Banyule

CITY COUNCIL

BANYULE SAFER DESIGN GUIDE

28 April 2003

INTRODUCTION

Safety has been identified as an important issue to Council and the Banyule community. The *Banyule Health Plan* promotes the improvement of safety for people living, working and travelling in Banyule as one of its major goals. Similarly the Municipal Strategic Statement in the Banyule Planning Scheme seeks to achieve a safe, attractive and high quality built environment.

Council is implementing these objectives through the adoption of safer design principles and policies, which acknowledge that the proper design and effective use of the physical environment can reduce the incidence and fear of crime, thereby improving quality of life. Accordingly a Safer Design Policy is proposed to be introduced at Clause 22.09 of the Banyule Planning Scheme, stating that it is Council policy to improve public perceptions of safety and reduce the risk of crime through the design of the built environment.

This Design Guide sets out safer design and land use principles which are to be considered by Council, development proponents and the community when proposing or considering changes or additions to the urban environment. These principles are in part based upon the provisions of the *Safer Design Code* (Bell Planning Associates), which outlines performance criteria and design solutions to minimise the potential for a proposed development or land use to facilitate or support criminal behaviour.

It is important to note that the safer design policies and guidelines below apply both to development on private land and Council or institutional projects which may affect buildings, streetscapes or open space, regardless of whether they require a planning permit.

OBJECTIVES

- To minimise opportunities for crime, through well designed and well maintained buildings and spaces.
- To improve community safety and quality of life.
- To enhance community perceptions of safety and reduce fear.
- To increase use of public spaces and improve accessibility to public premises.
- To discourage graffiti and vandalism.

KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Informal surveillance - providing opportunities for observation of people and their surrounds by others so that crime and inappropriate behaviour may be detected and discouraged.

Example: The placement of windows in a new office building to overlook a car park or parkland.

Territorial Reinforcement – encouraging and conveying a sense of ownership and demonstrating that property is cared for to ensure that people feel comfortable in and visit public spaces.

Examples: Designing an attractive building or shopfront with a prominent entrance; or providing clear signage which identifies and demonstrates ownership of a space; or removing graffiti quickly from a playground – if initial vandalism is ignored it can attract further attacks as it shows an area has no ownership.

Access Control – using physical and symbolic barriers to influence the movement of people and define appropriate spaces for public access.

Example: Utilising the placement of garden beds to discourage public access to a restricted area.

Vulnerable uses and developments are activities and buildings which have been shown to attract crime and illegitimate behaviour, or which are publicly perceived as unsafe.

Example: Common vulnerable uses and developments include car parks (including multi-storey and underground car parks), public toilets, major shopping centres, large and licensed entertainment venues, large institutional uses, transport interchanges, ATM's and telephone booths.

Vulnerable settings are locations, areas and access routes which are isolated or concealed, or which generate a poor perception of safety, especially where after hours use is anticipated.

Example: Underpasses, laneways, parks and access routes to and from institutional campuses, car parks, public transport, shopping centres and entertainment venues where people's movement can be easily predicted.

SAFE DESIGN RESPONSE

The purpose of a Safe Design Response is to ensure that safety and crime issues are considered as an integral part of the initial design process. A Safe Design Response should be prepared in the following circumstances:

- For any Council initiated project which will affect the built environment.

- By external (non-Council) proponents when preparing a planning permit application for a vulnerable use or development, or a use or development in a vulnerable setting. This is to be required by the Safer Design Policy proposed to be included in the Banyule Planning Scheme.

The preparation of a Safe Design Response will involve the following:

1. Determine environmental factors which increase actual and perceived vulnerability for users. This will require an assessment of a site or area's existing appearance, layout and use.

