

# SHOP FRONT DESIGN GUIDE

With particular reference to  
Lytham Conservation Area

CONSULTATION  
DRAFT



Fylde Borough Council

## DESIGN OF SHOP FRONTS

The first section of the design guide lays down the general justification for the Council's policy. The second part deals with specific aspects of design with the policies attached to the end of each topic area 1-8 below.

<u>Introduction</u>	2
<u>General Principles</u>	
Town character	4
The street scene	4
The individual shop front	11
<u>The Local Context</u>	
1. The shopfront : upper floors	13
2. The display window and surround	15
3. Advertisements	22
4. Verandahs	28
5. Blinds, awnings and canopies	35
6. Conversion of premises to malls	38
7. New buildings	38
8. Forecourts and tree planting	38
<u>Statutory Approvals and Consents</u>	39
<u>Grant aid</u>	40
<u>Appendix</u>	
Glossary of terms used	42
Code of practice for repair of verandahs	44

Loose sheets relating to specific aspects of the policy 1-8 above are available free of charge from the Planning Division, Planning and Technical Services Department, 288 Clifton Drive South, St. Annes. FY8 1LH

# A GUIDE TO THE DESIGN OF SHOP FRONTS, SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS : with particular reference to Lytham Conservation Area.

## INTRODUCTION

### Aims of Design Guide

This note offers practical advice on the Council's policies with regard to alterations to or replacement of existing shop fronts, signs and advertisements in Lytham Conservation Area. Although written with particular reference to Lytham Conservation Area, the principles set out in this Note are applicable to other locations within the Borough.

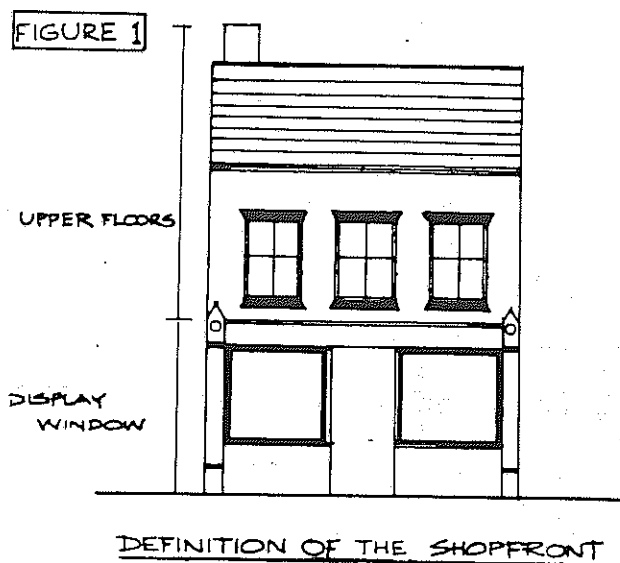
Though design is always important, local authorities have special responsibility towards protecting the character of conservation areas and stand in the vanguard of protecting them.

The places designated 'conservation areas', which are cherished by local people and often those from further afield, are the product of continuing economic and social development. Conservation does not aim to stifle such development but to ensure change is managed sympathetically. Pressures for change are particularly acute in town centres as traders seek to maintain and improve their competitive position. This pressure often takes the form of modernising shop premises. Some of the modern development that has been undertaken in the recent past is dull and lacking character. 'Multiples' have sometimes sought to impose a 'house style' irrespective of surrounding buildings and geographical location.

The cumulative effect of unsympathetic alterations is gradually to erode the character of places which made them worthy of conserving. By controlling unsympathetic development and promoting good design, it is possible to retain the individual character and charm of conservation areas. People are attracted to such places because of their very nature. Distinct economic advantages accrue to traders because of the nature and character of the historic environment. The guide has been designed to achieve the following objectives:-

- \* To improve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- \* To set down the general policies and principles of the Council with regard to shop front designs and future alterations.
- \* To help to achieve a co-ordinated approach over the whole commercial area.
- \* To enlighten members of the public and promote the Council's aims for conservation.
- \* To assist designers and their clients to be aware of the designs likely to find favour.

Throughout the Guide the term 'shop front' refers to the whole of the building's street elevation from roof to pavement and across its full width and not to just the display window and its surround. (Figure 1)



## TOWN CHARACTER

The quality and character of a town is likely to be more striking where it shares many common building styles. In Lytham, for example, much of the built environment is of Victorian origin with rich buildings and a coherent overall appearance.

An appreciation of the overall character of the town is an important starting point for considering the appropriate treatment for shop fronts in its shopping streets. In Lytham, with its strong visual character and intimate street scene, it is important to maintain and improve the detailed design of individual buildings and groups of buildings. There is no such thing as a building that "doesn't matter" - all have a contribution to make. The alternative is the piecemeal erosion of its character and its replacement by characterless uniformity.

The designation of Lytham town centre as a Conservation Area emphasised that its protection and enhancement is a major priority and that proposals would be judged on their positive contribution to the aim. The objective is not only to retain its visual assets, but to try, whenever the opportunity arises, to secure improvements to any previous, unsympathetic, alterations to help redress the balance in the town's favour.

## THE STREET SCENE

The general character of the town raises certain expectations regarding the scale of its buildings, spaces, activity and uses. The overall collective appearance of the town's buildings sets the framework for design in terms of mass, scale and general detailing.

In considering an approach to shop front design, it is vital to consider not only the individual property but its importance in the visual "hierarchy" and the building group.

### Hierarchy

In any town or street there is a visual "hierarchy" of buildings - a ranking of greater or lesser importance in the street scene. A major building may be important by virtue of its size, use or design or less important, formal or imposing. In Lytham, the major public buildings stand out from their surroundings. A building should not be altered to be more prominent than its rightful position. On the other hand, an 'important' building carries the responsibility of its position. It needs very careful treatment. (Figure 2)

FIGURE 2



A LOCAL LYTHAM EXAMPLE OF BUILDING HIERARCHY ; a. THE BANK BUILDING OCCUPYING A PROMINENT POSITION WITH ITS DOME. b. A LARGE AND IMPORTANT TWO STOREY SHOP, SIMILAR IN IMPORTANCE AND c, A MORE MODEST BUILDING. DESIGN CHANGES SHOULD MAINTAIN THIS DISTINCTION.

### Building Group

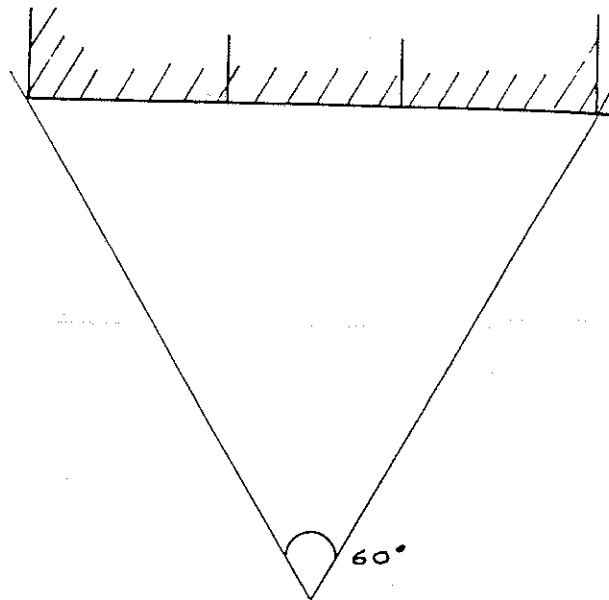
Some groups of buildings are readily apparent as they may fall into a short block of similar properties with similar characteristics. In these cases, the design response should conform to the character of the block as it was in its original state to maintain the proper unity. (Figure 3)

FIGURE 3

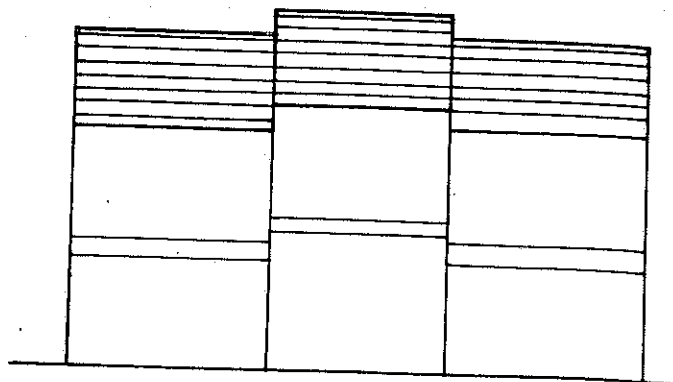


A REGULAR BUILDING GROUP OR TERRACE

FIGURE 4



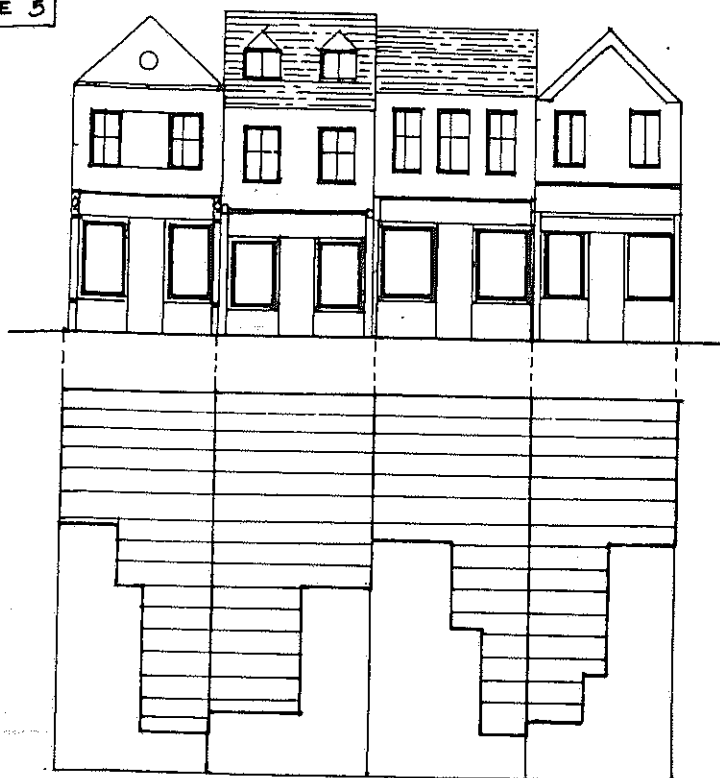
In other cases, the property subject of alteration may be in the centre of a long terrace and, furthermore, the properties may be of different styles. As a rule of thumb, the number of properties which should be considered depends upon the immediate relationship of the property to its neighbour. As the human eye covers a field of vision of approximately 60 degrees, the view from 10 metres away would give a length of frontage of 12 metres centred on the property in question. By this exercise, the group of buildings, of which it is appropriate to consider, can be fixed. (Figure 4)



IN 'TRADITIONAL' TOWNSCAPES THERE IS OFTEN A COLLECTIVE UNITY THOUGH BUILDINGS MAY VARY. IT IS VITAL TO CONSIDER NOT ONLY THE BUILDING IN QUESTION BUT THOSE ADJOINING. THE METHOD DESCRIBED IN THE TEXT IS A USEFUL METHOD IN TOWNS SUCH AS LYTHAM.

