Local Development Framework

Designing Out Crime

December 2011

Mole Valley Local Development Framework

FOREWORD

1. This Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared jointly by Mole Valley District Council and Surrey Police. It provides guidelines for developers and others involved with the design of new development.

2. The SPD gives practical advice about how developers and planners can avoid creating opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour. Applying the advice can help developers and the Council to create places which feel safe and where the fear of crime is low.

3. The SPD:
   - Highlights the crime issues which arise most often within Mole Valley;
   - Sets out a protocol for consultation between Mole Valley DC and Surrey Police on new planning applications;
   - Provides advice for planners and developers working in Mole Valley, outlining design considerations relevant to safety and security matters.

4. The guidelines are based on current best practice and Government guidance in Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM, 2004). The general principles in Safer Places are applied to the local context within Mole Valley and the guidance is illustrated by examples from within the District.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Legislation and National Guidance

5. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to exercise their functions with due regard to likely effect on crime and disorder, and the need to do "all that the authority reasonably can" to prevent crime and disorder. "Crime and disorder" includes anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment; and the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.

6. National planning policy makes clear that crime reduction is a material consideration for Planning Authorities (PPS1, 'Delivering Sustainable Development' 2005). Among the key objectives for robust design and access policies, PPS1 says that LPAs should aim to "create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion" (PPS1 para 36).

7. At the time of writing, the Coalition Government has just published the Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for consultation. The draft NPPF states that Councils should have "robust and comprehensive" design policies in their Local Plans. Policies should set out the quality of development that will be expected, while avoiding being over-prescriptive. The objectives include creating "safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion". (Draft NPPF para 116)

8. This SPD sets out practical guidelines and general principles that can be applied to different types of development. At the same time, it recognises that different issues will have to be balanced in each case and the same solution will not apply in every situation.

9. There is additional guidance in the following documents:

    - *By Design: Better Places to Live*, published by the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions in 2001 as a companion guide to PPG3.

    - *Safer Places – the Planning System and Crime Prevention*, published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2004.

    - *Crowded Places: The Planning System and Counter-Terrorism,* published by the Home Office, 2010

    Advice can also be found through the Secured by Design initiative, owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers. Details are on www.securedbydesign.com.

Mole Valley Planning Policy

10. The Mole Valley Local Plan 2000 includes policy ENV29 Planning and Crime Prevention, which states: *"In considering development proposals the Council will seek to ensure that the design and layout, and where necessary, use of buildings and spaces about and between buildings take account of the opportunities to reduce the incidence of crime."*

11. Core Strategy Policy CS14 deals with the design of new development. It does not specifically cover crime prevention issues, being a strategic-level document. To maintain a framework for crime prevention, Policy ENV29 was saved, pending the adoption of relevant development control policies. This SPD interprets the policy framework in CS14, carrying forward the issues highlighted in policy ENV29 and applying good practice within the local situation.

CRIME ISSUES IN MOLE VALLEY

12. On the whole, Mole Valley has a relatively low crime rate, but this does not reduce the importance of taking opportunities to tackle crime where they arise. The crimes that have the highest impact on residents and businesses are burglaries, theft of motor vehicles, theft from motor vehicles and anti-social behaviour. Within the rural areas, there are some more specific crime trends, including offences such as poaching and theft of fuel, machinery or farming equipment.

13. Crime, fear of crime and anti social behaviour can all harm community well being and quality of life. Crime has obvious direct consequences for victims. But even where actual crime rates are low, the fear of crime can undermine quality of life, particularly for vulnerable groups.

14. "Designing Out Crime" is one way of helping to reduce the risk and fear of crime. The aim is to design a physical environment that positively influences human behaviour. This should help people feel safe and secure within their built environment, while simultaneously make criminals at greater risk of being caught, and therefore less inclined to offend.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

15. Submission of a planning application provides an opportunity to make sure developments are designed in a manner which minimises crime. To this end, the Council works in partnership with the Surrey Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) to assess new development proposals.

16. The types of development which are most likely to raise crime prevention issues include:
    - larger residential and commercial developments;
    - new community or neighbourhood facilities;
    - applications involving food and drink uses or nightclubs;
    - installation of cash machines;
    - car parking or vehicle storage uses;
    - developments at premises where large numbers of people may gather, including large offices, conference venues and visitor attractions.

17. Those applying for these types of development are advised to include material in their Design and Access Statement, showing how these guidelines have been addressed.

