# C.8 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

# 8.1 INTRODUCTION

Social issues embrace all aspects of human life and include how we live, our culture, our community, our feelings of safety, our health and well being as well as how we use places. It is sometimes the case that a Development can positively and/or negatively contribute to social issues and this in turn could result in a social impact.

A social impact refers to the social or community consequences of a proposed Development. A social impact for instance, could be of concern or alternatively be of benefit to individuals, the community and/or community groups. There could also be for example increased demand for education, welfare, health, and other social services.

To assess the social impacts for a proposed Development (including Planning Proposals), two types of social assessment processes are commonly used. They are,

Type 1: A Social Impact Comment – as part of the environmental effect

Type 2: A Social Impact Assessment – a standalone more detailed assessment

Within this chapter, advice is provided to applicants regarding what type of Development requires either a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment.

## 8.2 APPLICATION

This chapter applies to all land to which this Development Control Plan applies and will be used in the assessment of Development Proposals (which includes Planning Proposals).

## 8.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Chapter is to ensure that social impacts and crime prevention through environmental design principles are considered and integrated at the earliest stage of preparing a Development Proposal.

### 8.2.2 Aims and Objectives

## <u>Aim:</u>

To provide guidelines on what type of Development requires either a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment.

### **Objectives**

- a) To provide best practice guidelines so to ensure that social and crime issues are considered at the earliest stage of a Development Proposal.
- b) To identify if the type of Development proposed requires the completion of either a Social Impact Comment (basic level of assessment included as part of the Statement of Environmental Effects) or a Social Impact Assessment (a more comprehensive social assessment).

- c) To maximise opportunity for stakeholders who may be impacted by the Development to participate in community consultation at an earlier time, for instance at the project planning phase and prior to Development Application lodgement.
- d) To ensure that unacceptable social and/or crime impacts do not occur as a result of the Development. Such outcomes will assist to maximise the social well being and safety of the community.

Applicants are required to provide to Council social assessment and crime prevention documentation with lodgement of their development application. Assessment criteria for issues to be considered are outlined in this Chapter. Applicants are advised to consult with Council's Community Planning Team to discuss any particular matters for inclusion that may be relevant to the proposal.

# 8.3 TYPE 1 – THE SOCIAL IMPACT COMMENT

## 8.3.1 What is a Social Impact Comment?

A Social Impact Comment is a basic level of social assessment and is often considered as part of the Statement of Environmental Effects.

### 8.3.2 Purpose of a Social Impact Comment

The purpose of a Social Impact Comment is to consider the social, including crime impacts associated with a proposed Development. The benefit of a Social Impact Comment is that both the positive and negative implications of a Development can be understood and managed at the most earliest stage of the preparation of a Development proposal.

## 8.3.3 When is a Social Impact Comment Required?

The below table indicates what type of Development requires a Social Impact Comment.

### **Dwellings and Accommodation**

Boarding houses, hostels, aged care facilities, group homes and similar accommodation that have the capacity to accommodate less than 20 people.

Transitional Group Home includes temporary refuge accommodation that has the capacity to accommodate less than 20 people.

### Services and Community Infrastructure

Child care centres and pre schools (less than 100 enrolments).

Community Facilities, for instance neighbourhood centres, community halls, youth centres.

Health consulting rooms.

Place of Public Worship that has capacity for less than 500 people.

### Other Developments

Amusement centre

Temporary event with an expected attendance of 5,000 or more people.

<u>Please Note:</u> The table above is intended as a guide. It should be noted that some applications whilst fitting the description for a Social Impact Comment may require a Social Impact Assessment due to their nature or scale. Council reserves the right to request a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment if they determine it necessary.

# 8.3.4 Matters to Consider in Preparing a Social Impact Comment

The Social Impact comment must,

- a) Identify how positive social impacts can be maximised.
- b) Identify how detrimental social and crime impacts can be mitigated.
- c) Identify how crime prevention through environmental design principles will be used within the Development.
- d) Contain sufficient information for Council to make a decision.

# 8.4 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A SOCIAL IMPACT COMMENT

The Social Impact Comment must be submitted as part of the Development Application process. The Social Impact Comment, although not as detailed in comparison to a Social Impact Assessment, should still provide a sound analysis of the social and crime impacts associated with a proposed Development.