Having obtained the appropriate building group, the correct approach to design will be ascertained by considering 'proportion'. In most 'traditional' high streets the design elements are vertical because the plots were developed with narrow widths but substantial depth in order to gain maximum use of the frontage. This gave rise to narrow tall buildings of two or three storeys. (Figures 5 and 6)

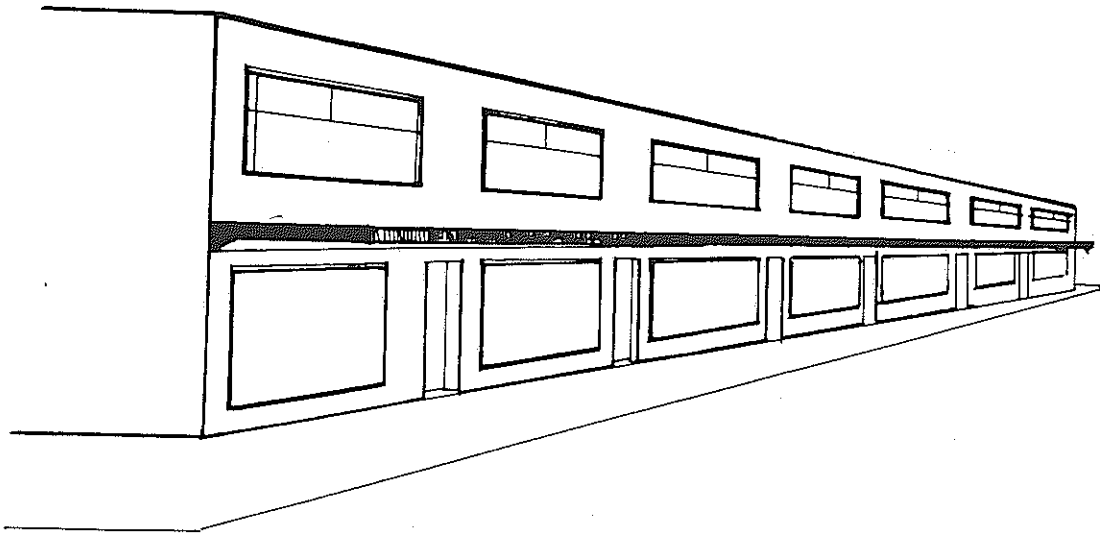
FIGURE 5



Though there may be variations in the style of buildings and in their individuality, buildings have, nevertheless, an overall unified appearance because their similar proportions are arranged in similar relationship. e.g. the windows and doors and frontage have a vertical emphasis. In contemplating alterations, these proportions should be maintained. The two illustrations show how unsympathetic alterations erode the unified appearance of particular groups of buildings. (Figure 7)



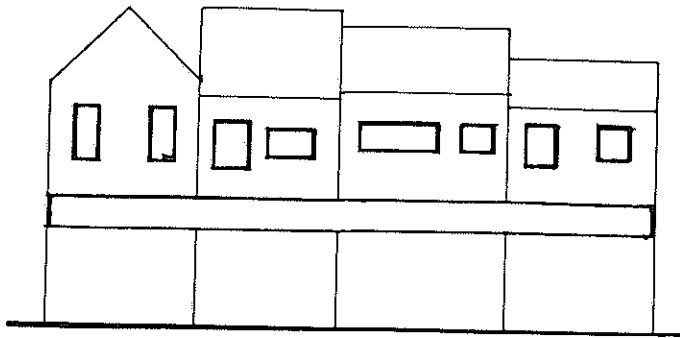
FIGURE 6



#### HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL EMPHASIS

IN THE TOP SKETCH, THE EYE MOVES ALONG QUICKLY ALONG THE HORIZONTAL DETAILING WHICH IS EQUAL, PREDICTABLE AND MUNDANE. THE SAME LENGTH OF BUILT DEVELOPMENT BELOW HAS BUILDINGS OF VERTICAL EMPHASIS AND THE EYE TAKES MORE TIME TO MOVE ALONG. THE GROUP AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS HAVE PARTICULAR INTEREST.

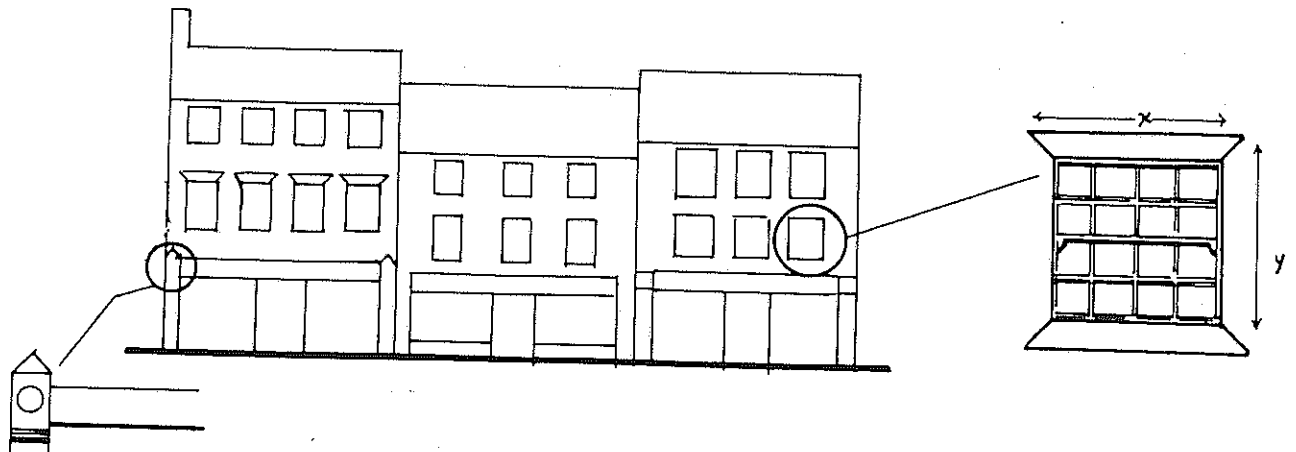
FIGURE 7



A VISUAL CONFUSION IS SET UP AS A DEEP FASCIA  
LINKING THE BUILDINGS DESTROYS THE VERTICALITY (TOP)  
HORIZONTAL WINDOWS AND OVER DEEP FASCIAS CAN  
ALSO HAVE AN UNFORTUNATE EFFECT. (BOTTOM)

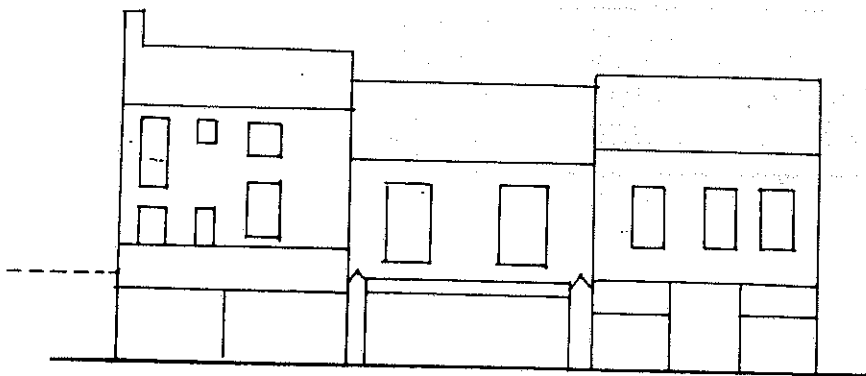
In addition to 'proportion' of the design elements, the scale of them is important to maintain. The proportions of the shop fronts should be maintained and returned to their original style if unsympathetic alterations have taken place. A study of traditional shop windows, where they remain, will give an indication as to the correct proportion. (Figures 8 and 9)

FIGURE 8



TRADITIONAL PROPORTIONS AND THEIR  
DETAILING SHOULD BE MAINTAINED.

FIGURE 9



DESPITE THE MAINTAINING OF VERTICAL EMPHASIS, THE SCALE  
AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE WINDOWS AND FASCIAS ARE WHOLLY  
INAPPROPRIATE.

## The Individual Shop Front

Having assessed and observed the position of the building within the group, the general parameters will influence the detailed design.

The requirements of the shopkeeper or patron are, of course, of vital importance. There is a need to advertise the business and display the goods for sale. It is unlikely that the patron will wish to undertake wholesale alterations unless there is likely to be a financial return. This is often where mistakes are made. Though the individual may wish to announce the presence of a particular shop, there is also a general need for the design to be sympathetic to the rest of the street. If unsympathetic alterations are repeated the general attractiveness of the street is reduced to resemble any other shopping street and the basis for improvement is lost. There is ample proof that people will visit places which have a traditional appeal. If this is lost so will be the appeal. The shop fronts can be modern and offer traditional appeal at the same time if the process of design is understood.

If the traditional designs are considered as a basis for design, sufficient freedom exists for the individuality and free expression of shop owners and designers to exploit.

Traditional shop fronts were not a 'fad'. They were designed as a specific solution and to be in architectural harmony with the rest of the building. Their purpose was then as it is now; to display the goods for sale and advertise the business.

## THE SHOP FRONT

For ease of reference the shop front is divided into two sections: the upper floors including the roof and the display window and surround.

### 1. THE UPPER FLOORS

Chimneys are important in the street scene in Lytham Conservation Area as they provide character and punctuation of the roof line. Wherever possible they should be maintained. Conservation area consent to demolish chimneys will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that they are structurally unsound and incapable of economic repair.

It is essential that roofs are kept in a good state of repair as water penetration through a neglected leaking roof can threaten the whole building. Repairs to roofs should use matching materials, for example, using blue slate in a blue slate roof. The replacement of a roof of natural materials with one comprised of artificial materials will be discouraged. Ridge tiles should be retained or restored as should timber detailing on gables, for example, decorative bargeboards. Leaking guttering and damaged fall pipes should be replaced in cast iron rather than grey plastic. Dormer extensions will not normally be granted consent.

Defective brickwork or painting should be repaired. Rendering brickwork is generally detrimental in visual terms as it results in a loss of decorative detail. Quoins should be retained in any repair work.

