CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN STATEMENT

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to identify and assess crime risk associated with the proposed mixed use development located at 795 Medowie Road, Medowie NSW 2318 (Lot 1 DP1215257).

Site Analysis

The site is located on the south eastern corner of the intersection connecting Peppertree Road with Muir Street. The site is surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential land uses as well as vacant, undeveloped land. Medowie town centre is located to the south west of the site and contains a mix of commercial and food and drink premises. Low density residential land is generally located to the north and south of the site with higher density residential to the east across Medowie Road. Land to the immediate north west is currently vacant.

Crime Opportunity

Given the nature of a mixed use commercial development there is a potential increased opportunity for crimes or anti-social behavior (e.g. vandalism, graffiti, litter, excessive noise) at the site, particularly during night time hours.

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 from intersecting in time and space.

CPTED aims to influence the design of buildings and places by:

- Increasing the perception of risk to criminals by increasing the possibility of detection, challenge and capture;
- Increasing the effort required to commit crime by increasing the time, energy or resources which need to be expended;
- Reducing the potential rewards of crime by minimising, removing or concealing 'crime benefits'; and
- Removing conditions that create confusion about required norms of behaviour.

Source: Department of Planning and Environment formerly the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 2001.

CPTED employs four key strategies including surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement and space/activity management.

In accordance with the four key strategies, the principals of Crime Prevention and Public Safety are addressed in relation to the Medowie proposal below:

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1. Surveillance

Natural surveillance limits the opportunity for crime by increasing awareness that people can be seen. Potential offenders therefore feel increased scrutiny and limitations on their escape routes.

Good surveillance is achieved by:

(a) Clear sightlines between private and public spaces;
(b) Effective lighting of public places; and
(c) Landscaping that makes places attractive, but not a place to hide.

The design of the development includes natural surveillance by the strategic placement of physical features to maximise visibility. The specific design elements include:

- Clear sight lines are provided allowing maximum surveillance of the vehicular entry and exit point(s) for the site;
- The maintenance levels for paths of travel will comply with AS1680;
- Installation of 24/7 video surveillance (CCTV) within the development;
- Fire exit doors will be alarmed (where required);
- Appropriate day and night lighting installed to eliminate any potential problem areas and to ensure security cameras operate effectively (i.e. easy facial recognition at 15m);
- No 'hidden spots' created within the site by siting of buildings allowing optimal surveillance over the internal (central) areas of the site; and
- The design of the car park areas encourages passive surveillance and incorporates active measures such as lighting and signage.

2. Access Control

Access control limits the opportunity for crime by taking steps to clearly differentiate between public space and private space.

Good access control for the movement of people is achieved by:

(a) Landscapes and physical locations that channel and group pedestrians into target areas;
(b) Public spaces that attract rather than discourage people from gathering; and
(c) Restricted access to internal or high risk areas (e.g. car parks).

The site has been designed to encourage natural access and control flow of people by:

- Appropriate signage for both customer and delivery/service vehicles;
- Lighting of pedestrian pathways and access routes to Australian Standard (AS 1158); and
- Clear movement for pedestrians throughout the car park and between the elements of the development to minimise conflict with vehicles.

3. Territorial Reinforcement (Community Ownership)

Territorial reinforcement promotes social control through increased definition of space and improved proprietary concern, i.e. it makes the normal user feel safe and makes the potential offender aware of a substantial risk of apprehension or scrutiny. By using buildings, fences, pavement, signs, lighting and landscape to express ownership and define public, semi-public and private space, natural territorial reinforcement occurs.

Community ownership (territorial reinforcement) makes people feel comfortable in a place and is achieved by:

(a) A design that encourages people to gather in public spaces;
(b) Having a clear transition between boundaries of public and private spaces; and

(c)   Having clear design cues as to who is to use the space and what it is to be used for.

The proposed development has been designed to clearly delineate public space. This will ensure that any potential intruders will stand out and be easily identified. Elements of territorial reinforcement included into the design and management of the proposal include:

- The premises and landscaping will be maintained such that it communicates an alert and active presence occupying the space;
- Clearly defined boundaries of the site;
- Pedestrian line markings provided within the development;
- Provision of signage that will assist in controlling activities and movements throughout the premises (knowing how and where to enter/exit and find assistance can impact perceptions of safety, victim vulnerability and crime opportunity);
- Providing appropriate landscaping treatments within the development; and
- Display of security system signage at access points.

4. Space Management

Space management strategies such as site maintenance, target hardening, and target removal are proposed for the development proposal.

Site Maintenance

Management and maintenance are closely linked to a sense of ownership. Good management and maintenance of a place, or property, is often the difference between it seeming safe or unsafe and it being cared for or uncared for. Deterioration indicates less control by the users of a site and indicates a greater tolerance of disorder.

It is in the interest of the future operators to maintain the site to a high standard so that each premises can operate at their optimal level and attract as much usage as possible. Routine maintenance checks and reporting will be carried out by personnel employed at the development to ensure the property is maintained and to reduce the likelihood of crime or vandalism. Furthermore, robust materials are proposed to be used where possible including graffiti resistant materials and fixed rubbish bins to mitigate against potential malicious damage. Any vandalism or graffiti will be repaired and removed promptly by staff or contractors.

As stated above, the proposed landscaping is designed not to create pockets or enclosures whereby victims could be entrapped but to help integrate the built form into the site and surrounds. The proposed landscaping scheme avoids vegetation that impedes the effectiveness of outdoor lighting and allows for good sightlines without areas for concealment.

Target Hardening and Removal

Target hardening and removal is the use of 'design out crime' strategies to make it harder for a crime to be committed and reduces the gains of crime. While this is the most long-established and traditional approach to crime prevention, it can create a 'fortress mentality' and imagery whereby users of the development withdraw behind physical barriers and the self-policing capacity of the built environment is damaged. This is effectively working against CPTED strategies that rely on surveillance, territoriality and positive image management.

The proposal includes the use of some physical barriers associated with target hardening such as security cameras and landscaping in key locations. However, the site allows opportunities for natural surveillance from within the site, with clearly defined boundaries, and allows opportunities for natural access control. The development aims to ensure a safe environment for all users of the facility.

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Conclusion

The development of the site for the purposes of a mixed use commercial development has been designed with CPTED principles in mind and incorporates appropriate night lighting, car park design, site and building layout and landscaping as well as security devices such as CCTV cameras to assist in crime deterrence and prevention.

Implementation of the above-mentioned measures into the design of the proposal will create an environment that will dissuade offenders from committing crimes by manipulating the built environment in which those crimes proceed from or occur.

The design is considered to be consistent with the Department of Planning and Environment (former Department of Urban Affairs and Planning) Crime Prevention and the Assessment of Development Applications, 2001.

Yours sincerely

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