacity to remain intact even when it is broken. This glass is virtually indistinguishable from ordinary glass, so is considered the most desirable option to retain the historic character of shopfronts.
- 5.51 Security glass can provide protection against theft and may act as a deterrent against repeated acts of vandalism. We would encourage the use of security glass rather than grilles or shutters, especially in relation to listed buildings and properties on conservation areas.

Internal grilles

- 5.52 These are less damaging to the streetscape and have many of the advantages of external grilles over solid shutters. Internal grilles can be fitted behind the shop window and are retractable. These are particularly useful in buildings in conservation areas. When used in conjunction with security glass, these grilles normally provide a theft-proof shopfront security system whilst allowing visibility into the shop. This is the preferred security method and will not require Planning Permission.

External grilles

- 5.53 These may be appropriate but only in exceptional circumstances and although secure still enables the contents of the shop to be seen. External grilles could be either demountable or on a roller. If the grille is on a roller, the box into which it retracts must be recessed behind the fascia board whenever possible. If this is not possible, the box should be clad in suitable materials so that it is unobtrusive.

- 5.5 The grille and box must be installed and operated only within the shop opening and must not cover any part of pilasters, columns or fascia. When intended for use on new shopfronts, the grille and box must form part of the overall design and be hidden behind the fascia. Care must be taken to ensure that this does not result in overly deep or projecting fascia boards.
- 5.55 The grille itself should be of high quality material such as brass. Otherwise, the grille should have a suitably coloured, powder-coated paint finish rather than raw aluminium. These can be acceptable if they are open in nature and designed to compliment the features of the original façade, and when the attachment brackets are designed sensitively. However, as they are sometimes removable, storage space may be required for them when the shop is open.



✓ Figure 5.14– A contemporary external grille, powder coated to match the overall colour and design of the shopfront.



✓ Figure 5.15 – An external grille designed to compliment the features and design of the historic shopfront.

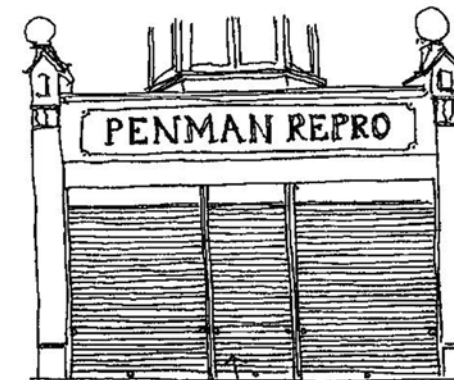
Solid shutters

- 5.56 These are not acceptable because they have a damaging effect on the character of the street scene and shopping area. These shutters make the streets darker by cutting out display lighting and create inactive solid frontages that contribute little to the street.



Open grilles allow the shop display to be seen outside opening hours

✓ Figure 5.16 – Open grilles allow the interior of the shop to be visible and activate the street outside opening hours.



Avoid solid shutters

✗ Figure 5.17 – Solid shutters result in a fortified and unwelcoming appearance for shopfronts.



6. Shop to residential conversion

- 6.1 Historic shopfronts positively contribute to Hackney's historic streets. The loss of them and replacement with poor quality frontages that fail to respect the wider streets or architectural character of the host building can have a harmful impact.
- 6.2 Historic cornices, corbels and fascias should be retained, particularly where the ground floor projects out from the upper floors. This will bring a natural divide between the old and the new, and reference the building's heritage.
- 6.3 Where a particularly ornate or positive shopfront exists the Council may encourage its retention, where it makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area. In these instances and where privacy is an issue, the lower section of the shop window could be covered by venetian blinds or obscured glass. Careful considerations to the risk of overheating must be given when shops are converted into residential, especially where there are large panes of glass – further information on what passive measures might be appropriate can be found in the Retrofit SPD:

 hackney.gov.uk/retrofit-spd


6.4 Design principles:

- **New ground floor windows and doors should either follow a traditional shopfront approach or reinstate a masonry frontage and incorporate windows aligned with upper windows, using centre lines and window edges.**
- **The shape and style of upper floor windows should be followed. This will include window heads which can be used above windows and doors. Window heads are particularly important as they are often dominant features on the facade.**
- **Window reveals (how deep the window is sunken into the facade) should be the same at ground floor as they are at upper floors.**
- **Usually frontages should maintain a hierarchy of windows with the ground floor windows being the largest and rarely smaller than the first floor windows.**
- **Retaining or creating a traditional shopfront and adapting it to a residential use, is encouraged as an unusual opportunity for a large window on an older building, and to maintain the attractive character often present in shopfronts.**
- **The door should be recessed at least as much as the window reveal.**
- **Ground floor materials (such as brickwork) should be matched to the upper floors in terms of brick type, bond and pointing style.**



