

Design Sheet 1:

Materials

- In the great majority of instances timber is the material traditionally used for shopfronts in South Lakeland. A few, very fine examples of metal shopfronts do survive, although almost all of these are contained within listed buildings.
- In almost every situation those historic shopfronts that retain anything like their original design or architectural components, will need to be retained.
- The material chosen for new shopfronts should respect the age and character of the building and adjoining street.



The whole window surround in this shop in Ulverston is constructed from stone

- Timber has many advantages for the design of new or replacement shopfronts: it is very versatile, capable of easy adaptation and if properly primed and painted, both durable and easy to maintain.
- In South Lakeland, stallrisers are traditionally constructed from unadorned or rendered masonry and only very recently have panelled or decorated timber stallrisers appeared, often with mixed results in terms of preserving local distinctiveness. In conservation areas, reference should always be made to the context within which the new shopfront is to be installed and materials selected appropriately.



Chamfered stone pilaster in Kirkby Lonsdale



Intricately carved timber console bracket in Kendal

(cont.)



Slate stallriser in a modern shopfront in Kendal

- Modern materials such as aluminium, plastic, acrylic or Perspex can work well when both the building and shopfront is contemporary in style. Where aluminium is used on such buildings a coloured, powder coated finish, chosen as an integral part of the overall colour scheme for the building, can often work best.
- Other high quality materials such as marble, terrazzo, bronze or chrome might also be suitable for use in such locations.
- It is often best to limit the number of different materials used, as too wide a range can result in a confused or chaotic appearance
- Some shops retain original or early tiled elements or inset counters and when these contribute to the architectural interest of a building they should be retained.



Polished granite stallriser in Grange over Sands



An unusual Edwardian shopfront in Kirkby Lonsdale combining carved stone pilasters and a timber lintel, which acts as fascia board

Design Sheet 2:



Narrow double doors and shallow steps can make access awkward for some users



Sometimes, as a last resort, an alternative door on another wall might need to be considered to ensure access for all

Access

- Access should be made easy for everybody including those in wheelchairs or with other aids to mobility; the visually impaired; parents with pushchairs and young children; the elderly and those carrying heavy bags.
- When designing a new shop front or planning alterations the needs of people with disabilities should always be considered.
- Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, service providers will, from 2004, have to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features that make it impossible, or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use their services.

- When dealing with Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas special consideration is required to limit

the conflict between retaining traditional features and providing access for all. In some extreme cases it may be necessary to create an additional entrance in a less prominent facade.

- Entrances should have a flush surface rather than steps. Where steps cannot be avoided they should be of suitable dimension, so as to make them more easily negotiated by those in wheelchairs and with other mobility aids and handrails should also be provided. Where ramps are necessary they should have the lowest practical gradient and certainly be no steeper than 1 to 12.



These handrails are a traditional feature, which creates interest in the street scene, as well as providing a functional service.



A good example of a slightly ramped door threshold which will aid access for users with limited mobility

(cont.)



The etching on this door make the doorway evident to the visually impaired. The etched glass ensures that the door does not appear as a void.

- Plate glass full doors and windows can be a hazard to the partially sighted and should generally be avoided. Partial glazing is favourable as it provides good visibility when entering and leaving the premises. Simple but strong designs etched into glass can make a positive contribution to a shop door or window and assist in the access and egress of people with visual impairment. Doors should not be too heavy and handles should be no higher than 1m from the ground.
- Flower tubs, litterbins, 'A' boards and other displays can be a hazard to the disabled and visually impaired.
- For guidance with specific access schemes, please contact our Access Officer on 01539 733333 extension 7191 or consult the British Standards document BS 8300:2001 Design of Building and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People - Code of Practice.
- The District Council intends to produce more specific and detailed design advice on this topic in the future.



Cluttered areas outside shopfronts can act as a real obstacle to those with disabilities



Sometimes ramps can be considered to ease access for those with mobility devices such as wheelchairs. The ramp has a shallow gradient and the handrail provides extra support and safety

Design Sheet 3:

Doors and Windows



Large areas of glass can be broken up through the use of mullions, as here in a shopfront in Kirkby Lonsdale, or with horizontal transoms

- Support for the structure above should be expressed through the design. A display front with a substantial, fully exposed framework to the window area often gives the impression of providing support for the upper floors. Where a shopfront extends across the full width of a building, careful attention needs to be given to the proportion and arrangement of the various solid elements so that they appear to provide a base for the fabric above, otherwise upper stories can seem to 'float' above the void of the shopfront. Thin or deliberately concealed framing with large areas of glass are often best avoided except on contemporary buildings.

