

**Community and Governance Meeting**

**Date: 7 March 2024**

**Agenda Item: 10.CG**

**Appendix: CG159**

# ENVIRONMENTAL VISUAL AUDIT MARKET DRAYTON

DESIGN OUT CRIME OFFICERS:

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The Modern Crime Prevention Strategy (2016) outlines the six key drivers of crime and states that crime prevention is the responsibility of everyone and not just the police. Legislative changes to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was as a result of The Morgan Report 1991 (Safer Communities: The Local Delivery of Crime Prevention through the Partnership Approach, London: Home Office cited in Moss 2001) making the case for crime reduction, safer communities and responsible authorities. With reductions in resources and budgets, crime prevention needs to be an intervention that causes a sustainable reduction in the levels of criminal activity and resulting harm, and as outlined in The National Policing Crime Prevention Strategy (2015), this should be achieved by adopting a partnership orientated problem-solving approach.

The following EVA focuses on the main town centre of Market Drayton, particularly Cheshire Street and the adjoining footpaths and alleys. Local Councillors have concerns regarding their understanding of local criminality in terms of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

This report is based on the attributes of Safer Places as it provides a simple yet effective framework for surveying the built environment. Safer Places focuses on seven attributes of sustainability that are particularly relevant to crime prevention. The attributes are general and descriptive. They are not prescriptive. They are not a set of rules to be applied to all situations. Instead, they should be considered as prompts to thinking about crime prevention and promoting community safety, primarily through the planning system.

Market Drayton is a small market town in northern Shropshire. It is covered by West Mercia Police and the local authority is Shropshire Council. Noted during the EVA was the cleanliness and well-maintained areas in Market Drayton. There is very good CCTV coverage of the town that can be accessed from within the Town Council offices, with Police having 24-hour access to this system. The Town Centre is a mix of commercial, entertainment and residential buildings. This was good to see as it increases the surveillance within the area.

The Market Drayton West Ward in 2019 had an estimated population of 8842, with 58.4% of those being within the 16-64 age bracket.

#### Crime Overview:

Within the area discussed, analysing crime figures and discussions with the local Safer Neighbourhood Policing team, it is good to know that there is relatively little crime in Market Drayton.

The issues and concerns raised by the Councillors are prioritised as below:

- 1) ASB under the walkway in the New Market Hall between Frogmore Car Park and Cheshire Street
- 2) ASB / fear of crime in the alley between Barnardo's & Vapa-fone. This leads from Cheshire Street to Queen Street
- 3) Loitering in the walkway underneath the library between Frogmore Car Park & Cheshire Street.

This was coupled with advice requested around any improvements in the area that could be made, and around a future development converting some public toilets into a youth shelter.

## Recommendations

In our recommendations, our responses have been considered in line with the Routine Activity Theory (RAT) by Cohen and Felson (1979), targeting each side of the triangle in order to look at how guardians(surveillance) can be increased, targets reduced and offenders diverted using the principles of situational crime prevention and supported through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design research.

The areas identified in the EVA include:

Access and Movement (Permeability) identifies the main pedestrian and vehicular access through the area, noting vulnerable areas. This addresses vulnerable pathways, excessive pedestrian permeability and access to alleyways.

Layout and Structure The Structure of the area including the design and layout of the buildings and infrastructure. Description of vulnerable structures with ease of access for criminal activity.

Natural and formal surveillance. Identifies vulnerable areas as a result of limited surveillance and identifies areas and problems with current CCTV coverage.

Ownership in relation to defensible space including dwellings, communal and commercial areas, examples of neglect of ownership within semi-private and public spaces.

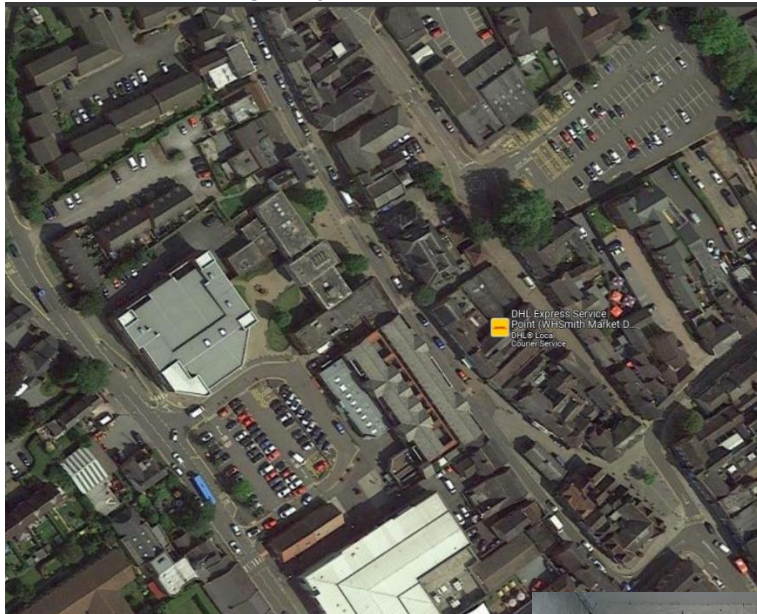
Physical Protection in respect to the disrepair to communal front and rear doors on low-rise flat/maisonette dwellings. Concerns regarding the age of housing/building stock and security standards for dwellings/premises.

