

# Guidelines: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. APPLICATION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. WHAT IS CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN? .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. WHY ARE CPTED ASSESSMENTS NECESSARY?.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4.1 WHEN IS A CPTED ASSESSMENT REPORT REQUIRED? .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4.2 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A CPTED ASSESSMENT REPORT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. CPTED PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5.1 TERRITORIAL REINFORCEMENT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5.2 SURVEILLANCE .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5.3 ACCESS CONTROL .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.4 SPACE/ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. THE ROLE OF COUNCIL AND NSW POLICE IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. CONTACT INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>

## 1. APPLICATION

These guidelines are relevant for applicants preparing a Development Application identified in Table 1: Development types requiring a CPTED Assessment Report. within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

- To identify and evaluate potential crimes risks and detail treatments for developments that will minimise or mitigate crime impacts.
- To promote design features within developments which will enhance community safety by reducing opportunities for crime.
- To provide well designed, maintained and managed buildings, facilities and public spaces that lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime.

## 3. WHAT IS CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN?

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a crime prevention strategy that focuses on the planning, design and structure of cities and neighbourhoods. It reduces opportunities for crime by using design and place management principles that reduce the likelihood of essential crime ingredients (law, offender, victim or target, opportunity) from intersecting in time and space.

Predatory offenders often make cost-benefit assessment of potential victims and locations before committing crime. CPTED aims to create the reality (or perception) that the costs of committing crime are greater than the likely benefits. This is achieved by creating environmental and social conditions that:

- Maximise risk to offenders (increasing the likelihood of detection, challenge and apprehension).
- Maximise the effort required to commit crime (increasing the time, energy and resources required to commit crime).
- Minimise the actual and perceived benefits of crime (removing, minimising or concealing crime attractors and rewards).
- Minimise excuse making opportunities (removing conditions that encourage/facilitate rationalisation of inappropriate behaviour).

CPTED employs four key strategies. These are territorial reinforcement, surveillance, access control and space/activity management.<sup>1</sup>

## 4. WHY ARE CPTED ASSESSMENTS NECESSARY?

Undertaking a CPTED assessment assists the proponent to identify and evaluate potential crime risks associated with a proposed development and provides an opportunity to detail treatments that will minimise or mitigate crime impacts prior to Council determination.

A crime risk assessment is a systematic evaluation of the potential for crime in an area. It provides an indication of both the likely magnitude of crime and likely crime type. The consideration of these

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Government, NSW Police Force (2021) Safer By Design (Website: [https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/safety\\_and\\_prevention/policing\\_in\\_the\\_community/safer\\_by\\_design](https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/safety_and_prevention/policing_in_the_community/safer_by_design))

dimensions (crime amount and type) will determine the choice and appropriate mix of CPTED strategies<sup>2</sup>.

Council has a statutory obligation under the provisions of Section 4.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to consider:

- The likely impacts of a proposed development (submitted via a development application), including social impacts in the locality, and
- The public interest.

The preparation of a CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report assists Council to assess whether the proposed development will provide safety and security to the users and the community.

#### 4.1 WHEN IS A CPTED ASSESSMENT REPORT REQUIRED?

The table below lists the type of developments requiring a CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report. Council may require a CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report for a planning proposal or development application not detailed in the table below if:

- There are likely or perceived crime impacts.
- There is a modification, extension or expansion of an existing development that could result in likely or perceived crime impacts.

Table 1: Development types requiring a CPTED Assessment Report.

<b>Dwellings and Accommodation</b>
Any form of residential development with 20 or more dwellings
Affordable rental housing including boarding houses, group homes and hostels of any size or capacity
Manufactured home estates, caravan parks and camping grounds of any size or capacity
<b>Social Infrastructure</b>
Recreation areas and recreation facilities of any size or capacity
Entertainment facilities and function centres that have the capacity to hold 1000 or more people
<b>Commercial and Industrial</b>
New commercial and specialised retail premises with an estimated cost of development of \$5 million or more
Food and drink premises and shops trading between 12.00am and 5.00am
Service stations and highway service centres of any size or capacity
New licensed premises (cellar doors, hotels, registered clubs, pubs, small bars, packaged liquor outlets) of any size or capacity
Extension of licensed premises trading hours past 12.00am
<b>Other Development</b>
Car parks of any size or capacity
Restricted premises and sex services premises of any size or capacity
Temporary events with an expected attendance of 5000 or more people
Amusement centres of any size or capacity

<sup>2</sup> Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (2001) Crime prevention and the assessment of development applications

## 4.2 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A CPTED ASSESSMENT REPORT

A CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report is required to be prepared by a suitably qualified person who has completed the NSW Police Safer by Design Course. The CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report must detail the credentials of the person responsible for the preparation of the report.

A CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report must include the following level of information and analysis:

- A brief description of the proposal
- Site analysis
- A crime profile which presents relevant demographic data and crime statistics and trends in the area and/or specific locality of the proposed development
- The identification of potential and actual crime risks associated with the proposed development
- An assessment of the proposed development using the CPTED principles of:
  - Territorial Reinforcement
  - Surveillance
  - Access Control
  - Space/Activity Management
- Recommended treatments, measures or strategies that have been, or will be, implemented to address identified crime risks

## 5. CPTED PRINCIPLES

There are four broad principles of CPTED. The CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report should address each of these principles, providing information as to how the aspects of the design or proposed management practices will help to reduce the risk of crime and increase the perception of safety.

### 5.1 TERRITORIAL REINFORCEMENT

People often feel comfortable and are more likely to visit spaces that feel owned and people who have informal ownership of spaces are more likely to respond if a crime is taking place. As a result, well used spaces can reduce opportunities for crime and increase risk to criminals.