- In most historic contexts, large, uninterrupted panes of glass will probably adversely affect the street scene. Windows can be divided using vertical mullions and/or horizontal transoms, which should be designed to fit not only with the proportions of the opening but also the balance of the whole elevation so that any aspects of symmetry or patterning in the overall design are maintained.

- Shop windows often work best if set in the same plane as the building front with any deeply recessed areas being confined to the entrance door.



A shopfront without much by way of framing, which therefore provides little apparent support for the masonry that appears to float above



A well conceived nineteenth century shopfront with strong vertical divisions and a recessed doorway



Characteristically asymmetrical arrangement for a traditional butchers shop with an opening sash window on one side that allowed the goods to be better displayed

(cont.)

- The use of purpose made joinery incorporating intricately moulded framing and glazing bars will be encouraged. Complex sections or profiles and the use of chamfers and run-out stops can sometimes add refinement and interest to the design.

- Successful designs might also incorporate the use of shaped brackets or curved heads to individual glazing panels or the provision of a trellis or fretwork patterns to transom lights.



A typical transom light detail showing the use of small leaded lights

- Shop doors should match the materials and overall design concept used elsewhere in the front and a similar arrangement of vertical and horizontal sub-division is to be preferred. A lower timber panel may be incorporated to continue the line of any solid stallriser while the use of a fanlight over the door may be positioned so as to follow the line of any transom lights.



Recessed doorway in Kirkland, Kendal, which neatly incorporates the original proprietors name

- Doorways can sometimes be successfully angled inwards to create an inviting lobby while also increasing the effective display area. The resulting deep door threshold could be invested with decorative surfacing materials although inclusive access should always be maintained.

- If an asymmetrical arrangement is chosen, with the entrance set to one side or off centre, it is important that the design fits in with the overall rhythm set up by any pattern of vertical sub-division elsewhere on the elevation.

- Schemes for shop premises which provide separate access from the shop frontage to upper floor accommodation need careful consideration to ensure that adequate provision remains for satisfactory first floor access.



A modern shop window in Ulverston which playfully mimics a traditional pattern of glazing through the use of an etched glass design

Design Sheet 4:

Architectural Details - Fascias and Cornices

- Fascias, pilasters and stallrisers are generally the most significant elements in any successful design as they help to frame the shopfront and give an overall impression of its scale in relation to the elevation as a whole.
- Fascias designed to be not much deeper than the combined height of any cornice and architrave and not exceeding approximately 20% of the overall shopfront height are often the most visually appealing. In general, any fascia and cornice will not rise beyond the height of the first floor and should always stop short of any first floor window sills or decorative features such as stringcourses or cornices. Many successful traditional designs have the fascia contained within the pilasters and any capital or console brackets.
- Applied fascia boards should be fitted so as not to conceal any original architectural details.



A Victorian shopfront with a bold cornice and simple fascia board.



A modern corporate fascia imposed on an older shopfront. The new fascia conceals earlier detail, is too tall for the shopfront and relates poorly to the architecture of the elevation above

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- The use of extended or sub-fascias, incorporated to hide suspended internal ceilings, will be discouraged. Designers should, instead, seek to conceal any such ceiling within the area of the shop window by either setting the ceiling well back from the shop front or by positioning it behind an obscure glazed transom light.

(cont.)