   Examine issues such as:

   - *location and accessibility of activities*
   - *location and accessibility of pedestrian and transport routes*
   - *hours of use*
   - *location and type of lighting*
   - *isolated areas or concealed locations*
   - *existing security measures*
   - *building design (location of entrances and windows)*
   - *any special needs of likely user groups (for example children, aged persons, persons with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, persons with disabilities, women and so on)*

   Other issues which should be considered as relevant, especially for major projects:

   - *Consultation with the community, community organisations or specific user groups to account for local safety needs and issues which might enhance the effectiveness and public ownership of a design. For example a proponent might contact a local trader's association in relation to a development in a shopping centre, or consult sporting clubs if a new facility is proposed in a reserve. Community feedback may then be incorporated into the Safe Design Response.*

- *Crime data, or social and demographic information pertaining to an area. A broad analysis of such information may be used to identify areas of greater vulnerability to crime.*

2. Identify how the proposed design responds to the issues identified above and demonstrates application of the Urban Design and Land Use Principles set out below.

   Detail measures which will enhance the safety of a site for users and deter potential offenders having regard to the characteristics of a site or area and the Urban Design and Land Use Principles.

If you require further information about the preparation of a Safe Design Response, or specific demographic or crime data, please contact Council.

URBAN DESIGN AND LAND USE PRINCIPLES

The following design principles and guidelines should be considered in any proposal which affects the built environment.

Informal Surveillance

> Encourage design which incorporates informal surveillance and allows for good visibility into and within spaces.
>
> *Examples: Public telephones and public transport stops which are well lit, constructed of transparent materials and located near the entrance to a shopping centre, rather than on the edge of a car park; or providing fencing which is low and transparent.*

- ❑ The design encourages informal surveillance from buildings and land uses through the location of windows and activities.
- ❑ The design provides opportunities for informal surveillance at sites of public congregation and along movement routes.
- ❑ The design provides visibility into spaces through the provision of clear sightlines and permeable barriers.

Safe Movement and Concealment

> Provide for safe pedestrian movement in public spaces, between areas of activity and to car parks and public transport stops by:
> - incorporating clear sightlines;
> - designing clearly defined, continuous, accessible paths of travel;
> - providing appropriate lighting to increase personal security in areas to be accessed after dark; and
> - eliminating areas of potential concealment and entrapment.
>
> *Examples: Placing ATM's in locations which are clearly visible from the street, away from alcoves; or designing footpaths whose sightlines are not compromised by close, dense vegetation.*

- ❑ The design allows for safe movement routes, particularly in areas where the movement and actions of pedestrians are easily predicted, by providing for clear visibility and sightlines, sufficient lighting, informal surveillance and wide paths connecting activity areas to minimise feelings of isolation or entrapment.

- ❑ The design removes opportunities for concealment in relation to
  - High walls and fences, changes of grade, underpasses, laneways and dead ends.
  - Corners, indents or gaps in facades, walls and fences
- ❑ Access to potential concealment areas is restricted.
- ❑ Uniform lighting is provided along principal movement routes and in vulnerable locations which will be accessed after dark.
- ❑ Isolated areas, not intended for night time use are not lit, to avoid a false impression of security.
- ❑ Particular attention is given to providing safe access routes between activity areas and destinations such as car parks and public transport.

Access Control and Spatial Definition

Ensure that development and urban spaces promote personal safety and security of property by controlling public access and clearly defining ownership, boundaries and legitimate use of private, public and community spaces.

Example: Using surface changes, lighting and landscaping to define appropriate routes for public access through a housing development.

- ❑ The design provides for clear delineation of public and private spaces through elements such as landscaping, change of levels, signage and low fencing.
- ❑ The design clearly demonstrates where access is or is not permitted, by incorporating physical and symbolic barriers to influence the movement of people.
- ❑ Legitimate use of public space is encouraged by locating uses and activities to promote pedestrian through movement, allowing for informal surveillance and designing user friendly meeting places and public spaces.
- ❑ Clear street numbering and building identification are incorporated into the design.

Territorial Reinforcement

Promote design which creates safe public places and streets by encouraging pedestrian use and demonstrating ownership of urban spaces and property.

Example: Incorporating community art into the design of a public space or building.

