

# I. SHELTERS & CLIMATE

## Structures and Climate

As well as promoting high quality streets and spaces, the urban realm should be as comfortable for people as possible by reducing the impact of the climate.

Climate is one of the least considered issues when designing the urban realm but has a tangible effect on all of us whether waiting for a bus/taxi, using cash points or information points, relaxing in outdoor cafes or just window shopping.

The use of small structures can:

- provide shelter from the elements in key places
- be used to organise a place spatially
- *blur* the threshold between the built environment and external space to create a gradual transition between indoors and outdoors
- draw smokers using local pubs and restaurants in areas away from entrances and exits and concentrate them elsewhere

Structures can contribute enormously to street life and activity by increasing the potential for streets to be used at all times of the year. Market stalls are a good example of structures that can have a big impact on the urban realm, as are the awnings and umbrellas used for street cafes.

Elements such as bus shelters, portable toilets and phone boxes are at present installed as stand alone objects. These appear to have no bearing on the surrounding street furniture palette which leads to a confusing blend of styles. Refurbishment of the urban realm provides the ideal opportunity to address these problems and install structures that complement the street furniture palette in colour and style.

## Design Principles

The following guidelines outline how structures should be integrated into the urban realm:

- New structures should add to the character of a street through high quality, distinctive design.
- Shelters should be appropriate in their scale and location and compliment the vernacular of the area.
- Structures within the urban realm should aim to have a high level of transparency to ensure that the space beneath/within it feels light and airy, is in contact with external spaces, and is not dark, oppressive or concealed in any way.
- The choice of materials should reflect the surrounding street furniture palette.
- Important views or urban quality should not be compromised.
- The overall design selected should be distinctive but not imposing on a street.
- The furniture should be constructed of durable and robust materials.
- The design should be easily maintainable.
- The location of underground stats (utilities) should be considered when locating new structures.

While it is not possible to anticipate all forms of structures in a town that may be required or proposed we would suggest that consideration should be given to the following types of structures within the town centre:

## Street Structures

- **Bus Stands**  
Ensure that there is adequate provision of shelter especially around bus stops. Bus shelters should be of a high quality, simple in design and transparent so as not to dominate the space.
- **Coherent Street Palette**  
There needs to be a simple design vocabulary that creates a coherent style between all the structures required within the urban realm, with one another and the surrounding street furniture palette.
- **Reduce Street Clutter**  
Where possible, there should be an attempt to reduce street clutter by combining elements. For example a single structure that combines an information kiosk, telephones and bus stand for example.

## Shelters at Building Edges

Integration of colonnades or cantilevered canopies along building facades and entrances has two benefits:

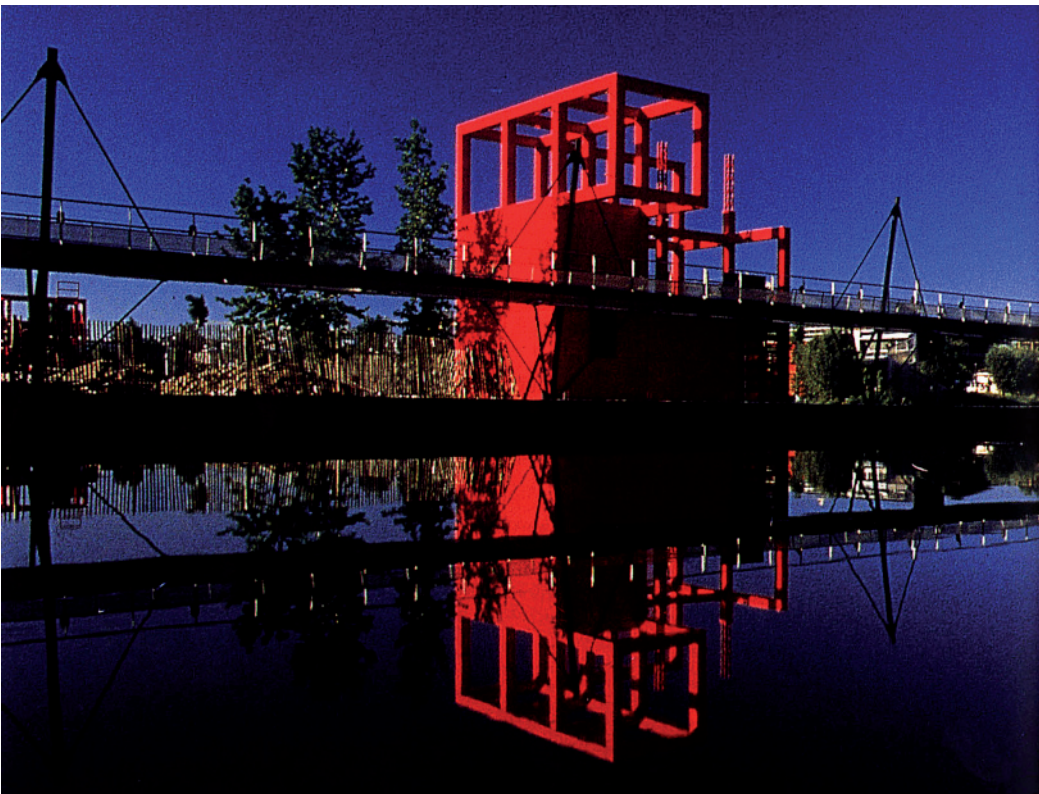
1. To provide shelter to improve the user experience
2. As a means of providing a facelift to poor facades