The Social Impact Comment is to be included in the Statement of Environmental Effects. Below is a guide for how to undertake a Social Impact Comment. Please note that all questions must be considered and documented within the Social Impact Comment.

	Questions to consider when completing a Social Impact Comment	
a)	How will the community benefit from the proposed Development?	
b)	How does the proposed Development impact on the local area? Briefly describe this impact in terms of, will there be changes to population composition or size, will the Development have an impact on the existing sense of place and community and how will the Development be used by the community.	
c)	What are the potential social and crime impacts of the Development? Include an overview of any known social and crime issues within the vicinity of the proposed development. Describe how any detrimental impacts will be managed?	
d)	In instances where stakeholders are consulted about the Development (e.g. local residents, community organisations, businesses etc) what issues do they raise? What strategies are proposed to be implemented to address concerns?	
e)	Identify and list the crime prevention through environmental design principles intended to be incorporated within the Development. For an overview of these principles, please consult pages 13 to 16 located within this Chapter.	

f) List any other comments regarding social and crime impacts applicable to the

Development?

### 8.5 TYPE 2 – THE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 8.5.1 What is a Social Impact Assessment?

A Social Impact Assessment is an in-depth enquiry about actual and potential social (which includes crime) impacts. The Social Impact Assessment is a standalone report and is to accompany the submitted Development Proposal.

A Social Impact Assessment assists stakeholders and this includes the Proponent, Council and the Community to contribute to and understand the social implications of what could occur as a result of a proposed Development. The advantage of a Social Impact Assessment is that identified matters can be proactively addressed prior to Council determining the Development Application.

### 8.5.2 Purpose of a Social Impact Assessment

The purpose of a Social Impact Assessment is to implement and demonstrate sound social research methodology, so to effectively identify and manage the social consequences of a Development, both positive and negative. A sound Social Impact Assessment involves consulting with stakeholders, understanding the profile and needs of the community along with identifying and mitigating the potential social consequences which could be attributed to the Development.

#### 8.5.3 When is a Social Impact Assessment Required?

The below table indicates what type of Development requires a Social Impact Assessment.

#### Planning Proposals

An amendment to Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) that requires the concurrent or subsequent preparation of Development Control Plans and/or Contributions Plan. Please refer to 'A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals 2012' for additional advice (NSW Government, NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure).

#### Dwellings and Accommodation

Low cost housing comprising of 20 or more dwellings and includes units and manufactured home estates.

Boarding houses, hostels, aged care facilities, group homes and similar accommodation that have the capacity to accommodate 20 or more persons.

Hotel, resort, motel, caravan park, backpacker's accommodation that has the capacity for 20 or more persons.

#### Commercial and Industrial

Commercial premises (includes business, office and retail premises) with an estimated cost of development of \$1 million or more.

Bulky good premises with an estimated cost of development of \$1 million or more.

Industrial premises with an estimated cost of development of \$1 million or more.

Twenty four hour restaurant, food, drink or convenience store.

New licensed premises (clubs, hotels, taverns, bottle shops, wine bars, cellar doors).

Extension of licensed premises trading hours where operations continue past midnight (clubs, hotels, taverns, bottle shops, wine bars).

#### Services and Community Infrastructure

Schools, child care centres and pre schools (100 or more enrolments).

Hospitals and health services facilities, including drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres (excludes health consulting rooms).

Correctional Centre

#### Other Developments

Places of public entertainment including event and sports facilities that have the capacity to hold 2,000 or more people.

Restricted premises, for example brothels.

Place of Public Worship that has capacity for 500 or more people.

Any other proposal deemed by Council to have likely significant social impacts.

