

crime prevention through design



SUPPLEMENTARY **PLANNING GUIDANCE**

CANTERBURY
DISTRICT
LOCAL PLAN

September 2003



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Crime prevention through design

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places an obligation on local authorities, the police, Kent County Council, the Primary Care Trust, the Fire Brigade and others to form a local crime reduction partnership (The Safer Community Partnership) and co-operate in the development and implementation of a strategy for tackling crime and disorder. The causes of crime and disorder are complex and varied and the Act reflects the view that achieving a reduction in crime and disorder is not solely a matter for the police. Local Authorities have responsibility for a range of services and activities, and frequently make decisions that have an impact on local crime. Accordingly, Section 17 of the Act imposes a duty on local and police authorities to:

Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed upon them to exercise their functions with due regard to the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.
Home Office Briefing Note 11/00

- 1.2 Circular 5/94 "Planning Out Crime" states that the planning system is one important factor in a successful crime prevention strategy, and crime prevention is capable of being a material consideration when planning applications are considered.
- 1.3 With the strong emphasis from central Government on local authorities playing a key role in addressing crime prevention, and the need to consider design as an opportunity to reduce the potential of crime and the fear of crime across the District, the City Council has produced this guidance note to supplement its Local Plan Review Policy TC8, and objective to improve the quality of life across the District. It also supports the Adopted (1998) Canterbury District Local Plan 'principle of enhancement', which seeks to enhance the quality of life of those living in, working in or visiting the District.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) therefore is to encourage all practitioners engaged in the design, development, management or use of the built or landscaped environment, to consider the impact the design or use of a development will have on crime and disorder. It should also supplement the Community Safety Strategy (2002 – 2005) which aims to reduce crime and disorder collectively. The strategic objectives of that strategy are:
To target resources on high crime issues;
To develop healthy communities;

Policy TC8

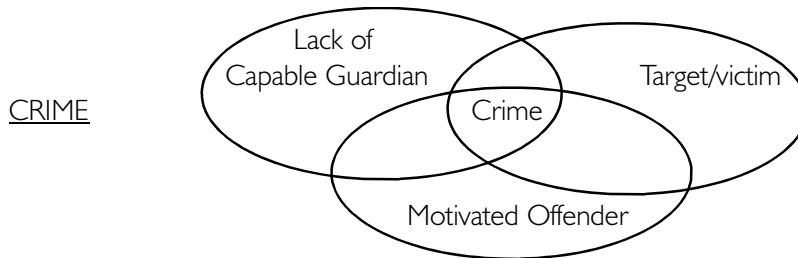
Policy TC8

To promote responsible citizenship and to tackle anti-social behaviour; and
To tackle crime bias – particularly racial and homophobic crime.

1.5 Policy TC8 of the Local Plan review sets out the City Council's objectives to improve the quality of life for all people in all places by planning for safe and secure environments. As such, although not written to be too prescriptive this guide should enable Circular 5/94, the Crime and Disorder Act, the Local Plan Review objectives, Adopted Local Plan principles and relevant aspects of the Community Safety Strategy to be fully considered in the design of built development and environments.



- 2.1 In order to appreciate the reasons that lead to criminal activity, it is important to understand the crime equation as illustrated below.



- 2.2 The diagram shows that for a crime to be committed, a motivated offender must find a suitable target/victim in the absence of a capable guardian. By removing one of these three factors, a crime cannot be committed.
- 2.3 In order to reduce the opportunities for criminal and anti-social activity and to reduce the fear of crime the following objectives should be considered.
- 2.4 Surveillance (capable guardian) both natural and technical is widely considered to be the most basic and essential element of deterring criminal or anti-social behaviour by making potential offenders feel conspicuous. Natural surveillance can be defined as the impression that someone is keeping an eye on their property. This idea of surveillance extends beyond the individual's property to public or communal spaces such as children's play areas, car parking spaces and the frontages of neighbouring properties.
- 2.5 Opportunist crime is likely to be reduced if the potential offenders feel there is, or may be, someone watching them.
- 2.6 Everything should be done to maximise the opportunity for residents, shop/office staff, tourists, etc. to keep an eye on the community around them. These range from the careful assignment of space, to specific houses or communal buildings. For example, the siting of car parking or play areas where they can be overlooked; the correct choice of planting; the use of open railings or palisade style fencing; and the contours of the land can all significantly effect the levels of natural surveillance. Attention to detail is very often all that is necessary.