On the upper floors, particularly where the upper floors are modernised, window frames can be in a poor state of repair. Original windows should be repaired wherever possible. If repair is not possible, due to too advanced a state of decay, authentic copies should be made. Particular attention should be paid to detail, for example, the thickness of glazing bars, as inappropriate detail can seriously harm the visual appeal of a building. The replacement of original windows with 'mock' period frames, for example, "Georgian" windows in a Victorian building are unacceptable. Where new window frames are to be used, timber should be used, rather than aluminium, uPVC or other modern materials. In terms of longevity, well maintained wooden frames can last as long as uPVC.

## POLICIES RELATING TO THE UPPER FLOORS

- 1 Consent will not be granted for the removal of chimney stacks in Conservation Areas unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that they are structurally unsound and incapable of economic repair
- 2 Consent will not normally be granted for dormer extensions in Conservation Areas
- 3 The Council will seek to encourage the restoration and repair of architectural details. This includes ornamental barge boards, ridge tiles, cast iron guttering and fall pipes
- 4 The Council will seek to encourage repairs to the fabric of buildings in Conservation Areas using materials to match the existing
- 5 The Council will seek to encourage repairs to existing original window frames wherever practicable
- 6 Consent will not normally be granted for the replacement of original window frames with mock period frames
- 7 The Council will seek to encourage the replacement of window frames of inappropriate design with historically authentic copies of original window frames
- 8 Consent will not normally be granted for the replacement of timber window frames with frames of modern materials
- 9 The Council will seek to encourage the replacement of window frames in modern materials with timber window frames of an appropriate design

## 2 THE DISPLAY WINDOW AND SURROUND

### The Display Window

The typical traditional display window, constructed of timber has an ornamental surround, with a cornice, dentils, angled fascia, panelled side pilasters surrounded by carved, corbelled brackets, panelled 'stall-riser' beneath the window, often a recessed doorway and ornamental glazing bars to the window. The whole is panelled, moulded and carved to varying degrees of ornamentation.

The visual solidity of this 'framing' gives an appearance of adequate structural strength to support the mass of the upper floors. The ornamental detailing of the pilasters, corbelling, stall-riser and glazing bars all provide visual interest in depth, to attract the eye and discourage the attention from wandering. The angled fascia politely directs its message downwards to the onlooker, with the lettering seen free from perspective distortion. The stall riser raises the display to a convenient level for inspection and protects the base of the window from damage. The whole is a subtly contrived design aimed at holding the eye within a strong frame, discouraging any escape other than to the recessed door, with its invitation to enter. (Figure 10)

FIGURE 10



A TRADITIONAL SHOP FRONT IN CLIFTON STREET, LYTHAM C.A.

### The 'Modern' Display Window

A comparison with a typical 'off the shelf' modern shop window is a revealing exercise. Here the materials, colouring and character are often at odds with the traditional building above. The slender, visually weak, surround has little effectiveness in 'framing' the opening. The flat fascia misdirects its message to a point above the observer's head. The hard, mechanical, glossy materials are out of place against the mellow, hand-wrought traditional materials of the older building. Whilst the traditional display window can face the severe test of being interesting in its own right, the poor 'modern' example is of no particular interest in itself. (Figure 11)

The assessment shows that far from being an irrelevant antique, the traditional shop front is not only of historical interest, but a skilled and sensitive design, difficult to improve on and still the best option for a traditional building. (Figures 11,12,13 & 14)



FIGURE 11

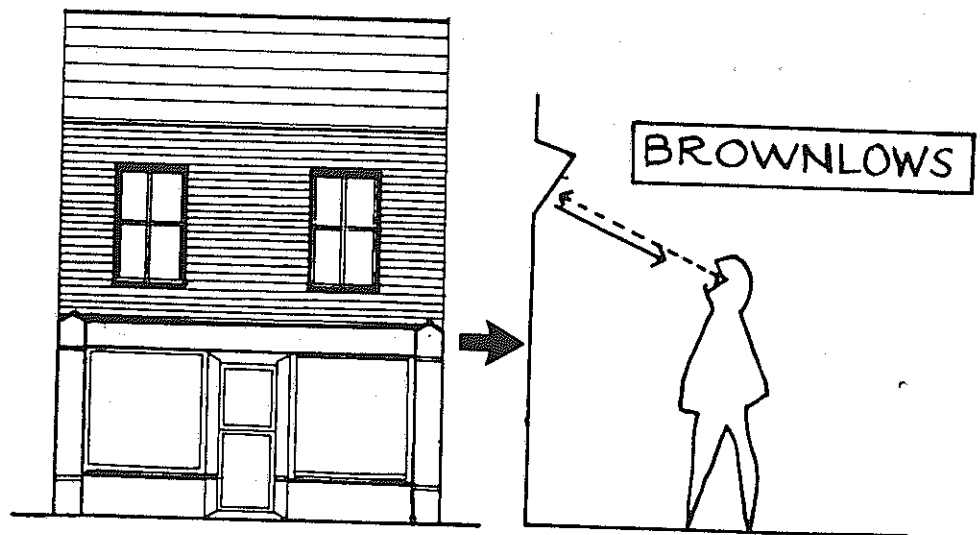
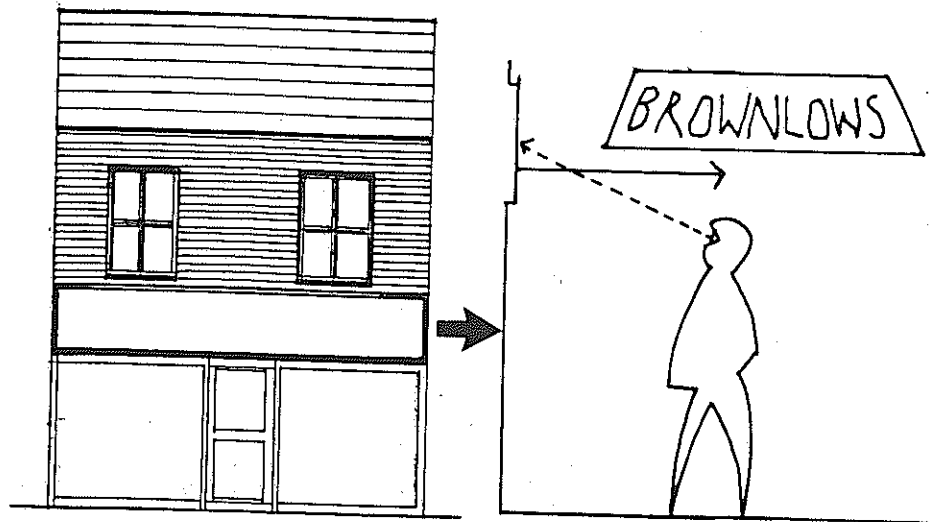
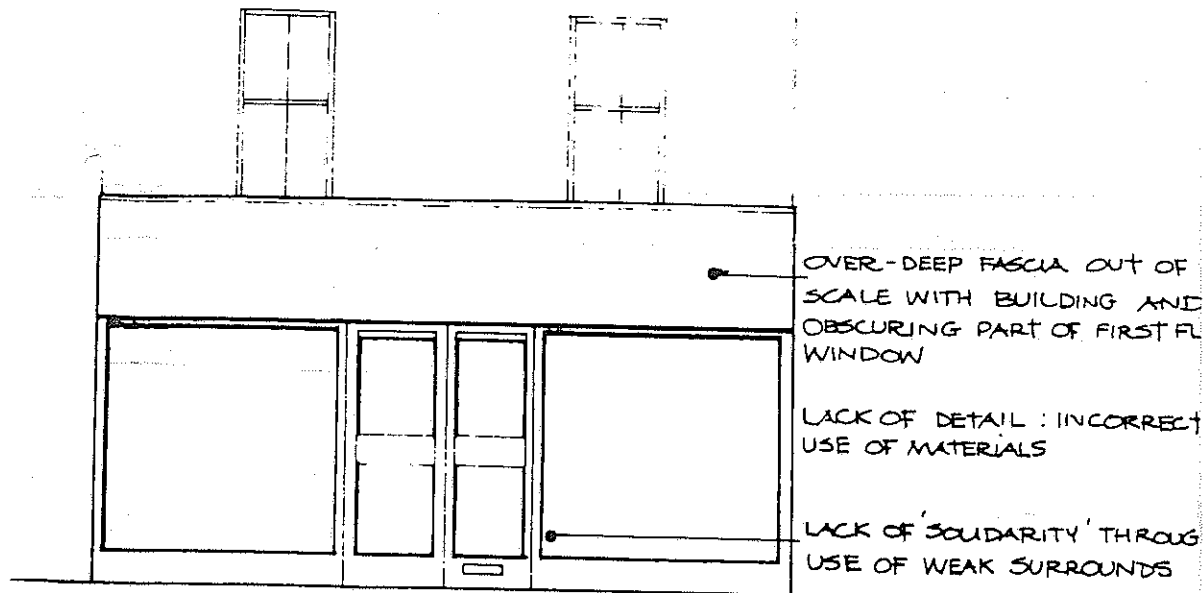


FIGURE 12



THE 'MODERN' DISPLAY WINDOW

WHEREAS.....

