



# 24

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## Designing out Crime

This guidance note amplifies, in a clear and concise format, development plan policies which acknowledge that the design of the physical environment can positively influence human behaviour. Attractive, imaginative, and feasible design can help reduce crime, the fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour thereby achieving a safer and higher quality environment, and an improvement in residents' quality of life. The note will form a material consideration in the determination of all relevant planning applications.

### Design Principles

Designing out crime rests on achieving the key principles of:

- a) defensible space - which distinguishes between public, semi-private, and public zones characterised, respectively, by increasing levels of access control and limitation to specific individuals or groups. Physical and/or symbolic barriers define zones, emphasise transition between zones, and discourage unwanted access;
- b) territoriality - which identifies certain areas, defined through uniqueness of design or location of community facilities, as the exclusive domain of a particular individual or group. Regular use of such areas fosters a sense of pride and ownership, mutual protection, and belonging which discourages unwarranted intrusion;
- c) surveillance - which, resulting from a combination of design, mixed use development, and local social activity, makes potential offenders noticeable and identifiable. Surveillance can be enhanced naturally by minimising visual obstacles and places of concealment or formally through CCTV or security patrols where natural surveillance measures alone cannot adequately protect an area; and
- d) building security standards - which, through the installation of security hardware and stronger materials to approved standards, discourages intruder entry.

### Design Checklist

#### a) Housing

Siting, Layout, and Movement

- site buildings to allow unobstructed views of neighbouring properties while maintaining adequate privacy and to provide direct views over public areas;

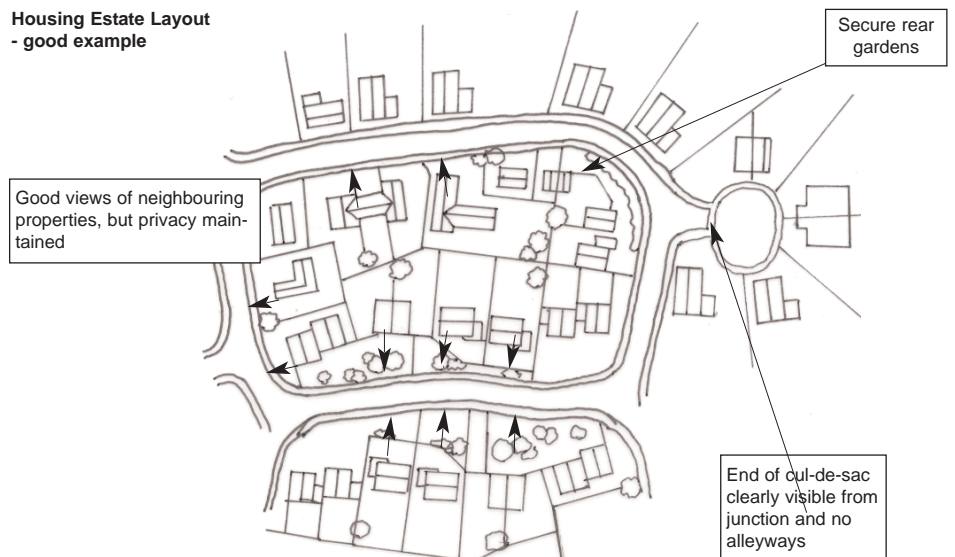
- limit the number of flats served by one entrance;
- a mix of dwelling types to make it more likely that some of the homes will be occupied throughout the day;
- private rear gardens should interlock with other rear gardens to restrict unwanted access from a public area;