Surveillance

Neighbourhoods

2.7 Closely associated with the principle of surveillance is that of neighbourhoods and the concept of territory. People who can identify with their community are more likely and willing to watch over and protect their particular neighbourhood. This should be borne in mind when siting children's play areas, staff car parking areas, cafe/restaurant terrace seating areas, the local bus stop etc. A sense of ownership and control should be established so that the local community for which an amenity has been provided can help to regulate the behaviour of those using or abusing that amenity.

Public and private spaces

2.8 Public space can be defined as any space with uncontrolled access, this will include roads, footpaths, parks and recreation grounds, but may also include land adjacent to blocks of flats or other high density housing projects.

2.9 Semi-public space is an area where there is limited opportunity to control access, residents parking/garaging areas, accesses to blocks of flats or other high density housing projects.

2.10 Semi-private areas will include the path or drive to main entrance doors, some communal lobbies, stairwells and lifts. It may also include open space over which the landlord or owner has a degree of controlled access by some physical means such as fencing, or signage i.e. Local Authority tennis courts.

2.11 Private space is space that is under the direct control of a person or persons, which is not directly accessible by others, e.g. side and rear gardens, secure parking areas, access controlled lobbies and stairwells etc.

2.12 Although there are a number of conflicting principles in relation to security and the design alternatives for organising space, whatever the approach adopted a general consensus exists over the importance of a strict differentiation between public and private space.

Potential Hiding Places

2.13 It is very important to eliminate potential hiding places. These unobserved areas create an opportunity for criminal and antisocial behaviour, including graffiti, drug taking and alcohol abuse. Failure to address this point may lead to an increase of this type of behaviour and crime being generated. It will also cause a disproportionate increase in the fear of crime.

- 2.14 A comprehensive approach to reducing crime and increasing community safety should be adopted. Design and layout should be considered in conjunction with other security strategies, such as target hardening measures (locks, bars, bolts, CCTV, etc.) and informal policing by the community. Different strategies should be incorporated into a comprehensive package. For example if it is not possible to provide the best possible natural surveillance it may be necessary to compensate by increasing the target hardening and the resistance of the likely points of entry.

- 2.15 The principle of a collaborative approach extends the responsibility for security and safety to people other than architects and planners. It will include all interested parties and future user groups. It is important that all the available information is taken into account when deciding on the design options for a particular site. This will not only ensure that the concerns and needs of the local community are taken into consideration but it will help to promote a sense of ownership and pride.

- 2.16 With the above general design concepts in mind, this SPG will now address more specific types of development or locations.

Comprehensive approach

Collaborative approach

The development itself

3.1 Careful design can reduce the incidence of crime and improve community safety. There should be a mix of dwellings, making it more likely that some of the homes will be occupied throughout the day thereby increasing the level of natural surveillance. Dwellings should be positioned to allow unobstructed views of neighbouring properties without conflicting with residents need for privacy. The creation of unobserved alleyways should be avoided.

Entrance to the
development

3.2 Where the location of the development allows, the entrance routes should include features such as changes of road surface, pillars or narrowing of the carriageway. This helps to create a symbolic barrier, psychologically giving the impression that the area beyond the barrier is deemed private space. Access should be restricted to as few routes as possible, taking into account the requirements for safe and convenient circulation. They should be designed to serve the development rather than provide unnecessary public access through it. Foot/cycle paths should be open to view, direct and overlooked by dwellings. Any landscaping adjacent to foot/cycle paths should be low level to reduce the availability of hiding places.

Landscaping

3.3 The correct use of spiny or thorny types of plants can help prevent graffiti and loitering, or enhance perimeter security. Landscaping should not impede surveillance and care must be taken not to create potential hiding places or trees that may become climbing aids.

