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Secure
Design

Wyre Borough
Council

Supplementary
Planning
Guidance

Adopted
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SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE - SECURE DESIGN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 In November 1999, the government published its Crime Reduction Strategy. This document stipulates targets for reductions in crime, to which all Local Authorities must respond. Crime levels in Wyre Borough are thankfully relatively low. However, the Council recognises the significance of community concerns over crime issues in the Borough. The Council therefore seeks to address these issues at a local level via both its Local Agenda 21 and Community Safety Strategies. Many of the aims and objectives outlined in the latter document can be addressed at least in part by the planning system, via the appropriate design of development. The purpose of this guidance is consequently to ensure that issues of community safety plan an important role in this respect.

1.1.2 Much can be done at the design stage to change the way certain environments are perceived by the public and potential criminals alike. Careful thought at this point can directly contribute to a reduction in both the actual incidence, and perceived fear of crime including theft, robbery, assaults, burglary and vandalism.

1.1.3 Design issues in general are becoming increasingly prominent in the planning system. The publication of the guides 'By Design' and 'Better places to Live' in the wake of the revised PPG3 'Housing' (March 2000) demonstrates increasing commitment to the attainment of good design at government level. These guides describe how good design needs to be viewed holistically, highlighting the importance of respect for and response to context, and the need to consider urban design issues - ie. how people interact with their environment.

1.1.4 It is particularly towards the latter that this SPG Note responds. It is important to note however, that designing for a safe, secure environment forms only one aspect of "good design". The guidance therefore sets out

requirements for the design and layout of development in the Borough which allow for creative designs, balancing the need to prevent crime with the need to create high quality environments. It is therefore recommended that the guidance be used alongside the aforementioned government design guides in order to create an environment which is "people friendly" in every sense.

1.2 Legislative and Policy Background

1.2.1 A strong legislative and policy framework exists for considering community safety as party of the planning process. The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act strengthened the role of the Police and the Council to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour. Section 17 of the Act places a statutory duty on the Police and Local Authorities to exercise their functions with regard to the likely effect on levels of crime and disorder. This means that Local Planning Authorities must consider these issues when making planning decisions. Circular 5/94 'Planning Out Crime' recognises that the planning system is an important factor in a successful crime prevent strategy, and acknowledges that "crime prevent is capable of being a material consideration when planning applications are considered" (paragraph 3).

1.2.2 The guidance supplements policy SP14 'Standards of Design and Amenity' in the adopted Wyre Borough Local Plan, and reflects the advice given by the Police guidance 'Secured By Design' and 'Secured Car Parks'.

1.2.3 The Council considers the implementation of the following guidelines as paramount in response to the above guidance and strategies. Consequently, the principles contained in this SPG are material planning considerations, and the appropriate weight will be accorded to them in the consideration of any planning application. Developers will be expected to show that proposals have been designed to take the principles into account.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2.0 Crime prevention through environmental design aims to create a physical environment that is conducive to the overall security of the community. New development will be assessed against the general principles set out below:

Design Principles for Crime Reduction and Community Safety

Mix of Uses

- 2.1.1. The number of people using the area should be maximised through a mix of uses and activities. This is particularly important in less inhabited areas, such as town centres.

Building Design

- 2.1.2 Building design should deter criminal and anti-social activity. Opportunities to attain good levels of surveillance via fenestration should be taken where appropriate. Design features which could be used in order to obtain illegal access to a property should be avoided.

Public and Private Space

- 2.1.3 Public and private spaces should have clearly defined boundaries. Spaces which exhibit unclear ownership rights are more prone to neglect and vandalism, therefore development should be designed so as to avoid the creation of such areas. This can be aided by concentrating POS into fewer, larger areas rather than several small areas.

Natural Surveillance

- 2.1.4 Opportunities for the observation of criminal and anti-social behaviour should be maximised. Parking areas, open space and footpaths should be well viewed. Opportunities to increase levels of casual surveillance from passers-by should be maximised via the design of the road layout, which should facilitate an appropriate flow of traffic, but at a speed where casual observation is achievable.

