

## **DESIGNING OUT CRIME STATEMENT**

### **Land at Victoria Road West, Hebburn**

8<sup>th</sup> May 2017

#### Introduction

It is widely accepted that environmental factors such as urban design can play a major part in crime reduction. In order to maximise this opportunity, developments need to apply the principles of Secured By Design (SBD) at planning stage and utilize good design philosophies such as outward aspects and ensuring the principles of 'designing out crime' with physical security are combined to create a safe development.

#### Process

Miller Homes applied for planning approval to a scheme of 334 units in July 2016. The scheme had been designed by the architects, POD who are local to the area. Having worked with both Miller Homes and Architectural Liaison Officers (ALO) on previous schemes, they were comfortable with the principles required. These follow the guidance from Secured By Design and Building Regulations Approved Document Q.

During the planning application, South Tyneside Council (STC) had consulted with their ALO who responded with some minor comments. They are noted as follows with the action proposed;

#### Principles

- Parking courts – these can be secluded areas which increase the risk of crime and subsequent escape and evasion.

As part of the design, we have tried to minimise these using parking at the front of plots where possible and only retained then in such places where site constraints i.e. acoustic or highways design have dictated. Where a rear parking court is required, we have made sure there is sufficient overlooking and lighting will be implemented to avoid hiding places. The parking courts, where proposed, are small and only ever serve up to four units.

- Boundary treatments – the rear of plots are vulnerable due to their lack of visibility and therefore need to be considered.

At the rear of plots, we have used 1.8m high close boarded fences to enhance not only privacy but to act as a deterrent. The front gardens of plots will use planting of low shrubs, hedges and railing to create defensible spaces. The site has been designed to ensure the majority of units back onto one another so that 'exposed' boundaries are kept to a minimum. The site benefits from good natural surveillance.

- Footpaths – Due care needs to be taken when incorporating these. The ALO had a particular concern about some access footpaths along the Northern boundary, these can be used as a means of escape into the neighbouring estates or over the level crossing into fields.

We have resolved this issue by removing the footpaths on the Northern boundary which contains the scheme. The site has 2 No. proposed access points off Victoria Road West.

- Surveillance – It is vital that as much of the site as possible can be seen to discourage crime and anti-social behavior.

We have carefully positioned the dwellings and the habitable rooms within to provide ample natural surveillance to footpaths and areas of Public Open Space. This includes the use of corner turner units so there aren't large areas of blank gables.

- Landscaping – this needs to enhance the scheme but not provide cover for crime or restrict views.

The landscape designers have used a range of plant and tree species which give low cover so as not to hinder road users or observation. The existing tree areas on site which are currently unmanaged and dense in places so the retention has been carefully thought through alongside engineering and remediation requirements. The proposed landscape strategy includes the removal of sections of these trees and thinning out lower shrubs to provide a well balanced, well maintained soft landscape including the benefits of natural surveillance.

## Conclusion

Following the comments from the ALO, we had a meeting in January 2017 to run through our responses and actions to his concerns. The ALO was then satisfied that the site will not encourage crime and in turn will provide a safe and secure community.

The dwellings and their curtilage will all comply with the current Building Regulations Part Q March 2015 : Security in dwellings.

The use of lighting, boundaries, landscaping and clear observation will minimize areas in which anti-social behavior is encouraged.