18. Mole Valley will consult Surrey Police on certain types of application, as listed in Annex 1. The Council's weekly list of new planning applications is also reviewed on a regular basis by the CPDA, who may wish to comment on other applications that raise concerns.

19. Any planning decision involves balancing sometimes competing objectives. Crime prevention considerations will be given weight alongside other issues, especially where the potential crime risk is likely to be high or the consequences serious. Where a proposed development undermines community safety, planning permission could be refused. Where possible the Council will seek amendments or impose planning conditions which will address crime prevention issues.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

20. The remainder of the SPD sets out principles for Designing out Crime in Mole Valley. The advice is structured under seven headings, corresponding to the attributes of sustainable communities set out in Safer Places:
    - *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

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

21. The aim is to create networks of streets, paths and accesses which are pleasant to use, take people where they want to go and do not feel isolated from their surroundings. Developers also need to avoid creating easy escape routes from criminal activity.

22. Good movement networks have direct routes that lead where people want to travel, by whatever means, including on foot, by cycle or public transport. Street layouts should be well connected to increase opportunities for interaction between different users. They should not cause neighbouring areas to be segregated, for example by transport routes that are difficult to cross.

23. From the point of view of crime prevention, it can be beneficial for routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles to run alongside one another. This can provide opportunities for natural surveillance.

Pedestrians and/or cyclists catered for alongside the carriageway with good mutual visibility.

24. However, there may be cases where it is desirable to separate footpaths and cycle ways from motor traffic, for safety purposes or to encourage walking and cycling. In these cases, footpaths or cycleways should be carefully designed to provide good visibility and avoid potential hiding places or dark corners. Care should be taken to avoid sharp bends that restrict visibility. As far as practicable, pathways should be overlooked and under surveillance from surrounding properties. Subways, footbridges and underpasses can be isolated and intimidating spaces which should be avoided wherever possible. Where unavoidable, they should be designed with good visibility from surrounding land, to minimise the risk of criminal activity.

Footpath separate from road, but well overlooked from adjacent properties (left).

In contrast, these paths (right) are obscured from view, isolating users and creating a potential escape route for criminals.

25. In all cases, developers are reminded that streets and paths must also be designed in accordance with current highway standards.

STRUCTURE

26. The structure of development is the way it is laid out, to minimise conflict between different uses and avoid creating "dead" spaces that are underused and ill cared for.

27. Mixed use developments can increase natural surveillance and maximise the range of uses in towns in order to extend the time that people are present in the streets. A town centre residential population brings activity, natural surveillance and a sense of ownership, which is to be encouraged. However, care should be taken to ensure that the mixture of uses within a locality is compatible. For example, noisy uses can cause disturbance to residents.

28. Windowless and blank walls can create spaces that are not overlooked and special care should be taken where the ends of buildings adjoin public spaces. Where possible, at least one window should be provided. Where blank flank/gable walls are unavoidable, security can be enhanced by providing a buffer of private space, with suitable boundary treatment (see section on Ownership for discussion of boundary marking).

In this housing layout, the road passes the gable ends of a series of terraces. As a result, the road is not well overlooked. Overgrown landscaping also creates potential hiding places.

Example of terrace designed so that the corner property has two "active" frontages. As a result, the entrance to this cul de sac benefits from good natural surveillance.

29. The structure of cul-de-sac based layouts requires particular care. When well designed, cul-de-sacs can provide good mutual surveillance between properties and enable residents to develop a strong sense of ownership within their small group of houses. In those circumstances, strangers become noticeable, which can help to deter criminal activity.

30. However, some cul-de-sac layouts involve networks of footpaths or 'rat runs' that are irregularly used and likely to foster criminal activity. The main access routes through a cul-de-sac estate may also lack natural surveillance, if all the properties front onto the cul-de-sac, rather than onto the main route.

Cul de sacs can offer good natural surveillance, a quiet environment and a strong sense of ownership, where strangers are easily identified (left), . However, access roads and other through routes can lack natural surveillance, where a succession of properties back onto them (right).

31. Where adopted, cul-de-sac design should be simple and linear in nature so that good mutual surveillance is possible between properties, along with sight lines from nearby streets.

32. In all new developments, public access to the rear of buildings should be avoided wherever possible. Secluded footpaths or alleyways should not run along the rear of properties, where they could make it easy to gain illegitimate access to. If rear access is necessary, lockable and un-climbable gates and fences should be incorporated in the design. Where these are for vehicular access, they will need to be located in accordance with highway standards, to ensure that vehicles can use them without obstructing the highway.