Attractively scaled, well moulded cornice and narrow fascia on traditional shopfront in Kirkby Lonsdale, with effective modern lettering added



An elaborate late nineteenth shopfront in Kendal with tilted fascia and discreet modern script

- Care needs to be taken to ensure that the proportions of the fascia and any pilasters are adequately scaled in relation to each other and to the overall proportion of the opening.
- Fascias can be tilted downwards slightly so as to be better seen by pedestrians below.
- The architrave below the fascia can be designed to house a blind box from which a flat canvas blind can be extracted.
- Well-designed shopfronts are often shallow in profile and examples that are too bulky and which project significantly or are designed with fascias that accommodate illuminated box signs or external security shutters are unlikely to be approved in areas possessing conservation value.
- As well as providing an opportunity for enrichment to the surround, cornices and architraves also perform a vital role in throwing water clear of the shopfront below. They are a necessary part of most successful designs and shopfronts that are designed without them can look thin and undistinguished.
- The provision of moulded cornices and architraves will be encouraged as will the use of reeded, fluted, panel or other appropriate mouldings on pilasters, subject to context.



An ill thought out shopfront, with an excessively tall fascia and a lack of any cornice, help make this shopfront appear uninspiring in design terms



Cornice and fascia detail scaled according to classical concepts of proportion, with simple, applied relief lettering

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Design Sheet 5:

Architectural Details - Pilasters and Stallrisers

- Pilasters can be very important in design terms as they help to frame and enclose the shop window. They are an area where ornament is often applied in the form of vertical mouldings or horizontal banding.
- Many pilasters were traditionally provided with a wider plinth or base at the bottom, and either simple capitals or highly decorative console or corbel brackets at the top, the whole being scaled according to classical notions of proportion.



A flamboyantly carved console bracket adds richness to a nineteenth century shopfront



An unusual, truncated, pilaster design around an early twentieth century shop window in Kirkby Lonsdale



A recent shopfront with poorly proportioned pilasters, which try, unsuccessfully, to imitate those in traditional designs: here the pilasters are far too wide, have unevenly sized divisions, and fit awkwardly to the fascia and transom lights



- The incorporation of new designs for pilasters, capitals and consoles, in a more contemporary idiom, will be given consideration subject to the use of appropriate proportioning.
- Stallrisers can be a vital design feature. Not only do they often improve the physical proportions of a shopfront but they can also provide protection to the glass from dirt and knocks and they can be strengthened internally to provide greater security. They also help to enclose a raised display area internally, at a height that is more convenient for passers by.

(cont.)

- In South Lakeland, the tendency is for traditional shop fronts to be provided with quite low stallrisers, often not more than 300-400mm high. The majority consist of simple masonry or rendered faces although the better examples are often provided with substantial or elaborately moulded sill in timber or stone to create interest below the display window.



Stylised capital detail found on top of pilasters in a shop in Kirkby Lonsdale



Simple panelled stallriser constructed in stone in a shop in Ulverston



Typical rendered stallriser, protected by intricately moulded sill above, as found throughout South Lakeland

- Very few traditional stallrisers are provided with formal panelling or enriched decoration although some modern designs have successfully used ornate tiling or polished stone. Careful consideration needs to be made of the adjacent townscape before a creative decision is made as to the appropriate design for any stallriser.



A contemporary shopfront that incorporates very good framing devices, including the vertical moulding often used in pilasters, as well as bold stallrisers and attractive transom-lights.

Design Sheet 6:

Architectural Details - Blinds and Canopies



A shop in Ulverston retains its flat canvas blind, which retracts into a flush blind box above the fascia when not in use

- Blinds and canopies can be invaluable for protecting goods from sunlight and providing shelter for pedestrians.
- Existing or original traditional style canvas blinds and blind boxes should generally be retained and, in conservation areas, permission is unlikely to be given for their removal or replacement.
- New blinds are most effectively positioned below the fascia and between the pilasters as this means the shop name will not be hidden and the blind will not interfere with or conceal the key framing elements of the shopfront.
- Regulations state that all blinds, fixed or retractable, must be positioned at least 2.43m above ground level and with their outside edge at least 1.0m away from the outside edge of the kerb. They need to be erected in such a way as not to cause obstruction, annoyance or danger to passers by.
- Blinds should always be retractable and ideally made of canvas or similar materials. It is highly unlikely that shiny plastic materials or fixed Dutch blinds will be approved as they generally conceal the fascia and other architectural features and introduce intrusive non-traditional shapes and textures into the high street. This is especially the case in sensitive historic areas, where they are often completely out of keeping.



Here, a scissor mechanism folds back when a flat blind returns to its flush housing below the fascia

(cont.)