Street lighting

3.4 Darkness and concealment are aids to crime and raise the fear of crime. Lighting should be provided to adequately cover the roads, foot/cycle paths, shared driveways and entrances. Care should be taken to ensure that areas of shadow are not created and that the lighting maximises the available natural surveillance, thereby deterring the criminal and reducing the fear of crime.

Communal areas

3.5 Communal areas such as playgrounds, seating or drying areas all have the potential to become crime and anti-social behaviour generators, and thereby raise the fear of crime. These areas should be designed to allow supervision from nearby dwellings and there should be a safe route for the users to come and go. Boundaries between public and private space should be clearly defined and open spaces should have features that prevent unauthorised vehicular access.

3.6 There should be a clear demarcation between public and private space. Dwelling frontages, which are open to view may have low walls, fences or hedges. Vulnerable areas, such as side and rear gardens, need more defensive barriers. The height of any perimeter treatment should normally be raised to 1.8 metres. If the risk is increased further, where side or rear gardens abut open land, foot/cycle paths or other such features such as railway property for example, additional defences such as trellis top or thorny shrubs should be considered. Boundary walls, bin and fuel stores, low flat roofs or balconies, should be so designed that they do not create climbing aids to gain access to a property. Footpaths that provide residents with access to the rear of their properties must have gates placed as near to the front of the building line as possible. This is to maximise the natural surveillance should they come under attack. The gates should be of a similar height as the boundary fencing. These gates should be capable of being secured and not easy to climb or remove from the hinges. In order to reduce thefts and attacks by bogus officials the utility meters should, where possible, be brought to the front of the dwelling. It is easy to understand why architects place these utility cupboards out of sight but by placing them towards the rear of the dwelling also means that any boundary fencing also has to be pushed back exacerbating the risk to the property. It is essential that dwellings should be clearly named or numbered to assist both the residents and the attendance of the emergency services.

3.7 Dwellings with in-curtilage car parking is preferred. Where communal car parking areas are necessary they should be in small groups, close and adjacent to the owners with whom they serve. These areas should be in open view of the residents and protected by high levels of natural surveillance. Where garages are provided, the entrances should be orientated towards the front of dwellings where they can be easily observed. Where parking is designed to be adjacent to or between residential units, a gable end window should be considered to allow residents an unrestricted view over their vehicles. Any parking areas should be provided with a good level of lighting.

Boundaries

Car parking

Car parks

- 4.1 Early collaboration, bringing together Community Safety Teams, Crime and Disorder Partnerships, Town Centre Management, Local Authority Planners and the Police etc. will help to ensure that any community safety, crime reduction or anti-social behaviour issues are dealt with at the design stage. Once a development has been completed, the main opportunity to incorporate crime reduction will have been lost.
- 4.2 One of the main reasons why people experience fear within the town centre environment at night is the fact that there are few people about. This fear for their safety and security keeps many people away. Changing this perception is the key to creating a safer environment. The more people that are using a town centre and its facilities the greater the increase in natural surveillance.
- 4.3 It is not always easy in design terms to integrate adequate crime prevention measures where these may have an adverse impact upon the character or appearance of buildings, conservation areas and the built environment generally. Each case should be considered on its merits, whilst seeking to make the buildings and town centre locations as safe as possible.
- 4.4 The design and location of many fire escape doors means that they are often targeted by vandals or used by vagrants. It is often not possible to have these doors positioned flush to the building line and where this is the case consideration should be given to using thick laminated glass as the main component in the doors' construction so that the door recesses can be viewed or covered by CCTV from within the building. Where possible fire escape doors should be located in areas of maximum surveillance.
- 4.5 Alleyways to the side or rear of the shops can become crime generators and a haven for anti- social behaviour. These alleys should be kept to a minimum and access controlled. Gates or doors placed across these routes should be located as close as possible to the front building line.
- 4.6 Pedestrian routes into and from the town centre to the various public transport interchanges and main public car parks should be carefully designed so that they enjoy the maximum available passive and technical surveillance. These routes should also be as direct as possible and should again be clearly signed to maximise usage. Care should be taken to avoid the use of subways along these routes. Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), every local highway authority is expected to prepare and publish a rights of way improvement plan. Such plans should consider the enjoyment of footpaths of which safety is of course integral.