Footpaths and Cyclepaths

- 2.1.5 Footpaths and cyclepaths should be located and designed to maximise their use and prevent opportunities for concealment. Where possible they should be overlooked by active frontages, wide, well lit, offer unobstructed views ahead - avoiding sharp changes in direction, and include a number of exit points.

Landscape Design

- 2.1.6. There is a need to balance the creation of a high quality environment with the need to reduce crime. Landscape design should prevent opportunities for concealment and access to property. Lighting should not be obscured by foliage. Appropriate planting can balance the twin objectives by providing a visually attractive, but effective barrier between public and private areas. Care should be taken with the design of hard landscaping not to create a hostile environment. Paved surfaces and benches should be designed and located so as to prevent opportunities for antisocial behaviour. It is also important that the choice of materials used as ground cover minimises the opportunities for causing damage to nearby buildings and vehicles - loose pebbles, stones and boulders providing a ready source of potential missiles.

Lighting

- 2.1.7. Appropriate use of lighting can reduce the incidence and fear of crime, and increase the chances of detecting it. Lighting should be designed so as to deter criminal and anti-social behaviour, but should also seek to minimise light pollution. Different sources of lighting and different patterns and levels of lighting will need to be considered for different environments. For example, Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15: "Planning and the Historic Environment" (PPG15) suggests that "high pressure sodium lamps (with well controlled light spillage) may be preferable in environmentally sensitive areas" including Conservation Areas (paragraph 5.17). The use of low level lighting columns should also be considered where appropriate.

Build Quality and Maintenance

- 2.1.8 Buildings, signs and public spaces should be designed to minimise opportunities for vandalism and graffiti. The public realm should be designed to last, with the minimum of maintenance. High quality public areas help to engender civic pride, and a sense of shared responsibility for the environment. Conversely, poor design in this respect can lead to a downward spiral of increasing neglect and degradation. Developers will need to satisfy

the Council that satisfactory arrangements have been made for the future long-term maintenance of relevant areas of the public realm. In some cases this may best be achieved by the transfer of the land to the Council, together with appropriate financial provision for its long-term maintenance.

3. TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

3.0 The following section identifies the main implications of the General Principles outlined above with respect to specific major types of development. Guidance is given with respect to the following areas:

- Residential Development
- Open Space and Children's Play Areas
- Town and Local Shopping Centres
- Car Parking
- Industrial Estates and Business Parks

3.1 Residential Development

3.1.0 The design of housing layouts can make a significant contribution to the prevention of crime and alleviating the fear of crime as well as deterring anti-social behaviour. Most crime in residential areas is opportunistic, including burglary, theft, vandalism, and car-related crime. In designing new housing layouts developers should take account of the following:

Neighbourhoods

3.1.1 Large new housing developments should be divided into recognisable 'neighbourhoods' to encourage social interaction and to create a sense of belonging and pride. Residents are then more likely to exercise control over their home and surrounds and be alert to strangers and anti-social behaviour.

Range of Dwelling Types

3.1.2 In general, large concentrations of similar types of dwellings should be avoided. A variety of dwelling types and sizes, including those likely to be occupied during the working day, such as those suitable for retired people, will ensure a mix of residents and increase the likelihood of natural surveillance throughout the day. Imaginative design solutions may be needed to achieve this.

Natural Surveillance

3.1.3 Natural Surveillance should be maximised whilst maintaining adequate privacy. This may be through a variety of design solutions, including siting dwellings so as to provide a degree of view between neighbouring homes, and frontage development to footpaths, play areas, open space and parking areas. Entrances to dwellings should be visible from the street.

Vehicular Access

3.1.4 Vehicular access to groups of dwellings should be across symbolic thresholds such as narrowed entrances, changes of surface material and the use of shared surfaces. The aim should be to create a private environment and a sense of shared ownership so that strangers can be readily identified and criminals made to feel vulnerable to detection.

Car Parking

3.1.5 Car parking should be provided within the curtilage of dwellings. If this is not possible then communal parking areas should be provided in well-lit areas which are open to significant natural surveillance and grouped so that residents can become familiar with the cars and their owners, and intruders noticed. Access to these areas should be similarly well-lit and open to surveillance. Parking bays should clearly relate to the dwellings they serve. Large communal parking areas are discouraged.

