

Guidance for Businesses

April 2023



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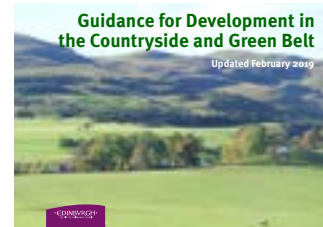
Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is intended to assist businesses in preparing applications to change the use of a property or carry out alterations to a business premises.



Policy Context

This document interprets policies in the *Edinburgh Local Development Plan*. Relevant policies are noted in each section and should be considered alongside this document.



Misc: Student Housing, Radio Telecommunications, Open Space Strategy etc.

This document and other non-statutory guidance can be viewed at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planningguidelines

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

If the building is listed or located within a Conservation Area, guidance on *Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas* must also be considered. Boxes throughout this guideline give specific information relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. You can check if your property is listed or located within a conservation area on the Council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planning

Business Gateway

Business Gateway offers businesses free practical help and guidance. Whether you're starting up or already running a business, and provide access to business support and information services.

To get more information on help for your business, or to book an appointment with our experienced business advisers please contact our Edinburgh office.

Contact details:

Business Gateway (Edinburgh Office)
Waverley Court
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG
Tel: 0131 529 6644

Email: bglothian@bgateway.com

www.bgateway.com

This guidance was initially approved in December 2012 and incorporates additional text on short term commercial visitor accommodation approved in February 2013, and minor amendments approved in February 2014, February 2016, March 2018 and February 2019.

Contents

	Page		Page		Page
Do I need Planning Permission?	4	Changing to a Food or Drink Use	10	Altering a Shopfront	15
Planning Permission		When is planning permission required?		Understanding your shopfront	
What is a change of use?		Changing a shop to Class 3 use or hot food takeaway		Context	
Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas		Selling cold food for consumption off the premises		New Design	
What Other Consents Might Be Required?	5	What should I do if it is permitted development?		Paint and Colour	
Advertisement Consent		What to consider if planning permission is required		Security	
Building Warrant		Protecting Shops		Blinds and Canopies	
Road Permit		Restaurants, cafés, snack bars and other Class 3 Uses		Automatic Teller Machines	
Licensing		Hot Food Takeaways		Air Conditioning and Refrigeration	
Table and Chairs Permit		Public houses, entertainment venues and hotels outwith Class 7 (Hotels and Hostels)		Signage and Advertisements	22
Biodiversity		Ventilation		Projecting and Hanging Signs	
Trees		Design		Fascia	
Changing a Residential Property to a Commercial Use	6	Noise		Princes Street	
When is planning permission required?		Changing a Commercial Unit to Residential Use	13	Directional Signs	
Private day nurseries		When is permission required?		Guest Houses	
Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)		What to consider if planning permission is required		Cycle Storage	24
Running a business from home		Protected shops			
Using your home as a guest house		Amenity			
Short Term Let Accommodation		Design			
What to consider if planning permission is required		Retain the shopfront			
Amenity		Simple contemporary design			
Road Safety and Parking		Residential appearance			
Parking in Gardens		Consider the privacy of residents			
Flatted Properties					
Further information					

Do I need Planning Permission?

Planning Permission

Planning permission is required for many alterations, and changes of use. However, some work can be carried out without planning permission; this is referred to as 'permitted development'. Permitted development is set out in legislation.

Common enquiries are set out in the relevant chapters of this document.

If you believe your building work is 'permitted development', you can apply for a [Certificate of Lawfulness](#) to confirm that the development is lawful and can go ahead. This can be applied for online at www.eplanning.scot

What is a change of use?

Most properties are classified under categories known as a 'Use Class'. For example, shops are grouped under Class 1 and houses under Class 9. Some uses fall outwith these categories and are defined as 'sui generis', meaning 'of its own kind'. This is set out in The Use Classes (Scotland) Order 1997 (as amended).

Changing to a different use class is known as a change of use and may require planning permission, although some changes between use classes are allowed without planning permission. Planning permission is not required when both the present and proposed uses fall within the same 'class' unless there are specific restrictions imposed by the council. The Scottish Government Circular 1/1998 contains guidance on use classes.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Fewer alterations are considered to be permitted development and most changes to the outside of a building, including changing the colour, require planning permission. More information on other consents which may be required is included on the next page.

Listed Building Consent

Listed building consent is required for works affecting the character of listed buildings and also applies to the interior of the building and any buildings within the curtilage. Planning permission may also be required in addition to Listed Building Consent. If your building is listed, specific guidance on [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas](#) must also be considered along with this document.

What Other Consents Might Be Required?

Advertisement Consent

Advertisements are defined as any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, and employed wholly or partly for the purpose of advertisement, announcement or direction.

While many advertisements require express consent, certain types do not need express consent as they have 'deemed consent'. You can check this by consulting [The Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 1984](#). Advertisements displayed in accordance with the advert regulations do not require advertisement consent.

Illuminated shopfront signage in a conservation area requires advertisement consent.

Building Warrant

Converted, new or altered buildings may require a Building Warrant. There is more Building Standards information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingwarrants. For detailed information please go to the [Scottish Government website](#).

Road Permit

You must get a permit to the Council if you want to carry out work in or to occupy a public street. A [road permit](#) will be required if forming a new access or driveway or if placing a skip or excavation in a public road. It will also be required for scaffolding

or to occupy a portion of the road to place site huts, storage containers, cabins, materials or contractors plant, to put up a tower crane or to operate mobile cranes, hoists and cherry pickers from the public highway. For more information contact the Areas Roads Manager in your [Neighbourhood Team](#).

Licensing

Some activities, such as the sale and supply of alcohol or late hours catering, require a licence. Please contact [Licensing](#) for more information on 0131 529 4208 or email licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk.