- 4.7 Facilities provided at public transport waiting areas, bus stops etc. should be located in open view, within an area with good street lighting. Any seating should be *designed* to discourage it being used to accommodate sleeping.
- 4.8 Car parks should be designed so that there is a high degree of surveillance to all areas of the site. They should have a clearly defined perimeter that identifies it as 'private space'. High levels of illumination should be provided to all areas of the site and vehicular entry and exit points should be kept to a minimum. Pedestrian access and exit routes should be minimised and should have good natural surveillance with any landscaping adjacent to such areas maintained at a low level. There should be clear visible signage that identifies entrances, exits, lifts, and stairwells.
- 4.9 The District's city and town centres have an existing and growing night time economy. The City Council wishes to encourage a diverse economy by supporting evening uses for the benefit of the towns and City centres. However, some uses, in particular if these are located close to each other, can give rise to anti-social behaviour and an unacceptable level of noise, disturbance and fear of personal safety.
- 4.10 The City Council, whilst wishing to promote thriving town centres, will not grant planning permission for development that will give rise to large numbers of people coming out of pubs, clubs or other late night entertainments where there is likely to be a conflict with the need to protect residential amenity and public safety. Similarly, some other proposed uses that generate a peak in trading in the late hours, where this would have an adverse impact upon residential and environmental amenity, are likely to be resisted.
- 4.11 A balance needs to be struck and the City Council will consider each proposal on its merits, having regard to any measures that may be incorporated into the proposal to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour

Lighting

5.1 The measures encouraged in the section on residential development should also be adhered in this section. In addition, the following measures should be incorporated where possible and practicable.

5.2 Darkness and concealment are aids to crime and raise the fear of crime. However bright, street/security lighting is often met with objection from rural communities. Every effort should be made therefore to provide lighting that is sensitively designed to reduce glare and light pollution but at the same time adequately covering roads, path entrances, shared driveways and any other vulnerable areas. Care should be taken to ensure that areas of shadow are not created. Lighting should be used to complement any available natural surveillance, and not just used in place of it.