### General Approach

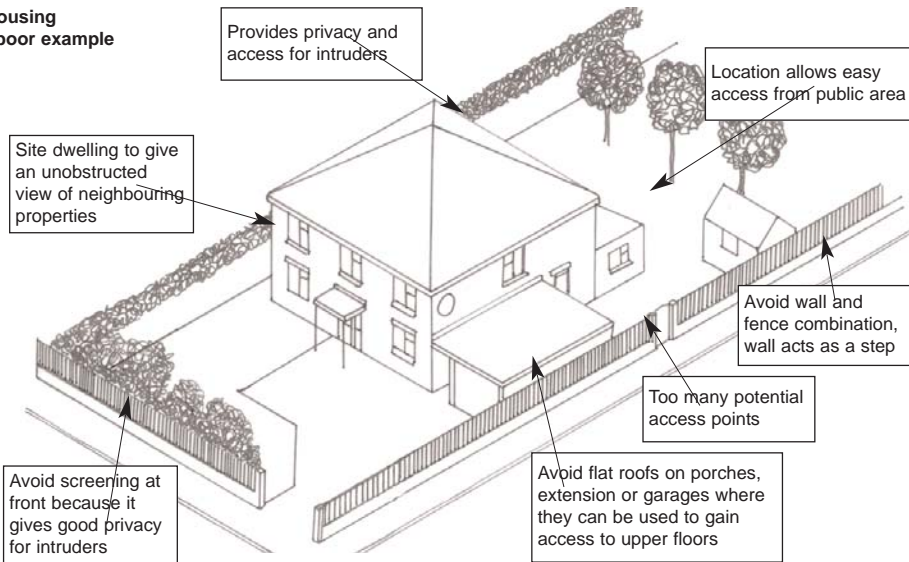
Measures aimed at enhancing public safety extend well beyond the functions of land use planning. The approach taken to designing out crime is, therefore:

- a) comprehensive - design must be considered in conjunction with other security measures (e.g. CCTV, locks, Night Safe registration, etc.) and informal policing by the community; and
- b) collaborative - extending responsibility for safety to all interested organisations (e.g. North Wales Police, house builders, etc.) and residents will promote a sense of ownership and pride.

Housing Estate Layout - good example



**Housing - poor example**

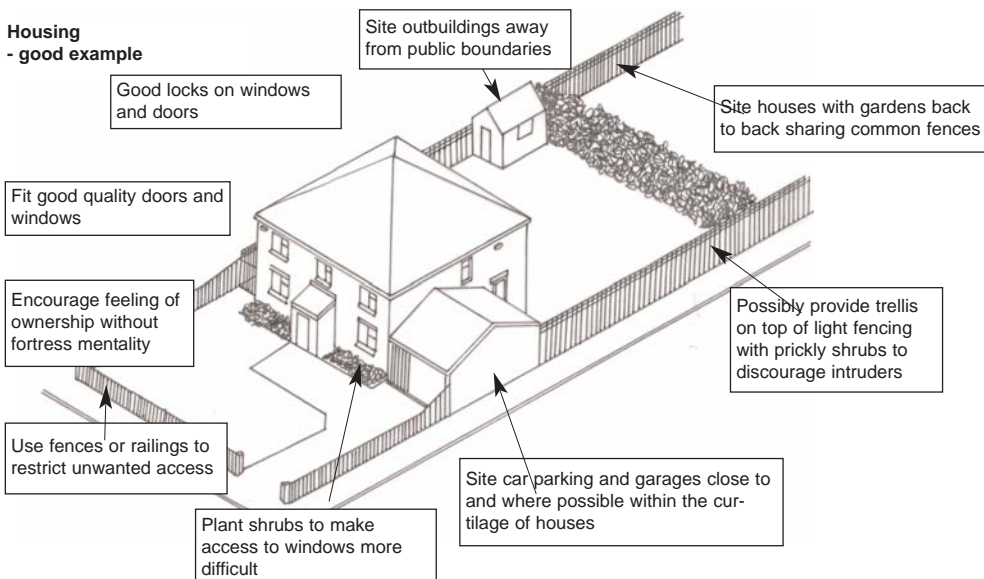


- avoid layouts where dwellings back onto public open space or footpaths;
- entrances, bin stores, communal drying areas and garden sheds should be sited in plain view from the principal rooms of adjacent dwellings and avoid creating dark recessed areas where people can hide or engage in anti-social behaviour;
- minimise through routes and numbers of entry and exit points to estates and make good use of cul-de-sacs;
- limit pedestrian links between cul-de-sac and avoid rear access to dwellings;
- car parking and garages should ideally be provided within the residential curtilage and be overlooked by habitable rooms;
- communal car parking areas and garage courts should be well lit and, unless they are secured by remote controlled gates, should not be sited to the rear of buildings;
- footpaths should be clear, well lit, direct and overlooked by adjacent households without dark corners or blind bends where people could hide;
- adopt traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speed;
- use changes to road surface treatment, entrance pillars, or narrowing of the carriageway to delineate entrances to estates;
- avoid subways, especially where there is no through visibility.