Territorial reinforcement can be achieved through:

- a. Clear transitions and boundaries between public and private space. Paving, tactile surfaces, fencing, verges and gardens can be used as transition cues.
- b. Visible and well maintained security signage at all entrances.
- c. Clear and legible location markers, directional signage and residential house numbers, assisting people to navigate the environment and define appropriate use of spaces.
- d. Design features that encourage people to gather in public or shared spaces.
- e. Positioning staff (for example: concierges, onsite management, security) in a location that can be clearly seen from communal or public spaces.

### 5.2 SURVEILLANCE

Crime risk can be reduced by providing opportunities for effective surveillance. Good surveillance means that people can see what others are doing. People feel safe in public areas when they can easily see and interact with others. Potential offenders are often deterred from committing crime in areas with high levels of surveillance.

Natural surveillance is achieved when space users can be seen by others and is supported by building design, orientation and layout, strategically located services and facilities, clear sightlines and landscaping. Technical surveillance is achieved through mechanical or electronic measures (for example: CCTV, lighting).

Good design principles include:

#### *Natural Surveillance*

- a. Buildings with external windows, doors and balconies that address the street and encourage clear lines of sight between public and private spaces.
- b. Direct pathways with low, permeable (see through) barriers (for example: landscaping and fencing).
- c. Avoiding blind or dark corners in pathways, stairwells, hallways and car parks. Where blind corners can't be avoided, surveillance should be enhanced by the installation of vandal resistant mirrors.
- d. Avoiding opaque glass or visual obstructions on external facing windows and doors (for example: excessive signage and posters).
- e. Internal waiting areas, foyers, elevators and stairwells that are close to areas of active use and visible from the building entry.
- f. Open style stairwells, or the use of transparent materials where stairwells are provided.
- g. Street furniture, ATMs and public toilets located in high activity areas that promote casual surveillance.
- h. Avoiding 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. Trees with dense low growth foliage should be spaced or have the crown raised to avoid a continuous barrier.
- i. Avoiding vegetation and fencing that inhibits surveillance of building entrances, shared spaces, access routes and pedestrian pathways.
- j. Ensuring vegetation and landscaping does not provide opportunities for concealment.

#### *Technical Surveillance*

- k. Effective, vandal resistant lighting in public spaces that does not produce glare or dark shadows.
- l. Well lit entrances, exits, service areas, pathways and car parks, particularly in situations where they are likely to be used after dark.
- m. Using wide beam lighting illumination which reaches to the beam of the next light, or the perimeter of the site or area being traversed.
- n. Directing lighting towards access routes to illuminate potential offenders, rather than towards buildings or resident observation points, avoiding light spillage onto neighbouring properties.
- o. CCTV systems that are carefully planned and assessed in regards to camera position, placement and capability.

### **5.3 ACCESS CONTROL**

Access control strategies are used to attract, channel or restrict the movement of people and vehicles, making designated areas clear and increasing the effort required to commit crime.

Effective access control can be achieved by:

- a. Use of walkways, lighting, signage and landscaping to clearly guide people and vehicles to and from entrances.
- b. Restricting access through the use of physical barriers (for example: bollards, anchored planter boxes, fencing, boom gates).
- c. Fitting appropriate security hardware and electronic entry systems on doors and windows to private property or spaces that are to be accessed by staff only (for example: intercoms systems, locks, security screens, automated access systems). The use of access control systems should correspond with crime risk, ensuring systems and hardware do not impede emergency access.
- d. Installing night payment screens/windows that can be used when staff are working in isolation or at times where crime risk is increased.
- e. Installing monitored alarm systems and/or duress alarm systems for staff working in isolation.
- f. Ensuring design features of buildings or nearby trees don't facilitate 'natural ladders' that allow climbing onto balconies, rooftops and window ledges.
- g. Using security guards either permanently, or at specific times where activity or crime risk is increased.

#### **5.4 SPACE/ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT**

Space/activity management strategies ensure that sites are appropriately utilised and well maintained, encouraging active and appropriate use.

Good design principles include:

- a. Using treatments on fencing and walls that reduce the opportunity for vandalism and graffiti (for example: creeping vegetation/green screens, anti-graffiti coatings, modulated walls).
- b. Using vandal resistant external lighting fixtures.
- c. Using hard-wearing materials for street furniture and design features in public space, ensuring items are secured by sturdy anchor points or removed after hours.

Good management practices and strategies include:

- d. The rapid repair/removal of lighting, vandalism and graffiti.
- e. Implementing Site Management Plans that include the routine maintenance and cleaning of property.
- f. Coordinating activities that attract people to spaces that are misused or at times where crime risk is increased (for example: outdoor events, food trucks, markets).

#### **6. THE ROLE OF COUNCIL AND NSW POLICE IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Council staff will review the submitted documents and consider the following aspects in the assessment of planning proposals and development applications:

- Whether the CPTED or Crime Risk Assessment Report meets the requirements and minimum standards outlined in these guidelines.
- The validity of data and research presented.

- Whether crime impacts have been adequately identified and analysed.
- Whether the recommended treatments, measures and strategies are appropriate.
- Whether the proposed development supports positive community safety outcomes.
- Any recommended conditions of consent.

Council refers development applications identified in TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENT TYPES REQUIRING A CPTED ASSESSMENT REPORT to NSW Police for assessment in line with the Consultation Protocol for the referral of Development Applications to the Hunter Valley Police District by Cessnock City Council.

## **7. CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you require further information about these guidelines or CPTED Assessment Report requirements please contact Council's Community Planning and Development Team on 02 4993 4100 or

[council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au)