Activity identifies examples of community programmes and the positive impact this has in and on the residents, including events organised by partners to engage with the community and understand their issues. Consideration given to other activities to empower residents regarding crime prevention.

Management and Maintenance addresses the impact of disrepair on dwellings and structures, and by addressing problems within a short time frame, it would decrease further escalation of problems.

Cheshire Street is a one-way vehicular highway heading from north to south with some on-street parking on the eastern side.

Each side of the highway there are commercial premises, a public library and some residential properties above the commercial.



There is a public car park off Frigmore Road with foot paths that lead under the library building and residential properties in Rodenhurst House onto Cheshire Street.

The walkway that leads through the New Market Hall (under Rodenhurst House) has a clear line sight. There are void areas, however no signs of rough sleeping or other criminality.

There is a retail unit on one side with the windows covered with marketing material preventing any visibility into and from the shop. Opposite there is a coffee shop with large windows and seating inside. There has been reports of youths kicking footballs at the windows. No informal surveillance at this point. However, it was noted on the EVA that the coffee shop has a number of CCTV withing the premise that look out onto the walkway. DOOCO has recommended that SNT make enquiries within the coffee shop to see if CCTV covers the external area.



Old sodium lighting in the ceiling of this walkway, however these are not operational during daylight hours; therefore, reducing levels of visibility because, creating dark areas. Previously there were bins outside the fire escape from the Market Hall. People used to climb on these and congregate around them. Since these have been repositioned outside this has stopped.

There is no CCTV in this walkway. There is a camera on the other side of Cheshire Street that points towards this walkway. The angle of the camera doesn't cover much of the walkway.



Recommendation: Improve specification of lighting, timing of lighting and consider CCTV at the point of one of the columns at the entrance point of the walkway. (Shropshire Council/Lighting TC/CCTV)





The library walkway is wide and open. Daylight visibility in this area is satisfactory. 6 sodium lights are built into the ceiling, I would assume that the lighting would not provide adequate lighting coverage during the darker hours. CCTV located in this area. It was noted on the EVA that individuals congregate in this area – using the back wall as a seating area (beyond the refuse bin). No signs of graffiti and the area looked relatively clean and tidy.

Recommendation: Improve lighting specification in this area. Mosquito alarm can

be considered for this area. Mosquito is an anti-loitering device (youths only) and can assist in the prevention of vandalism, graffiti, and nuisance behaviour. (Shropshire Council)



At the rear of the library, through the library walkway are two COVID monuments.

We were informed that one of the monuments has been vandalised, and the sign to the second monument has been vandalised. No other reports of ASB here. There is one CCTV camera that points towards this walkway on a nearby block of flats. There is one very small “CCTV” sign on a wall.

Residential properties overlook this area. Some lighting in this area. SNT to advise DOCO regarding level of lighting during the dark hours.

Recommendation: Create a defensive boundary around this area (monument on the grass area), as discussed, a small hedge similar to the other hedges in the area. This will create a defensive boundary; it signals that this area is not to be walked on). Please consider removing the vandalised sign further back into the garden area. Improve and multiply CCTV signage in this area. (Town Council)



Off the eastern side of Cheshire Street there are three predominant walkways that lead to Queen Street.

The alleyways provide a number of escape routes, from Cheshire Street to Queen Street (where car park is). It is quite a permeable area. All the alleyways differ in size, appearance and visibility. The alleyways additionally provide access and entry points to the buildings in those areas. There was graffiti on the walls of the one alleyway. Some of the alleyways had CCTV and

lighting.

The alleyway between Bardardo's & Vapa-fone is narrow with little to no lighting. There's an alcove that could create an area for congregation. In this alcove there is egress door/fire door from a building, this door has been reinforced with metal sheeting. There is also graffiti on the walls.

Along this section of the alleyway there are two other doors to the rear of Barnardo's. Both have graffiti on them.

There are exposed telephone cables on the side of vapa-fone.



One of the guttering downpipes has an anti-climb cover around it.

This alley was well used while on the EVA, there have been reports of issues. There is a single light in the alley that is connected to a PIR sensor.



Whilst this alleyway has some level of activity during the day, it does create an increased risk of crime, fear of crime and sense of being unsafe. DOCO would not encourage the use of this alleyway.

Public right of way (including alleyways) should be devoid of potential hiding places overlooked by active surrounding buildings and activities well maintained so as to enable natural surveillance along the path and its

border.

Where isolated footpaths are unavoidable, and where space permits, they should be at least 3 metres wide (to allow people to pass without infringing personal space and to accommodate passing wheelchairs, bicycles and mobility vehicles).