[The Civic Government \(Scotland\) Act 1982 \(Licensing of houses in Multiple Occupation\) Order 2000](#), requires operators of HMOs to obtain a licence allowing permission to be given to occupy a house as a HMO where it is the only or principal residence of three or more unrelated people.

Table and Chairs Permit

If your business sells food and drink you may be able to get a permit from the Council to put tables and chairs on the public pavement outside your business.

A [tables and chairs permit](#) allows you to put tables and chairs on the public pavement between 9am and 9pm, seven days a week and is issued for either six or twelve months. For more information please email TablesChairsPermits@edinburgh.gov.uk or phone 0131 529 3705.

Biodiversity

Some species of animals and plants are protected

by law. Certain activities, such as killing, injuring or capturing the species or disturbing it in its place of shelter, are unlawful. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place (or obstruct access to).

If the presence of a European Protected Species (such as a bat, otter or great crested newt) is suspected, a survey of the site must be taken. If it is identified that an activity is going to be carried out that would be unlawful, a license may be required.

More information on European Protected Species, survey work and relevant licenses is available on the [Scottish Natural Heritage website](#).

Trees

If there are any trees on the site or within 12 meters of the boundary, they should be identified in the application. Please refer to [the Edinburgh Design Guidance \(chapter 3.5\)](#) for advice.

All trees in a Conservation Area or with a Tree Preservation Order are protected by law, making it a criminal offence to lop, top, cut down, uproot wilfully, damage or destroy a tree unless carried out with the consent of the council. To apply for works to trees, go to www.eplanning.scot.

Trade Waste

Proposals for commercial use of a property should ensure that there will be sufficient storage space off street to store segregated waste containers, in line with the Council's Trade Waste policy.

Changing a Residential Property to a Commercial Use

What does this chapter cover?

Changes of use to:

- private day nurseries
- house in multiple occupation (HMOs)
- running a business from home
- guest house
- short term let accommodation

This guideline is not intended to address new hotel development which is covered by [Edinburgh Local Development Plan \(LDP\) Policy Emp 10 Hotel Development](#).

Where an extension to a residential property is required to then run a business from home, please refer to the [Guidance for Householders](#) to understand what permissions are required.

When is planning permission required?

Some activities within a residential property can be undertaken without requiring planning permission. Some common enquiries are given below.

What should I do if it is permitted development?

If you believe planning permission is not required, you can apply for a [Certificate of Lawfulness](#) for legal confirmation.

Private day nurseries

The change of use from a residential property to a private day nursery requires planning permission.

Where child minding is undertaken from a residential property, whether a change to a private day nursery has occurred will be assessed on a case by case basis. Consideration will be given to the number of children, the frequency of activity and the duration of stay. The criteria under 'Running a business from home' should also be considered.

Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The sharing of accommodation by people who do not live together as a family is controlled at the point at which there is considered to be a material change of use. For houses, Class 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997 considers this to be when more than 5 people are living together, other than people living together as a family. As with houses, the Council would also expect a material change of use to occur in flats when more than 5 unrelated people share accommodation. All planning applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are assessed using LDP Policy Hou 7: Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas, having regard to the advice below.

Running a business from home

Proposals which comply with all the following may not need planning permission, but always check with the council first.

- There should be no change in the character of the dwelling or the primary use of the area. For example, signage, display of commercial goods, increased pedestrians and vehicular movements, noise etc.
- There should be no more than the parking of a small vehicle used for commercial and personal purposes within the curtilage of a dwelling house.
- Any ancillary business should not be detrimental to the amenity of the area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, ash, dust, or grit.
- There should be no impact on the amenity or character of the area as a result of visitors or deliveries to the property.
- The primary use of the property must be domestic and any members of staff on the premises should have no impact on the amenity and character of the property.

Using your home as a guest house

Planning permission will not be required for the use of a house as a bed and breakfast or guest house if:

- The house has less than four bedrooms and only one is used for a guest house or bed and breakfast purpose
- The house has four or more bedrooms and no more than two bedrooms are used for a guest house or bed and breakfast purpose.

Planning permission will always be required if a flat is being used as a guest house or bed and breakfast, regardless of the number of rooms.

Short Term Let Accommodation

The city-wide Edinburgh Short-term Let (STL) Control Area came into force on 5 September 2022, which means that the use of a residential property for short term let accommodation will constitute a change of use requiring planning permission provided that:

- It is not a private tenancy under Section 1 of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016;
- It is not a tenancy of a dwellinghouse (or part of one) where all or part of the dwellinghouse is the principal home of the landlord or occupier;
- Sleeping accommodation is provided to one or more persons for one or more nights for commercial consideration (i.e. an exchange of money);
- No person to whom sleeping accommodation is provided is an immediate family member of the person by whom the accommodation is being provided;

- The accommodation is not provided for the principal purpose of facilitating the provision of work or services to the person by whom the accommodation is being provided or to another member of that person's household;
- The accommodation is not provided by an employer to an employee in terms of a contract of employment for the better performance of the employee's duties; and
- The accommodation is not a hotel, boarding house, guest house, hostel, residential accommodation where care is provided to people in need of care, hospital or nursing home, residential school, college or training centre, secure residential accommodation (including a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short-term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as military barracks), a refuge, student accommodation or an aparthotel.

These legal requirements are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Town and Country Planning (Short-term Let Control Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2021. Further detail is contained in Annex B of the Scottish Government's Planning Circular 1 of 2021 – Establishing a Short-term Let Control Area.

On 1 October 2022, the licensing scheme under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022 (the STL Licensing Order) will open to receive applications for short-term let licenses. The requirement to have an STL licence is separate from any need to have planning permission.

In Edinburgh, due to the STL Control Area, to lawfully operate a secondary let STL under an STL licence, there will be a need to either have planning permission in place, or an ongoing application for planning permission, or have it in place confirmation from the Council that planning permission is not required. In the event that the planning application and any related appeal is refused, the STL licence holder cannot lawfully continue to operate the secondary let STL in terms of their licence.

