



Chapter 13 - Crime Prevention

2221/R/004 C
Revision C November 2004

Bilston Urban Village, Wolverhampton

BILSTON URBAN VILLAGE CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY

Providing a safe living and working environment

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This strategy has referenced the following documents

- UK Police 'Secured by Design' Initiative. This initiative supports one of the Government's key planning objectives - the creation of secure, quality places where people wish to live and work.
- Safer Places The Planning System and Crime Prevention
- Design for Community Safety Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

1.2 These documents identify a number of key attributes that are particularly relevant to crime prevention in the design of sustainable communities. How each of these attributes relates to the design of Bilston Urban Village has been briefly set out in this strategy.



1.3 LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

The revised deposit of the Wolverhampton City Council Unitary Development Plan has the following policies which relate to this strategy

1.4 CHAPTER 4: DESIGN

1.5 Policy D5: Public Realm (public space/ private space)

Proposals should promote active street frontages as a means of enclosing the public realm.

Developments should clearly differentiate between private areas and public spaces. The following principles should be taken into account in the design of new development:

- The fronts and backs of buildings should be clearly defined to ensure places are easily understood, physically secure, and feel safe and pleasant.
- Main entrances should open onto the public realm, windows and more active rooms should face the public realm, and blank walls or inactive facades should be avoided on frontages.
- Frontages should not be dominated by parking or servicing areas.
- Parking arrangements should be catered for in ways that do not detract from the effectiveness of the built up frontage in defining public areas.
- Parking areas should be secure, attractive and overlooked.

1.6 Policy D10: Community Safety (Part I)

Proposals should take full account of the need to prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime and promote community safety throughout the design process. Proposals should take account of the following principles:

- Opportunities for surveillance of public space should be maximised. Buildings should front onto the public realm (see [Policy D5](#)). Exposed blank facades should be minimised. Streets and other public spaces should be well lit.
- The layout of buildings and landscaping schemes should avoid creating "dead space", hiding places or cover for criminals. Segregated routes, footpaths and alleyways and parking spaces which are not directly overlooked should be avoided. Private space around buildings should be designed to be "defensible space" i.e. it should be secure, attractive and overlooked so that it is controlled, or perceived to be controlled by its occupiers.
- Attractive landscaping, fencing, walls, pillars, railings and other treatments should be used to reinforce boundaries and deter intruders.

2.0 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Places with well defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security.

2.1 MASTERPLAN DESIGN

2.1.1 The layout for Bilston has a good movement framework with direct routes that lead to where people want to go. This movement framework removes the need for under-used alleyways, short-cuts, and a large number of access points that can become vulnerable to crime.

2.2 FOOTPATH DESIGN

2.2.1 Routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles generally run alongside one another, avoiding isolated pedestrian routes.

2.2.2 Good visibility will be provided along the route of the footpaths and cycleways.

2.2.3 Pedestrians and traffic will be kept at the same level wherever possible to avoid creating intimidating spaces such as subways, footbridges and underpasses.

2.3 PLANTING NEXT TO FOOTPATHS

2.3.1 Planting where necessary next to footpaths will begin at the outer edge of the verge, starting with low growing plants with taller shrubs and trees to the rear.

2.3.2 Where footpaths run next to buildings or roads the path will be open to view.

2.3.3 Careful selection of plant species is critical in order not to impede natural surveillance and to avoid an unnecessarily high maintenance requirement.

3.0 SITE LAYOUT

Places that are laid out so that crime is discouraged and different uses do not cause conflict.

3.1 ACTIVE FRONTAGES:

3.1.1 The urban structure of Bilston provides 'active frontages' to overlooked streets. Windows and doors will face onto the streets, to allow good supervision.

3.2 MIXED USE

3.2.1 The frontage to the green spine will be mainly mixed use. This will ensure that the open space will be overlooked by buildings that are busy at all times.

3.3 COMMUNAL AREAS PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND PLAY AREAS

3.3.1 These will be designed to allow supervision from nearby dwellings with safe routes for users to come and go.

3.3.2 Street furniture will not be sited in areas that will encourage the congregation of groups.

3.3.3 Toddler play areas will be designed so that they can be secured at night. Fencing at a height of around 1200mm can often discourage casual entry and reduce damage to a useful extent.

3.4 SEMI-PRIVATE AREAS

3.4.1 Urban Blocks may centre on semi-private communal gardens that can only be accessed from the surrounding buildings, to provide defensible space.

5.0 OWNERSHIP

Places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community.

5.1 FRONT BOUNDARIES

5.1.1 Dwelling frontages will be open to view, so walls, fences and hedges will need to be kept low. Front garden planting of feature shrubs and suitable trees (e.g. open branched or light foliage or columnar habit etc) will also be acceptable provided they are set back from paths and placed to avoid obstructing visibility.

5.2 SIDE AND REAR BOUNDARIES

5.2.1 Vulnerable areas, such as side and rear gardens, need more defensive barriers with walls or fencing to a minimum height of 1.8m. There may be circumstances where more open fencing is required to allow for greater surveillance. Trellis topping fencing can be useful in such circumstances.

5.3 GABLE END WALLS

5.3.1 A 1m minimum buffer zone will be provided using either a 1.2 1.4m railing (with access gate), a 1m mature height hedge with high thorn content or a change in paving materials
Where there is insufficient room for a buffer zone, climbing plants will be used

5.4 DETAIL MATERIALS

5.4.1 Features such as rumble strips, change of road surface (by colour or texture), pillars or narrowing of the carriageway may be used. This helps to define the defensible space, psychologically giving the impression that the area beyond is private.

5.5 OPEN SPACES

5.5.1 Maintenance and a feeling of ownership of the public open spaces will be key in ensuring that the open space network is maintained and remains a safe environment. It is therefore essential that an appropriate management team is put in place before completion of the project.

4.0 SURVEILLANCE

Places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked.

4.1 LAYOUT

4.1.1 Places vulnerable to crime, such as the footpaths, the canal, the central green spine, and play areas will be overlooked by buildings, and not backed onto. Where possible, mixed use development will provide surveillance at all times of the day.

4.2 CAR PARKING

4.2.1 Where communal car parking areas are necessary they will be in small groups, close and adjacent to and preferably within view from the owners' premises.

4.3 LIGHTING

4.3.1 Lighting will be an important part of the Bilston layout the lighting should be sensitive to the needs of residents and users, without resulting in glare and compromising privacy. Lighting in places that are vulnerable to crime, such as the park, should be robust and secure. Places to which there is no legitimate access after dark could be unlit.

4.4 PLANTING

4.4 Planting should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance and must avoid the creation of potential hiding places. As a general recommendation, where good visibility is needed shrubs will be selected to have a mature growth height no higher than 1 metre and trees should have no foliage below 2 metres, thereby allowing a 1 metre clear field of vision.

6.0 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

- 6.1 During the construction phase of the development, care will be taken to prevent unauthorised access onto the site. Fly tipping is currently a problem in the Bankfield road area, and measures will be taken to prevent this during the infrastructure development. This could be in the form of mounding and ditches to prevent access onto the site.