New developments should consider some elements of the scheme be built in colonnades or canopies or even covering the entire street, to provide an enclosed environment. The external space palette of materials should continue beneath a structure which would then provide continuity of the urban realm. In Grimsby the *urban realm* around the new bus station would be an good example of where a covered street environment could be created to provide a comfortable and inviting environment. In Cleethorpes the roof garden that sails over the new development site adjacent to Dolphin Square could be used to create an informal canopy which provides shelter to the tourist facilities during bad weather.

## Temporary Shelter

Encourage the use of temporary shelters/canopies for street cafes that will provide colour and interest to a space. Cafes can form an important element within the urban realm.

Temporary structures, such as market stalls, should not necessarily follow the same style as the street furniture but could be distinctive and compliment the urban realm. This should be the subject of separate guidance. The creation of a large pedestrian plaza in Riverhead Square provides an excellent opportunity for cafes to spill out onto the space or to hold regular or seasonally markets which will bring life and vitality to the town centre.



# J. SHOP FRONTAGES

Shop fronts have an important function in a town and on the surrounding urban realm. By raising the quality of the design, construction and implementation of the shop fronts the overall quality of the built and surrounding spaces can be significantly improved making them better, and more vibrant places for people to shop, work and relax.

## Key Features

When considering the design of a shop front it is important to understand the character, style, scale and proportions of its setting. This setting, or context, includes:

- the whole facade of the building it is in
- adjacent buildings or parades
- adjacent shop fronts

Significant or traditional features on buildings (especially with conservation areas) should not be removed or concealed by the installation of a new shop front. Significant or original features should be exposed or reinstated where possible.

## Fenestration

Arguably one of the most important elements of a new shop front is its fenestration, or windows. Modern shop windows can often be a single expanse of glazing that bears little or no relation to the proportions of the rest of the building. Taking into account the design and proportions of the wider context new shop fronts should consider the glazing be sub divided into small units.

The positioning of glazing within the reveal has an important effect on the appearance of a shop front. When glazing is installed flush to the external elevation the external reveal is lost and the overall appearance of the building can become very flat. All openings should therefore have an external reveal of at least 75mm.

## Pilasters

Pilasters have been traditionally used in shop fronts to provide vertical framing and support. They also provide breaks in the horizontal run of a long shop front or series of shop fronts, creating better proportions and clear distinction between premises. New shop fronts should look to provide vertical elements to continue this separation. Where original pilasters exist they should be incorporated in to the new design. The location and proportions of pilasters or vertical elements should be carefully considered in line with the whole building elevation. Generally the width of pilaster should be no more than 200mm. While pilasters may not be appropriate in the design of a modern shop front the principle of providing a well defined division between shop fronts should still be adhered to. One way to achieve this would be to incorporate or retain flanking masonry piers.

## Security

The installation of grilles and shutters can have a dramatic effect on the character, not only on the premises they are on, but also the wider urban realm. Once shutters are down shop front displays are obscured or hidden, as a result street activity is compromised, natural surveillance is reduced creating areas that are no-go zones. The loss of spill out light from shop windows all reduces general light levels onto the urban realm.

There are alternative methods of increasing security of the shop frontage without the need for shutters. These include:

- Toughened or laminated glass can offer a good level of protection.
- The use of glazing bars (transoms and mullions) to divide up a shop front can provide a permanent, but attractive measure of security and the use of smaller glazing units can add to the strength and protection of the shop front.
- CCTV should be considered as a first alternative to shuttering, or as a complement to one of the preferred types of security shutters.
- Where there is recognised risk of ram raiding the use of a reinforced stall riser should be considered as an alternative to external bollards.

Where no appropriate alternative to shutters or grilles can be found careful consideration to their design, use and installation should be given:

- All shutters should be perforated and not use any solid slats.
- Where possible all shutters should be internal and not obscure the shop front.