“Secondary letting” means a short-term let consisting of the entering into an agreement for the use of accommodation, which is not, or not part of, the licence holder's only or principal home.

Further guidance on licensing can be found on the [Council's website](#).

What to consider if planning permission is required

Policy Hou 7

Sets out when uses will not be permitted in predominately residential or mixed use areas i.e. uses which would have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions of nearby residents.

Amenity

Proposals for a change of use will be assessed in terms of their likely impact on neighbouring residential properties. Factors which will be considered include background noise in the area and proximity to nearby residents.

In the case of private day nurseries, whether nearby residential uses overlook the garden will also be considered. This is due to the potential for increased noise to those households.

Road Safety and Parking

The *car parking standards* define the levels of parking that will be permitted for new development and depends on the scale, location, purpose of use and the number of staff. Parking levels will also be dependent on the change of use and proximity to public transport.

The existing on-street parking and traffic situation will be important considerations in this assessment. The location should be suitable to allow people and deliveries to be dropped-off and collected safely. This is especially important for children going to and from a private day nursery. The potential impact on vulnerable road users – cyclists and pedestrians – will also be a consideration.

Parking in Gardens

The provision of new car parking should have regard to character and setting of the property and should normally preserve a reasonable amount of front garden. In a conservation area parking in the front garden would only be considered if there was an established pattern and it was part of the character of the area. Parking in the front garden of a listed building is not likely to be supported and there is normally a presumption against loss of original walling and railings and loss of gardens. Further information on the design of parking in gardens can be found in the *Guidance for Householders*.

Flatted Properties

Change of use in flatted properties will generally only be acceptable where there is a private access from the street, except in the case of HMOs. Nurseries must also benefit from suitable garden space.

Further information

If a proposal has the potential to result in impacts then these should be addressed at the outset so they can be considered by the case officer. Examples of information that may be required include:

- An acoustic report if there is potential for noise impact.
- Details of ventilation systems if the application has the potential to create odour problems, and details of the noise impact of any proposed ventilation system.
- Details of any plant and machinery
- Details of attenuation measures if structure-borne and air-borne vibrations will occur.

Short Term Let Accommodation

Applications for a change of use to short term let accommodation will be assessed and determined against the development plan, both with respect to LDP policy Hou 7 and National Planning Framework 4 (NPF 4) policy 30(e), and material considerations. The table below principally provides guidance in respect of LDP Policy Hou 7. It may also provide some assistance in considering NPF 4 Policy 30 (e) (i). This table is not relevant to the consideration of NPF 4 Policy 30 (e) (ii).

<p>The character of the new use and of the wider area.</p>	<p>Where the location is predominantly commercial in character and there are no residential properties in nearby, adverse impacts on amenity are less likely. This means it is more likely short-term lets (STLs) can be supported in such locations.</p> <p>Where the location is mixed in character (residential / commercial) regard will be had to the nature of surrounding uses and the proximity of the proposal site to residential properties. Where there is likely to be a further deterioration on residential amenity in such mixed areas, it is unlikely that short term let proposals will be supported.</p> <p>Where the street has a quiet nature or low ambient noise levels (particularly at night-time), STL will not generally be supported. No weight will be given to the existence of neighbouring unlawful STLs as justification for the grant of planning permission for an STL.</p> <p>The Planning service will assess the merits of any proposal against its impact on the lawful planning use of nearby properties. Where the area is wholly residential, it is unlikely that short-term let proposals will be supported.</p>
<p>The size of the property.</p>	<p>Larger properties can have a greater capacity for guests. Where there are greater numbers of guests, there is increased potential for noise and disturbance. Both the number and size of rooms will be taken into account when considering this.</p>
<p>The pattern of activity associated with the use including numbers of occupants, the period of use, issues of noise, disturbance, and parking demand.</p>	<p>If the property is accessed off a stair where there are other flats off that stair, it is very unlikely that a change of use will be supported. This is because it has been found that existing residents of flats within stairs are particularly affected by the pattern of activity which often results from STL use where multiple sets of guests stay for short periods of time throughout the year. Guests of the short-term let properties can arrive late at night and make noise and cause disturbance in a way which residents of that stair would not, given they will know of the impacts that they have on one another and be able to manage those impacts in a neighbourly way. Examples of disturbance include bumping suitcases up stair and using washing machines in the middle of the night.</p> <p>If the property does have its own main door access regard must be had to the other criteria within this table.</p> <p>Planning permission is granted to property rather than individuals, which means that property can change hands and be operated in a different way than was intended by the applicant for planning permission. Because of this, when considering the pattern of activity associated with a use, only limited regard can be had to how an applicant intends to manage that.</p> <p>It should be noted that licensing of STLs is separate from the planning system.</p>
<p>The nature and character of any services provided.</p>	<p>Where there is access to a communal garden which can be used by existing residential properties, or where there is a garden that would form part of the curtilage of an STL and would be in close proximity to residential gardens, STLs will generally not be supported. Where parking is provided, this will be considered within the context of the Council’s parking policies and guidance.</p>

Changing to a Food or Drink Use

What does this chapter cover?

Uses such as:

- Restaurants, cafes and snack bars (Class 3)
- Hot food takeaways (Sui Generis)
- Cold food takeaways which are classed as a shop (Class 1)
- Public houses and bars (Sui Generis)
- Class 7 uses (hotels and hostels) licensed or intending to be licensed for the sale of alcohol to persons other than residents or persons other than those consuming meals on the premises. i.e. with a public bar.

It does not include:

- Class 7 uses (hotels and hostels) without a public bar.

When is planning permission required?

Some food and drink uses do not require planning permission. Information on some common enquiries is given on this page.