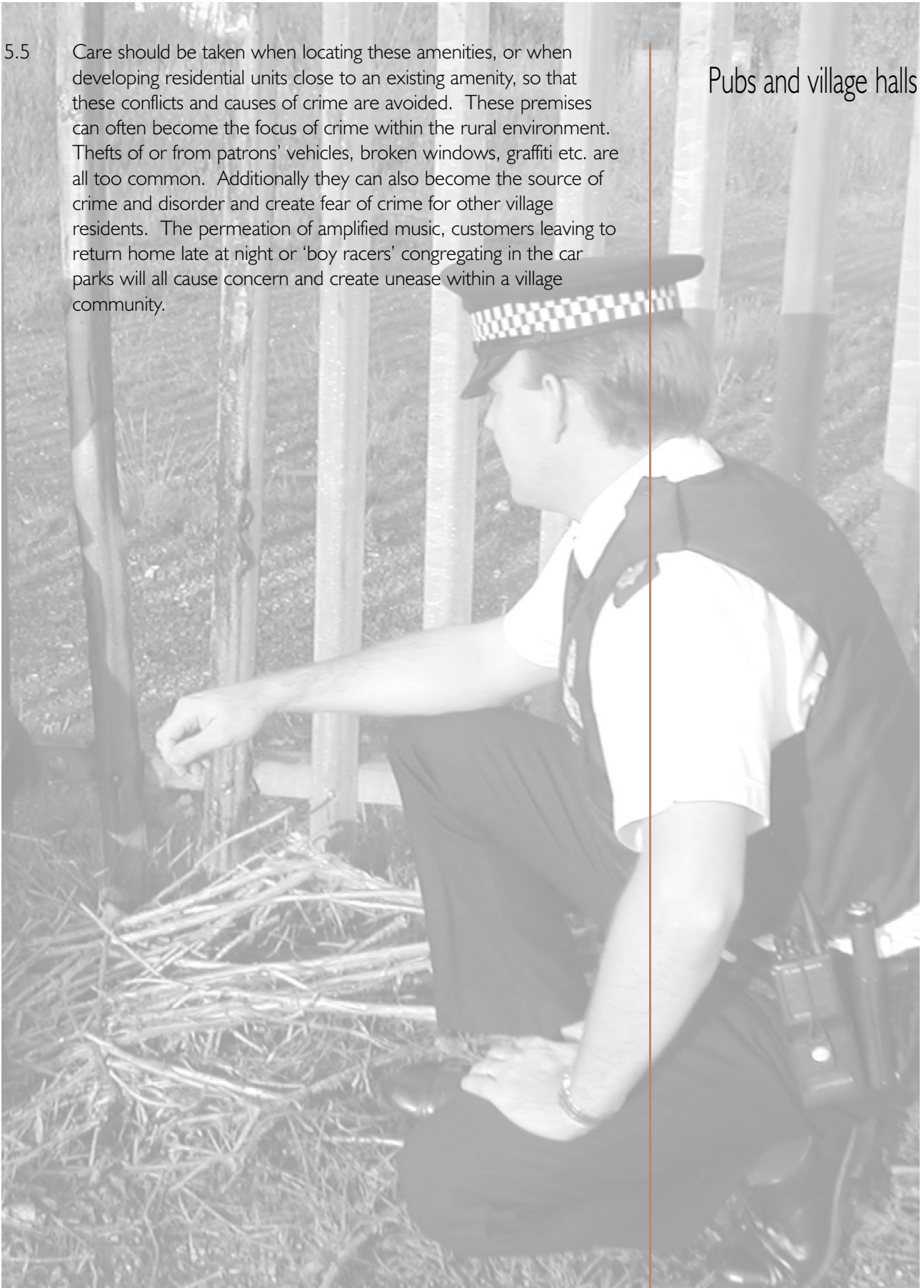
Village amenities

5.3 As we seek to bring sustainability and vitality to our rural communities there will be increased pressure for the need to bring cash vending, banking or Internet services to our villages. This is likely to be achieved by locating them within traditional village premises such as a public house, post office, village hall or church. We must remain aware that these premises are very often older buildings that may be listed or fall within a conservation area. They have until now had little need to keep pace with the urban environment in relation to crime prevention, through environmental design or the advancements in target hardening, because the risk to them has been relatively low. These additional services will make such premises very vulnerable. Every effort must be made to protect existing buildings and any new developments which are to provide these additional services against attack.

5.4 The area in front of any ATM or vulnerable shop/pub windows or doorways should be designed to protect against and withstand a ram raid attack by a goods vehicle or heavy plant machinery. Any protection should be set far enough away to prevent a mechanical arm reaching the building in order to remove the ATM or attack the building shell. The additional risk must be considered when designing or refurbishing shop fronts, doors or windows. Where possible, laminated glass can provide good protection against smash and grab offences. Community buildings such as these should be protected by high levels of natural surveillance. The area around any external ATM should be well lit, and should be free from any street furniture which may attract youths which will increase the fear of crime for those wishing to use that amenity.

5.5 Care should be taken when locating these amenities, or when developing residential units close to an existing amenity, so that these conflicts and causes of crime are avoided. These premises can often become the focus of crime within the rural environment. Thefts of or from patrons' vehicles, broken windows, graffiti etc. are all too common. Additionally they can also become the source of crime and disorder and create fear of crime for other village residents. The permeation of amplified music, customers leaving to return home late at night or 'boy racers' congregating in the car parks will all cause concern and create unease within a village community.