Where external installation is unavoidable shutters must consider the overall design of the shop front:

- They should not cover or partially cover any features such as fascias or pilasters,
- They must be as discreet as possible so they are not visible during opening hours.
- Spindle boxes or shutter housings must be hidden and incorporated into the structure of the shop front; shutter boxes with integrated lintels for shop front openings are widely available and enable the units to be discretely built into the brickwork. When using shutters, careful consideration must be given to their colour and all visible parts must be considered and their finished treatment integrated into the shop front.

## Signage, Advertising and Lighting

With careful design, signage and advertising can be introduced into shop fronts to complement adjacent shop front signage, and enhances the overall environment. Branding is a crucial part of business, however all signage should be designed to reflect the proportions and scale of the property in question.

### Projecting Signs

The numbers of projecting signs for any business must be limited to one per business, per elevation. The location and design of these signs must consider:

- the location of Local Authority CCTV cameras to ensure they do not obscure their view or limit their effectiveness
- the structure and proportions of the building elevation so they do not detract from it
- the signage and shop frontage of adjoining premises to coordinate with them where possible
- the use of appropriate materials
- methods of fixing and the design of any brackets required

If signage cannot easily be accommodated on the external elevation it could be accommodated internally or applied directly on to the glazing.

### Colour, scale and style

As with the rest of the shop front design, context must be considered to ensure that the chosen colour, scale and style of both the overall shop front and signage take into account, and enhance the surrounding elements; without this thought the

overall design of the shop front and associated signage may detract from rather than enhance the general environment.

### Lighting

Where fascias or projecting signs are to be illuminated, integrated or concealed lighting should be used. Lighting units must be discreet and should not detract from the overall design. Lighting of a fascia can add interest to the architecture of the building and can provide ambient lighting into the urban realm.

### Canopies

Canopies and awnings can provide variety, vitality and protection in shopping areas. Their use and installation however needs careful consideration to ensure they are an integral part of the overall design of the shop front to ensure that it enhances the overall character of the building and the streets. All canopies and awnings used should be retractable and integrated into the fascia to minimise their impact when not in use.

Canopies should usually cover the whole width of the shop front without obscuring features. They should be incorporated into the bottom of the fascia to allow signage to remain visible. Care must be taken to ensure any canopy provides a minimum clear height of 2.3m above the footpath and stops a minimum of 450mm back from the kerb edge. Canopies must not cause any visual obstruction for CCTV cameras, public or vehicular information signs. Materials, colours and lettering for canopies must be appropriate to the shop front and surround buildings.



# K. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This section looks at the importance of effective management and maintenance of the urban realm to retain their quality and character.

The quality of design, application of appropriate principles and attention to detail are crucial factors when investing in the urban realm treatment. Of equal importance however is the effective management, aftercare and maintenance of the project after implementation.

To be truly effective the role of management and maintenance needs to begin early on and a pragmatic view of the long term upkeep of a scheme should be adopted during the design process. Informed choices should be made to ensure the suitability of materials and the design. Equally, the positioning of streetscape elements can help improve the effectiveness of maintenance. This is not to say that all designs should be maintenance led, but that the dialogue should be part of the design process to ensure that maintenance issues are either minimised or highlighted and adequately provided for. This will ensure sufficient long term upkeep.

Often those responsible for maintaining public spaces have been required to take over the management and maintenance of newly completed schemes for which they have had no involvement or influence in. It is at this stage when completed schemes can be found to be extremely difficult and costly to maintain.

The design of the urban realm project should be considered not only in terms of its implementation, but also in terms of future maintenance and care. Design and maintenance need to be considered together if the streetscape is to add value to the image and perception of the town.

The development of common objectives and a coordinated programme for management and maintenance among the various public agencies is essential to achieve and sustain improvement to public spaces and ensure the continued improvement of the town.

## Management

To maintain an attractive and clean urban environment there has to be a clear strategy and cleansing regime across the Borough. There is a recognised problem with litter in many town centres, particularly around heavily used routes and areas and around bars and clubs. The image of a littered town creates a negative impression and a decrease in respect for it.

A street cleansing regime for Grimsby and Cleethorpes should look to include:

- a clear hierarchy as to which spaces/character areas receive what treatment, and to what intensity - with possible targets that have to be achieved for each area so that the quality of street cleansing can be measured
- different regimes to cater for the needs of a modern town centre, and potentially a 24 hour place in the future, such as different working hours, intensifying street cleansing at certain times to deal with peaks associated with the night time economy and potentially operating 7 days a week
- dedicated working areas/compound where street cleansing vehicles and labour can obtain practical access to the town centre and have safe transfer areas for equipment, materials and waste that avoids conflict with the general public
- investment in suitable equipment that will make street cleansing more efficient but not damage paving or street furniture; for example a cold wash scrubbing system may be less damaging to paving and jointing than hot wash high pressure system (trials should be held to determine the most appropriate type of equipment)
- resources for dealing with chewing gum removal which is a major problem for all towns

The cleanliness of the town centre should also be proactive and not just reactive. The reduction of litter could be promoted by an awareness campaign throughout the town; in schools, local press and public events, to communicate the value and importance of the public realm, and the damaging effect of rubbish and graffiti. The users of the public realm, both residents and visitors, have a vital role to play and should be educated to be made more aware of their environment.