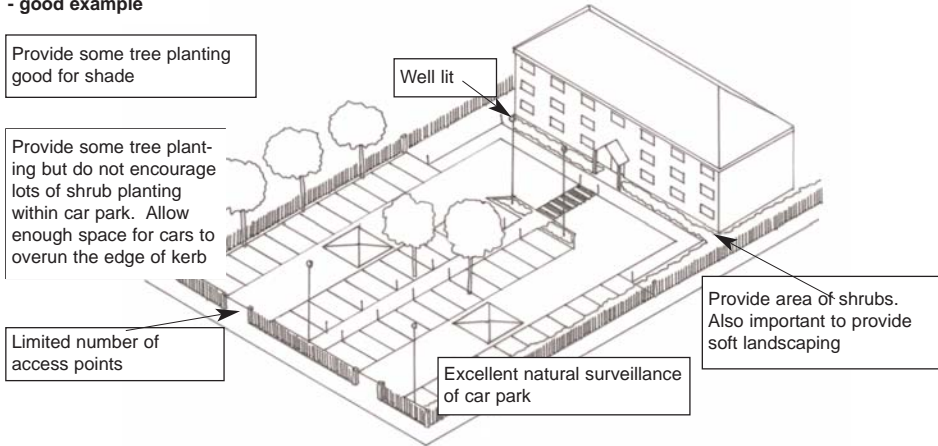
**Buildings and Boundaries**

- single storey structures such as porches, extensions, and garages should have pitched roofs to prevent them being used to gain access to first floor windows or other openings;
- rear pedestrian access to existing housing can be restricted by the use of lockable rear gates approximately 2m in height and without supports or bars that can be used as a foot/hand hold for any intruder to gain a leverage to climb over the gates;
- provide an entry phone system with electrical lock release in communal entrances to flats;
- install good quality doors preferably with laminated glass, mortice locks, spy holes, and chains;
- install good quality laminated glass sealed window units with window locks;
- movement sensitive security lighting at the front and rear of dwellings, but which avoids causing nuisance to neighbours, can improve security and surveillance to buildings, their users, and passers by;
- fences or walls should be used to define private areas to make potential criminals feel vulnerable;
- install trellis with prickly shrubs on top of light fencing to discourage intruders in low risk situations;
- boundaries between public areas and private rear/side gardens in high risk situations should be at least 1.8 metres in height and of robust structure which cannot be kicked or pushed down;
- defensible planting of spiny or thorny plants can help prevent graffiti and loitering as well as enhancing perimeter security. Appropriate plant species include Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hawthorn (*Crateagus* spp), Berberis (*Berberis julianae*), Firethorn (*Pyracantha* spp), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), and Rose (*Rosa rugosa/canina*). Further advice is contained in Wrexham County Borough Council's Local Planning Guidance Note 7 "Landscaping";
- front boundaries should be defined with low walls or railings up to 1.0 metre in height, or, in open plan suburban settings, shrub planting;
- brick walls should have sloping or pointed copings to eliminate potential sitting and congregating;
- boundary walls should not include pillars that can be used as steps to gain access.

**Housing - good example**



**Commercial - good example**



spp), Berberis (*Berberis julianae*), Firethorn (*Pyracantha* spp), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), and Rose (*Rosa rugosa/canina*). Further advice is contained in Wrexham County Borough Council's Local Planning Guidance Note 7 "Landscaping".