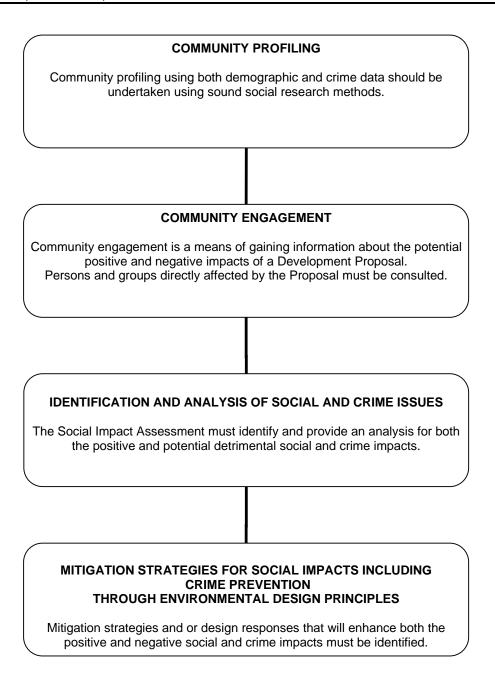
<u>Please Note:</u> The table above is intended as a guide. Council reserves the right to request a Social Impact Assessment if they determine it necessary.

### 8.5.4 Matters to Consider in Preparing a Social Impact Assessment

If determined that a Social Impact Assessment is required, it will be the Proponent's responsibility to engage a person with expertise in Social Impact Assessments to undertake the study.

An experienced, qualified practitioner is likely to be familiar with relevant social data and may have experience with comparative Developments. This knowledge may be invaluable in identifying significant impacts that may not be immediately apparent.

For there to be an effective assessment of social impacts and crime prevention through environmental design principles, the Social Impact Assessment Report needs to incorporate the following principles.



# 8.6 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## 8.6.1 The Social Impact Assessment Report

The Social Impact Assessment Report will:

- a) Be a stand-alone report and will accompany the submitted Development Application.
- b) Be a sound, evidence-based approach to responding to the circumstances at hand.

Below is a guide advising of the minimum standards for what must be included within a Social Impact Assessment. Please note that all questions must be considered and documented within the Social Impact Assessment Report.

Check List	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT
1	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL
	COMMUNITY PROFILE
	The community profile must include,
	• An estimate of the current population and projected population (or patronage) resulting from the Development.
V	• An analysis of the demographic profile for the affected community. The demographic profile should also identify any significant community or cultural issues relevant to the affected community.
	• A crime profile for the local area in which the Development is intended to be situated.
	• If applicable to the Development (for example in the case of Residential Development), an identification of community services and facilities relevant to the proposal must occur. For instance, this could include youth services, children services, aged care services and public transport services. An analysis should also occur regarding the ability of existing community services to meet the service needs of the intended population growth.
	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
$\checkmark$	• A community consultation methodology and its associated findings must be documented within the Report.
	• The Social Impact Assessment Report where possible should include a demographic profile of the participants involved in the community engagement process.
	IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL AND CRIME ISSUES
√	• The Social Impact Assessment Report must identify and provide an analysis for both the positive and potential detrimental social impacts.
	• The Social Impact Assessment Report must identify and provide an analysis for both the positive and potential detrimental crime impacts.
	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
1	• The Report must document the strategies which aim to minimise and/or prevent the identified negative social impacts, and this should include Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles/strategies.

# 8.6.2 Community Profiling

The Social Impact Assessment must provide a detailed community profile for the population affected by the Development. The Community Profile should include matters such as,

- a) Current population and projected population estimates resulting from the proposed Development.
- b) Analysis of the demographic profile for the affected community.
- c) Audit and/or mapping of neighbouring community services and facilities relevant to the application. For instance, this could include available youth services, children services, aged care services and public transport services.
- d) Identification of special needs groups including any significant community or cultural issues relevant to the affected area.

### Community Profile Data Sources could include,

- Council maintains a Community Directory which lists a range of social, welfare and health services. The listing can be accessed via Council's website: www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au
- Crime data for many different offence categories can be accessed via the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) website: www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au
- There is also extensive data available from various government departments that will assist in the Development of a Community Profile.

## 8.6.3 Community Engagement

Involving people via a consultation process will assist in exploring how the Development impacts on affected communities. Communities that could be affected as result of the Development have an important role in identifying and discussing the potential impacts. Council requires some form of community consultation that engages the affected community in social issue identification prior to the lodgement of the Development Application. Please Note: Community engagement should not be seen as a process for gaining consent from the affected community.

Communities that may need to be consulted include,

- a) Those who live or work nearby to the Development.
- b) Those who will hear, smell or see the Development or its impacts.

- c) Those who have an interest in the Proposal but may not live in close proximity, for example, a local committee or association, local service providers, etc.
- d) Those who may normally use the land/space where the Development is to be located.

It is important in the development of the Social Impact Assessment that community involvement is meaningful and undertaken early in the process, preferably at the concept development phase. When undertaking community consultation, it is important that information is presented in a format that is understood by the affected community.

Techniques to engage and consult with the Community could include,

- Written surveys
- Calling for written submissions
- Interviews, meetings
- Opportunity to telephone in comments
- Public meetings, forums, seminars and workshops
- Use of newsletters, flyers and brochures
- Use of media (newspapers, local radio)
- Exhibition and displays in public places

The findings from the community engagement process must be detailed in the Social Impact Assessment Report. The Report should also include a consultation methodology and document the number and demographic profile of participants involved in the consultation process.

## 8.6.4 Identification and Analysis of Social and Crime Issues

The Social Impact Assessment should document an analysis of the identified social and crime impacts specific to the Development. The social impacts of a Development could be many and varied and is often dependent on the type of Development and its locality. It is important to document both the positive and negative social impacts.

The below provides an example of potential considerations which could assist to identify social and/or crime issues associated with the Development. Please note that not all of the components listed below are mandatory considerations. Rather, they are suggestions only and are subject to the type of Development proposed.

Potential issues to consider include,

- a) Population
  - 1. Changes to population size
  - 2. Changes to age and gender distribution
  - 3. Requires the relocation of any part of the population

## b) Community Structure, Character, Values and Beliefs

- 1. Changes in relationships, structure and customs
- 2. Beliefs, attitudes and values adversely affected or enhanced

### c) Social Cohesion

- 1. Changes to the lifestyle for existing residents
- 2. Conflict of space between existing and new population
- 3. Development disadvantages particular social groups
- d) Sense of Place and Community
  - 1. Changes to the aesthetic environment
  - 2. Development is complementary to existing neighbourhood character
  - 3. Items of social and cultural heritage are preserved

### e) Housing

- 1. Need for increased housing options
- 2. Loss of affordable housing stock as a result of the Development
- 3. Availability of housing for people with a disability
- f) Income Levels, Cost of Living and Employment
  - 1. Income levels, property values and cost of living are impacted
  - 2. Employment and the workforce is impacted
  - 3. The availability of goods and services are impacted
- g) Health Implications and Access to Services
  - 1. Demand for health services (including ancillary services such as community health care, dental services)
  - 2. Access to and the requirements for human and social services
  - 3. Impacts on the heath of the community, including perceptions of health
  - 4. Need for healthy infrastructure, e.g. walkways, bicycle pathways
- h) Accessibility
  - 1. Groups are excluded by virtue of the design or type of Development
  - 2. Requirements for public transport, including transport routes
- i) Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
  - 1. Perceptions of safety associated with the Development
  - 2. Current crime rates associated with the locality and/or site
  - 3. Need and benefits for crime prevention strategies
  - 4. Incorporation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Principles

# 8.6.5 Mitigation of Social Impacts and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Principles

Where negative social and/or crime impacts become evident, it is necessary that the Social Impact Assessment include documentation on the intended mitigation strategies.

Given the breadth of potential mitigation strategies, the following performance objectives are divided into two categories. The first category considers generic Social Impacts (see 8.6.6) and the second category considers Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Principles (see 8.6.7).

Please note that when determining mitigation strategies for a proposed Development, not all of the suggestions listed will be applicable and is rather subject to the type of Development proposed.

## 8.6.6 Mitigation Strategies – Social Impacts

The integration of social impact mitigation strategies at the most earliest stage of a Development Proposal can later assist to minimise detrimental social impacts post development. Hence to encourage the minimisation of social impacts post the development phase, the Social Impact Assessment Report must consider and identify the following (and any relevant additional) social impact mitigation strategies.

Please note: The below strategies from a) to f) are sourced from the Healthy Urban Development Checklist, (2009) NSW Department of Health, North Sydney.

