

Applied Crime Prevention Case Studies – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in NSW

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Introduction

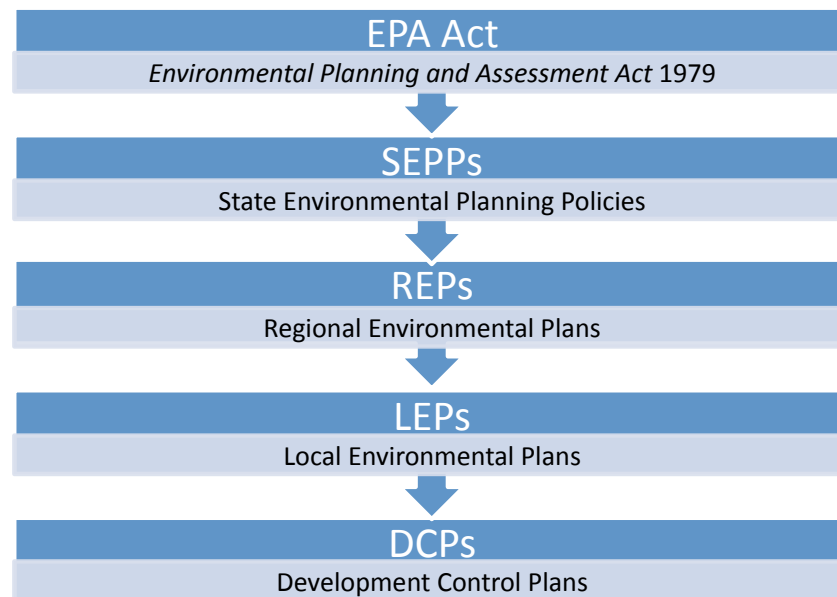
Applying crime prevention knowledge and techniques in a real world context can be challenging. Numerous difficulties can emerge that are not always identified in crime prevention texts. The following case studies provide opportunities to work through a series of steps relevant to applied crime prevention work.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED involves manipulation of the physical environment to “produce behavioural effects that will reduce the incidence and fear of crime, thereby improving the quality of life” (Crowe, T. (2000) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design: Applications of Architectural Design and Space Management Concepts, Butterworth-Heinemann, pp 35-36). CPTED can be applied at different levels. For example, at a macro level, urban planning decisions pertaining to city and neighbourhood designs and composition will have implications for crime. At the micro level, particular design and security features of an individual house will contribute to crime risk.

NSW Planning Instruments

NSW, like other Australian jurisdictions, has a hierarchy of planning instruments. These planning instruments guide the development or re-development of land and property across the state. The table below depicts the key NSW planning instruments.



Exercise

1. Section 79c Guidelines of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 outline key CPTED principles to be employed in NSW. Search for and read these Guidelines. Identify the developments for which a crime risk assessment is required and identify the key CPTED principles used in NSW.
2. Become familiar with SEPPs, REPs and LEPs by conducting an Internet search. Locate and review examples of each planning instrument. In particular, look for elements of these planning instruments that are directly relevant to CPTED.
3. Many councils have CPTED DCPs. Locate two council CPTED DCPs and review them.

Crime Risk Assessments

Consistent with the section 79c Guidelines, crime risk assessments will often be completed for significant projects. The crime risk assessment will often be completed by a consultant and the report will be included as part of the development application that will be submitted to the consent authority (council or state government, depending upon the size and nature of the development).

Exercise

1. Do an Internet search to locate crime risk assessment reports completed in NSW. These reports will often be on display through public exhibition periods. This can mean that different reports will be available on the web at different times. Review any reports that you can access. Critique one report, highlighting limitations in the methodology or the recommendations of the report.
2. Consider how you would complete a crime risk assessment for a proposed development. You have been provided with the architectural drawings and you are expected to complete your crime risk assessment report within four weeks. What steps would you take to thoroughly analyse the potential crime risks for the development? Consider what challenges you would face in compiling a crime risk assessment.

Community Safety Audits

Community safety audits are conducted by many NSW councils. Community safety audits involve engaging local community members and stakeholders in an audit of a particular location (usually a crime hot spot). There are various methods adopted for conducting a community safety audit. The following is a methodology that I have developed.

Location: List the locations audited.			
Functions: List the functions, the activity generators and the movement predictors of the sites reviewed.			
Audit Observations:			
Day Time Observations:		Night Time Observations:	
Recommended Treatments:			
Issue	Recommended Treatments	Priority	Responsibility
Natural surveillance (including lighting and sightlines and entrapment spots)			
Space management - maintenance			
Territorial reinforcement			
Access control			
Wayfinding and emergency contacts			
User conflict			
Social cohesion			
Connectivity			
Scale			

Priority: 1 = High; 2 = Medium; 3 = Low; N/A = not applicable.

Exercise

1. Choose an area that has significant pedestrian traffic. Go to the location and use the community safety audit methodology to review the crime risks of the area. Spend a little time in the area gaining an understanding of the functions of the site, the movement of people through the site and the potential crime issues.
2. What challenges did you face in conducting a safety audit of the area? What limitations did you identify with the methodology?
3. The ultimate success of a community safety audit relates to the implementation of the recommendations. What recommendations did you make and what challenges do you see in getting the recommendations of your audit implemented?