Footpaths/Cyclepaths

3.1.6 Except where they comprise security unacceptably, existing well-used footpath routes should be retained as part of new housing to integrate the development with established communities and to encourage pedestrian movement. The proposed footpath/cyclepath network should be viewed holistically, alongside the other aspects of the development in the early stages of the design. It should complement the layout of the development, featuring safe, legible linkages to open space and bus stops, and respond to the individual characteristics of the location. The network should be kept concise and legible.

with the construction of multitudinous footpaths kept to a minimum, taking into account the requirements for convenient circulation. Unnecessary footpaths should be avoided particularly where they might be used to gain unobserved access to properties and provide a means of escape for offenders. Where footpaths and cycleways have to be located directly along the rear of residential properties, suitable physical barriers, such as quickly established shrubs, should be provided to supplement walls and fences to prevent access to rear gardens. It is desirable that footpaths are of a generous width for actual and perceived security and to allow the passage of emergency vehicles.

Rear Gardens

- 3.1.7 Except in areas particularly sensitive in terms of landscape, where an unacceptably "hard edge" to the development would result, unsecured rear gardens that back onto roads, footpaths, cycleways, and open land should be avoided. Outbuildings, walls, fences, trees, street furniture and decorative features should not be designed or site so as to facilitate easy access to rear gardens and upper floor windows.

Lighting

- 3.1.8 All street lighting must comply with BS5489. Where conflict with other statutory provisions occurs (e.g. developments within conservation areas) requirements should be discussed with the local Police Architectural Liaison Officer (see Section 4) and relevant Council Officers. All foot and cyclepaths should be adequately lit. Security lighting should be designed to cover all external doors and other vulnerable areas, such as rear gardens. The use of low consumption lamps is recommended, with units positioned to reduce glare, light pollution and possible attack.

Boundaries

- 3.1.9 It is important that appropriate demarcation between public and private areas is clearly indicated. Dwelling frontages, which are open to view, may have low walls, fences or hedges. Less visible areas, such as side and rear gardens, need more defensive barriers with walls or fencing to a minimum height of 1.8m.

Consideration should be given to the use of additional deterrent features, such as a trellis top in particularly vulnerable areas.

- 3.1.10 Along the front boundary of new housing schemes an appropriate treatment is required, to clearly define and separate the public and private area. This should comprise a low wall or railings, although in suburban and semi-rural locations shrub planting may be more appropriate, depending upon the individual characteristics of the site location. In either case, the boundary treatment should allow a clear view into the front garden/car parking area of the frontage properties to provide additional surveillance from the residential properties opposite and from passing members of the public.

Wheelie Bins

- 3.1.11 To avoid wheelie bins from being used as a means of climbing into rear gardens, arrangements should be made from their storage within individual residential curtilages.

Rear and Side Accesses and Alley Ways

- 3.1.12 New housing schemes will not usually be considered acceptable if they are designed with service roads or long alleyways serving the rear of houses. If a separate pedestrian access to rear gardens must be provided along separate access way these should be fitted with lockable gates. The locks to these gates should be positioned at a level to enable people in wheelchairs to be able to use them.
- 3.1.13 In some older parts of Wyre, access is gained to the rear of terraced housing via alleys. Due to high rear boundary walls, many of these alleys are not properly overlooked and can provide routes for potential burglars. The use of lockable gates at the access points to these alleyways is a means by which those entering the alleys can be restricted. Any new gates should be approximately 2m in height. The gates should be designed so that they cannot be climbed over and have no supports or bars etc. that can be used as a foot/hand hold for any intruder to gain a leverage to climb over the gates.
- 3.1.14 When considering the possible use of such gates it is, however, important to pay due

regard to public rights of way. The use of alleyways may not be appropriate where public rights of way are adversely affected, and suitable alternative arrangements cannot be made. Alleyways may require planning permission, consequently it is recommended that their siting and appearance is discussed with the Planning Division prior to their erection.

Secured by Design

3.1.15 Secured By Design (SBD) is a Police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in development design. It features a wide range of guidelines which in some respects go beyond the remit of the planning system, therefore are not, in themselves, enforceable. However, they are recognised as measures of good practice, and the Council has consequently adopted the concept of SBD for the purposes of determining planning applications. Developers are therefore encouraged to adhere to the principles outlined in the guidance, and invited to initiate SBD approval prior to a planning application being submitted. Further details on Secured By Design are given in Section 4.

