

# LIVING & WORKING OVER THE SHOP

The upper floors over the shops offer considerable potential for increased financial return on the property. Their occupancy as either commercial or residential units automatically increases the number of people drawn to the area and the 'eyes on the street' security of 24 hour use.

This in itself increases the potential for trade and the 'lively character' which inevitably accompanies such diversity. The increased income generated from all these aspects permits a standard of external maintenance and general improvement which raises the quality of the environment and, in turn, increases its attraction to the public and potential customers, to the benefit of the landlord and tenant alike and the viability of the area in general. The upper levels of the original facade should be respected or replaced and any changes to the internal planning should not compromise this.

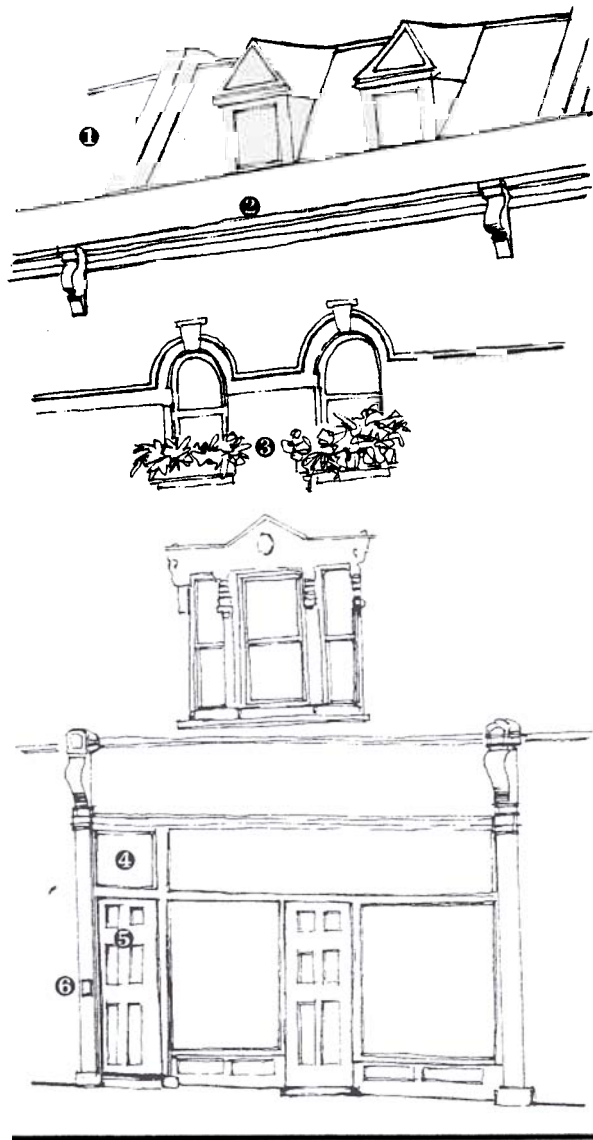
## ENTRANCES

The entrance should if possible be located on the street front, in preference to the rear of the building.

The front door and fanlight over should be integrated within the shop front surround, be of a suitable design and respect the character of the building. They should be fixed on the outer face of the building, usually one step up from the pavement. Recessed entrances are to be avoided for reasons of surveillance and security.

## ROOF DEVELOPMENT

Where original pitched roofs with dormers, gables, etc, form an essential part of a block/terrace in the street scene, alterations, enlargement or replacement of these with, for example, a mansard type design would not be considered acceptable.



## 16 BUILDING ALTERATIONS

- 1 Mansard roof addition
- 2 Existing parapet
- 3 Planted window boxes
- 4 Fanlight
- 5 Entrance door
- 6 Entry phone

However, where blocks/terraces have suitable parapets it may be considered acceptable to form a mansard type roof provided that the vertical emphasis (if applicable) is maintained, the bulk, height, pitch, windows, details, etc, are appropriate and set far enough back behind the parapet so as not to impinge upon the street scene.

## SERVICES

The addition of surface mounted services - extractors, pipes, conduits, cables, etc - would not be permitted on the street elevation and would require to be in keeping with the character of the building on all elevations.

