



**Police Service of Northern Ireland**  
**Crime Prevention Design Service**  
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**Please reply to:** Joanne Smyth

**Your ref:** -

**Our ref:** -

**Date:** - 6<sup>th</sup> October 2017

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Dear Oliver,

## **Re: Designing Out Crime Advice – Railway Park, Dungannon**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed development plans for Railway Park and to meet and visit Railway Park, with you and our Inspector Gibson on 15<sup>th</sup> September. As requested I have compiled the following report which offers advice in relation to designing out crime.

### **Project Profile**

The proposals and designs outline the further development of Railway Park in Dungannon. This area has been the subject of numerous incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and some violent crime. This project could have a very positive outcome for local community and by looking at ways to design out crime it will help reduce their fear of crime and improve the quality of life. Seven attributes of sustainable communities that are particularly relevant when working towards designing out crime in projects such as this one are set out below.

**Access and movement:** places with well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security.

**Structure:** places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict.

**Surveillance:** places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked.

**Ownership:** places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community.

**Physical protection:** places that include necessary, well-designed security features.

**Activity:** places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times.

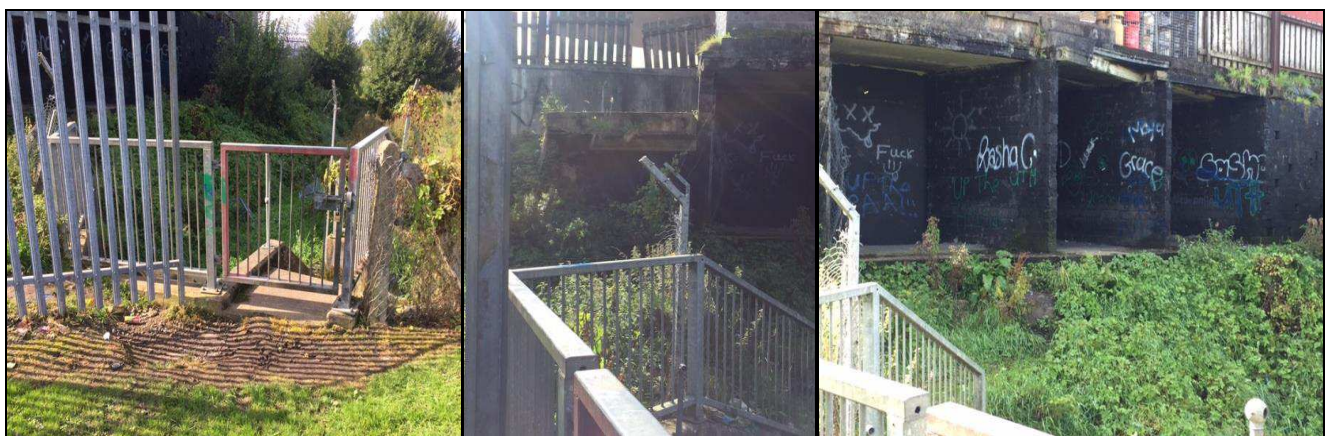
**Management and maintenance:** places that are designed with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present and the future.

### Observations

Below are some photos of the area which highlight particular problems.

The first set is of an area sometimes referred to as “The Cubes”. This area is accessible from the park and is clearly used for ASB activities. There is palisade fencing along one side of the access point to this area but stops at the gated area shown in the first photo below. The middle photo shows another access/egress point from a local garage forecourt. The last photo shows the cubes where the youths congregate.

Areas such as this generate fear and make the park appear unappealing and dangerous to the local community.



Trees and shrubs are naturally associated with parks however, planting should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance and should avoid the creation of potential hiding places. There are areas throughout the park where trees have provided cover and shelter for those engaging in ASB activities. The evidence seen from the photos below were taken in the wooded area just behind The Junction community building and also in the area near the Old English Road.







This photo shows an access/egress point in the park which runs behind the wooded area at The Junction and has a number of fear generators. The trees and planting on either side prevent natural surveillance, there is no lighting and the evidence shows that this has made it an area which is regularly and frequently used for ASB activities. The access/egress point has been blocked off but the 1m fencing is not sufficient to prevent its use for the purposes of ASB. Numerous 'rat runs' were noted leading on to the path in Railway Park which at this point gives access to off-licences – the local Tesco is situated close by.

The area under the bridge below again provides cover for those who commit crime. I noted floodlights have been added to the lampposts at either side of the bridge however, because my visit took place during the hours of daylight, I cannot confirm if they are working or provide sufficient lighting in this area. There was also some graffiti on the bridge.



The planting on the access/egress path leading to/from Newell Road has become overgrown obscuring the lighting. Planting should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance nor create the opportunity for hiding places.

One of the areas to be developed is set alongside McKee's Terrace, an area of housing near the end of Newell Road and a Skateboard park is proposed for the area shown in the second photo below. As the skateboard park will abut the rear vehicular entrance leading to the rear of McKee's Terrace the boundary will need to be secure taking account of issues such as privacy and noise concerns. Across from this area, just off the Ballygawley Road a Performance Space is planned which appears to include a covered stage area and perhaps some cover along the rear seating area. This has the potential to create further ASB problems if care is not taken to ensure it is well lit and has good surveillance.



