



Department of Planning,
Lands and Heritage

Our ref: A9865424
Enquiries: Krista Dunstan

Mr P.A. Katsambanis, MLA
Chairman
Community Development and Justice Standing Committee
By email: lacdjsc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Katsambanis

Inquiry into the protection of crowded places in Western Australia from terrorist acts

Thank you for your letter of 18 October 2018 regarding the above matter. In response to your request, the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage provides the following comments:

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Since the release of the 'Designing Out Crime' Planning Guidelines in 2006, significant advancements have occurred where environmental design considerations have been integrated into planning and development controls.

With the introduction of State Planning Policy 7.0 'Design of the Built Environment' (anticipated in early 2019), safety has been included as one of the ten design principles for the built environment. This design principle states:

"Good design optimises safety and security, minimising the risk of personal harm and supporting safe behaviour and use.

Safety and security is promoted by maximising opportunities for passive surveillance of public and communal areas and providing clearly defined, well-lit, secure access points that are easily maintained and appropriate to the purpose of the development.

Good design provides a positive, clearly defined relationship between public and private spaces and addresses the need to provide optimal safety and security both within a development and to adjacent public realm.

Places should be connected with each other and easy to move through with pedestrian movement given priority over vehicles. Consideration should be given to incorporation of urban design qualities in transport routes not just traffic considerations. Access and circulation within developments should contribute to a fine-grain network of direct and connected routes within and beyond the site and avoid creating large non-permeable blocks."

As a State Planning Policy, it is applicable for all facets of planning design,

assessment and decision making.

New policies being prepared by the Western Australian Planning Commission for the design of apartment buildings also incorporate these principles of delineating public versus private areas, management of access, limiting places of concealment, and having clear and legible entries and exits to facilitate authorised entry. These considerations form part of the process for planning policies and guidelines.

Within government works and infrastructure projects, early identification of security risks and ensuring these risks are embedded in briefing and procurement documentation is critical to achieve integrated design outcomes that will offer the best protection for people and assets while also ensuring that buildings and places remain attractive, accessible and present a positive image of our community. In projects such as the New Perth Stadium, security concerns including terrorist acts were considered at an early stage, given high priority during project delivery and appear to be well integrated into the final design outcome.

‘Good design’ results from the successful realisation of a building or place by resolving often competing requirements and factors in an integrated way during the planning and design process. When not integrated appropriately within the design of public places, measures to improve safety and security can alienate the public and contribute to perceptions of hostility in our built environment. This is particularly important as our most important public institutions and spaces will likely carry the highest security risks. It is vital therefore that our responses to security risks are scoped early, integrated within planning and design processes and balanced with ambitions to create places that are welcoming, inclusive and amenable.

It is acknowledged that should further guidance become available, particularly for the public realm, these will be considered for implementation alongside other functional design factors like landscape quality, amenity, weather protection and shading, and serviceability.

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Crowded spaces would include high congestion areas or gathering spots. The train station, Forest Place or events in or around the Arena, are examples of such locations. A numerical threshold approach to considering when a place needs enhanced design measures for safety and security purposes is supported, however it may not necessarily be the only determining criteria in every situation. A numerical criteria is useful in the consideration of proposals to ensure that enhanced safety design considerations such as crowd management, prevention of hostile vehicles, sightlines for CCTV and managed access/egress for servicing and emergency vehicles. It is suggested that consideration of access – for all modes of transport – are considered in addition to crowded places such as plazas, squares and parks.

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Although there is guidance for public and private buildings, there is limited guidance for the design of public places that are places of public gathering. Many public spaces are existing and retrofitting or redesign may be challenging.

A risk management approach is strongly encouraged where places that often become crowded and serve purposes as public squares, farmers markets and community festivals to have integrated and well-designed infrastructure that serves to protect the community. However, the approach must be appropriate to the scale of the event and any assessed risk.

As the design and long term management of many of these public realm areas are with Local Government, the provision of guidelines and specialist technical expertise to provide input and commentary on proposed or remodelled places of public gathering may be appropriate – determining when and where enhanced protective measures may be necessary.

I trust this information will assist the Committee with your inquiry. If you require further information, please contact Krista Dunstan, Principal Policy Officer, on _____ or _____.

Yours sincerely

Gail McGowan
Director General
15 November 2018