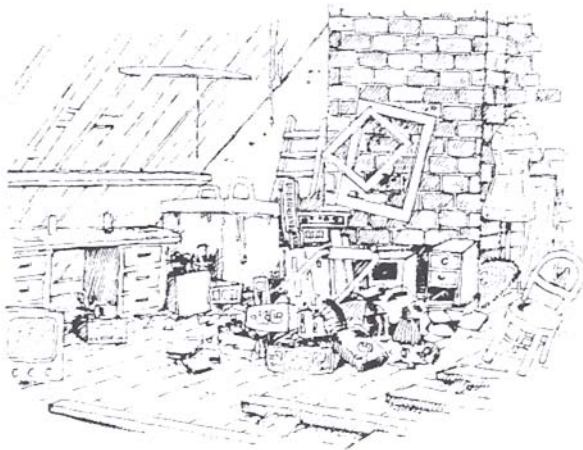
## ACCOMMODATION

Kitchens, bathrooms and toilets should be located to the rear to avoid window alteration and obscure glazing to the street elevation. Appropriate window boxes for planting fixed to the street elevation are to be encouraged.

## LIVING OVER THE SHOP

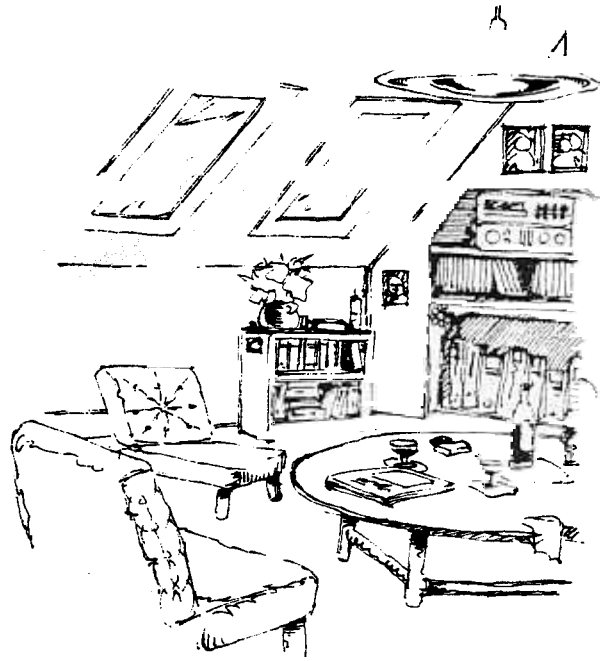
Britain's housing shortage is greater than ever before - yet in every town there are vacant rooms above many of the shops. Much of this empty space could be converted into self-contained flats - increasing the supply of homes and at the same time providing an increased income for the owner.

In the past, owners have often feared the restrictions imposed by legislation or have been wary of the 'red tape' involved in being a landlord. However, recent legislation has made it possible to lease the upper floors of a shop to a local Housing Association. The length of the lease could be as little as three years and the Association would guarantee vacant possession at the end of that period. The owner would receive an income from rents and would be free to sell or relet the property at the end of the lease terms.



USE OF THE ROOF SPACE BEFORE...

Refuse containers should not be stored at the front of the shop. Proper provision should be made at the rear of the premises.



...AND AFTER

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## THE HOUSING ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL

Housing Associations are non-profit-making and work at a local level, refurbishing or building homes for local people. They have access to grants not always available to individuals, and may be able to obtain loans to help pay for improvement works.

The Housing Association would;

- I arrange for a survey of the property, to assess the feasibility of conversion and the cost of works;
- II negotiate grants and loans as necessary;
- III liaise with the local authority to obtain the necessary consents;
- IV organise and supervise the improvement works;
- V manage the completed dwellings, including letting, rent collection, organisation of repairs and maintenance, etc.

## BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME...

### ... TO THE PROPERTY OWNER...

By leasing to a Housing Association the owner would;

- I receive an income from otherwise wasted space;
- II avoid liability for the Uniform Business Rate or Standard (Community) Charge on this space;
- III increase the value of the property by improving appearance and ensuring its future maintenance
- IV improve the security of the premises, since the risk of illegal entry is much reduced when property is occupied.

### ... TO THE OCCUPIER...

Flats above shops are particularly suitable for households without children, and this is the greatest housing need in many areas. The Housing Association would ensure that the improvement works were of a high standard and that

the property was regularly maintained and professionally managed.

### ... TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY...

A resident population ensures that shopping areas are not deserted outside shopping hours. This brings increased custom to local businesses and a general sense of pride in the area.

Empty space represents at best a lost opportunity and at worst a financial burden. The Living Over The Shop scheme can help you increase your assets, at the same time as providing someone with a home.

A list of useful Housing Association addresses and phone numbers is included below:

# NECESSARY CONSENTS

Planning permission is required for the replacement of a complete shopfront and for a significant alteration of an existing shopfront. It is also necessary to seek planning permission in order to install a fixed blind, canopy, shutters or grille.

Advertisement Consent is required in Conservation Areas for any of the following :

- I all internally illuminated or externally illuminated signs;
- II illuminated signs on a blind or canopy;
- III non-illuminated signs above 4.6 meters from ground level, or above any first floor window sill (whichever is the lower);
- IV large individual letters over 750mm.

Advertisement Consent is required in areas other than Conservation Areas for any of the following:

- I any signs above 4.6 meters from ground level, or above any first floor window sill (whichever is the lower);
- II illuminated signs on a blind or canopy;
- III large individual letters over 750mm.
- IV any sign exceeding one illuminated sign parallel to a wall and one projecting illuminated sign which complies with the conditions and limitations set out in the Control of Advertisements Regulations 1989.

Listed Building Consent is required for any works which would affect the special character of a building on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. This will include all requirements set out above, and also other non-illuminated signs as well as the removal and demolition or removal of an existing shopfront.

Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition or removal of an existing shopfront surround from a building located within a Conservation Area.

Building Regulations Approval may be needed to ensure that shopfront proposals comply with structural, fire and access for people with disabilities requirements.

Advice can be sought on planning advertisement, Listed Buildings, Building Regulations or Conservation Area Consent from the Council's Environmental Services department.

Application plans, in addition to a site location plan, should include the following information, as appropriate;

I elevational and plan drawings of the existing and proposed shopfront and signs, showing part of the adjoining shop unit and the upper floors. The layout of the shopfront should be clearly indicated, showing the structural elements within it;

II a cross-section of the proposed shopfront from pavement level to the first floor window sill;

III details on the design and dimensions of advertisement signs;

IV annotated details of materials and colours should be given on the elevational drawings;

V details of the proposed methods of illumination, if applicable.

# REQUIRED CONSENTS

PROPOSED WORKS	CONSENTS REQUIRED		
	TYPE OF BUILDING OR SHOP		
LBC - Listed Building Consent required PP - Planning Permission required CA - Conservation Area Consent required AC - Advertisement Consent required	Listed Building	Building - including a Listed Building in a Conservation Area	Building outside a Conservation Area
Display of internally or externally illuminated sign	AC+LBC see Note 1	AC	AC see Note 1
Display of non-illuminated sign where individual lettering is over 750mm in height	AC+LBC	AC	AC
Display of non-illuminated sign of which any part is over 4.6m from ground level	AC+LBC	AC	AC
Display of non-illuminated sign of which any part is higher than the the bottom level of any first floor windows	AC+LBC	AC	AC
Display of non-illuminated sign on a shop wall which does not contain a shop window	AC+LBC	AC	AC
Display of other non-illuminated sign not described above	LBC	-	-
Demolition or removal of shopfront surround, or parts thereof	LBC	CA	-
Demolition or removal of shopfront excluding surround or parts thereof	LBC	-	-
Alteration or installation of new shopfront	LBC+PP see Note 2	PP see Note 2.	PP see Note 2
Erection of a fixed canopy or blind	LBC+PP	PP	PP
Erection of a retractable canopy or blind	LBC	-	-
Erection of fixed shutters or grille	LBC+PP	PP	PP
Erection of removable shutters or grille	LBC	-	-

## Note I

You are advised to contact the Environmental Services Department. Telephone 0181-545 3117

## Note II

LBC and PP required if it changes the appearance of the building. You are advised to contact the Environmental Services Department Telephone 0181-545 3117 for guidance.

If you have any plans to alter your property or you would like some further information regarding the contents of this book, then please do not hesitate to contact the Environmental Services Department of Merton Council.