Car Parking

33. Car parking is part of the layout of many, if not most, types of development and a significant element in the structure of our townscapes. Car parks can also be a particular target for criminal activity with offences such as theft of, and theft from, vehicles, and assault.

34. Developers should seek to create safe and convenient parking facilities where all users, including the most vulnerable, can feel secure. Car parks should be appropriately lit, with good natural surveillance from nearby dwellings, buildings and/or well used routes. Landscape planting should not obscure views of vehicles, create hiding places or form litter traps.

Well designed and cared for planting means that this "Park Mark" certified car park looks attractive, and sight lines are kept clear.

35. Multi-storey car parks can be particularly isolated and vulnerable. Parking levels need to be well lit, lifts and stairwells well maintained with a lack of possible hiding

places for criminals. Parking spaces should be arranged in straight rows to avoid blind spots, dead ends and recesses and support pillars should be as slim as possible.

36. All car parks should create a pedestrian friendly environment that caters for all users – whether they are members of the public or occupants of a private development. Pathways should be direct and well defined with easy access from parking bays to the properties or facilities served.

37. Within residential developments, the most secure option is to provide integral garages. Parking within the curtilage is the next most secure option. Where parking is on-street, vehicles are more vulnerable to opportunistic crime and vandalism. To minimise the risks, parking spaces should be as close as possible to the dwelling they serve. Vehicles should not be isolated and there should be good natural surveillance from surrounding properties. Isolated parking courtyards should be avoided.

In this housing layout, parking was provided in small parking courts, which are close to the houses they serve (left), and easily overlooked. On street parking is also in clearly visible locations, close to neighbouring properties (right).

38. Where appropriate, developers should seek to achieve the 'Park Mark' Award, details of which can be found at www.saferparking.com

SURVEILLANCE

39. Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to occur if the people involved are confident they will not be seen. Developers can help by making sure buildings and structures are designed to maximise natural surveillance. This helps to encourage positive interaction among legitimate users of space whilst limiting the number of escape routes for potential offenders.

40. Buildings should provide "active frontages" in which windows and doors face onto streets, footpaths and public spaces. Room and window orientations should provide views to and from the street, with at least one habitable room fronting the street at ground floor level. Private rear gardens should be back to back wherever possible and avoid backing onto service roads or footpaths.

Traditional streets, with all the houses facing the road, are the easiest way to provide an "active" frontage. Visibility is maintained when planting is kept at a height which does not obscure the view of the street.

These houses back on to the road in the foreground. They have been designed so that the rear elevations have plenty of windows and the back doors have the appearance of main entrances. The hedge is low enough to enclose the gardens, without obscuring the view of the street.

41. Surveillance of strangers and visitors is easier when each property has its own private entrance from the street. Entrances should be visible from windows within the dwelling so that visitors can be identified from within. Recessed doorways of greater than 600mm depth can create hiding places and should generally be avoided.

42. Where communal entrances are necessary, design features such as secure intercom entry systems should be used, to help the occupiers restrict access to residents and authorised visitors.

43. External structures including extensions, outbuildings, fences and trees should not obscure entrances from view, provide hiding places or allow easy access to upper floor windows or over boundaries.

44. Good external lighting can also help to promote natural surveillance. There is further advice on lighting below, under the heading Activity.

OWNERSHIP

45. Clearly delineating between private and public space gives people the opportunity to personalise their own space. This helps to foster the perception of a well kept and loved environment. It also makes it easier for intruders to be challenged.

46. The boundaries of private and communal areas should be clearly defined, in a manner which is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. There are many ways of demarcating boundaries. Sensitive placement and appropriate selection of physical barriers such as gates, fences, walls and hedges create safer places that are also attractive. Conversely, insensitive boundary treatments can

create a "fortress" appearance or obstruct natural surveillance, neither of which is desirable.

47. On front boundaries and on the edges of public spaces, visually permeable boundaries will help to ensure surveillance is not hindered. This can be achieved using boundaries which are up to one metre in height or, if higher, of a design which allows views across the boundary. Railings can be the best option in areas vulnerable to graffiti.

Examples of boundary treatments which preserve visibility over boundary in different settings:

- Low, well maintained hedge (top)
- Contrasting paving (bottom left)
- Railing and contrasting surface (bottom right)

48. Boundary treatments that actively impede access, such as higher fences and walls, are most appropriately used in locations where mutual privacy is needed, such as between back gardens.