A modern variation of the flat blind with a roller mechanism positioned in the housing



Here in Kirkby Lonsdale the historic character of the street and the individual interest of the shops is being eroded by the plethora of Dutch blinds that have been erected recently

- Many off-the-peg Dutch blinds or balloon canopies are often added simply because they seem to increase advertising space. In fact they often conceal the name board and mask any attractive character in the wider shopfront.
- Sometimes a shallow folding fan canopy may be an acceptable alternative where the hood is not expected to project too far from the shopfront but such canopies can require a deep box to house the folds and this might be inappropriate.
- A more modern alternative for those situations where produce or goods need protecting from harmful sunlight is the use of retractable roller blinds. These extend across the whole shopfront but are contained within the pilasters and descend vertically from a blind box below the fascia. Any such assembly should be an integral detail of the shopfront design.
- Generally, the colours chosen for blinds should be subdued as bright or gaudy colours will often jar with neighbouring shops and undermine the quality of the street scene. The most successful schemes are often those that use similar colours for the blind, fascia and any surrounds.



A large cumbersome housing for a Dutch blind masks the elegant shopfront behind



A recently added glossy Dutch blind hides the attractiveness of the shopfront behind and limits the amount of natural light entering the inside

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Design Sheet 7:

Decoration



Colour schemes should try to be neighbourly rather than deliberately eye-catching, as there is often a detrimental impact on the wider street scene when aggressively vivid colour combinations are chosen

Decoration schemes should be chosen with care to benefit the streetscape as a whole, especially in conservation areas, where traditional oil paints and pigments may prove to be the most successful. Colours and tones should try to be neighbourly as the use of discordant colours may distract and undermine the character and coherence of a particular street or area.

- Colour schemes should relate sympathetically to the colour and texture of the external masonry and any neighbouring elevations.
- Good results can be had on properties from specific periods by using paint manufacturer's specialist colour charts.
- The use of rich colours such as dark greens, blues and black are encouraged for the surrounds as these are the most traditional and so tend to work well in historic areas but they also better serve as a frame to show off the shop display.



The use of single, rich colours, which relate well to the adjacent walling materials often works best in framing the display area in an elegant way



Dark colour schemes, with contrasting lettering and numbering in gold, silver or white, often produces a very refined appearance



In order to keep the lettering in scale with the overall shopfront consideration should be given to keeping it to less than 60% of the combined area of the fascia and any cornice

(cont.)

- The use of bright or modern synthetic colours such as yellows, pinks, pale blues or orange are to be discouraged in historic areas as they generally relate poorly to listed buildings and vernacular properties.
- Painted timberwork will almost always prove to be more harmonious than the use of stained or varnished hardwoods or plyboards.
- The majority of successful and superior quality schemes tend to utilise simple, monotone combinations alongside the choice of stylish but plain script on associated signage.
- Encouragement will be given to the use of refined script for use on the fascia which is best limited to the name of the firm, type of business carried out or the product sold and street number. "Promotional" advertisements will not be allowed.
- The maximum size of the lettering should not be greater than 60% of the whole fascia height to keep it in scale with the shopfront and building. Individually applied letters in relief can sometimes be effective. Hand painted signs produced by a professional sign writer often look the best.



Care needs to be exercised when choosing colour schemes, as overly bright combinations can be discordant and unwelcoming



The use of unpainted timber is rarely sympathetic or harmonious in historic areas



The use of relief letters, in a simple font, applied to the fascia can be very successful

Design Sheet 8:

Security

- Traditionally designed features have been encouraged in this guide for aesthetic reasons, but they can also provide additional security to shop fronts. Stallrisers provide a solid base to display windows, which protects against dirt and knocks, but it can be internally reinforced to protect against attacks such as ram-raiding. Smaller panes of glass also hinder entry and are easier and cheaper to replace if a breakage does occur.
- The overall security of the building should be assessed before measures are taken to alter the shop front. Advice can be obtained from the Crime Prevention Officer. The Council notes the pressure placed on shop owner by insurers to have a fully comprehensive security scheme, which includes external shutters, but this type of proposal is not considered appropriate.
- If it is felt that added security is required then internal grilles should be used. Internal grilles have a minimal affect on the character of the street, allow the interior of the shop to be seen, so increasing security and allow window shopping out of hours.
- Only in exceptional circumstance will external grilles or shutters be granted permission. Roller shutters have a major affect on the overall street scene, by creating a lifeless environment, which can discourage use of an area and so increase crime in the longer term. External fitting also have an adverse affect on architectural features designed into traditional and contemporary shop fronts.