Changing a shop to Class 3 use or hot food takeaway

Planning permission is required for a change of use from a shop to a hot food takeaway or to a Class 3 use, such as a café or restaurant. Whether this change has, or will occur will be determined on a case by case basis. Regard will be given to:

- Concentration of such uses in the locality
- The scale of the activities and character and appearance of the property
- Other considerations are the impact on vitality and viability, the effect on amenity and potential road safety and parking problems.

What should I do if it is permitted development?

If you believe planning permission is not required, you can apply for a [Certificate of Lawfulness](#) for legal confirmation.

Selling cold food for consumption off the premises

Businesses selling cold food for consumption off the premises, such as sandwich bars, fall within Class 1 shop use. If the building is already in use as a shop then permission is not required.

Some secondary uses alongside the main uses also do not need permission; this is dependant on the scale of the activity.

Ancillary uses which are not likely to require planning permission in addition to a Class 1 shop use are:

- The sale of hot drinks
- The provision of microwaves, soup tureens and/or toasted sandwich machines.
Note: hotplates for the cooking of food will generally not be acceptable in a class 1 establishment
- Seating constituting a very minor element to the overall use. The limit will vary according to the size and layout of the premises
- An appropriately sized café in a larger unit, such as a department store, if it is a relatively minor proportion of the overall floorspace and operates primarily to service the shop's customers.

What to consider if planning permission is required

Protecting Shops

Policies Ret 9-11

Set out which locations a non-shop use is acceptable. These policies should be considered if a shop will be lost as part of the changes. In some areas of the City, the loss of a shop use will not be permitted. In other areas, certain criteria must be met.

Policy Hou 7

sets out when uses will not be permitted in predominantly residential or mixed use areas.

Policy Ret 11

Sets out when food and drink establishments will not be permitted.

Restaurants, cafés, snack bars and other Class 3 Uses

Proposals will be supported in principle in the following locations:

- Throughout the Central Area
- In designated shopping centres
- In existing clusters of commercial uses, provided it will not lead to an unacceptable increase in disturbance, on-street activity or anti-social behaviour to the detriment of the living conditions of nearby residents.

Proposals in predominantly housing areas will not normally be permitted.

Hot Food Takeaways

With the exception of proposals within areas of restriction (shown on the next page), proposals will be supported in principle in the following locations:

- Throughout the city centre area as shown in the adopted Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP)
- In designated shopping centres as shown in the LDP
- In existing clusters of commercial uses, provided it will not lead to an unacceptable increase in disturbance, on-street activity or anti-social behaviour to the detriment of the living conditions of nearby residents.

Proposals in the areas of restriction will only be accepted if there will be no adverse impact upon existing residential amenity caused by night-time activity. Where acceptable, this will normally be controlled through conditions restricting the hours of operation to 0800 to 2000.

Proposals in predominantly housing areas will not normally be permitted.

Where a restaurant's trade is primarily in-house dining but a minor element is take-away food then this still falls within the Class 3 use. Where take-away is a minor component of the business it will not require planning permission.

You can find out whether a site is located in the city centre area or a designated shopping centre through the online proposals map for the LDP, which can be accessed via the following link: <https://edinburghcouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d1e3d872be424df5b89469de72bb03bd>

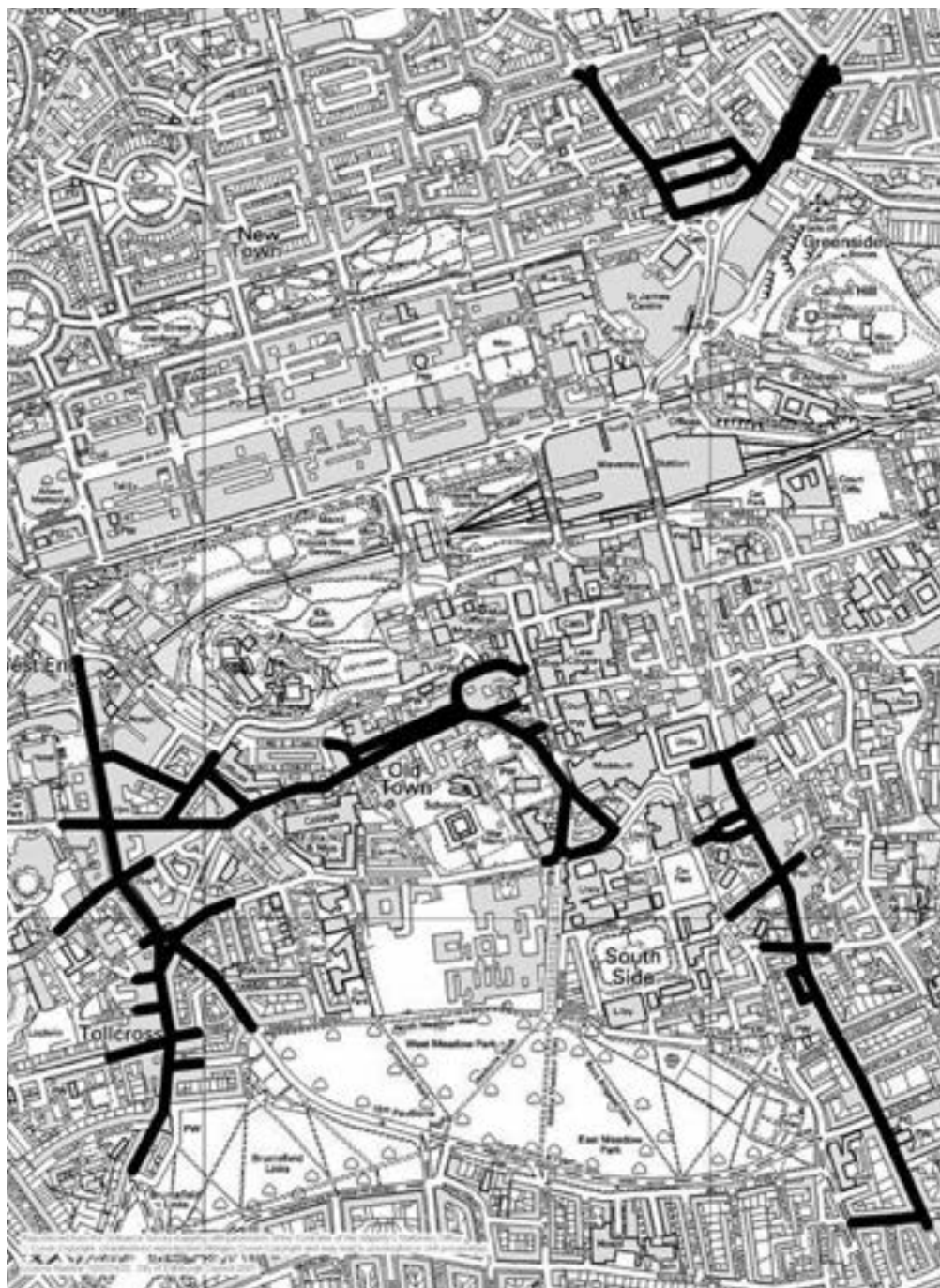
Public houses, entertainment venues and hotels outwith Class 7 (Hotels and Hostels)

In all locations, these uses should be located so as not to impinge on residential surroundings. Accordingly, such developments, with the exception of public houses designed as part of a new build development, will not be allowed under or in the midst of housing¹

There will be a presumption against new public houses and entertainment venues in the areas of restriction (shown on Page 10). Proposals for extensions to venues in the areas of restriction will only be accepted if there will be no adverse impact of the residential amenity caused by night time activity.

Proposals in predominantly housing areas and residential side streets will not normally be permitted.

[1] "Under or in the midst of housing" means a) where there is existing residential property above the application site or premises; or b) where there is existing residential property immediately adjoining two or more sides of the building or curtilage comprising the application site. "Residential property" means dwelling houses, flats or houses in multiple occupancy and includes any vacant units.



Ventilation

If the use is acceptable in principle, establishments with cooking on the premises must satisfy ventilation requirements to ensure that they do not impinge on the amenity of the residential area or other neighbourhoods.

An effective system for the extraction and dispersal of cooking odours must be provided. Details of the system, including the design, size, location and finish should be submitted with any planning application. A report from a ventilation engineer may also be required where it is proposed to use an internal route in an existing building for ventilation ducting.

The ventilation system should be capable of achieving 30 air changes an hour and the cooking effluvia ducted to a suitable exhaust point to ensure no cooking odours escape or are exhausted into neighbouring premises.

Conditions shall be applied to ensure the installation of an effective system before any change of use is implemented, and/or the restriction of the form and means of cooking where necessary.

On a listed building or in a conservation area, the use of an internal flue should be explored before considering external options. The flue would need planning permission and listed building consent in its own right.

Design

Any external duct should be painted to match the colour of the existing building to minimise its visual impact.

Location

Ventilation systems should be located internally. Where this is not practicable, systems located to the rear may be considered.

Noise

Conditions may be put in place to ensure that there is no increase in noise that will affect the amenity of the area.

The map identifies areas of restriction. These are areas of mixed but essentially residential character where there is a high concentration of hot food takeaways, public houses and entertainment venues.

Changing a Commercial Unit to Residential Use

When is permission required?

Planning permission is required to convert a business to a house or flat. Permission will also be required for physical alterations to any external elevation. Listed building consent, where relevant, may also be required.

What to consider if planning permission is required

Protected shops

Policies Ret 9-11

set out when a non-shop use is acceptable. They should be considered if a shop will be lost as part of the changes.

In some areas of the city, the loss of a shop use will not be permitted. In other areas, certain criteria must be met. These policies should be considered for more information.

Amenity

Policy Hou 5

Sets out the criteria to be met by proposals to convert to residential use.

Applications for a change of use will need to prove that the quality and size of accommodation created is satisfactory.

Units with insufficient daylight will be unacceptable; proposals should fully meet the council's daylight requirements in the [Edinburgh Design Guidance](#). Basement apartments with substandard light will only be accepted where the remainder of the created unit represents a viable unit in its own right with regards to adequate daylight.

Dwelling sizes should meet the following minimum requirements and exceeding these standards is encouraged. Provision of cycle and waste storage is encouraged and may be required in some instances.

Number of Bedrooms	Minimum Gross Floor Area (sq m)
Studio	36
1 (2 persons)	52
2 (3 persons)	66
2 (4 persons)	81
3 (4 persons)	81
Larger Dwellings	91

Design

New designs should be of a high quality and respect their context

- 1. Consider the architectural or historic merit of the shopfront and its context and identify an appropriate design from one of the following three basic approaches.**

Retain the shopfront



Henderson Street

Retaining the existing shopfront and adapting it for residential use is a simple method of conversion and ensures the property fits well within its context. Where the shopfront is of architectural or historic merit this will be the only appropriate design.

A design which retains the shop front could be used in residential areas or within a row of shops.

Simple contemporary design



Royal Park Terrace

Simple contemporary designs are often the most successful. The existing structural openings should be retained and any features of architectural or historic merit retained and restored. High quality materials should be used.

A simple contemporary design could be used in residential areas or within a row of shops.

Residential appearance

Conversions with a residential appearance are rarely successfully achieved. Attention should be paid to structural openings, materials and detailing to ensure the new residential property does not stand out from its context.

Windows which are a version of those on the upper floors in terms of proportions, location and detail are usually most appropriate. Doors should relate to the scale of the building and should not result in a cluttered appearance.

Paint work should be removed to expose the stone or toned to match the building above.

A design with a residential appearance may be appropriate in residential areas but not within a row of shops.



Consider the privacy of residents

To create privacy within the property, shutters or moveable screens behind the window could be considered as an alternative to frosted glass. Where considered acceptable, frosted glass should not occupy more than 50% of the height of the window. Retaining recessed doors also provides a degree of separation from the street. Metal gates could also be added.

Altering a Shopfront

There should always be a presumption to improve, where possible, a poor shopfront.

Understanding your shopfront

Policy Des 12

sets out the principles for altering a shopfront

1. Consider the period of the building and the style of the shopfront

Shopfronts come in many styles, reflecting the different periods of architecture in Edinburgh. Those of architectural merit or incorporating traditional features or proportions should be retained and restored.

2. Determine whether there are any original or important architectural features or proportions which need to be retained

The pilasters, fascia, cornice and stallriser form a frame around the window and should be retained. Recessed doorways, including tiling, should not be removed. Original proportions should be retained.



Pilasters



Cornice



Stallriser

3. Identify any inappropriate additions which should be removed

Large undivided areas of plate glass can be appropriate within a small shopfront, however over a larger area can appear like a gaping hole over which the upper storeys look unsupported.

Large deep fascia boards and other claddings should be removed and any original features reinstated.



Deep Fascia



Proportions



Cladding

Good Example

At 37-41 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh, restoration work has been carried out to remove modern additions and unveil the original Victorian shopfront of 'McIntyre's Drapery Stores'. Architectural features, including the cornice, pilasters and glazing bars have been exposed. Views into the store have now been opened up and the shop is more noticeable in the street.



Context

Shopfronts should be designed for their context

1. Consider the relationship of the frontage to the rest of the street

The relationship of the frontage to the established street pattern should be considered, particularly in terms of fascia and stallriser height and general proportions. Alterations should preserve and strengthen the unity of the street.



One shopfront across two separate buildings will not normally be acceptable as it disrupts the vertical rhythm of the facades above.



2. Consider the relationship to features on the upper floors

Where units have a narrow frontage and vertical emphasis, they should retain their individual integrity, rather than attempting to achieve uniformity with adjoining properties.



Good Examples



St Stephen Street



William Street



Grassmarket

New Design

New designs should be of high quality and respect their surroundings

1. Identify the features or proportions which will need to be retained or restored

The pilasters and frame should be retained, even if the rest of the frontage is not of sufficient quality to merit retention.

Poorly designed fascias and pilasters do not make up a well composed frame. Pilasters should not be flat to the frontage and fascias should not exceed one-fifth of the overall frontage height or be taken over common staircases. Stallrisers should be in proportion to the frontage.

Cornice which continues from the adjacent frontages will require to be restored. No part of the frontage should be located above this.

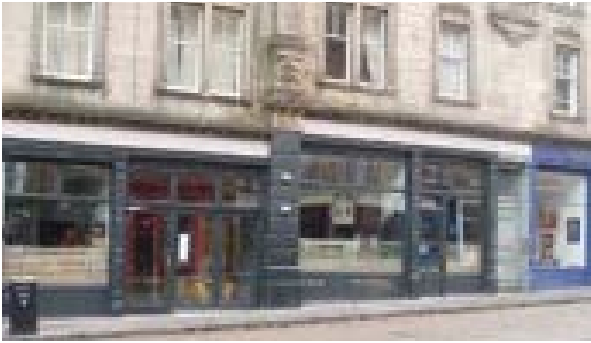
2. Consider the design and materials to be used

Where a new frontage is considered appropriate, there is no particular correct style. Modern designs will be considered acceptable providing they incorporate high quality materials, are well proportioned, and retain any features of architectural merit.

Reproduction frontages should be based on sound historical precedent in terms of archival evidence or surviving features.

Appropriate spacing and cornice should be used to create a visual break between the frontage and the building above.

Good Examples



Barclay Place



Bread Street

In general, natural and traditional materials, such as timber, stone, bronze, brick and render should be used. These should be locally sourced from renewable or recycled materials, wherever possible. Frontages clad in incongruous materials will not be acceptable.

Paint and Colour

When is permission required?

Planning permission, and where relevant listed building consent, will be required to paint a building which is listed or within a conservation area, including a change of colour.

Planning Permission will not be required to paint an unlisted building out with conservation areas. However the painting and colour of a building should reflect its character and the area.

Good Example



Victoria Street

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Paint

Unpainted stonework and other good quality materials should not be painted.

Colour Schemes

The creation of a strong identify for a business must come second to an appropriate balance with the context. Colour schemes should clarify the architectural form and not apply alien treatments and design. The most successful are simply schemes which employ only one or two colours.

Muted or dark colours are preferable.

Uniform Appearance

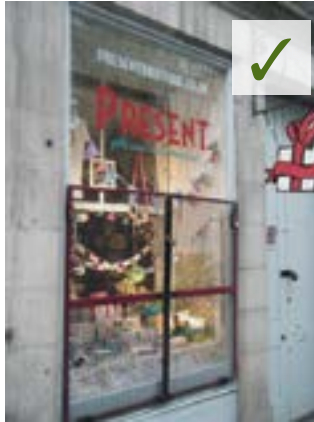
Coordinated paint schemes are encouraged and should be retained where present. In particular, common details, such as arches and pilasters, should have a uniform treatment. Similar lettering and signage should also be used.

The range of colours within a block should be limited.

Security

1. Determine whether a security device is necessary and consider alternative solutions

Security devices should not harm the appearance of the building or street. Toughened glass or mesh grilles could be used as an alternative to security shutters.



2. If a device is considered acceptable, consider its location in relation to the window

Where shutters are not common within the immediate area, they should be housed internally, running behind the window.

Elsewhere, shutters should be housed behind the fascia or a sub-fascia.