49. Demarcation of territory without physical boundaries may be appropriate in some settings. Suitable design techniques include changes in paving, surface texture/colour, landscaping, planting and signage.

50. Within rural or semi-rural areas, "hard" boundaries such as high fences, gates and walls may be inappropriate for visual reasons. Their use may also be impractical where properties stand in large grounds. In these situations, it may be more appropriate to concentrate on maintaining good natural surveillance, combined with effective use of planted boundaries.

51. In all locations, care should be taken to ensure that boundary walls or fences do not create easy access onto flat roofs.

52. It may be relevant to consider access control systems such as lockable gates or secure intercom entry systems in areas where security is a significant issue.

However, such features require careful design, to integrate into their surroundings and avoid generating a "fortress" mentality.

PHYSICAL PROTECTION AND SECURITY

53. One of the most effective ways to protect against burglary is to make individual properties as secure as possible. This is sometimes known as "target hardening".

54. Some target hardening measures are directly deliverable through the planning process, such as appropriate boundary treatments as described above. Other measures complement what can be achieved through the planning process, such as selecting doors and windows which make it difficult to make a forced entry.

55. In some cases, there may be a conflict between measures to secure properties against intrusion and the visual appearance of an area. For example, security shutters may make an individual property more secure, but at the same time reduce natural surveillance and increase fear of crime.

56. The Council will wish to strike a balance between the security benefits of target hardening and the consequences for the character and appearance of the area. Particular care will be required in sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

57. Developers are referred to the Secured By Design initiative, which includes extensive guidance on target hardening measures, alongside the other general principles set out in this SPD. The Secured by Design Developers Award is a scheme which enables developers to work with Crime Prevention Design Advisors to demonstrate that new developments have been built to SBD principles. Those interested in obtaining a Developers Award for their project should consult with the Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) at the earliest opportunity. Contact details are provided in Annex 1.

CCTV

58. In some situations, it may be appropriate to complement natural surveillance measures with formal surveillance such as CCTV cameras. CCTV is most useful in town centres, car parks and sensitive high risk locations, including some commercial uses. It is most effective when combined with effective lighting and supported by management, continuous monitoring and adequate response.

59. CCTV should meet Home Office standards and be visible but sensitively positioned. Equipment should be avoided on listed buildings if at all possible. But where this is necessary, discussion should take place with the Local Authority's Historic Environment Officer and the relevant consents must be obtained. For effective crime prevention, it is vital that CCTV systems are fit for purpose and well placed so that views are not obstructed.

CCTV Installations in sensitive locations: Grade 2* Listed Building at Polesden Lacey (left), and Leatherhead Conservation Area (above)

60. Using signs to publicise that CCTV is in operation will increase its impact and is necessary to comply with Data Protection Act Codes of Practice. However, in sensitive areas, including Conservation Areas or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, careful thought needs to be given to the number and location of signs. Consultation with the Local Authority's Historic Environment Officer is advised.

ACTIVITY

61. Crime can be reduced where there is a high level of legitimate activity at different times of day and night. The level of activity increases the probability that crime will be observed or challenged.

62. Good signage and points of interest, such as market stalls, places to sit or street art, can encourage people to use routes and spaces, increasing the general level of activity.

Well-used public open spaces, incorporating seating, public art and clearly-defined pedestrian routes.

63. Again, mixed use developments can be beneficial, by increasing the times at which people are likely to be present in the streets. Within solely residential areas, opportunities for surveillance throughout the day can be improved by providing a mix of house types, so that a mixture of workers, retired people and young families are

more likely to be present. A sense of community spirit can also be encouraged, by allowing regular sightings of neighbours.

64. When designing new parks, play areas and other public spaces, the layout should ensure that these are easily observed from nearby dwellings and streets and provide a safe access route for potential users. Advice on children's play areas can be obtained from the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA).

Lighting

65. Well lit spaces can be a major factor in reducing the fear of crime and making places more usable. Lighting can help to increase legitimate activity after dark and can act as a deterrent to criminal activity. At the same time, great care has to be taken in the introduction of external lighting in rural or suburban locations, where the prevailing level of illumination may be low.

66. Where lighting is introduced, it should be carefully designed, with regard to the character of the surroundings. Lighting should be focussed on the areas where it is genuinely required, avoiding glare or nuisance to neighbouring properties. Care is also needed to avoid creating dark patches, which can act as hiding places.

67. More detailed guidance on the design of external illumination can be found in the Secure by Design publication *Lighting Against Crime*, which can be downloaded at: www.securedbydesign.com/pdfs/110107_LightingAgainstCrime.pdf

68. Developers should note that all lighting within the public highway must also conform to Surrey County Council's Specification for Street Lighting.

Landscaping

69. The way that landscaping is designed can encourage, or discourage, levels of activity. Well designed street furniture and art can be effective in creating an attractive and more distinctive environment. Seats, bus stops, taxi ranks and bins should be positioned to encourage their use, and in positions that will not obscure views of users, obstruct pedestrian movement, encourage anti social behaviour or assist unauthorised entry.

70. Trees and shrubs can be highly beneficial in creating attractive spaces that draw in plenty of legitimate activity. However, they can also create hiding spaces and reduce visibility which may discourage people from using a space or pathway.

71. To avoid this, landscaped areas such as parks, footpaths and open spaces should be designed to maintain a good level of natural surveillance, as well as being visually appealing. Trees and other landscaping features should be positioned so that they do not create hiding spaces or obscure lighting. Clear sightlines should be maintained over long distances (25 metres or over). There will be greater visibility if trees in public areas do not have foliage below 2 metres from the ground, while low level planting should not exceed 1 metre in height.

This small open space (above left) is for residents of the surrounding houses. It is well maintained, has good natural surveillance from the neighbouring properties and seems an attractive place to sit.

This footpath (above right) is through a "landscaped" area in a housing layout. It does not appear to have been kept maintained and has become overgrown and unappealing.

The footpath on the left has clear, open sight lines, is overlooked from neighbouring flats and the planting is well maintained. The path provides a useful pedestrian connection between two streets, avoiding the main road.

The footpath on the right links two cul de sacs. It lacks natural surveillance and users cannot see beyond the bushes or around the corner. It could feel very isolated, especially at night.

MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

72. Management and maintenance embrace both how a place looks and how it functions over time. Whilst getting the physical design and build of areas right is paramount, ongoing management and maintenance are important factors in the creation of safer places.

73. Management arrangements should take account of the above issues and ensure that spaces are appropriately maintained in the long term. In many cases, this will be beyond the scope of the planning system. But appropriate management may form part of a legal agreement attached to a planning permission, in cases where a development results in the creation of a significant new public or communal space.

ANNEX 1

Protocol for Consultation between Mole Valley District Council and Surrey Police

The Council's weekly list of new planning applications will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) for Surrey Police.

At the planning application stage, the CPDA will comment on any application they deem to be subject to a crime and risk issue. These are likely to include:

- Major developments, i.e. residential housing developments comprising 10 or more units, or where the site is over 0.5 hectares and major commercial office, industrial, retail or leisure schemes, involving 1000 sq. m of floor space and above.
- Development involving new neighbourhood or community facilities.
- Applications for Class A3, A4 or A5 food and drink uses and nightclubs, including changes of use.
- Any development proposing a new ATM.
- Developments for freestanding car parking or vehicle storage uses.

Mole Valley will consult the CPDA directly on all applications for Major Developments, as defined above. Having reviewed the weekly list, the CPDA will notify Mole Valley about any other application upon which he wishes to reserve the right to comment. Where possible, Mole Valley will also include the CPDA in pre-application discussions on these types of development.

Mole Valley will consult the Surrey Police Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs) with respect to development at locations defined as "Crowded Places". These include:

- Large shopping centres
- Significant visitor attractions
- Stadia and arenas
- Cinemas and theatres
- Larger hotels (over 50 rooms)
- Larger restaurants (over 200 covers)
- Larger commercial centres (500+ employees)
- International HQ or US or Israeli owned organisations
- Larger bars or pubs (400+ capacity)
- Larger nightclubs (500+ capacity)
- Higher and further education establishments
- Major health care sites, i.e. with A&E facilities
- Significant places of worship

Within Mole Valley, the amount of development within the above categories is very limited. However, there are a few properties which fall into one or more of the above categories. The Council has identified such sites within its GIS system for development management and will consult the CTSA about any significant expansion or alterations at those locations.

Contact details

The Crime Prevention Design Adviser (CPDA) is a member of the Mole Valley Neighbourhood Team. Contact details are available on the Surrey Police website www.surrey.police.uk. Alternatively, the CPDA can be contacted via Surrey Police, PO Box 101, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 9PE or on 01483 637410.

The Counter Terrorism Security Advisers (CTSA) for Surrey Police can be contacted on ctsa@surrey.pnn.police.uk or 01483 639871.