7. Advertisements

Defining advertisement

- 7.1 'Advertisement' means any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction, and (without prejudice to the previous provisions of this definition) includes any hoarding or similar structure used or designed, or adapted for use and anything else principally used, or designed or adapted principally for use, for the display of advertisements, and references to the display of advertisements shall be construed accordingly;
- 7.2 The above legal definition of advertisement from the Town and Country Planning act is very broad, but there is a wide range of deemed consent, meaning not all adverts need consent from the LPA. For more information please refer to the governments 'Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers' via:
 bit.ly/MHCLGadvertguide
- 7.3 This chapter addresses large-scale, stand-alone advertisements for commercial buildings, including prominent fascia, projecting, and building-mounted signs. Smaller scale signage, integrated within individual shopfronts, is covered separately in the Shopfront Design Guidance, in Section 5.

ADVERT VS ART

- 7.4 When defining the difference between adverts and public art installations, it is important to focus on the purposes within the legal definition above. Advertisement, announcement or direction; for example, if the installation includes who the artist is via a social media handle, phone number or name, then that element of the installation is considered to be an advert.

PLANNING PERMISSION AND CONSENTS REQUIRED

- 7.5 You will need advertisement consent for most kinds of outdoor advertising. This includes illuminated advertisement signs such as fascia signs, projecting signs and advertisement hoardings.

ADVERT CONTENT

- 7.6 Advertisement regulations do not control the content of the advert, only the materiality of the advert itself, including the placement, location and size of the advert. For any concerns around the content of the advertisement please contact the adviser directly, or the Advertising Standard Authority (ASA).

DESIGN PRINCIPLES: ADVERTISEMENT

7.7 All advertisements should:

- Be designed to respect the scale, form, and architectural character of the host building and its surrounding context.
- Avoid excessive visual prominence and should be limited in number and size to prevent visual clutter.
- Ensure that they are integrated with the building's design, avoid significant alterations to the external fabric.
- Use materials that are sympathetic to the host structure and local townscape.

7.8 Innovative and distinctive signage may be supported where it demonstrates a high standard of design and is clearly compatible with both the host building and its wider setting.



✓ Figure 7.1 – The signage is an integrated architectural feature of the landmark building Hackney Empire, making it legible from a distance.

(Photo credit: Hélène Binet, Tim Ronalds Architects)

ILLUMINATION

7.9 All externally illuminated advertisements:

- Should use a type and design of signage which is appropriate and complementary to the architectural character of the host building.
- Must be modest in scale and discreetly positioned.
- Should use a method of illumination which responds to the building's overall design.
- Flashing or intermittent lighting, regardless of whether internal or external, is not acceptable.
- Should use discreet lighting equipment – such as compact spotlights or trough lights – mounted to minimise visual intrusion and prevent unnecessary light pollution.



✓ Figure 7.2 – Externally illuminated signage is suitable for all shop signs but is required in conservation areas and on historic shopfronts.



✓ Figure 7.3 – Bold lighting and illuminated advertising contribute to night time economy in Hackney.

SHROUD ADVERTISEMENTS

7.10 Permanent and temporary large scale adverts on buildings often dominate the street scene and obscure the host building. This can result in harm to the composition of Hackney's streets. Generally shroud advertisements will not be approved by the Council especially in Conservation Areas and on listed buildings due to their overwhelming impact on the historic environment. It is strongly advised to seek pre-application advice on proposals for shroud advertisements.

MURALS

- 7.11 Murals can support the borough's goals for creative placemaking, community identity, and high-quality public realm. Murals that represent themes of community, heritage, diversity, or environmental sustainability are especially encouraged.
- 7.12 Murals should:
- Be located on gable ends or blank walls visible from public streets.
 - Respect the character and scale of the building and surrounding streetscape.
 - Reflect the area's cultural, social, or historical identity.
 - Be inclusive and avoid controversial, explicit, or promotional content.
 - Use professional-grade, weather-resistant materials and anti-graffiti coatings where appropriate.
 - Avoid conflicting with existing signage, wayfinding, or statutory notices.



✓ Figure 7.4 – A new gateway feature mural in Ridley Road Market located near the entrance from Kingsland High Street, painted to reflect the cultural history of the landmark Hackney destination, with the aim to draw people into the market.



✓ Figure 7.5 – The Hackney Peace Carnival Mural on Dalston Lane was completed in 1985 at the height of the cold war. It depicts a group of people marching for peace against ‘the bomb’ and has become an important cultural statement from that era.

PAINTED SIGNS

7.13 Hackney boasts a rich tradition of hand-painted shop signage, reflecting the borough’s vibrant cultural tapestry and commitment to preserving artisanal crafts. Hackney’s urban landscape is adorned with ‘ghost signs’ – fading hand-painted advertisements that reflect the history of the borough’s commercial past, concentrated in areas like Stoke Newington.

7.14 Painted signage:

- Will be encouraged especially when supporting signwriting as a traditional skill.
- When located on brickwork such as gable ends may be acceptable where it will enhance a commercial or retail environment and will not conflict with conservation guidelines.
- In the form of ‘ghost signs’ – fading hand-painted advertisements that reflect the history of the borough’s commercial past should be preserved.



✓ Figure 7.6 – Ghost signs were originally painted with oil-based house paints. The paint that has survived the test of time most likely contains lead, which keeps it strongly adhered to the masonry surface.



✓ Figure 7.7 – 36 Englefield Road – Painted Sign of C. Lindley & Co, a metal parts manufacturing company established in 1865 that played a significant role in the rich manufacturing heritage of De Beauvoir area.

BILLBOARDS

- 7.15 Billboards and large-scale advertising displays are a prominent form of outdoor media in urban environments. In Hackney, being a densely populated borough, billboards have an adverse impact on local townscape and on the borough's architectural heritage, visual character, and public realm.
- 7.16 Therefore, billboards are generally not supported in particular:
- **In residential areas where they would cause visual intrusion or light pollution.**
 - **Near heritage assets, conservation areas, or historically sensitive locations, such as listed buildings.**
 - **Where they obstruct public views, important sightlines, or public art.**
 - **Where they dominate the host building or the surrounding public realm due to disproportionate scale.**
 - **Where made out of low-quality or non-durable materials unsuitable for long-term urban display.**
 - **Where they use excessive lighting, flashing, or moving elements –especially in sensitive areas.**
 - **If they compromise highway safety, such as distracting drivers or blocking visibility at junctions and crossings.**

HOARDINGS

- 7.17 Large hoardings will be permitted only in suitable locations around construction sites, on a temporary basis, where they enhance the visual appearance of the site and its surrounding area.
- 7.18 To minimise negative visual impact and support local character, hoardings should:
- Be constructed from durable materials, typically plywood or solid panels, and painted or finished to a high standard.
 - Avoid excessive height – usually not exceeding 2.4 metres unless justified for security or screening purposes.
 - Be finished in neutral, dark, or recessive colours, unless artistic or branding treatments are approved.
 - Avoid glare, reflective surfaces, or oversized logos that may be considered advertisements.
 - Integrate site information boards indicating contractor details, emergency contacts, planning references etc.
 - Avoid any projections over the public highway.
- 7.19 Hackney encourages the creative treatment of hoardings in prominent locations. Hoardings may:
- Feature temporary public art, murals, or graphic panels that engage with local culture or history.
 - Be used for community messaging, wayfinding, or showcasing project information in a visually appealing manner.

DIGITAL ADVERTISING

- 7.20 Digital advertising is unlikely to be supported given the impact it can have on the character of an area, amenity of residents and potential impact on the public highway. It is strongly advised to seek pre-application advice on proposals for shroud Advertisements as set out in section 1.4 above.

Appendix 1: Glossary for shopfronts

Blind Box – Originally used to conceal a roller blind, now used to hide through lights within a fascia.

Cill – This tops the stall raiser and both protects it and throws rain from it.

Console/Bracket – Sometimes the pilasters are topped by a console or bracket. These frame the fascia and the blind box.

Cornice – Provides a horizontal divide between the shopfront and the upper floors.

Fascia – The fascia is the primary place that a shop displays its sign.

Mullion – Vertical pieces of timber that divide the window into smaller panes of glass.

Pilasters – Frame the shopfront vertically and are on either side of the windows, providing visual support to the fascia.

Stallriser – The panel below the window that not only raises the window from the ground but also provides a visual base for the rest of the shopfront.

Threshold – The recessed entrance lobby leading to the door that allows for more window display area. Often these areas have floor tiling, sometimes in a mosaic pattern.

Transoms – The horizontal divisions used to divide large expanses of glass.

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- ☐ Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây. (Vietnamese)
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