Shutters should not be housed within boxes which project from the front of the building.

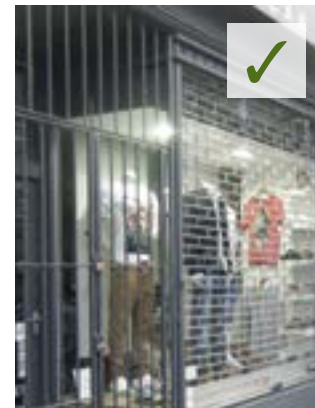


3. Identify an appropriate shutter design

Solid roller shutters are unacceptable. They do not allow window shopping at night, the inability to view the inside of the shop can be a counter security measure and they tend to be a target for graffiti.



Roller shutters of the non-solid type may be acceptable in a perforated, lattice, brick bond or open weave pattern. Shutters made up of interlocking clear polycarbonate sheets running externally to the glass may also be acceptable.



Where there is evidence of early timber shutters, they should be restored to working order or replaced to match.

External roller shutters require planning permission.



Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Externally mounted shutters will not be considered acceptable.

The most appropriate security method is toughened glass. Internal open lattice shutters or removable mesh grilles may also be acceptable.

Metal gates are most appropriate on recessed doors.

Shutters should be painted an appropriate colour, sympathetic to the rest of the frontage and immediate area.

Blinds and Canopies

1. Consider whether a blind or canopy is appropriate on the building

Blinds and canopies should not harm the appearance of the building or street.

Traditional projecting roller blinds, of appropriate quality, form and materials, will be considered generally acceptable

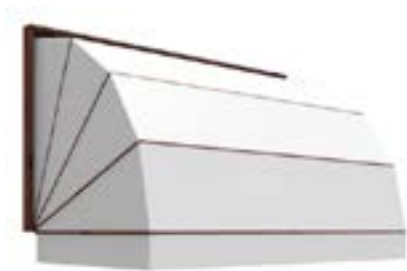
Dutch canopies will not be acceptable on traditional frontages where important architectural elements would be obscured.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Dutch canopies will not be acceptable on listed buildings or in conservation areas.

Blinds and canopies will not be considered acceptable on domestic fronted buildings.

Solar glass and film are acceptable alternative methods of protecting premises from the sun, providing they are clear and uncoloured.



Dutch canopy

2. If acceptable, consider the location of the blind or canopy

Blinds and canopies should fold back into internal box housings, recessed within the frontage. They must not be visually obtrusive or untidy when retracted.



Boxes housing blinds and canopies that project from the building frontage will not be acceptable.

Blinds and canopies will not be acceptable above the ground floor level.



3. Determine an appropriate design and materials

Blinds and canopies must be made of high quality fabric. Shiny or high gloss materials in particular will not be supported.

An advert, including a company logo or name, on a blind or canopy will need advertisement consent.



Other works affecting or relating to a shopfront or other business which may require planning and/or listed building consent:

- Installation of garlands, particularly if they are supported by a structure
- Free standing advertisement fixtures, awnings, flagpoles and banners

Where permission is **required** these will generally not be acceptable.

Automatic Teller Machines

1. Consider whether an ATM will be acceptable

ATMs should not impact upon the character of the building or area.

Free standing ATMs add to street clutter and will not be considered acceptable.

ATMs may be considered acceptable when integrated into a frontage, providing no features of architectural or historic interest will be affected and the materials and design are appropriate.

2. If acceptable, consider the location, design and access

Consideration should be given to pedestrian and road safety. Terminals should be sited to avoid pedestrian congestion at street corners and narrow pavements. The assessment of the impact on road safety will include any potential increase in the number of vehicles stopping, visibility and sightlines.

The use of steps for access to ATMs should be avoided and the units should be suitable for wheelchair access.

Where ATMs are removed, the frontage should be reinstated to match the original.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Consideration should first be given to locating the ATM internally. For guidance on internal alterations, consider the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area guidance.

Externally, ATMs should be located in a concealed position on the façade, within an inner vestibule or on a side elevation.

ATMs should not be fitted to finely detailed façades or shopfronts of historic or architectural merit. They will not be acceptable where stone frontages, architectural features or symmetry will be disturbed. New slappings (knocking a hole through a wall to form an opening for a door, window etc) will be discouraged.

Only one ATM will be allowed on the exterior of any building.

Where acceptable, the ATM should not be surrounded by coloured panels or other devices and signage should not be erected. The ATM and any steps or railings, where necessary, should be formed in high quality materials and be appropriate to the area. Surrounding space should match the façade in material and design.

Permissions Required

ATMs which materially affect the external appearance of a building require planning permission. Listed building consent may also be required for an ATM on a listed building. In addition, advertisement consent may be required for any additional signage.

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration

Location

Air conditioning and refrigeration units should not be located on the front elevation or any other conspicuous elevations of buildings, including roofs and the flat roofs of projecting frontages.

It will normally be acceptable to fix units to the rear wall. These should be located as low as possible.

Design

Units should be limited in number, as small as practicably possible and painted to tone with the surrounding stonework or background.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

The preferred location for units on listed buildings and within conservation areas are:

- standing within garden or courtyard areas (subject to appropriate screening and discreet ducting)
- Within rear basement areas
- Inconspicuous locations on the roof (within roof valleys or adjacent to existing plant). However, in the New Town Conservation Area and World Heritage Site, aerial views will also be considered.
- Internally behind louvers on inconspicuous elevations. This should not result in the loss of original windows.

Where it is not practicably possible to locate units in any of the above locations, it may be acceptable to fix units to the wall of an inconspicuous elevation, as low down as possible.