THE 'TRADITIONAL' DISPLAY WINDOW

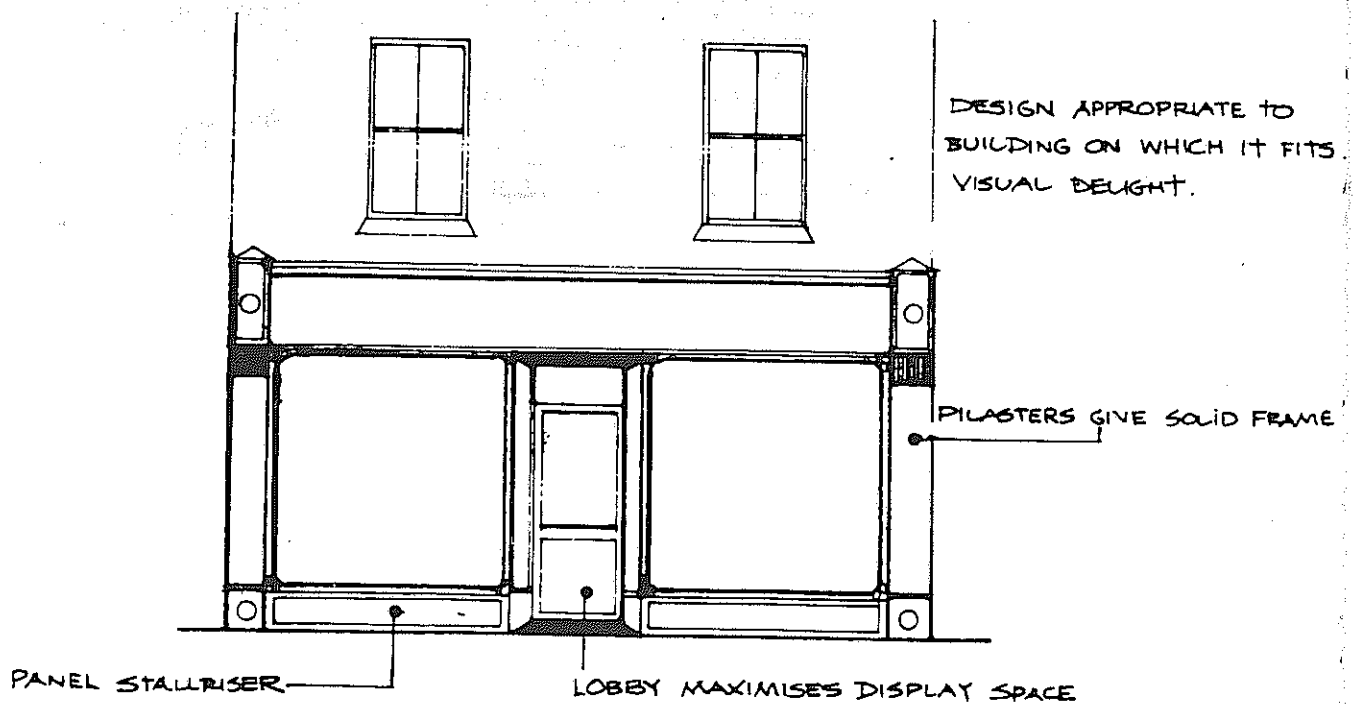


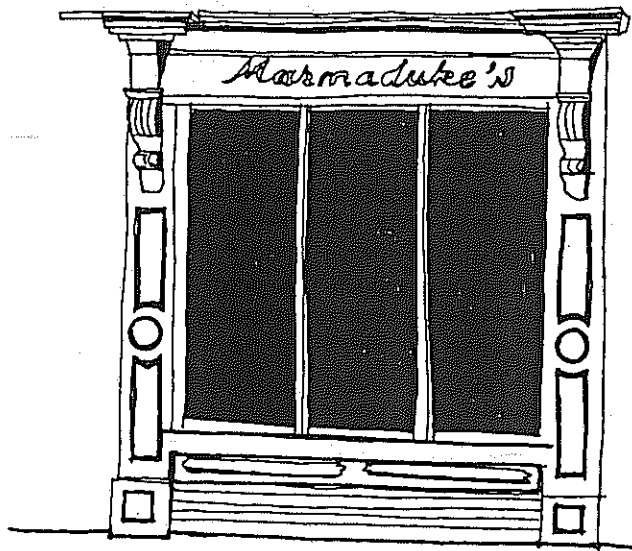
FIGURE 13



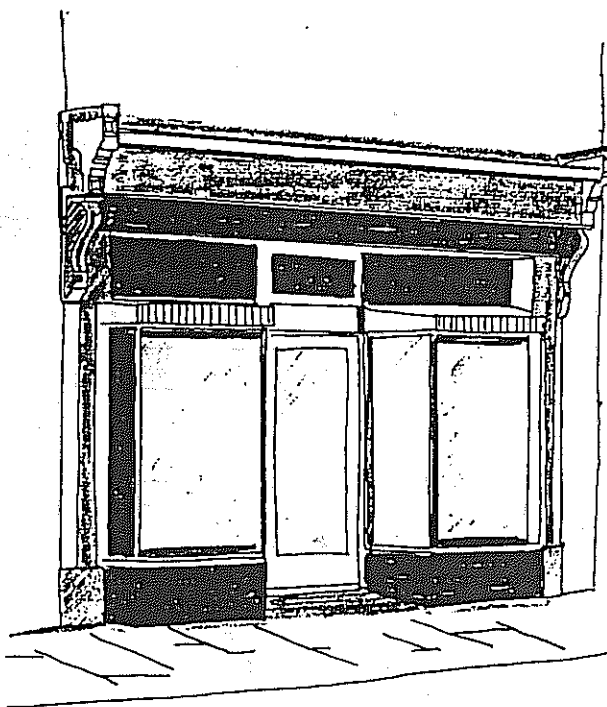
THE DRAWING ABOVE HIGHLIGHTING THE EXISTING TRADITIONAL SHOPFRONTS INDICATING THE HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UPPER FLOORS AND THE DISPLAY WINDOWS. BELOW, 'MODERN' FRONTAGES DESTROY THE RELATIONSHIP AND APPEAL OF THE HISTORIC STREET SCENE WHICH BECOMES CLUTTERED. BADLY DESIGNED WINDOW REPLACEMENTS AND ADVERTS COMPOUND THE PROBLEM. THE BASIS FOR CONSERVATION BECOMES LOST.



FIGURE 14



AN EXISTING TRADITIONAL DISPLAY WINDOW  
IN LYTHAM



A MODERN REPLACEMENT DISPLAY WINDOW  
IN LYTHAM WHICH CLEVERLY BUILDS ON  
TRADITIONAL DETAILING TO PROVIDE AN  
APPROPRIATE SOLUTION.

## POLICIES RELATING TO THE DISPLAY WINDOW AND SURROUND

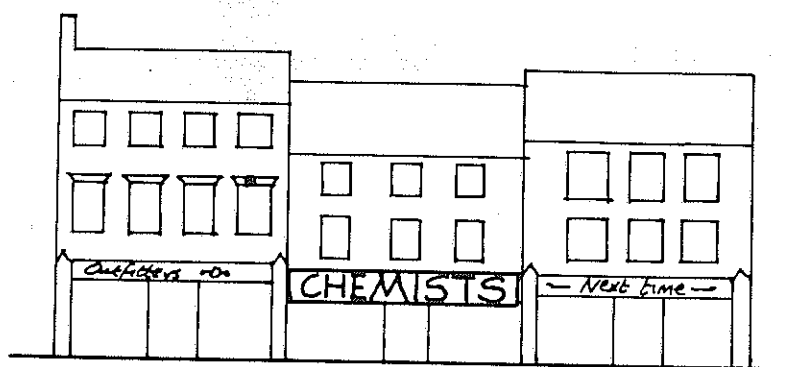
- 10 Display windows and their surrounds should be designed to reflect the existing architectural features of the building facades to which they are applied
- 11 Where a shop is to occupy several units, consent will only be granted if vertical sub-divisions of existing units are preserved
- 12 The only circumstances in which planning consent will normally be given for a 'modern' display window and surround will be in 'modern' buildings
- 13 The Council will seek to encourage the replacement of 'modern' display windows and surrounds with display windows and surrounds of traditional appearance except in 'modern' buildings
- 14 Stall risers should be retained or replaced where they have previously been removed, as they provide a visual base to the shop front
- 15 The importance of a 'house style' or 'corporate image' to some traders is recognised but the importance of visual amenity is considered to be greater. House styles will therefore be required to be sympathetically adapted to particular buildings in Conservation Areas and other locations
- 16 Opaque display windows will not normally be permitted in Conservation Areas and other locations
- 17 New display windows and surrounds will only be permitted where opportunities for disabled persons are maximised and will be refused unless provision is adequately provided for them
- 18 There will be a presumption against the use of mosaics, laminates, tiles or other similar adhesive material

### 3 ADVERTISEMENTS

This section relates only to advertising matter on shop fronts - it does not cover other forms of advertising in other situations.

Sometimes the owner of a building will try to attract custom by making that building blatantly 'obvious'. Over-large fascia signs, crude colouring, a proliferation of adverts, over-bright illumination, may all be used. This gains attention while it is the only building treated this way, but if everyone follows this bad example, it no longer stands out. Meanwhile, the whole street is down-graded to a visually painful display of bad taste. (Figure 15)

FIGURE 15



SOMETIMES THE PROPRIETOR OF ONE SHOP ATTEMPTS TO  
OUT-DO THE NEIGHBOURS THOUGH IT IS OUT OF SCALE  
AND DETRACTS FROM THE OVERALL APPEARANCE OF THE BLOCK.

The most important consideration in advertisements is 'knowing when to stop'. A proliferation of unnecessary signs on building after building soon brings a confusing sense of 'clutter' to a street. The more there are, the less easy each is to pick out. As numbers increase, there is more demand for larger sizes, brighter illumination and more garish colouring as each fights the rest for attention, but this over-assertive approach does not suit the more subtle character of Lytham Conservation Area. (Figure 16)

FIGURE 16



TAKEN TO AN EXTREME A WHOLE VARIETY OF SIGNS BECOME OUT OF CONTROL AS THEY COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER, CREATING A RIOT OF CLUTTER. LYTHAM

Therefore, whilst a degree of advertising on a shop front is quite an acceptable part of its commercial function and character, the building should be treated with respect and care taken to ensure that the design of advertising matter stays within the realms of good design, particularly since entering the realms of bad taste in advertising risks discouraging customers rather than attracting them.

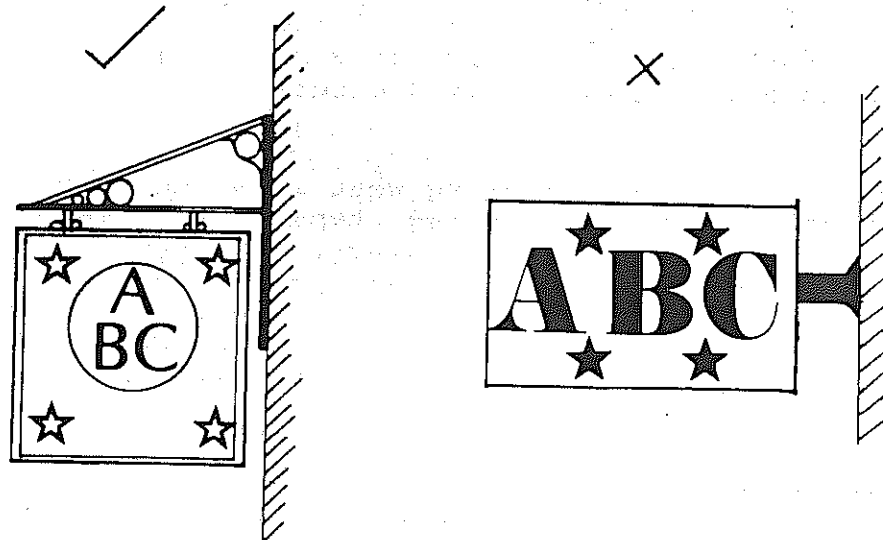
It is helpful when considering what is acceptable to distinguish between the two main broad types of 'informative' and 'promotional' advertising. Whatever the type of advertisement, however, care should always be taken to choose colours, lettering styles and overall designs which harmonise with the building and the trade. 'Informative' advertising includes such items as the name of the firm and the nature of the business. This is necessary information for the shopper, helping in locating the firm or goods which are being sought out. As no advertisement needs to be more prominent than being reasonably easy to read with normal eyesight, the fascia sign of a traditional display window usually has ample room to accommodate this information without straying onto other parts of the shop front, particularly above the fascia. (Figure 17)

FIGURE 17



In some locations, however, a hanging sign may be both helpful and appropriate. In these cases, the traditional painted sign, externally lit on, say, a wrought iron bracket at or below fascia level, will usually be adequate for the purpose and suit the building. The projecting internally illuminated plastic and metal sign is generally an unsatisfactory alternative as its materials and over-illumination are out of keeping with traditional buildings. (Figure 18)

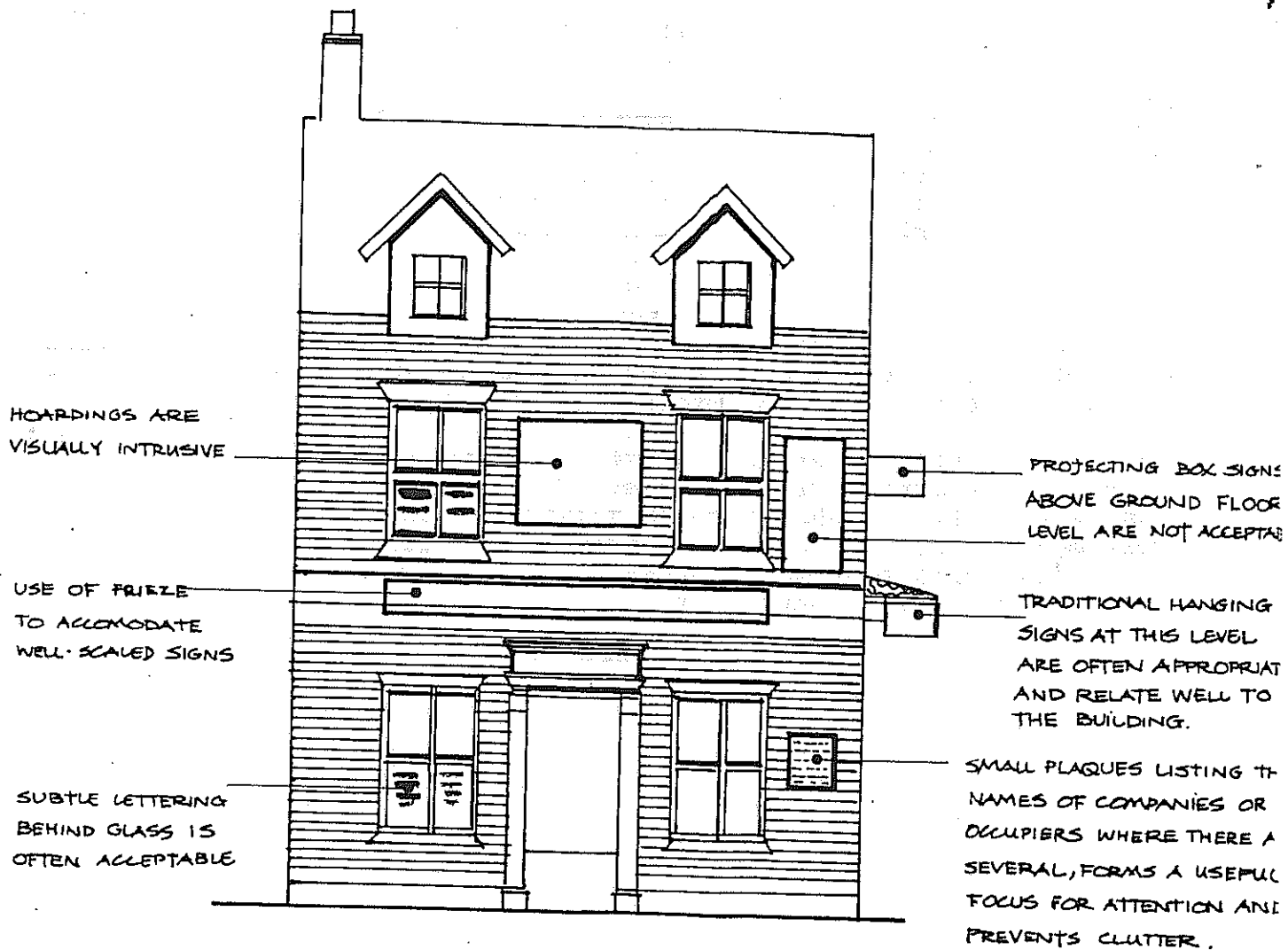
FIGURE 18



PROTECTING SIGNS BOTH CONVEYING THE SAME MESSAGE  
TRADITIONAL PROTECTING SIGNS ILLUSTRATED LEFT ARE.  
APPROPRIATE IN CONSERVATION AREAS.



FIGURE 19



BUILDINGS SHOULD CLEARLY EXPRESS THEIR FUNCTION WITH ADVERTISEMENTS RESTRICTED TO GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND THE UPPER FLOORS KEPT CLEAR.

#### ADVERTISEMENTS ON COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Illumination is better if external to the sign and need not be brighter than to make the sign readable to late night shoppers. Spot lighting, swan neck cowl lighting and pelmet lighting would normally be acceptable. It is unnecessary in daytime - sunlight is quite adequate - and illumination is only essential if the shop is open during the hours of darkness.

By far the best illuminated advertisement is a well-lit and well-designed window display - this tells the shopper far more about the goods on sale than an overhead sign, whilst bringing interest and a feeling of warmth, light and welcome to the street on a dull and cheerless evening. A well-designed building can often also benefit from tasteful floodlighting of the upper floors to show its design off to advantage.

'Promotional' advertising, concerned with establishing 'brand loyalty' or repeating a message already delivered once, is the area where the risk of 'overdoing it' or bringing confusion to the shop front, is greatest. The question should always be asked as to whether the advert is so essential as to justify risking detracting from the rest of the building. If it really is essential, it should be no more prominent than the necessary minimum for its purpose. Whatever its claim, it should receive the same care and skill in design and choice of materials as any other part of the shop front.

## POLICIES RELATING TO ADVERTISEMENTS

- 19 Within the Conservation Areas and other locations advertisements will only be permitted if they are appropriate to the character of the building on or adjacent to that on which they are situated
- 20 There will be a general presumption against the display of advertisements above the fascia at ground floor level. The only exception to this is where there is a separate tenancy or business on the upper floors of the building. In such cases the only signs which will normally be permitted will be those showing the name and/or function of the occupants and these should be behind the glazing
- 21 There will be a general presumption against the display of internally lit box signs on fascias
- 22 Sign-written fascias, lit externally will be preferred, but signs made up of single illuminated letters may be acceptable
- 23 Signs on commercial buildings should be below the bottom level of first floor windows and take account of adjoining buildings. Existing features such as friezes or fascias should be utilised. Box signs on internally illuminated devices are not acceptable

#### 4 VERANDAHS

Perhaps one of the more outstanding features of the architecture in Lytham town centre, is the Victorian iron frame verandah at the front of some shops. Sadly, there are few of these now remaining. This is a regressive step, as the original verandahs lend a degree of charm and antiquity to the area and a character of its own. In places, the verandah style has been copied when shop fronts have been re-designed but these are mainly of the square functional type without the character or interest of the original and are, therefore, a poor substitute or replacement.

Verandahs narrow the street in visual terms with the result of increasing the intimate feel of the street scene. Functionally, verandahs are valuable in that they offer protection to pedestrians during inclement weather.

The original verandahs are in varying states of repair. It is highly desirable that any repairs are sympathetic. The replacement of glass with inappropriate materials like corrugated plastic may make maintenance easier, but it detracts from the quality and appearance of the verandahs as a permanent feature.

The Council is keen to promote the sympathetic restoration of the existing, Victorian iron frame verandahs. The Council has prepared a separate guidance note:

"Verandahs: standard specification of works for the repair and restoration of cast iron and glass components to an approved standard".

This is available from the Planning Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department.

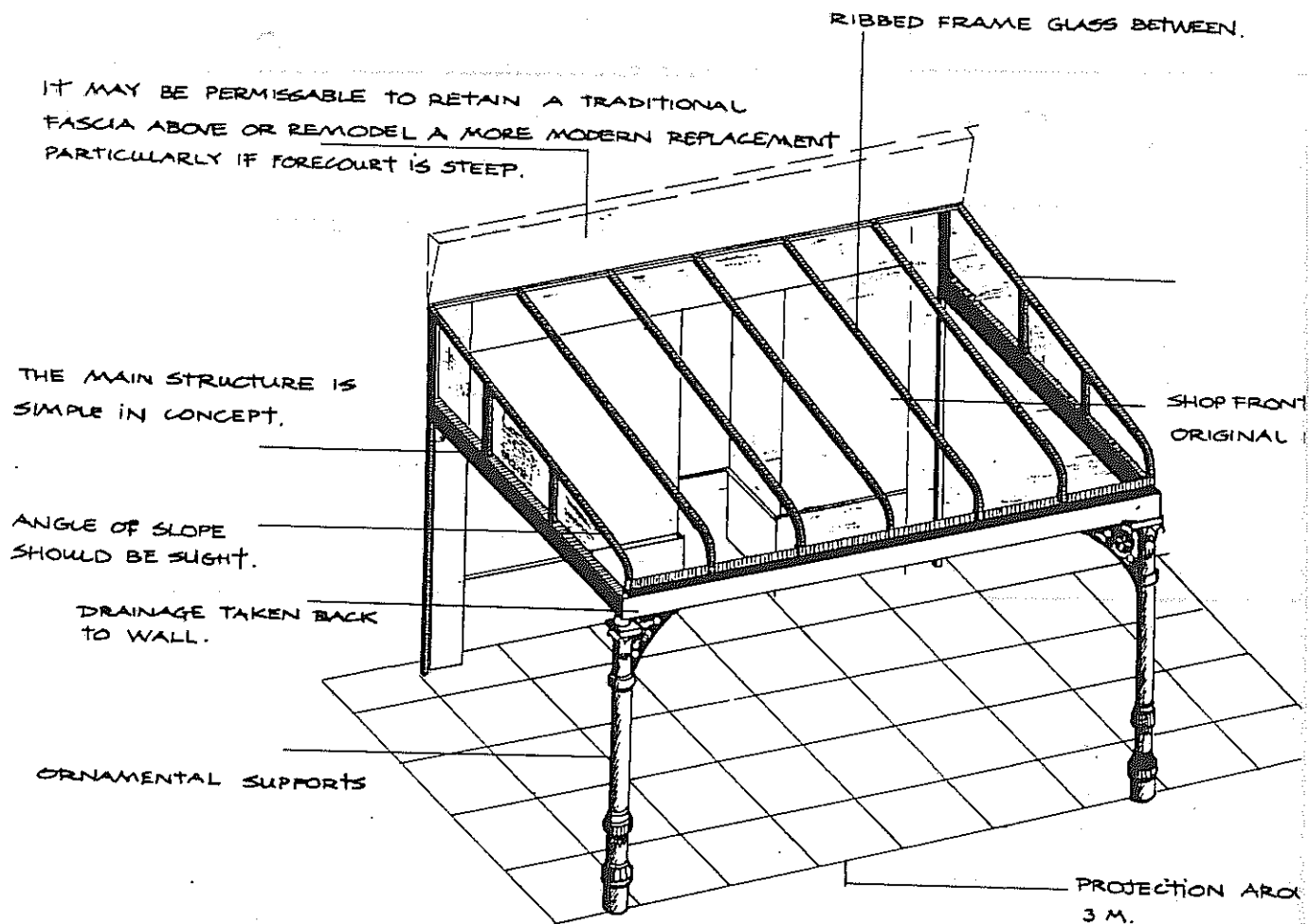
The Council is also keen to encourage the erection of new verandahs of an appropriate design. The design needs to take into account, not only the shop front where it is proposed to erect the verandah, but also the shop front of the adjoining premises. The verandah should always be located below first floor level windows. Normally, the verandah should cover the fascia. Where the fascia heights of the building group vary, so too should the height of the verandah. The angle of slope of the verandah slope should, as far as possible, remain consistent. In some cases where the fascia is particularly high and the verandah would be of an inappropriate scale, it may be appropriate to place the edge of the verandah beneath the fascia. This solution may also be appropriate where the forecourt slopes steeply towards the footway. Drainage from the verandah guttering will not be permitted directly onto the forecourt or footway. The Council will require details of how the verandah is to be fixed to the shop front.