Enforcement of street cleanliness should also be considered. To help with the management of urban centres other towns around the country have introduced *Street Scene* officers or community policing groups to assist in the management of its streets. These officers provide a recognisable presence through the urban centre and help deter abuse or degradation of the urban realm environment, through littering, graffiti, dog fouling, chewing gum, and fly posting, and help to ensure any problems are swiftly dealt with. To help enforcement such street scene officers should be given the authority to issue fixed penalty notices and littering orders.

The source of litter should also be pursued. Collaboration with retailers in particular food outlets, should be considered so that they become aware and accountable for the waste packaging that are associated with their goods, and if necessary introduce a fine system to ensure that they comply.

It is important that management regimes are understood during any design process, and although this should not stifle creativity. Early involvement and drawing on such expertise to help inform design decision is vital. This may help to design out elements that will later cause problematic street cleansing issues.

As with maintenance it is vital that sufficient resources are allocated for street cleansing to be carried out to a high standard. As the town centre develops and high quality spaces become more extensive and widespread the budget and resources allocated will also need to increase.

Overrun of vehicles onto pavements is a major problem in terms of maintenance as it can cause significant damage. While it has been recommended in section **B. Materials & Surfaces**, that the construction of pedestrian surfacing should be able to accommodate vehicles, parking enforcement will be key to maintaining the high quality of the public realm and preventing vehicle damage. In areas where there are grass verges it is particularly important to prevent vehicles from parking or driving on them through enforcement and physical measures.

## Maintenance

To help in the efficient maintenance of the urban realm it is essential that clear strategies and routines and effective enforcement protocols are in place prior to the implementation of any major urban realm scheme. These include:

- providing enough resources for maintenance of streets and spaces to a high quality; monies need to be sought and set aside at the beginning of a public realm scheme to ensure that there is sufficient investment in maintenance once a scheme is finished
- reinstatement works - like many towns Grimsby and Cleethorpes has suffered from poor reinstatement works following Public Utility and public authority instigated work; failure to reinstate street surfaces to the standard of the original finish, and in a consistent way, will compromise the character and quality of the streetscape.
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- The *New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991* seeks to ensure that surfaces are quickly and effectively restored to the original standard as soon as the necessary works have been carried out. Repairs to road and pavement surfaces are to be done with *prescribed materials* to a *prescribed standard* and streetworks supervisors and operators have to prove themselves capable of organising and carrying out reinstatement work. The Act is a positive instrument for achieving a higher standard of quality control and should be enforced rigorously to ensure that a quality public realm is not undermined.

Material failures, or damage (through accident or vandalism), must be dealt with immediately to ensure safety of users and preserve the quality of the environment. To be able to carry this out quickly and successfully it is important to have a good supply of materials. During the implementation of any public realm project it is important that arrangements are made to enable quick access to additional materials and furniture after completion of the works (either through stockpiling of materials or agreements with suppliers). This stockpile enables the fast and efficient replacement of damaged materials and elements.

High quality repairs and reinstatement to the fabric of the urban realm are critical.

Involving maintenance/street cleansing early on the design process is essential. Elements such as drainage and overrun of service vehicles on paved areas are examples where a maintenance input can be key to ensuring that a scheme is successful.

The proposed maintenance procedures for any streetscape project should be compiled in a manual prior to completion of the contracted works. This manual should:

- incorporate the agreed procedures for maintenance works
- identify the exact materials to be used
- provide the names and contact information for all suppliers
- outline procedures for reinstatement works by Public Utilities companies

The maintenance of the town should be given the status it requires through a formal maintenance document for the town centre.

Further sections of this document set out the answers to pertinent questions:

- What are the roles and remit of individuals and various departments?
- What maintenance/street cleansing is carried out, what is the regime and how does it reflect the hierarchy of streets and spaces through the town?
- What maintenance is required for a scheme in man hours and the cost?
- A town centre wide breakdown of costs for each street and space that can be updated as new schemes are handed over for maintenance.
- Total costs of annual maintenance/street cleansing expenditures and production of forecasts taking on board future aspirations and the implementation of new schemes so that the implications of future public realm projects are known at the outset.