3.1.16 Additional guidance on residential development is given in SPG4 'Spacing Guidance for New Housing Layouts' and SPG5 'House Extensions'.

3.2 Open Space and Children's Play Areas

3.2.0 Vandalism, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour especially from adolescents are problems associated with public open spaces and children's play areas. Surveillance from dwellings and by people moving through or past such areas can significantly reduce criminal and anti-social behaviour. Developers should ensure that the following factors are taken into account:

Size and Location

3.2.1 The provision of small disparate areas of open space scattered throughout a development should be avoided. Open space for a development should be focused on fewer, larger areas, enabling the provision of buffer zones to reduce disturbance to adjacent dwellings.

Natural Surveillance

3.2.1 Public open space and any children's play areas and youth shelters, included as an integral part of new housing development proposals, should be located so as to maximise natural surveillance from neighbouring dwellings and from passing pedestrians and vehicles, whilst minimising disturbance to any adjoining residents. Substantial buffer zones of planting should be provided around these facilities in respect of the latter. Consideration also needs to be given to the location of lighting along roads and footpaths, which can improve surveillance during hours of darkness.

Pedestrian Routes

3.2.2 Pedestrian routes to and through areas of public open space should form part of the wider network to increase usage and improve safety. They should be sign posted to encourage use and limited in number in order to concentrate pedestrian traffic, increase surveillance and assist policing.

Planting

3.2.3 Planting should be at a suitable height where there is a need to maintain lines of sight, and be properly maintained to avoid hidden areas and to allow natural surveillance.

Play Equipment

3.2.4 Children's play equipment should be safe, robust and vandal resistant. Access should be via a hard surfaced, drained and well-lit path. Play equipment should be selected and located so as to reduce the likelihood of general disturbance, noise and other nuisances, whilst ensuring a safe play environment.

Youth Shelters

3.2.5 It may be appropriate to provide a suitably located sheltered place for youths to sit and talk. Lighting close by would increase the level of safety and the shelter's use, whilst making the facility more visible. Again, it should be located so as to reduce the likelihood of general disturbance, noise and o.

nuisances, whilst ensuring a safe environment - with access via a hard surfaced, drained and well-lit path.

from 24 hour lighting to deter burglary and to make the street feel safer at night.

Hard and Soft Landscape Elements

3.3.4 The appropriate location of planting and street furniture such as planters, seats, bollards and cycle racks can provide an effective deterrent to certain types of crime. In designing such schemes the needs of the blind, disabled and partially sighted should also be taken into account.

Rear Service Yards

3.3.5 Rear service yards should be secure and have lockable gates. Bin and storage areas should be large enough to accommodate all storage needs, including those of extended holidays periods. Care should be taken when designing yards to avoid the creation of potential hiding places and easy access to upper windows. Windows above or adjacent to storage areas should be avoided and where possible access to the rear of a shop when it is closed should be prevented. Where service yards are open to the general public, they should be well lit and feature active frontages to increase natural surveillance.

3.3 Town and Local Shopping Centres

3.3.0 It is the Council's policy to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town and local shopping centres. An attractive and safe environment is considered essential to the achievement of this. The key to reducing theft, vandalism, burglary and anti-social behaviour which are often associated with shopping centres is to achieve greater pedestrian activity, especially by increasing the use of the centres in the evening and by discouraging the creation of dead and hostile street frontages. This may be achieved through consideration of the following:

Mix of Uses

3.3.1 Consideration should be given to achieving a wide mix of uses in central locations - including more residential use, such as 'living over the shop', in order to increase pedestrian activity especially at night and to generate a general feeling of safety.

Shop Window Shutters

3.3.2 Internal open grille shutters to shop windows allow the opportunity for window shopping, thereby increasing pedestrian activity and encouraging the surveillance of retail premises from the street. External shutters such as roller blinds will not usually be permitted as they create a dead and hostile frontage and can attract vandalism and graffiti. Only internal open grille shutters may be allowed within Conservation Areas, or where the appearance of the premises is important to the street scene. Shutters on listed buildings will be allowed only in the most exceptional circumstances. Further guidance on this subject is given by SPG6 'External Shutters On Retail/Commercial Premises'.