Pubs and village halls



- 6.1 It is important that all areas of open space are protected by natural surveillance to promote safety and reduce the fear of crime.
- Similarly all routes to or from the open space should be direct and be overlooked with clear sight lines.
- 6.2 Where fencing is provided around the boundary this should be of an open design to maintain surveillance. Height and design will be dependant upon whether the open space is to have restricted access.
- 6.3 Where open spaces have footpaths that link one development to another they should be direct, open to view, and served with adequate lighting. Street furniture should be located so that its use does not impede onto the path area.
- 6.4 The correct use of certain species of plants can help prevent loitering and the creation of hiding places. This is particularly important where they abut a footpath or amenity area. Landscaping in general should be so designed to ensure that surveillance is maintained at all times. For example, by keeping ground cover plants to a maximum height of 1 metre and the canopy of any trees to above 2 metres a clear unobstructed view can be maintained.
- 6.5 The boundaries to children's play areas should be clearly defined using 900mm to 1200mm wooden or metal palisade type fencing with self-closing gates. Any planting should be kept low so surveillance can be maintained on the children using the area. These areas should not be positioned too close to roads and the paths to and from these play areas should be carefully planned to afford the children the safest possible route. They should not be located close to car parking areas. The location should be carefully considered to ensure good surveillance but also the quality of life for residents in respect of noise.
- 6.6 So often children's play areas become a congregating point for older youths in the area. This often leads to damage to the equipment and younger children becoming intimidated against using their equipment. A solution to this is the provision of youth shelters. The provision and siting of these shelters should be done in consultation with the youths in the area, Community Safety officers and local Police.

- 7.1 Again, many of the principles of good design have already been set out in this SPG. However, there are some additional measures to take into account.
- 7.2 The design should encourage a hierarchy of defensible space and the use of real or symbolic barriers, e.g. access controlled gates or a change of road surface texture. This will help to encourage a feeling of territoriality amongst the users. High boundary fences and landscaping should be balanced with any available surveillance to achieve the best security. Frontages should be open to view. Public access, including footpaths through the development, should be controlled and unobserved routes avoided.
- 7.3 Car parking and secure motor/pedal cycle parking should be located and aligned to maximise the surveillance from employees and other estate users. Main services, i.e. fibre optics, telephone lines or alarm cables should be secured and if underground contained within lockable covers. Natural or technical surveillance onto all accessible doors and windows to the sides and rear of the units should be maximised.
- 7.4 External refuse and other hazardous stores should be located to reduce damage by fire. These stores should also be secure. Clear signage, and numbering or naming of the individual units will help to deter unauthorised access by reducing the opportunities for anonymity. This will also assist the estates users and emergency service vehicles.
- 7.5 When selecting materials for the construction of any units, resistance to attack should be considered. For example walls constructed of alloy sheeting with a sandwich of soft insulation material can be vulnerable to chain saw or similar tools. Design features that aid climbing or create deep recesses that can become hiding places should be avoided, where possible.

Development design

Industrial buildings

Consultation

The City Council went out to public consultation with this Supplementary Planning Guidance in parallel with the first deposit draft of the Canterbury District Local Plan from 3rd May until the 14th June 2002. The consultation arrangements and availability, therefore, corresponded with the Local Plan consultation arrangements. As with the Local Plan consultation, comments received in response to the 26th March 2002 report to the Development and Planning Committee were also accepted. The draft guidance was placed on deposit at the Council's offices in Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable, the libraries and the Kent County Council offices at Invicta House, Maidstone.

The consultation was drawn to the attention of the public by means of an article in District Life, published in March 2002 and delivered to all the households in the District. In addition, the Council has written to all individuals and organisations who either commented on the Local Plan Issues Paper (2000) and asked to be kept informed of the Local Plan progress, or submitted site representations during the pre-deposit consultation, to inform them of the consultation period. In addition the City Council has also written to residents groups, amenity societies and other local groups informing them of the consultation period.

The City Council has produced a summary of the consultation, including copies of representations and committee reports. This is available at cost of printing on request from the Local Plans Team on (01227) 862199.

REFERENCES:

In addition to this SPG additional information and guidance can be found in the following publications or on the following web sites:

'Kent Design - A guide to sustainable development'.

Department of the Environment Circular 5/94

British Standard Institution BS 8220-1:2000

Association of Chief Police Officers, 'Secure by Design Award' Scheme.

www.securedbydesign.com

Home Office Crime Prevention

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimeprev

Or from the Police County Architectural Liaison Officer.