

Design Out Crime - 83 Connaught Road

Introduction

Crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour within the urban environment all have negative impacts upon community well-being and quality of life. As well as the direct costs of crime experienced by its victims, the fear of crime contributes to social exclusion, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, the elderly, children and ethnic minorities. Crime also threatens the success and vitality of town centres and employment areas by acting as a brake on economic growth and prosperity.

Good designs and layouts make crimes more difficult to commit, increase the likelihood of detection of criminal activity and improve public perceptions of safety. Attractive and well-designed environments also encourage a sense of pride and 'ownership' amongst the local community.

83 Connaught Road, is an end-terrace house at the junction of Connaught Road and Prince of Wales Ave, with neighbours to the rear and right elevation. The left elevation overlooks Prince of Wales Ave, which is tree lined, end to end.

The front of 83 Connaught Road, is off set from the pavement, with an open gravel driveway that accommodates 3 vehicles. The left elevation and front boundary brick wall is approximately 90 cm high, deterring individuals to loiter or deposit waste/litter as they can be visibly seen. The rear fencing is standard 6 foot in height.

Natural Surveillance

This principle is based on the notion that places are safer when they are overlooked and that those doing the overlooking will be a deterrent and take action if they witness a crime. Crime and anti-social behaviour can be deterred by ensuring that all parts of the street, footpaths and public spaces are subject to casual supervision throughout all times of the day. Designs and layouts that ensure that there are always 'eyes' give potential offenders the message that any criminal or antisocial activities will be observed.

83 Connaught Road has window access that overlooks both the front, rear and left elevation boundary and in addition has visible CCTV that captures all aspects of the property boundary. The premises additionally have motion detection lights that cover the front and left elevation of the house that provide for additional deterrence as the lights will illuminate for a short period as individuals pass.

Entrance to the rear garden is through a locked side gate along the left elevation, which has a motion sensor light above it. The rear garden contains a metal lockable bike shed that can store up to 4 bicycles.

The property will be occupied 24 hours a day, providing an additional deterrence and assurance to neighbours and local nursery businesses on Prince of Wales Ave and Connaught Road that the property will not be seen as a target.

Defensible Space

An important issue is the need to establish a clear distinction between the public and private domains so that people are fully aware of where they are allowed to go at all times of the day and night. It must be clear where public space ends and where private space begins. Crime and anti-social behaviour is more likely to occur if users are unclear whether space is public or private, and are unaware of the behaviour expected in each.

83 Connaught Road has clearly defined boundary with fencing that delimitates between private and public right of access and use.

Surveillance

Good natural surveillance both to and from the street, public routes and open spaces is key to reducing crime in residential areas. Areas at risk from crime should be visible from adjoining properties or well-used public routes to increase the risks of detection and deter crime by making the potential offender feel more exposed.

83 Connaught Road is close to two nurseries and has regular pedestrian traffic along its front and left side elevation with parents dropping off and picking up their children. This pedestrian traffic deters others from loitering around 83 Connaught Road and creates a natural deterrence to crime.

External Structures and Trees

Extensions, outbuildings, fences and trees should not obscure entrances, provide hiding places or provide easy access to upper floor windows or over boundaries. Structures with flat roofs (for example, bin storage areas) assisting unauthorised entry into private property.

The garden footprint of 83 Connaught Road, is of low level planting and of low maintenance, ensuring that entrances are not obscured, and do not provide for hiding places.

The bike shed is placed away from street view and away from the structure of the house so as to ensure that it cannot be used to gain entry onto the first floor of the building.

Bin storage facilities are located to the left elevation of the property and no window or entry point is above the storage facility, and is clearly visible by pedestrians walking along Prince of Wales Ave.

CCTV

CCTV plays an important role in deterring and monitoring crime, particularly when combined with good natural surveillance and lighting within areas of high pedestrian activity.

83 Connaught Road is regulated by Ofsted and covered by the Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002, that requires CCTV that covers all common areas and entry and exit points to the property.

The CCTV system at 83 Connaught Road meets these requirements.

Site Management and Property Design

Good site management and property design is key to maintaining safe and attractive places over the long-term. Crime is more likely to occur in areas showing ongoing evidence of neglect, such as broken windows, abandoned vehicles, storage of waste or persistent graffiti. While high standards of maintenance will encourage active use and enjoyment of the area by local residents, poor maintenance can lead to a vicious circle of environmental degradation and crime.

83 Connaught Road is of standard brick and tiled roof construction with double glazed window and doors that are lockable by key from the inside. In addition, all windows have window restrictors operated by key.

83 Connaught Road is maintained to a high standard as required by Ofsted and covered by the Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002, with annual inspections.