Lighting

3.3.3 A well-lit shopping centre can deter criminal behaviour at night and make it feel safe, thereby increasing pedestrian activity. In town centres, new retail development may benefit

3.4 Car Parking

3.4.0 Car parking areas are vulnerable to the theft from and of cars. The fear of other crimes including muggings and physical assault within car parks and on foot paths leading to car parks is also common, particularly amongst vulnerable sections of the community. The guidance given below seeks to increase safety and reduce the fear of crime associated with such areas. Further information on the secure design of car parks is given in the Police 'Secured Car Parks' advice, details of which are given in Section 4.

Natural Surveillance

3.4.1 Car parks should be located so they are readily visible from nearby buildings and well-used pedestrian and vehicular routes. The boundary treatment of the car park should allow for views into it from these routes.

Main Footpaths

- 3.4.2 Main footpaths should be well defined, readily accessible from parking bays, and provide direct routes to the buildings or facilities they service. Footpaths to public car parks should be sign posted and well-lit to encourage their use. Any landscaping should prevent the opportunity for concealment. Low level planting is recommended. Consideration should be given to providing exit points from footpaths to increase the sense of safety of those using the paths by providing possible 'escape routes' so that those posing a potential threat might be avoided.

Layout

- 3.4.3 The layout of large car parks should avoid the creation of numerous cul-de-sac aisles that significantly reduce the opportunity for surveillance from passing cars.

Planting

- 3.4.4 Planting within large surface car parks is important in helping create an attractive environment. Planting should also be properly maintained, avoid the potential for concealment and retain the effectiveness of lighting.

Lighting

- 3.4.5 Car parks should be well lit whilst avoiding light pollution.

Private Car Parks

- 3.4.6 Smaller private car parks should be secured at night to prevent access and unauthorised and inappropriate use outside office hours.

3.5 Industrial Estates and Business Parks

- 3.5.0 The risk of burglary and vandalism to industrial buildings can be high, particularly at night when buildings and compounds are unattended. Empty roads, car parking and service areas also create extensive hard surfaces, which can attract groups of young people during evenings leading to vandalism and anti-social behaviour. These problems can be reduced through consideration of the following:

Entrance Thresholds

- 3.5.1 The use of a physical or symbolic threshold such as entrance pillars and changes in road surface can help to create an impression of a semi-private area. The industrial estate or park should have a securely fenced or landscaped boundary with intermittent views into the site.

Natural Surveillance

- 3.5.2 Access points, car parking and service areas should be overlooked from the buildings they serve. Parking areas should be well-lit with a safe and direct access for drivers from their vehicles to the building. Unprotected and secluded areas between and behind buildings should be avoided.

External Compounds

- 3.5.3 Secure external compounds for the storage of goods, materials and rubbish should be provided. The storage of flammable materials should be kept away from walls and buildings and should not affect means of escape or hinder access for fire appliances.

Vehicular Access

- 3.5.4 The number of vehicular access points should be minimised an surveillance from passing traffic encouraged especially at night, whilst seeking an appropriate balance with highway safety.

Footpaths

- 3.5. The number of footpaths to and through the industrial estate or business park should be minimised to concentrate use and reduce the number of potential escape routes.

Adjacent Uses

- 3.5.6 Account should be taken of adjacent uses, such as open space, and the means of enclosure of the premises in order to reduce the opportunities for access by criminals and the ease of their escape.

Landscaping

- 3.5.7 Landscaping, especially in the long-...

should not prevent natural surveillance or reduce the effectiveness of lighting.

4. ADVICE

- 4.1 If you are proposing to carry out development and wish to discuss your proposal and the Council's guidelines, please contact the Planning Services Section at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde, tel: 01253 891000. Crime and safety issues can be discussed with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer, at Fleetwood Police Station on tel. 01253 604345. Further details on the 'Secured by Design' scheme are available on the SBD website www.securedbydesign.com. The Secure Car Parks Scheme is administered by the British Car Parking Association. Further information is available on their website www.securedcarparks.com.