



## **A Development Control policy for considering proposals for the control of security screening on commercial properties**

### **Introduction**

This policy relates principally to properties within Conservation Areas and to properties within West Lothian's main shopping streets.

### **Conservation Areas**

Conservation Areas, often designated for their architectural character, are especially at risk from the installation of security screening. Accordingly, a strict policy is operated as follows:

- Security screening will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.
- In these exceptional circumstances internal grilles or meshes should be used wherever possible. Alternatively, carefully designed and installed external detachable grilles or meshes may be acceptable on certain properties.
- External fixed roller shutters of any type are unlikely to be acceptable.

These policy guidelines apply in all Conservation Areas (Linlithgow, Mid Calder, Kirknewton, Torphichen, Livingston Village, Broxburn and Uphall). In Broxburn and Uphall, suitably designed roller shutters, preferably of the open grille type may be acceptable because Conservation Area designation was mainly for historical and not architectural reasons and because there are already a number of unauthorised roller shutters. Solid shutters may also be acceptable on certain properties in Broxburn and Uphall Conservation Areas provided they are coloured to blend with the shop front and building. In all cases, roller shutters must be housed behind the facade of the shop front when retracted. Projecting shutter boxes are not acceptable.

### **Main shopping streets**

Other main shopping streets throughout West Lothian already have a number of solid roller shutters with projecting shutter boxes. Even some of the more visually acceptable grille shutters still have unsightly projecting shutter boxes. In these circumstances, it is not possible to operate a strict policy and it is thought to be more productive to look at these areas in a pragmatic way, accepting that shopkeepers have severe problems with vandalism and theft and that their insurance companies will often only countenance solid shutters.

Accordingly, the policy on security screening on commercial properties in main shopping streets is:

- Where shutters are proposed these should preferably be of the grille type. If this is not possible, punched out or solid shutters may be acceptable.
- In all cases, roller shutters must be coloured to fit the overall colour scheme for the shop front.
- In all cases, shops will not be allowed to have new projecting shutter boxes.

Where shopping streets are covered by closed circuit television, the fall in crime and vandalism due to the presence of the cameras should be reflected in the application of the policy on roller shutters. In these areas, shopkeepers will be encouraged to replace solid shutters with open grille type shutters to add more visual interest to shop fronts during closed hours. Applications for new roller shutters in these areas should also be approved in exceptional circumstances only, grille types being favoured.