Internal security grilles have the joint benefit of allowing the shop surround and any architectural details to remain unobstructed



The combination of toughened glass with internal lattice grilles can provide better security and still allow window-shopping to take place out of hours

(cont.)

- Toughened or laminated glass can be used instead of shutter or grilles as a means of improving security. Toughened glass is five times stronger than ordinary glass for the same thickness and breaks safely into blunt fragments. Laminated glass on the other hand ranges in thickness and strength, but again it does not shatter when broken. Shatterproof adhesive films can also be used on existing glazed areas. The film does not increase the strength of the glass, but it does hold the pane in one piece.
- Although alarm boxes have to be visible to work as a deterrent, they should be as unobtrusive as possible. They should be fixed on to the fascia and painted in a colour which incorporates the box into the overall design of the shop.
- Internal lighting can be used as a means to deter criminals. During closing hours good lighting, which illuminates the whole shop interior and is visible from the street, can encourage people to window shop and also reduces the likelihood of a break in. The lighting should generally not be so strong as to illuminate the area outside the shop, as this might affect the character of the area.
- Residential use of floors above the shop can provide numerous benefits to the shop owner. As well as an additional source of income 'living over the shop' is a cheap and effective way of improving security. Having a constant presence over the premises is one of the most efficient ways of reducing crime and vandalism and often involves little alteration which might affect the character of the building.



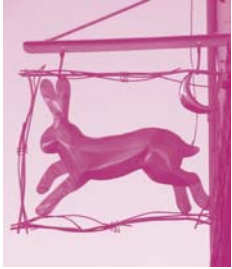
Where security alarms are fitted as a deterrent they should be chosen so as to be as unobtrusive, in terms of colour, size and location



New window designs, which incorporate smaller pane sizes, have the advantage of both deterring entry and being cheaper and easier to replace if breakages do occur

Design Sheet 9:

Signs and Advertisements



Well thought out designs, which use images instead of text, can often produce memorable images which enhance the character of historic areas, as this sign in Ulverston demonstrates

- The regulations around advertisement consent are complex and it is strongly recommended to take early consultation with a planning officer before altering or providing a new sign.
- Carefully designed signs can enhance the quality of a shop front or building. In contrast, too much information should be avoided - it will only serve to clutter the appearance of the building and reduce the visual impact of the sign.
- Fascia signs should simply state the trader's name and where necessary the type of business. The lettering should be in proportion with the shopfront and building as a whole and should be in a style, which conveys the image of the shop and is easily read.

- A proliferation of window stickers and advertisements will always detract from the quality of the shop front and are best avoided.



Shopfronts showing an excessive use of window stickers and sandwich boards can detract from the shopfront and limit the opportunity for easy window shopping

- Hanging signs can provide interest and character to the surroundings. Traditional signs should be painted boards hanging or supported by a simply bracket at fascia level, but contemporary hanging signs can also provide great visual interest to the street scene when they are finished to a high standard.



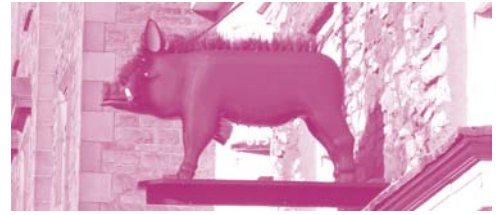
Simple hanging signs, with elegant and refined script, can be just as eye-catching as more ambitious signs, if well constructed and written



This sign is a good contemporary example of a projecting sign. It provides interest to the street scene and reflects the character and design of the shopfront.

(cont.)

- Where a fascia board is not available lettering can be fixed directly on to the building, but it should be of an appropriate style and scale. Lettering can also be painted or etched directly onto display windows. This can be used to great effect in sensitive locations, as it involves no physical alteration to the exterior of the building.