- ❑ The design encourages people to gather in public spaces and creates a sense of ownership by providing for a high standard of amenity through appropriate landscaping, lighting, furniture, art, finishes and other measures to improve environmental conditions, make visitors feel comfortable and show an area is cared for.
- ❑ The design allows for a high standard of regular maintenance.

Overall Design Legibility

Ensure the design of spaces, buildings, precincts and signage which enable orientation and navigation through a site and enhance individual perceptions of personal safety.

Example: Providing maps and signage at the entrance to a hospital or education campus detailing safe access routes to activities or premises.

- ❑ Buildings, precincts and spaces include clear and visible entrances, exits and movement routes.
- ❑ A variety of user groups including women, persons of different ages, ethnic backgrounds and abilities are planned and designed for.

❑ Legible and accessible signage and maps designating pedestrian routes, activity nodes, entrances, location of services and street names are provided.

❑ Signage takes account of night use requirements, persons with special needs and is located so that it will not be obscured by landscaping.

Activity Mix and Generation

Encourage a mix of uses which:
- facilitate informal surveillance;
- generate activity, particularly at ground level;
- support legitimate use of public spaces and isolated areas; and
- are compatible with neighbouring land uses.

Example: Providing a range of facilities to attract a variety of users to a park – for example play equipment, sporting facilities and barbecues.

❑ Activity generation is encouraged in isolated areas and public spaces, along movement routes and at ground level to provide an interactive façade to the street.

❑ Opportunities are maximised for complementary mixed use development which facilitates day and night informal surveillance and is compatible with neighbouring areas.

Vulnerable Uses and Locations

Ensure that uses which have the potential to generate crime and fear of crime (vulnerable uses) are:
- sited in highly visible locations with maximum opportunities for informal surveillance; and
- co-located with compatible uses which may enhance personal safety

Example: Locating public toilets in an area with regular pedestrian activity rather than isolated or secluded places such as behind a building, away from a street.

❑ Vulnerable uses are placed in safe locations which incorporate high levels of visibility and are sited to take advantage of other complementary uses.

❑ Safe activities are placed in vulnerable locations where this will enhance informal surveillance and increase perceptions of safety for users.

Building Design

Ensure that building design contributes to the enhancement of public safety and security and allows buildings to positively interact with the public realm.

Example: Building design which presents an active frontage to the street through the use of verandahs, porches, windows and entrances, rather than blank walls or high fences.

❑ The design incorporates crime reduction measures such as windows overlooking public spaces and ensuring lifts, car parks, toilets and entrances are not located in isolated areas.

❑ The entrance to premises are clearly defined, face the street and incorporate clear sightlines.

❑ Building security measures do not create a 'fortress-like' appearance or hard interface with the street.

Landscaping and Fencing

Ensure that fencing and landscaping reinforce security principles such as maintaining sightlines, minimising concealment, defining boundaries and allowing for informal surveillance, whilst having regard to their neighbourhood character context and the environmental values of vegetation.

Example: Utilising canopy trees with clean stemmed trunks which allow for visibility at eye level, rather than dense shrubbery.

- ❑ Planting does not obscure doors and windows overlooking public spaces and isolated areas.
- ❑ Landscaping design and maintenance maintains sightlines and visibility, especially along movement routes and in vulnerable settings.
- ❑ Fencing is low or transparent with its design accounting for issues such as definition of property boundaries, site security, surveillance and the local context.

Graffiti and Vandalism

Promote the use of materials, colours, finishes, fixtures, landscaping and building forms which discourage graffiti and vandalism and allow for easy maintenance and management.

Examples: Painting facades a dark colour, or planting vines in front of a potentially vulnerable wall.

- ❑ Vandal proof materials and fixtures are utilised which are hardy and not easily removable.
- ❑ Large, flat, light coloured external walls and solid fences are minimised.
- ❑ Informal surveillance in areas or over elements likely to attract vandalism is encouraged.

COUNCIL CONTACT DETAILS

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OTHER REFERENCE

Safer Design Code, Bell Planning Associates