

SDCC Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime Prevention Pre Planning Guidance

One of the most effective measures for community safety and crime prevention is the creation of lively, lived-in urban areas and public spaces which are easy to overlook.

'Safer-by-Design' is the concept of designing the urban environment in a way which promotes passive security. While active security measures such as Garda presence on the streets and private security in buildings play a role in creating a sense of security, it is important that the environment is designed in a way which maximises the perception of safety and reduces opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. Specific design measures promoting passive security that apply to most forms of development are set out below.

- ✓ **Natural surveillance:** Buildings should be positioned so that they front onto and overlook the public domain. Layouts should avoid exposing blank gable walls or rear gardens directly onto the public realm. Boundary treatment should define an area in front of the gable as private and the gable wall should have a window to habitable space.
- ✓ **Diversity of uses:** The inclusion of a wide range of uses as an integral part of town, district and local centres is desirable. Residential use at first floor level is encouraged.
- ✓ **Legibility:** It should be easy to understand how to travel through an area. Routes and access points should be well-lit and well-defined.
- ✓ **Integration of secondary routes:** Secondary and internal estate routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles should, in most cases, run alongside each other and not be segregated.
- ✓ **Open Space:** All open space should have a function and should not just be 'space left over'. Public and communal open space should be directly overlooked by surrounding buildings and activities. Buildings with overlooking windows should form a full perimeter around areas of communal or private open space.
- ✓ **Safe pedestrian routes:** Footpaths should be wide, well-lit, follow a direct route, avoid secluded corners and should be directly overlooked by surrounding buildings and activities.
- ✓ **Landscaping:** Planting should not be too dense and tree canopies should be a minimum of 2m above ground level. In larger residential developments, facilities should be provided for all age groups. Facilities that may be the target of vandalism should be centrally-located and well overlooked
- ✓ **Boundary treatment should be visually-permeable.** Where walls or planting are required, they should be designed not to provide cover.
- ✓ **Dwelling type mix should be sought.** Adaptable housing catering for a mix of age-groups should also be encouraged.
- ✓ **Apartment development** should generally not exceed 6 storeys in height in order to promote connectivity with ground level. All entrance and exit points should be clearly defined by highlighting architectural detail.
- ✓ **Defensible space:** Along their boundaries, apartment blocks and town houses should have clearly defined private/communal space that is separate from public space through building design, railings or planting.
- ✓ **Roads and footpaths** should not undermine the defensible space of a development. Features such as change of road surface (colour or texture) or narrowing of the roadway may be used to define the defensible space, giving the impression that the space beyond is private.
- ✓ **Active frontage:** Streets should be well-overlooked with a large number of openings onto the street to avoid blank facades and 'dead frontage'.
- ✓ **Well-defined openings:** All entrance and exit points should be clearly defined by highlighting architectural details.

This guidance is based on "Guidelines for Designing out Anti-Social Behaviour" approved by the Economic Development and Planning Strategic Policy Committee on 19th September 2007 and adopted by the County Council on 14th April 2008.