Historic signs such as this one in Kendal, add distinctiveness to an area and should be retained

- The use of illumination is strongly deterred in historic areas, as it can affect the special character of an area and is often unnecessary. Internally illuminated signs will not normally be permitted and externally lit signs should be of a very high standard, with the light fitting concealed.

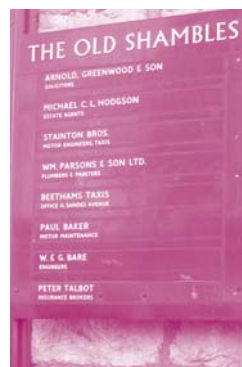
- Business nameplates are allowed, but they should not be illuminated, no more than one should be displayed for each person, partnership or company in the building and those larger than 0.3m² will require advertisement consent.

- Traders located in yards without a street frontage should use carefully designed signs at the yard entrance. Ideally traders should join together to produce a standard ladder or group sign, rather than a jumble of small signs.

- Sandwich boards can give the appearance of clutter in the townscape, and can be a hazard to the disabled and visually impaired if not carefully designed and positioned. These will be discouraged in favour of a suitable alternative, such as hanging and group signs.



An uncoordinated clutter of signs in the entrance to a yard can conflict with each other and so reduce their overall impact



Businesses with premises in yards should give thought to producing a joint group sign for the whole yard

Design Sheet 10:

Policies

Policy S2 - South Lakeland Design Code

All new development is expected to take account of the following South Lakeland Design Code. Planning permission will not be given for development, which fails to take proper account of that Code:

1. **Character:** The design of new buildings should take account of existing distinctive local character. This should not exclude good contemporary architecture in keeping with its surroundings. A good original design will be preferable to a poor copy of past style.
2. **Setting:** The setting of any building should be carefully considered, whether in the countryside or in a built-up area. Attention should be paid to its impact on public views into, over or out of the site. Those views should not be significantly harmed and opportunities should be taken to enhance them or open up new views. In the countryside, or on the edge of settlements, buildings should be located to sit comfortably in the landscape and skyline development should be avoided.
3. **Context:** New buildings should relate effectively to others around them adding interest and variety. New roofs should respect the roofscape of the area.
4. **Proportion:** New buildings should be well proportioned and in scale with their surroundings. Extensions should be in scale and character with the building to which they are added. Where appropriate, elevations should be in proportion to one another and with surrounding buildings. The size, spacing and location of openings should also be in proportion and related to the function of the building, and harmonious with its architectural style. Shopfronts should acknowledge the character and architectural style of upper floors; they should distinguish between separate buildings, be of materials and colours appropriate to the building, and be well proportioned in themselves.

Policy S11 - Provision for Disabled People

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In proposals for new development or alterations to existing buildings to which the general public have access, the District Council will seek to negotiate appropriate provision for people with disabilities, particularly where Part M of the Building Regulations does not apply.

(cont.)

Policy S12 - Crime and Design

The opportunity to limit or deter crime shall be taken into account in the location, layout, landscaping, lighting and detailed design of all new development.

Policy S14 - Shop Fronts

Well-designed and appropriate shopfronts whether original or reproduction should be retained wherever practicable and restored as necessary. New shopfronts should relate in scale, proportion, materials and decorative treatment to the façade of the building and, where appropriate, to adjacent buildings and/or shops fronts. All proposals shall comply with the District Council's "Shopfronts and Signs" Design Guide which forms Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Policy S15 - External Blinds

Proposals to affix external blinds or awnings will not be permitted unless they form a discreet, integral part of the premises and do not detract from the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding street scene.

Policy S20 - Control Over Advertisements

New advertisements and signs, which require approval, will be strictly controlled in order to ensure compatibility with their surroundings and to minimise clutter in the landscape and settlements. The District Council will operate particularly strict control in Conservation Areas, the open countryside and in respect of internally illuminated signs.

The policies listed below may also be relevant in some cases and may provide useful background policy information:

Policy C15 - Listed Buildings and Their Settings

Policy C16 - Control of Development Affecting Conservation Areas

Policy C17 - Article 4 Directions

Policy S13 - Security Measures in Town Centres

Policy S16 - External Cashpoint Machines

Policy S21 - Areas of Special Control of Advertisement

Appendix F: Security Measures to Retail and Commercial Premises in South Lakeland

Appendix H: Areas of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA)