

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) Part 2

[00:18] - Chris Butler

So one example that we have from South Auckland is Redcrest Reserve in Papakura.

One of the issues with Redcrest Reserve is that all of the housing backs onto the reserve with high fencing. This limits the ability for people to look out onto the reserve and provide opportunities for surveillance of that space.

It also limits activation at the edges of the reserve so that it becomes effectively a dead space.

Redcrest Reserve is also quite a winding reserve, and it takes you through and out, in locations which you may not be familiar with.

So there are issues there around the logical nature of the access and how people can actually move through the reserve.

So there's a number of issues there that we can look at and how we can improve it.

So one of the things that we can look at in terms of Redcrest Reserve is looking at the access points into the reserve. How do we make them safer?

One of the things that we often look at is the width of those access, where are they leading to and what the distance is, whether there is opportunities for people to see from one end of the access to the other, and that allows you to see who's coming towards you, but also have confidence in moving through that space.

So one of the options that we're looking at with Redcrest Reserve is to actually extend some of the roading network so that it's less of a cul-de-sac weaving arrangement, so that it's clearer, there's more routes for people to take.

But it's also looking at how we can improve the frontage to the reserve. And by that, we're looking at increasing the amount of road frontage, which gives you a public edge to the reserve, which is clear visibility, you've got passing moving traffic and pedestrians which will look out onto the park and give visibility.

But it also opens up the interior of the park.

So, as I mentioned earlier, the current issue with the park is that you've got high fencing running along the edges, which is preventing people looking out onto the park.

This will allow, by putting road frontage in there, more visibility into the park space.

As you'll be aware, going into existing environments that may have problems, can be very difficult to get all of the landowners on board and all the neighbours to that space.

So just going asking people to lower the fencing is a very challenging exercise.

The ability to actually make more significant changes using the tools that Council have is one way of addressing that.

And so, as I mentioned earlier, the lack of road frontage to Redcrest Reserve is a real challenge in terms of opening that space up and improving visibility into the park.

So one example that we've got from Marybeth Reserve in Papakura was where they had an issue with this local park and it had housing effectively encircling the edges of the park, very similar to Redcrest reserve.

The council worked with a number of the local landowners acknowledging that there was a problem with this park and they removed the houses around the outside, opening it up to the road frontage.

So it's a really good example of how an existing environment can change on a more macro scale. Those are significant challenges, but it can be done.

In new environments, urban design principles and good planning play a really important role in terms of achieving good outcomes and good CPTED outcomes.

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One example that we have is from Stonefields in Auckland, and that's a new urban design-led development and all the parks in Stonefields maximise road frontage.

And a general rule of thumb with that is to try and get at least two sides of a park with road frontage, if not three.

So the example that you'll see here from Stonefields, you see that road frontage is on three sides.

And on the fourth side, you actually have houses directly abutting the park, but also overlooking it, so they'll have their front doors and they'll have windows looking into the park space.

And you can see from this images, but also some of the photographs that we've got how good the visibility is, how good the surveillance is, or the overlooking is, of this park from the surrounding residences.

[04:07]

So in terms of access, a poor example that we have locally is from Weymouth and that is a long walkway, it's about 150 meters in length, it has a dogleg or a sharp corner in it, so you can't see from one end to the other, so visibility is very poor.

It's narrow. So it goes down to about 1.8 meters in width and you've got high fencing either side.

So, again, visibility, which is one of the common themes that keeps coming up, is very limited into the walkway.

But also because it has a dogleg and exits out onto two different roads, it does impact on what we call wayfinding or legibility.

So your understanding of how you navigate where you walk through a neighbourhood, those sorts of things, become very challenging in that context.

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A good example that we have from Karaka in South Auckland.

This is a wide walkway that's about 10 metres in width, which is really good. Rule of thumb, is between eight and 10 metres.

It's also relatively short at 60 metres in length. So 60 metres is typically the length that we want to go to. Anything more than that does start to become a bit more problematic.

So you can see from one end of the walkway to the other because it's straight, the trees within the walkway have an elevated or raised canopy.

So that means you trim them below so you can clearly see underneath them and there is some visibility from the neighbouring properties or outlook into the walkway.

So both of these walkways connect streets and they can often be used as a shortcut to make it faster to get from one location to another.

[05:32]

So for mix of uses, it's about trying to create 24 hour activity, it's about generating activity during those times of the day, which might be quieter than others.

So, for example, a typical town centre might operate from seven o'clock through till five or six o'clock at night, but at night time, it then starts to shut down and there's less people around, and that's when these opportunities for more crime to occur or there's a greater risk of crime occurring.

So the concept behind mix of activities or mix of uses is about creating more activity throughout those quieter periods of the day and night.

For example, during the day, you obviously have your retail and you have your commercial and your business operation, and into the early evening, you also have offices still potentially operating, and at night time you have the opportunity for residents to be in that space, so that the opportunity to mix uses does present opportunities to enliven and activate certain areas.

So the first example is from Albany on Auckland's North Shore. And this is just a very simple mixed use development where you've got retail activity or business activity at ground level.

You have offices at the first floor level and then you have residential at the second level.

And this is an opportunity to, as I said, present opportunities for activation throughout the day.

The second example is Central Auckland, and this is of a residential apartment building and it's also on a busy street.

And as you can see, because it's busy, the owners of the building have put up a high wall around the outside of the ground level.

And this prevents opportunities for activation at ground level and it creates effectively a dead street environment.

So this example here, we've actually just done some Photoshop and we've just input there, or inserted in there an example of a cafe and what that might do for that street level in terms of activation.

So in a mixed use environment, you would have a cafe or business at ground level that doesn't need to have the privacy that a residential property would. And then the residential properties continue from the first floor up.

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So for layout, it's important that we understand where we're going to and what our destination is, and this is an example from a shopping centre in Papatoetoe and the car parking was at basement level and people were required to walk up from the basement through a set of doors.

And as you can see from this photograph, the doors are screened or hidden from view by shopping trolleys and excess crates. So it doesn't create a very logical and safe access arrangement.

So here's a couple of examples of what we've done through a Photoshop scenario of how we can actually improve that environment.

So the first one is to remove the clutter, obviously remove that out of that space so that you've got clear visibility of the doors and the access.

The second is to highlight the route, to distinguish that from the remainder of the carpark so that people walking through that space identify where you've got to go.

The third thing is to look at signage. So improve that and allow for people to understand where they have to go and identify your destination.

And the last one is to actually highlight the entrance. And there's a number of different ways you can do this and in this example, we've just glazed the doors that you can see from the outside in,

and it's important so that you know what's happening on the other side of the doors, and that there isn't any one there that could be hiding in wait.

[08:58]

So in this example, we're going to be talking to quality environments and sense of ownership, and this is an example from Maraenui in Napier, and it was a perfect collaboration of Council working together with Police and the local community.

So this community had issues with crime and was generally considered to be unsafe.

There was a number of reasons for that. And it was our job, I guess, to go into that community and work with the community to try and find a solution.

One of the issues that we found out very early on with Police was that a lot of the crime was committed by a number of the youths in the area who, when we spoke to them and involve them in discussions, they explained that there was nothing for them to do.

So we worked with them, and they said that they were never getting anything from Council.

They felt that they were getting left behind and that Council was not providing for them.

So we saw this as an opportunity on a number of fronts to actually work with them, to build trust with them and give them a sense of ownership of the work that we're looking to do.

So part of the outcome that came from this is to provide those kids in that community with something to do.

We worked with them to design a playground and also a performance stage that was bringing the community together and which they all had a part to play in.

Some of the artwork was done by the local children, and that allowed them to feel that they were part of that process as well.

And at the end of it, the community felt like that they were invested in this scheme and they felt like they had gotten something back from Council for that.

The sense of community was so strong in regards to this project that soon after the playground was completed and something was actually stolen from the playground, the community rallied around and were able to find the missing piece and return it back to the playground.

And that was really a result of their involvement in that process as opposed to being just a distant party. So in this project, there was a role for everyone there.

The Council were involved in funding the project and working in bringing the various stakeholders together, the community were involved in actually having their say in terms of what they wanted.

And lastly, the police were involved. They had a barbecue, which was great, but it also brought the community together.

So they were more there around working with the community and trying to build trust and relationships.

So councils have an important role to play in the ongoing maintenance and quality of environments. And that's important for the morale of the community.

[11:18]

So in physical protection, it's those active security measures that you'd start to employ.

So things like CCTV and in this example that we've got here from Whangarei, it's a number of shops on the main street, and you can see here that they've got CCTV footage, but the lighting is such that it doesn't make out faces.

And this is really important to understand when you are looking at things like CCTV and lighting and how they work together, sometimes the lighting can create too much glare, so there is very little visibility.

In other times, the lighting isn't uniform. So it means that there's dark patches and it makes it very difficult to sort of see people.

So it's important to understand how these things work together and the value of CCTV and lighting together.

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Other examples of physical protection include fencing and in residential environments we need to ensure that that's balanced against the quality of those environments and the ability to see and be seen, which is one of the other principles we've talked about.

So high fencing along the street, for example, close boarded, makes it very difficult to create surveillance. Even though you might feel protected inside someone could jump the fence and actually be hidden from view of the street.

So those are important things to consider.

Here in this example, you can see the quality of lighting and in particular its uniform nature so that there are no dark patches, there's no areas where people could be hidden or screened from view.

And in return, that makes people more confident to walk in that space and occupy that space at night time.