The detailing on verandahs needs careful consideration, for example, design of pilasters, capitals and spandrel brackets.

The detailed design of new verandahs requires specialist knowledge, so early consultation with the Planning Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department is strongly advised. (Figures 20 and 21)

FIGURE 20

THE LYTHAM IRON FRAME VERANDAH.



VERANDAHS VARY IN STYLE AND THIS IS ONE TYPICAL EXAMPLE

THEY ALSO VARY IN HEIGHTS... *illustrative only.*

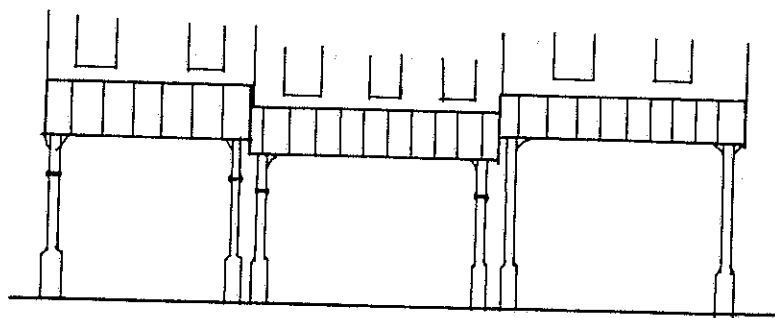
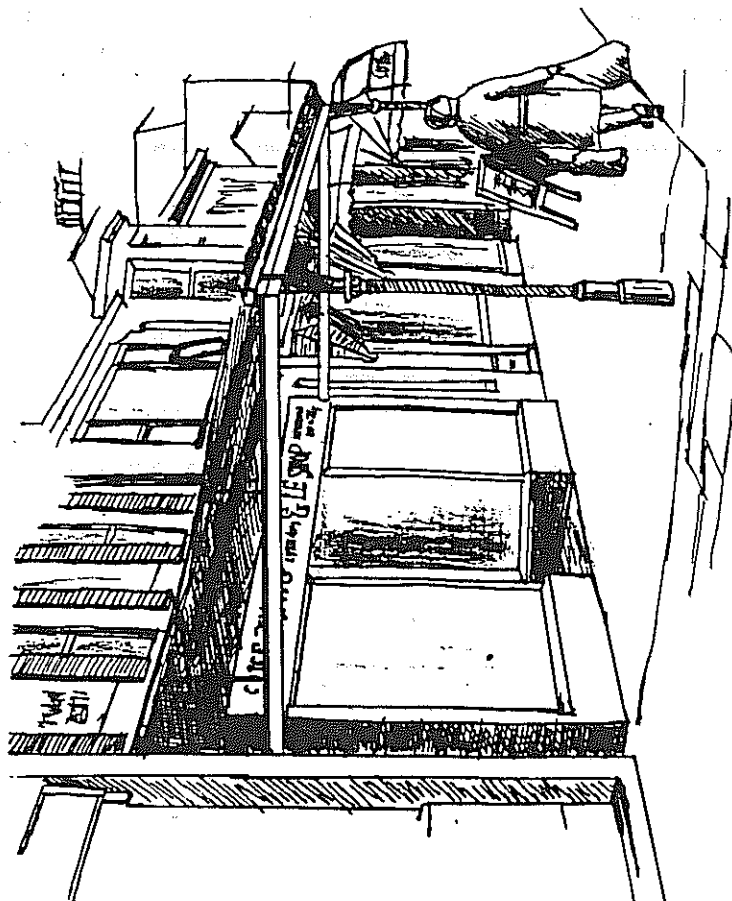
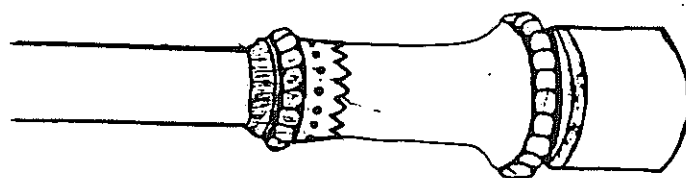


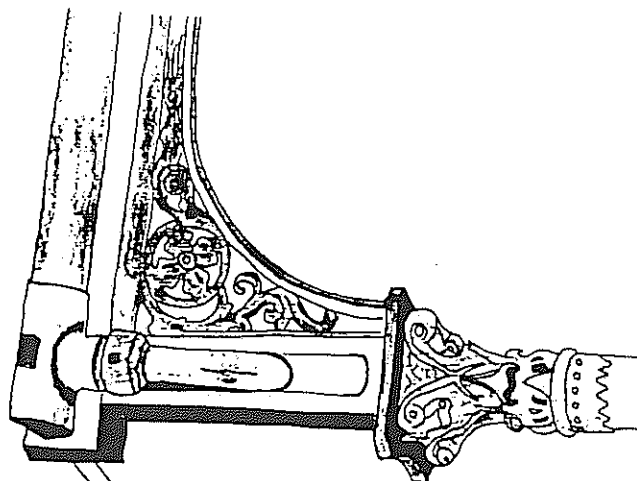
FIGURE 21



AN ORIGINAL VERANDAH ON  
CUFTON ST.



COLUMN DETAIL.



DETAILED SPANDREL

## POLICIES RELATING TO VERANDAHS

- 24 The provision of new verandahs will be welcomed but they must relate in scale and proportion to the original cast iron verandahs with particular regard to detailing of columns and other iron work
- 25 Flat roofed and solid verandahs will not be permitted
- 26 Normally, verandahs should enclose the whole of the display window. The only exception is where the resultant slope to the verandah roof would be excessive given the projection appropriate to the location. In these cases, the fascia may protrude above but this must be as a whole and must be of an appropriate type and depth
- 27 Drainage from the verandah roof must be taken back to the main facade of the building
- 28 The fascia should not project onto any part of the public highway
- 29 New verandahs should match the existing in terms of the overall projection of the particular block
- 30 The verandahs should be clad in glass and constructed of iron. In particular no wooden structures will be acceptable
- 31 Existing verandahs should be repaired and renovated in line with the Council's Code of Practice



### Signs on Verandahs

Signs on the verandahs need to be subject to detailed control so as not to detract from the appearance of the verandahs.

The verandahs provide ideal positions for signs at right angles to the flow of people walking along the street and also for interesting forms of lighting using spotlights or trough lights. Nevertheless, there are some limits to the size and placing of signs to preserve the appearance of the verandahs.

Internally lit box signs will not be allowed on the verandahs.

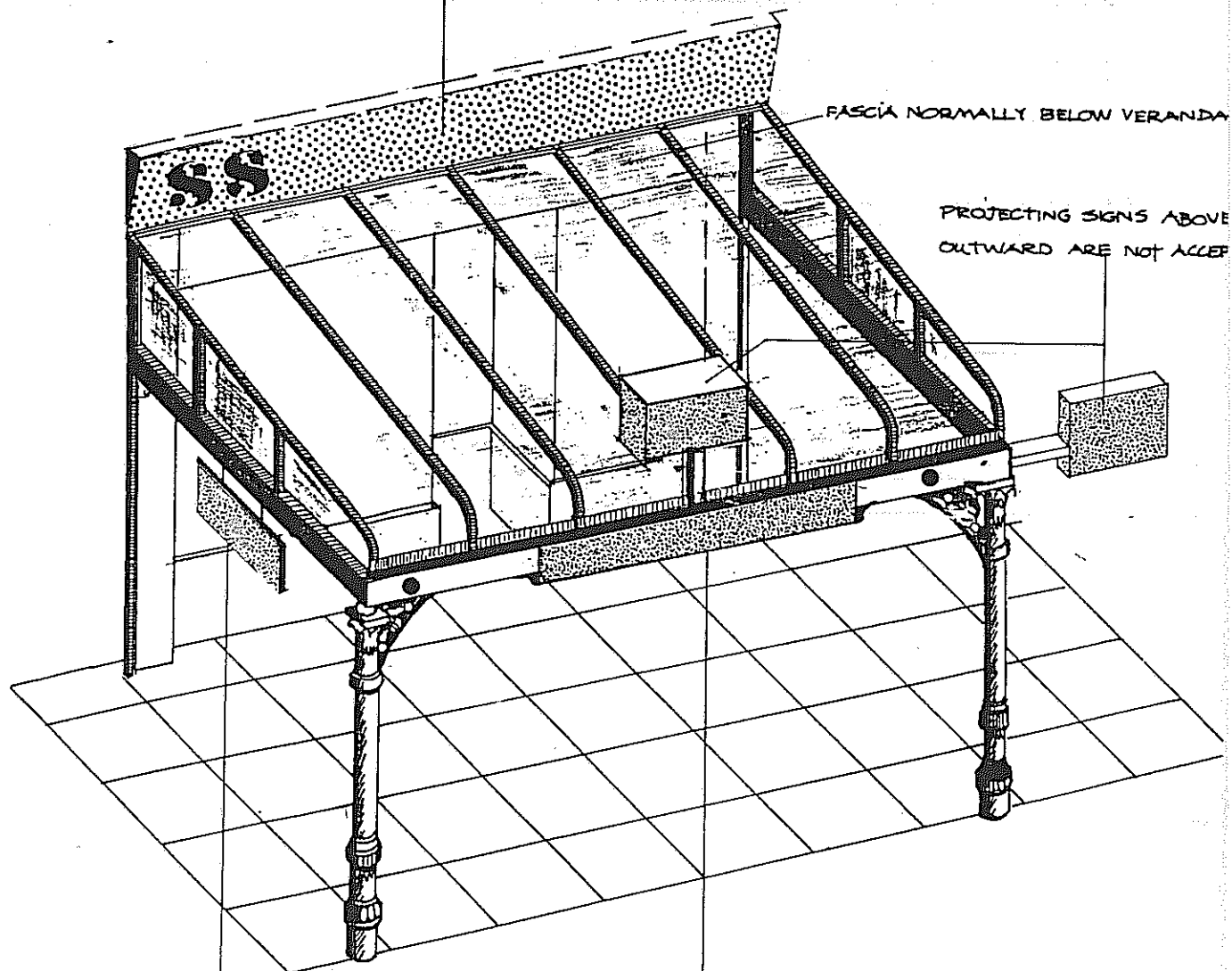
No signs will be allowed on the front face of the verandahs unless the design of the cast iron work allows a space for a sign. (Figure 22)