- razor or barbed wire fencing may, in exceptional circumstances, be used to protect the most vulnerable areas but should be carefully designed and sited so as not to be visually intrusive;

**b) Commercial and Public Buildings**

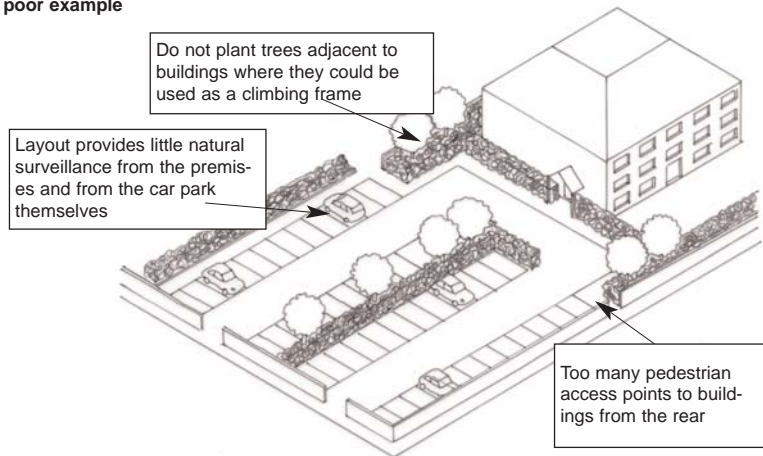
**Siting, Layout, and Movement**

- pedestrian and vehicular access and exit routes should be minimised, front the main access road and pass reception desks or security officers to allow visitor monitoring;
- side or rear alleyways should be avoided and access to existing routes controlled with gates or doors;
- main delivery areas, usually sited at the rear of the development, should be gated to prohibit access by unauthorised people;
- bus shelters should be located on open, well lit sites so that their users remain in constant view;
- differentiate unloading areas and designated occupier and visitor parking through surface treatment;
- where possible, provide living accommodation over shops to encourage natural surveillance
- pedestrian routes into and from buildings and to public transport nodes and public car parks should be direct, clearly sign-posted, and well lit;
- pedestrian subways should be avoided.

**Buildings and Boundaries**

- reception areas should be open, well lit, and welcoming;
- fire escape doors should be located to deter vandalism;
- the use of thick laminated glass doors can allow recesses to be viewed or covered by CCTV from within the building;
- walls, dividing fences, and planting (except for trees) above 1m within car parking areas are inappropriate as they would hamper unobstructed views;

**Commercial - poor example**



- provide secure parking at night, where appropriate;
- light glare and/or spillage onto adjoining properties and public areas should be minimised;
- install substantial rear doors with good quality locks;
- install windows with fixed panes and laminated glass, especially at the rear of properties;
- provide reinforced stall risers or, in high risk situations, site planters, bollards, or other street furniture to discourage ram raiding;
- boundary treatment should include a robust brick wall, railings, or where appropriate (e.g. in industrial areas), palisade/paladin fencing of at least 1.8 metres in height;
- defensible planting of spiny or thorny plants can help prevent graffiti and loitering as well as enhancing perimeter security. Appropriate plant species include Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hawthorn (*Crateagus*

- install shutters in high risk situations. Further advice is contained in Local Planning Guidance Note 18 "Shopfront Security".

**c) Public Open Space and Landscaping**

**Siting, Layout, and Movement**

- public open space should be directly overlooked;
- avoid providing inadequate pockets of public open space that are difficult to maintain;
- don't plant trees too close to buildings where they may be used for climbing and gaining access to upper storeys;
- don't plant trees or shrubs where they will obscure lighting or pedestrian routes;
- planting schemes should not provide an opportunity for people to be able to hide or be able to congregate and engage in anti-social behaviour;
- children's play areas and their pedestrian access points should be