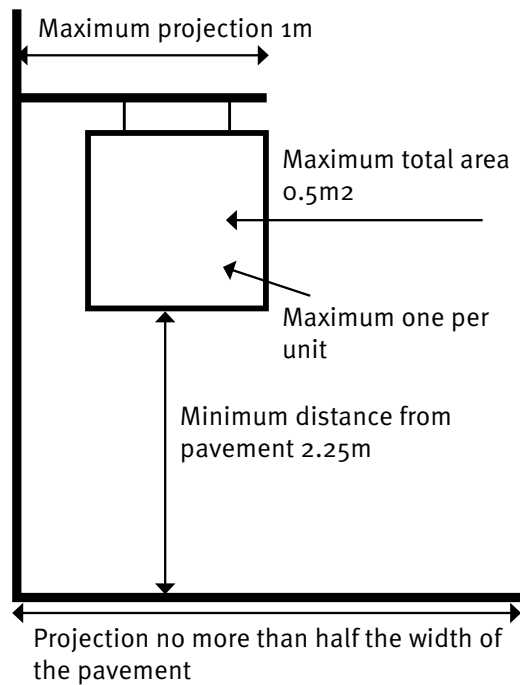
Units should be limited in number, as small as practicably possible and painted to tone with the surrounding stonework or background.

Ducting must not detract from the character of the building.

Signage and Advertisements

1. Consider the scale, location and materials of the advertisement and any lettering

High level signage is not normally considered acceptable.



NB. Dimensions may be reduced for smaller frontages

Projecting and Hanging Signs

Traditional timber designs are most appropriate on traditional frontages.



Fascia

Box fascia signs applied to existing fascias are not considered acceptable.

Individual lettering should not exceed more than two thirds the depth of the fascia, up to a maximum of 450mm.

Princes Street

Projecting signs and banners will not be supported. Illumination must be white and static.

Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Royal Mile

Signage obscuring architectural details is not acceptable.

Signage should be timber, etched glass or stainless steel; synthetic materials are not appropriate.

Signage should harmonise with the colour of the shopfront.

Applied fascia boards/panels will not normally be acceptable. Lettering shall be applied directly onto the original fascia. If there is an existing applied fascia board/panel in place, this should a) be removed and the original fascia restored, or b) an appropriate new fascia applied but only where there is no original fascia.

Letters must be individual and hand painted.

On buildings of domestic character, lettering or projecting signs are not acceptable. Guidance on alternative signage is given on the next page.

In the Royal Mile area of Special Control, there are additional controls on advertisements.

2. Consider an appropriate method of illumination

External illumination will only be acceptable if unobtrusive.

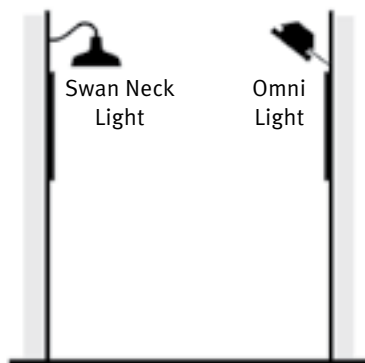
Individual letters should be internally or halo lit. Discreet spotlights painted out to match the backing material or fibre optic lighting may also be acceptable. Illumination must be static and no electrical wiring should be visible from outside of the premises. White illumination is preferable.

Projecting signs should only be illuminated by concealed trough lights.

LED strip lighting to illuminate signage may be acceptable where it can be positioned discreetly on the shop front.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Swan neck lights, omni-lights on long arms or trough lights along the fascia will not normally be acceptable. Letters should be halo or internally lit.



3. Consider alternative advertisements

Internal Advertisements

Advertisements behind the glass should be kept to a minimum to allow maximum visibility into the premises.



Directional Signs/ Temporary On-Street Advertising / A boards

Advance directional signs outwith the curtilage of the premises to which they relate (including 'A boards' and other temporary on-street advertising) will not be permitted.

Guest Houses

Houses in residential use (Class 9) but with guest house operations should not display signs, except for an official tourism plaque or a window sticker.

For properties operating solely as a guest house (Class 7), any pole signs located in front gardens should not exceed 0.5sq metres in area.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Basement properties

Basement properties may be identified by a name plate or modest sign on the railings, or where they don't exist, discreet and well designed pole mounted signs may be acceptable.



Buildings of domestic character

On buildings of domestic character, identification should consist of a brass or bronze nameplate, smaller than one stone. Where the building is in hotel use, consideration will be given to painted lettering on the fanlight or a modest sign on the railings.

Cycle Storage

Commercial buildings which operate under class 4, 5 or 6 of the use classes order* have permitted development rights to erect a structure for the purpose of the temporary storage of pedal cycles, provided that the following criteria are met:

- The structure will not be sited within the curtilage of a listed building
- If the site is located in a conservation area, the structure will be located within the front curtilage of the commercial building
- The structure will not obstruct the clear line of sight of a road or footpath by the driver of a vehicle entering or leaving the commercial building (a driver's view of pedestrians and drivers on the footpath and road next to the building should not be worsened as a result of the structure being erected)
- The structure would create an obstruction to light to another building

To get written confirmation that you do not require planning permission you can apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness. You can do this online and you will get a decision from us on whether permission is required. This certificate can be used to confirm you do not need permission. It can also be useful should you decide to sell or rent the premises, or if you are asked if you have permission for ancillary buildings.

Note: The planning authority will not provide informal opinions as to whether a building will obstruct either the clear sight of a driver, or light to another building. If you wish to seek clarification as to whether your proposal complies with these requirements in order to be considered permitted development, a certificate of lawfulness must be applied for.

* Use classes order

Class 4 - Business use

- As an office, other than a use within class 2 (financial, professional and other services)
- For research and development of products or processes
- For any industrial process

Being a use which can be carried on in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.

Class 5 - General Industrial

Use for the carrying on of an industrial process other than one falling within class 4 (business)

Class 6 - Storage or distribution

Use for storage or as a distribution centre



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