Signs placed under the verandahs should preferably be sign-written on boards of suitable long-lasting material.

FIGURE 22

SIGNS ON VERANDAS.

SIGNS ABOVE VERANDAH LEVEL ARE SOMETIMES  
APPROPRIATE WITH CAREFULLY SCALED LETTERS  
- ONLY IF THE FASCIA'S RETENTION IS DESIRABLE.



FASCIA NORMALLY BELOW VERANDAH

PROTECTING SIGNS ABOVE  
OUTWARD ARE NOT ACCEPT

HANGING SIGNS, HAND PAINTED TIMBER  
ARE USUALLY ACCEPTABLE PROVIDING  
ADEQUATE CLEARANCE IS MAINTAINED.

SMALL SIGNS ON FASCIA OF AN  
APPROPRIATE DEPTH ARE NORMALLY  
ACCEPTABLE. VERANDAH FASCIA  
DESIGNED WITH THIS IN MIND.

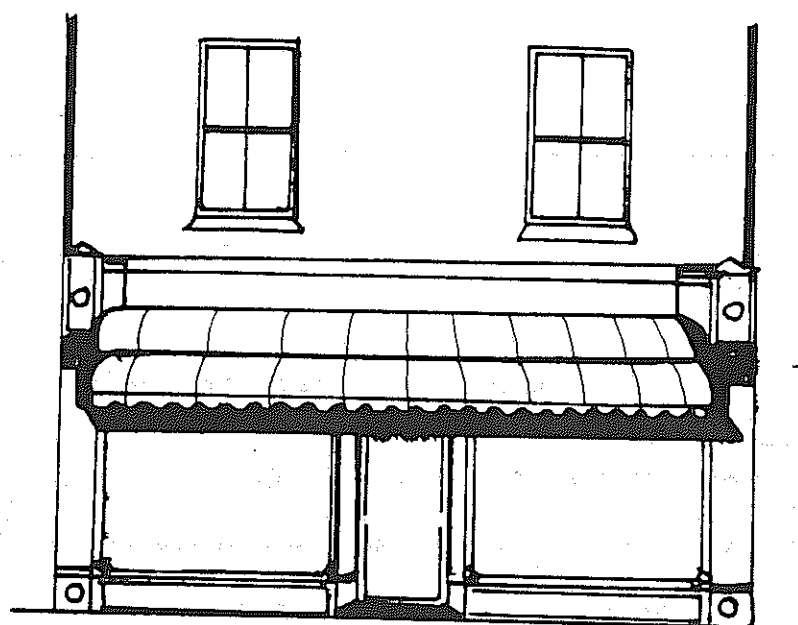
## 5 BLINDS, AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Many shops on Clifton Street have blinds and canopies which fall into three basic types: the straight pitched blind, the box blind and the awning or canopy. (Figure 23)

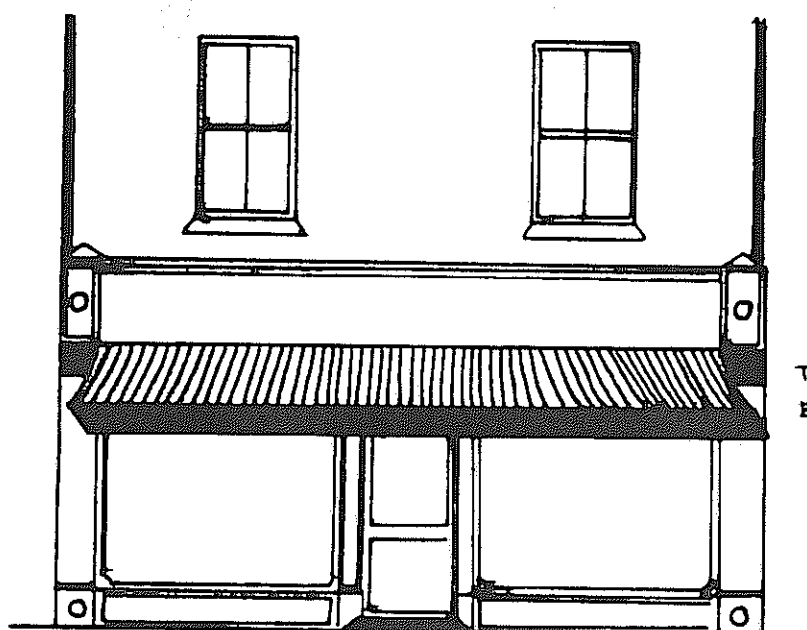
The straight pitched blind and box blind are traditional features in Lytham Conservation Area. These blinds are often integrated into the surround of the display window. Being retractable they do not permanently obscure the detail of the display window surround.

Awnings or canopies have appeared in Lytham Conservation Area relatively recently. The canopies, which are made of plastolene, PVC or similar synthetic materials, appear in a variety of profiles and colours (often garish) and often have advertising displayed on them. The canopies are obvious "add ons" and, as such, are not "read" with the remainder of the shop front. They often do not relate well to the display window and surround, and obscure detail. The Council will strongly discourage the display of plastic canopies and will refuse permission for their display.

FIGURE 23 WINDOW BUNDS AND AWNINGS.



THE MODERN 'CLIP-ON'  
DUTCH BLIND



THE RETRACTABLE  
BOX-BLIND

## POLICIES RELATING TO SIGNS ON VERANDAHS, BLINDS AND AWNINGS

- 32 Signs on verandahs will normally be permitted:-
- a On the fascia of the verandah subject to it being of appropriate depth scale and lettering and having adequate clearance of at least 2.4m
  - b Underneath the verandah, on painted boarding suspended from the structure subject to sympathetic design, scale, lettering and a clearance of at least 2.4m
  - c On the fascia of the shop front or that remaining over
- 33 Signs will not be acceptable where they
- a Are illuminated internally and project from or above the fascia
  - b Are of inappropriate depth, width and size even within the parameters above (32)
  - c Attached to supports or other parts of the structure except as allowed by Policy 32
- 34 Traditional box blinds are considered acceptable and should be repaired and retained where possible
- 35 Plastic dutch blinds are not considered acceptable

## 6 CONVERSION OF PREMISES TO MALLS

Opportunities have arisen recently for the development of shopping malls in the form of sub-division of larger units. Although the detailed design of the shopping units in the mall will depend on the characteristics of the premises to be converted, it is considered that the guidance and policies set out elsewhere in this document should generally be adhered to.

## 7 NEW BUILDINGS

For the totally new building on a vacant site, architects should have the skill to produce better designs than the inadequate example quoted above. Whilst a scholarly 'reproduction' building can be acceptable, a well-designed modern building which takes account of the criteria for successful shop front designs and harmonises with the street scene, can be an equally enjoyable example of this present generation adding its best endeavours to a continuing heritage of good design.

The only occasion where the "modern" display window may be acceptable is in an existing "modern" building. In Lytham, for example, it would be inappropriate to include a traditional shop front in "Arndale House". The shop front should be of a style to reflect the age of the building.

One type of display window that is not acceptable is the obscure painted or plastic-coated glass display window. This type of window is unacceptable for two reasons: it creates "dead" frontage and is usually detrimental in that there is an overwhelming expanse of often garish colour. This type of window will not be granted consent by the Council.

In designing the display window and surround, consideration should be given to providing a separate access to the upper storeys of the building where one does not already exist. Door and door cases should relate to the style and tradition of the building.

It is a statutory requirement to maximise access opportunities for disabled persons. In new shop front design it will be a requirement for provision to be made. Details of the particular requirements in respect of this are available from the Planning Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department.

## 8 FORECOURTS AND TREE PLANTING

Although not strictly part of the shop front, forecourts and street trees are an important part of the street scene in Lytham Conservation Area.

At the present time, the forecourts lack any unity in terms of surface treatment. The forecourts are surfaced with a number of materials including stone flags, block paviers and tarmac. The forecourts are also in different states of repair. The Council are keen to encourage forecourt owners to improve their forecourts to improve pedestrian safety and to create a unified street scene. The Council consider that the best course of action is for the Council to undertake the works involved to repair or replace the forecourts after gaining the permission of forecourt owners. Details of this can be obtained from the Technical Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department.

One characteristic of Lytham is the presence of street trees both on the forecourts and the footway. "Leafy" Lytham has suffered in recent years because of the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease and also trees being felled for safety reasons. The Council have undertaken tree planting in Clifton Street in the footways and on forecourts with the agreement of forecourt owners. The Council is keen to encourage tree planting on forecourts in appropriate locations, and to discuss tree planting proposals by forecourt owners.

#### STATUTORY APPROVALS AND CONSENTS

In common with the majority of buildings, alterations to shops and the building of new ones is subject to control under the Planning Acts and Public Health Acts. The legislation is complex and it is not possible to give fully detailed information on the need for obtaining consent in a brief note. Generally the consents which should be obtained cover:

##### Planning Permission

New buildings, change of use, large extensions, verandahs, new shop fronts/display windows or alterations to existing ones, major changes in external appearance, advertisements above limited minimum sizes, illuminated signs.

##### Building Regulations Approval

Alterations affecting the structure of the building, drainage and sanitary fittings, installation of heating appliances, new building, extensions.