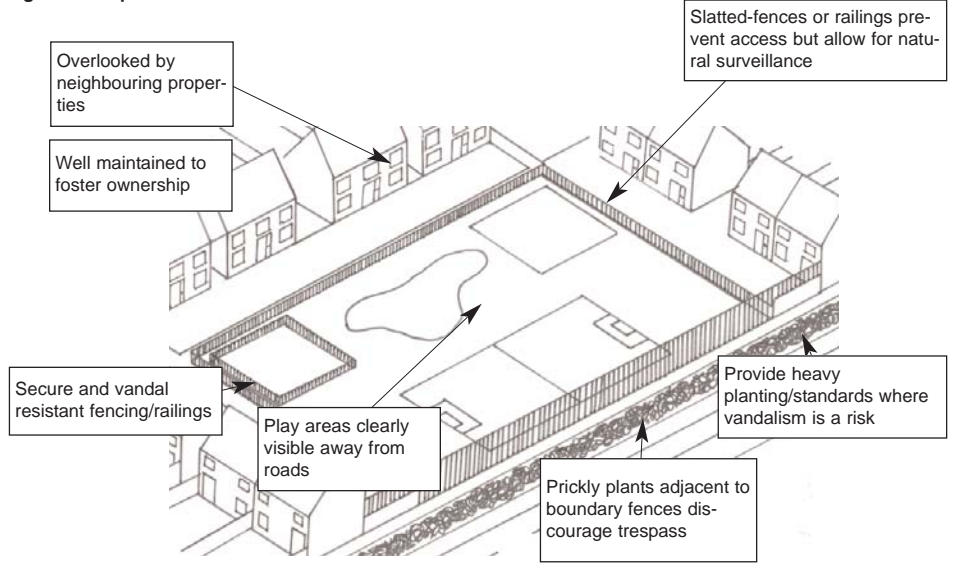
sited within sight of adjoining properties but not next to roads or car parks.

Detailed Issues

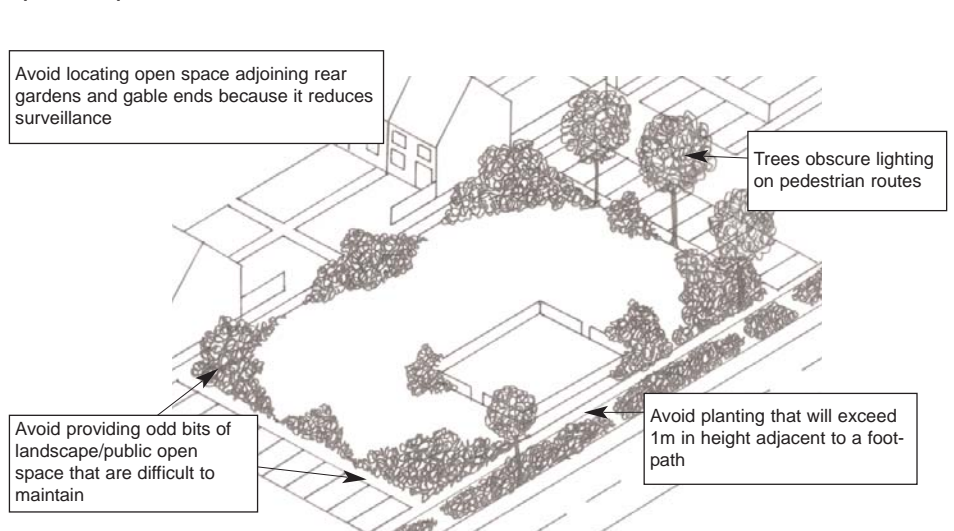
- prevent unauthorised vehicular access by the use of walling, fencing, or the use of bollards;
- avoid planting landscaping that will grow over 1 metre in height immediately adjacent to public footpaths;
- hard landscaping should be vandal resistant and not provide potential missiles;
- defensible planting of spiny or thorny plants can help prevent graffiti and loitering, enhance security, and keep the public to designated pedestrian routes. Appropriate plant species include Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hawthorn (*Crateagus spp*), Berberis (*Berberis julianae*), Firethorn (*Pyracantha spp*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), and Rose (*Rosa rugosa/canina*). Further advice is contained in Wrexham County Borough Council's Local Planning Guidance Note 7 "Landscaping".
- light glare and/or spillage onto adjoining properties and public areas should be minimised;
- children's play areas should be securely fenced, vandal and resistant proof.

Further advice is contained in Wrexham County Borough Council's Local Planning Guidance Note 10 "Public Open Space in New Housing Development".

Public open space - good example



Public open space - poor example



  
**wrexham**  
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