## **Recommendations**

The recommendations refer to not only the new development but also areas within the existing park.

**Landscaping** – My report has highlighted areas where the planting may be contributing to ASB by providing cover or obscuring view. However, park areas are green areas and landscaping plays an essential part in making such an environment friendly and pleasant. The correct use of certain species of plants such as spiny or thorny shrubs can help prevent graffiti and loitering and create or enhance perimeter security. Defensive planting is not just about prickly shrubs; it is about selecting the right type of plant for the right aspect and environment. For example, open branched and columnar fastigiated trees can be used in a landscape scheme where natural and formal surveillance is required. Climbing plants can be used to cover walls to deter graffiti. Carefully selected trees and shrubs can be used to 'green up' the most hostile of environments providing both horizontal and vertical interest without adding to crime risks.

Planting should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance and must avoid the creation of potential hiding places such as the area behind The Junction and the closed off pathway leading to Railway Road/Linfield Street as well as the area close to the Old English Road. As a general recommendation, where good visibility is needed, shrubs should be selected to have a mature growth height of no higher than 1 metre, and trees should have no foliage, epicormic growth or lower branches below 2 metres, thereby allowing a 1 metre clear field of vision – the gradient of the landscape will need to be considered when deciding what planting to use.

**Access/Egress** – The park is designed to allow local residents easy access. These pathways should not be secluded areas but should be as straight as possible, have good lighting and should be designed to provide good visibility i.e. where users are visible by others through

natural surveillance - concealment spots or entrapment spaces must be avoided. Unauthorised access points such as 'The Cubes' area should be closed off. The Palisade fencing should be extended - if access is required to that area a gate which is of the same height and construction as the fence should be put in place and securely locked. The secluded pathway which leads to Railway Road/Linfield Street is an area of concern. The current fencing is not adequate or high enough to prevent access but replacing the fence with palisade fencing will not, on its own, provide a solution to the problems of ASB that exist at present. The pathway itself is still a concern. However, it could be re-opened if the bank of trees was cleared and replaced with a new planting design which takes full account of opportunities for crime.

At the moment Council Vehicles have access to the park – I recommend that provisions are put in place to ensure that Emergency Services can also gain access when necessary.

**Graffiti** - In situations where Graffiti is frequently painted on walls it is recommended that the graffiti be removed as soon as possible. Anti-social behaviour attracts further such behaviour. I recommend it is removed or painted out. Treating walls with an anti-graffiti glaze will make future removal of graffiti much easier.

**Lighting** - A successful lighting scheme requires good but not oppressive levels of light that is evenly distributed. Well-positioned lighting deters and reveals potential intruders and reduces fear of crime. It is important that the landscape architect and lighting engineer co-ordinate their plans to avoid conflict between lighting and tree canopies. Where CCTV is to be used the lighting should complement the chosen scheme. A CRI of 65+ is best to aid recognition and identification which produces quality images and avoids light spillage.

**CCTV** – Where natural surveillance cannot be achieved consideration should be given to the use of CCTV. The area under the bridge has in the past given cause for concern. It is clear that steps have been taken to address this issue and flood lighting installed. However, whilst improved lighting can reduce the fear of crime, lighting without any natural or formal surveillance may prove to be ineffective.

**Signage** - Clear Signage is a very positive way to set out expectations for people's behaviour and to exercise control over your space. A welcome message to visitors giving directions and advising of services provided is useful but signage which sets out rules will clarify and define what behaviours are unacceptable. Drinking has been identified as one of the ASB activities in the park but currently there are no signs which state that drinking is prohibited.

Where any unacceptable behaviour is presented, a sign may be used as a mandate to challenge the behaviour. Challenging someone by saying "The sign says 'No Drinking'" is very different to telling someone "I say that you cannot exhibit the behaviour".

Signs should be clear and multi-lingual as appropriate. The use of simple recognised symbols is recommended. If CCTV is to be in operation, clear signage at the entrance should be erected to alert the public.

**Ownership** – A launch day and subsequent events such as park runs, theatre events etc. will encourage local residents to use the park. This in turn should help to create a sense of ownership which in turn encourages the residents to take pride and ownership of the park.

## **Conclusion**

For further guidance on security I would recommend checking [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com) and [www.psni.police.uk/index/crime-prevention](http://www.psni.police.uk/index/crime-prevention)

This report is based on information supplied and current crime trends in the area concerned. Crime prevention advice is given free without the intention of forming a contract.

The Police Service does not accept liability for the advice given. The total elimination of crime cannot be guaranteed but the advice if acted upon and implemented, will reduce the fear of crime and the opportunity of crime being committed.

In compiling this, I have endeavoured to maintain a reasonable, realistic and cost effective approach. If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**Joanne Smyth**  
**Crime Prevention and Designing Out Crime Officer**

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