- a) Social Infrastructure
  - 1. Social infrastructure should be centrally located and easily accessible.
  - 2. Social infrastructure should link to existing and/or proposed public transport routes.
  - 3. Building design, in terms of access to social facilities should respond to the lifestyle needs of the community.
  - 4. Building design should be flexible so that it can be adapted to accommodate changing demographics of an area or community.
  - 5. Social infrastructure should include (where possible) the implementation of sustainable development principles, such as the use of solar power and recycled materials.
  - 6. In the case of residential development, there should be reasonable access to a mix of facilities including local shopping, health services, educational institutions, leisure and recreational space.
- b) Social Cohesion, Social Connectivity, Sense of Place
  - 1. Communal areas should be provided within large housing developments.
  - 2. The Development should promote physical integration with adjacent areas and existing Developments, through for example road connections, layout and open space.
  - 3. The Development should encourage social integration across communities, for instance through provision of shared community facilities that can also benefit adjacent areas.

- 4. Building design should respond to the social context and needs of the local community.
- 5. Where appropriate, incorporate and enhance local symbols and/or landmarks within the building design and finish.
- c) Housing, including Affordable Housing
  - 1. The development offers a range of housing options which target a diverse population.
  - 2. Affordable housing should be distributed throughout the Development and not concentrated in an identifiable cluster.
  - 3. Affordable housing design should not be distinguishable from other forms of housing.
- d) Employment, Work Places and Commercial Space
  - 1. District centres should be designed to be mixed use (including providing employment, residential, open space, education, and training facilities).
  - 2. Places of employment should include the option of staircases to access multiple levels of the workplace.
  - 3. Placement of employment should include amenities that encourage people to walk or cycle to work (such as showers and bicycle parking).
  - 4. Retail and commercial areas to be designed to encourage physical activity and active transport.
- e) Health, including Physical Activity
  - 1. The Development is within a comfortable walking distance (approximately 400-500 metres) to destinations which are frequented to meet everyday basic needs such as shops, schools, parks, transport stops.
  - 2. Land use is arranged to encourage walking, cycling and other forms of active transport.
  - 3. Streetscapes are designed to be attractive, interesting and welcoming to pedestrians, and cyclists, including the provision of enjoyable scenery, appropriate amenities and shelter.
  - 4. Bicycle use is encouraged by providing ample, safe, attractive and convenient access to key destinations.
  - 5. The design should allow people including those with a disability, opportunity to equally access the site.
- f) Public Open Space
  - 1. Public open space should be connected to a network of footpaths, trails and public transport.
  - 2. Public transport stops should be within easy walking distance (approximately 400-500 metres or up to 800-1000 metres for a railway station) of key public open spaces.
  - 3. People, including children should have the opportunity to walk and cycle safely from major residential areas to a local park, playground or natural area.
  - 4. Children's play areas are easily observable by care givers.

- 5. All people, including those who require mobility aids such as a wheel chair and caregivers with prams/strollers should be able to access and move within the open space.
- 6. Open space to be sufficiently buffered from traffic in terms of noise, fumes and pedestrian safety.
- 7. Open space should include seating. Amenities such as picnic areas, toilet and cooking facilities (barbeques) should also be considered.
- 8. Public open spaces to be designed so to accommodate community celebrations, festivals and other events.

## 8.6.7 Mitigation Strategies – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

The integration of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles at the most earliest stage of a Development proposal can later assist to minimise crime opportunities post development. Hence to encourage the minimisation of crime opportunities post the development phase, the Social Impact Assessment Report must consider and identify Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.

In summary, the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Principles (in which there are four) that must be addressed within the submitted Development Application are,

- a) Surveillance
- b) Access Control
- c) Territorial Reinforcement
- d) Space Management

### a) Surveillance

Crime can be reduced by providing opportunities for effective surveillance, both natural and technical. Good surveillance means that people can see what others are doing. From a design perspective, the following Surveillance principles apply.

#### Natural Surveillance

Good design principles which promote natural surveillance include,

- 1. Avoid blind corners in pathways, stairwells, hallways and car parks.
- 2. Pathways should be direct. All barriers along pathways should be permeable (see through) including landscaping, fencing etc.
- 3. Consider the installation of mirrors to allow users to see ahead of them and around corners.
- 4. Where elevators or stairwells are provided, open style or transparent materials are encouraged on doors and/or walls of elevators/ stairwells.
- 5. Waiting areas and entries to elevators/stairwells should be close to areas of active uses and should be visible from the building entry.
- 6. Seating should be located in areas which attract active uses of the space.