##### Listed Building Consent

Alterations (however minor) which could affect the character of a Listed Building, whether for good or ill. Total or partial demolition, including the removal of items fixed to the building, of Listed Buildings, without prior consent is a criminal offence.

## Conservation Area Consent

Total or partial demolition, including the removal of items fixed to the building of unlisted buildings (with very minor exceptions) in a Conservation Area. Commencement, without prior consent, is a criminal offence.

Further guidance in detail can be obtained from the Planning Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department.

## GRANT AID

A final word concerning grant aid will probably be of interest. Grant aid to repair and improvement of houses, including flats over shops, can be considered under the Housing Acts.

Under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act 1962, Fylde Borough Council can give grant aid to work of repair and maintenance to any building it considers of architectural and/or historic interest, whether or not it is 'Listed'.

Fylde Borough Council's scheme applies to the majority of buildings in Lytham and other Conservation Areas, as well as Listed Buildings. The amount of grant depends on the age and character of the building, the work involved and the effect on the Conservation Area. The type of work that would and would not be eligible for grant is summarised in Figure 14.

Grant aid is also subject to availability of funds, which can vary due to factors outside the Council's control. Details can be obtained from the Planning Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department.

It is important to note that works which adversely affect a building's character cannot be grant aided, but repairs and maintenance (unless of a routine nature) and historically authentic restoration can be assisted.

Schemes following the philosophy of this Design Guide would generally be favourably received. Therefore, before starting on proposals, it is advisable to see whether grant aid could be obtained. In particular, undesirable alterations could not be assisted and it is a wise precaution to check that proposals do not remove eligibility for grant aid.

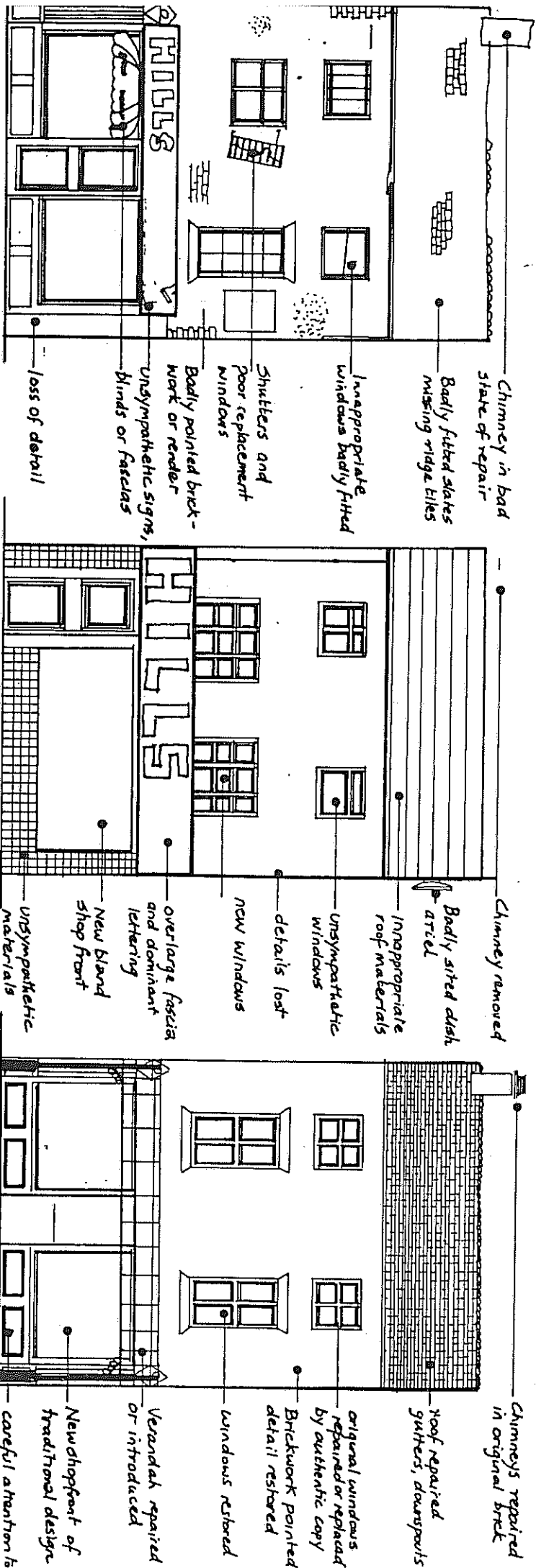
As repeat assistance (at a minimum of 12 months apart) can be given throughout the life of the building, an ill-designed scheme could lose access to a useful source of grant aid towards the continued maintenance and repair of the building.

Applicants are strongly advised to check with the Planning Division of the Planning and Technical Services Department before design work starts.



FIGURE 24

# GRANT AID: A Summary



EXISTING SITUATION  
ILLUSTRATING SOME PROBLEMS

UNSYMPATHETIC ALTERATIONS  
WHICH ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE  
AND FOR WHICH NO GRANT  
AID WOULD BE AVAILABLE.

SYMPATHETIC RESTORATION AND  
ALTERATIONS FOR WHICH GRANT  
AID MAY BE OFFERED.

## GLOSSARY

### Advertisement

Any word, letter, sign device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of advertisement or announcement.

### Architrave

The moulded frame surrounding a door or window

### Barge-Board

Projecting boards placed against the incline of the gable of a building and hiding the ends of the horizontal roof timbers.

### Canopy

A hood suspended or projected over a door, window, etc.

### Capital

The head or crowning feature of a column, often decorated, for example, stiff leaf.

### Conservation Area

Place of particular character where special care is needed to maintain and improve its attractive visual qualities and character.

### Corbelling

A projecting block supporting a beam or other horizontal member.

### Cornice

Projecting ornamental moulding above the display window surround.

### Dentil

Small square blocks which form part of the cornice.

### Fascia

A plain horizontal board usually in an architrave.

### Fluting

Shallow concave grooves running vertically on the shaft of a column pilaster or other surface.

### Gable

The triangular upper portion of a wall at the end of a pitched roof.

### Ovolo Moulding

A convex moulding usually a quarter of a circle.

### Pedestal

The base supporting a column or pilaster which form part of the cornice.

### Pilaster

The solid mass between doors, windows and other openings on buildings projecting only slightly from a wall.

### Polychromatic

Use of bricks of different colours.

### Quoins

The dressed stones at the corner of buildings, usually laid so that their faces are large and small.

### Sash Window

A window formed with sashes, i.e., sliding glazed frames running in vertical grooves, imported from Holland into England in the late 17th Century.

### Shaft

The trunk of a column between the pedestal and capital.

### Spandrel Bracket

The decorative bracket between the capital and the horizontal member.

### Stall Riser

The solid underside of a display window.

### Verandah

An open gallery or balcony with a roof supported by light, usually metal supports.

VERANDAHS - STANDARD SPECIFICATION OF WORKS FOR THE REPAIR  
AND RESTORATION OF CAST IRON AND GLASS COMPONENTS  
TO AN APPROVED STANDARD

1. MEASURE

Measure and take templates of existing components as necessary.

2. DEMOLITION

Allow for all necessary warning signs, lights, barriers etc., and obtain permits as necessary. Take down all illuminated signs and electrical connections, lights etc., and hand to building owners. Check fire switch and disconnect if necessary.

Carry out all necessary protection to safeguard the public and maintain adequate access and remove existing glass, wall bars, loose and broken cast iron elements, gutters and decorative features. Store all removed components for repair and re-use or for the purposes of pattern making as directed by the Architect or Supervising Officer. Provide access for inspection of main structural elements and provide temporary P.V.C. weathering as necessary to allow for protection of exposed structure.

3. REPAIR

Scrape down columns and spandrel panels together with all cast iron components remaining in situ on site to bare metal by means of compressed air needle gun and/or blow lamp and scraper, (roto stripper or other). Finish with wire brush. No sand blasting is to be used on site. Note that the extent of scraping in any working day is to be governed by the ability of the contractor to prime the iron to the specification for priming contained in Section 4 (Site Works) below. NO BARE IRON IS TO BE LEFT UNPRIMED AT THE END OF A WORKING DAY, in addition no stripping may be carried out during the wet or humid weather.

Broken or fractured cast iron columns may be site welded or removed from site for re-casting if welding proves to be impractical. Fill blow holes and other defects (including replacing lugs if necessary) with electric welding and car body epoxy filler, as appropriate, and sand to smooth finish. One coat of epoxy red lead primer to be applied directly after final wire brushing and sanding and in dry conditions on site and followed by No. 1 coat Micaceous Iron Oxide when red lead is dry. All components removed to shop to be cleared off-site by sand blasting and other means, and defects and blow holes made good with electric welding and car body epoxy.

Filler and lugs replaced as necessary and all sanded to a good smooth finish. One coat epoxy red lead primer to be applied directly after final wire brushing and sanding and in dry conditions in the shop and followed by one coat I.C.I. Micaceous Iron Oxide when lead is dry.

If any one column or any bracket glazing bar or decorative feature is found to be in unsatisfactory condition to replace, the contractor shall supply and fix a new cast iron column bracket or decorative feature to match others and providing patterns, if necessary, including providing any temporary supports necessary. Allow for suction cleaning of all columns used as downspouts. Ensure that all rainwater outlets at the base of any such column is free of obstructions and discharges into a functional surface water drain or gully below ground level.

#### 4. SITE WORKS

Provide for any new steel structural members to be hot dip galvanised after pre-drilling for gutter fixings, glazing bar fixings, frieze and bracket fixings. All steel work to be primed with one coat I.C.I. 2 pack etching primer and one coat Dulux metal primer chromate. All gutters to be in cast iron with ogee section to match existing. All gutters to be caulked at the joints with an approved compound, painted with one coat Decadex on top of one coat epoxy red lead primer and the gutters run with Hot Bitumen. (if coast aluminium gutters are to be used then non-ferrous fixing must be used between materials).

All new fascia boards to be vac: impregnated timber painted two coats approved moisture controlling paint. Provide for 5lb Code 5 lead flashings to replace existing as detailed by Architect. Provide for either:-

- (i) Refurbishment of existing glazing bars and include for new glass retaining clips and ladder brackets and prime steel with one coat I.C.I. 2 pack etching primer. One coat Dulux metal primer chromate in shop. Cast iron to be primed one coat epoxy red lead; or
- (ii) New steel/cast iron glazing bars primed as this specification for steel or cast iron.

Sealing joints with clear silicon mastic (Arbosil 1081), restraining each sheet with No. 2 galvanized clips.

Refix any hanging signs and include for reviving for any illuminated electrical work to owner's specification to approved sign scheme under the Advertisement Regulations.