# Landscaping

Avoid landscaping which obscures natural surveillance. Large size vegetation can obstruct visibility and make people feel uneasy and unsafe. As a result, this can discourage genuine use of a space.

Good landscaping design principles include,

- 7. Avoid medium height vegetation with concentrated top to bottom foliage. Plants such as low hedges and shrubs, creepers, ground covers or high canopied vegetation are good for natural surveillance.
- 8. Trees with dense low growth foliage should be spaced or have the crown raised to avoid a continuous barrier.
- Use low ground cover or high canopied trees, clean trunked to a height of 2 metres around children's play areas, car parks and along pedestrian pathways
- 10. Avoid vegetation that conceals the building entrance from the street.
- 11. Landscaping that makes places appealing, but does not provide offenders with a place to hide.

## Lighting

Adequate lighting is essential in making people feel safe and in deterring illegitimate users.

Good lighting design includes,

- 12. Care should be taken to ensure lighting does not produce glare or dark shadows.
- 13. Entrances, exits, service areas, pathways and car parks should be well lit after dark, particularly in situations where they are likely to be used.
- 14. Lighting should be directed towards access/egress routes to illuminate potential offenders, rather than towards buildings or resident observation points.
- 15. Avoidance of lighting spillage onto neighbouring properties as this can cause nuisance and reduce opportunities for natural surveillance.
- 16. Use wide beam lighting illumination which reaches to the beam of the next light, or the perimeter of the site or area being traversed.

## Technical Surveillance

Technical surveillance such as CCTV and alarms may assist to make people feel safe and could also be a crime deterrent.

Good design principles include,

- 17. CCTV systems should be carefully planned and assessed in regards to camera position, placement and capability.
- 18. The installation of an alarm system for commercial and/or industrial premises (in particular) should be considered.

### b) Access Control

Physical barriers can be used to attract, channel or restrict the movement of people, making it clear where people are permitted to go or not go.

Effective access control can be achieved by:

- 1. Use of walkways, lighting, signage and landscape to clearly guide people and vehicles to and from the proper entrances.
- 2. Restricting access through the use of physical barriers, for example bollards, fencing etc.

### Entry Points

Entrances should be at prominent positions within the building design, easily accessible from well lit street areas and within areas providing natural surveillance opportunities.

Good design principles for entry points include,

- 3. Natural surveillance of the street.
- 4. Clear line of sight from both inside and outside the premises.
- 5. Emergency services are able to access the property rapidly.
- c) Territorial Reinforcement

The purpose of this principle is to create a clear distinction between public and private property. People often feel comfortable and are more likely to visit places which feel owned. As a result, well used places can reduce opportunities for crime and increase risk to criminals.

Territorial reinforcement can be achieved through:

- 1. Good design with clear transitions and boundaries between public and private space.
- 2. Visible and well maintained security signage at all entrances.
- d) Space Management

Space management ensures that the area is appropriately utilised and well maintained.

Good design principles include,

- 1. Strong, wear resistant laminate, impervious glazed ceramics, treated masonry products, stainless steel materials, anti-graffiti paints and clear over sprays will reduce the opportunity for vandalism.
- 2. Where large walls are unavoidable, consider the use of vegetation or anti-graffiti paint. Alternatively, modulate the wall, or use dark colours to discourage graffiti on vulnerable walls.

- 3. External lighting should be vandal resistant. High mounted and/or protected lights are less susceptible to vandalism.
- 4. Communal street furniture should be made of hard-wearing vandal resistant materials and secured by sturdy anchor points or removed after hours.

Other space management strategies include:

- 5. Policy direction which promotes the rapid repair of vandalism and graffiti.
- 6. Site Management Plan which includes principles of site cleanliness and immediate removal or refurbishment of decayed physical property.
- 7. Site Management Plan which promotes the immediate replacement of burned out and/or damaged pedestrian and car park lighting.