Recommendation – Please consider deterring the use of this alleyway. A self-closing gate/ or other gate at each entrance point would discourage use and access into the area beyond. Please be mindful of Fire Regulations if considering this option and any other obligations that you need to address if deterring access on a public right of way. (Shropshire Council)

Graffiti- I would recommend that any graffiti is cleaned away at the earliest, this will avoid the 'Broken Windows' effect. Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to occur if unused buildings and spaces are not remodelled or removed and fly-tipping/graffiti not cleared/removed. (Shropshire Council)

Any loose wiring should be made safe and appropriately maintained. (property owner)

Hallette Alley

- Inspect lighting and improve if required.





Queen Street Car park – This car park holds PARK MARK accreditation and is signed off by the DOCO on review every two years. There are clear lines of view throughout the parking area, with appropriate lighting. To the side of the car park where the benches are, tree branches are close to the lighting column, it is important that lighting columns are not covering or impact the illumination.

Recommendation: Consideration should be given to cut trees back and undercut low hanging branches, improves lines of surveillance and illumination in the area. No reported problems in this car park area. (Shropshire Council)

We were advised that there is CCTV in this area.



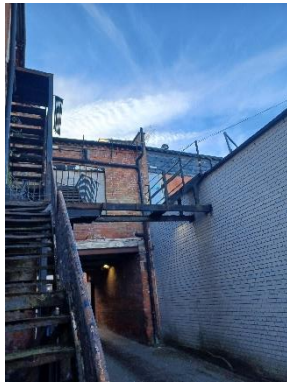
Queen Street Phone Box

Foliage, trees, hedges can limit lines of surveillance especially with informal surveillance.

Recommendation: Please ensure that foliage is cut back or undercut as to enhance lines of surveillance for the CCTV. (Town Council/property owner)

Window coverings on phone boxes can create places to hide and reduce lines of surveillance both ways, it can also become a target for ASB. Please remove advertising and clean glass for

clear visibility into box.



### Safety Concern

We discussed the ongoing issues and concerns regarding safety of the youths using the fire escape. DOCO has emailed the Fire Service with regards to having the dilapidated fire escape removed.



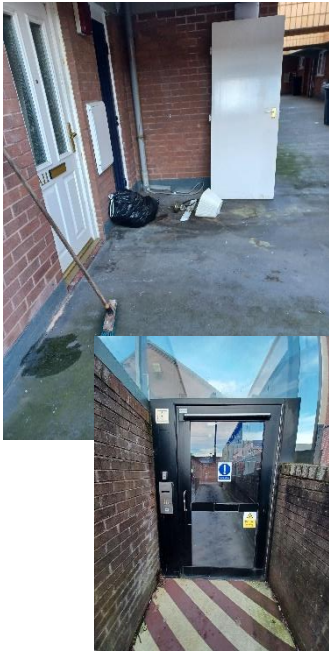
Door located by the commercial bins next to the coffee shop (before the covered walkway). DOCO noted signs of wear (rot) and maintenance required on this doorset. Whilst there was a good lock on the door, it is important to ensure that any maintenance issues are addressed as to not impact the integrity of the door.



### Outside Rodenhurst House/New Market Hall

We discussed the issues with the bins. This area is covered with CCTV and lighting. The location of the bins is in a busy place so active surveillance in place. As discussed with the group, DOCO has recommended that bins could be stored in an open single bin store, using open slats of wood and no roof, ensuring line of sight through the store cupboard, whilst not encouraging ASB or rough sleeping. (Shropshire Council/Connexus)





We discussed the issues with Rodenhurst House, that being ASB and issues with drugs.

Access control into this area, however the trade button allows access, defeating the object of controlling access. The doors are on a magnetic

lock, some magnetic locks can be forced as they are not an appropriate access control mechanism. Lighting was encased to protect the light cover. Signs of CCTV in the area on the building, this did not look to be operational. Signs of damage to doors and windows along the walkway in the building complex, along with some fly-tipping.

Recommendation: A level of control can be given if the trade button was put on timer – reducing the option for easy access into the area beyond. However, a magnetic closing mechanism should be discouraged as the magnetic closure can be forced. It is recommended that access control should operate a lock instead of a magnetic closure. To reduce imitation, any fly-tipping/graffiti should be removed. Please ensure that lighting is working within this area, it will enhance lines of sight especially during the dark hours and reduce places to hide. (Connexus)



## Public Toilets / Youth Hub Development

We discussed the options for the redevelopment of this site. No problems reported in this area. The options we discussed were very interesting. From a crime prevention and safety point, open views into both areas will assist in surveillance, reducing opportunities for crime and fear of crime. As discussed, please consider lowering the height of the hedge line along the A529/Drayton Bridge Road so that natural surveillance from the highway is improved. Please ensure that there is lighting in both areas. CCTV is covered from the car parking area.

We discussed the option of asking the local youths to be a part of the project. This is a strong recommendation, as it fulfils elements of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) – Ownership and Activity.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The below provides an evidence-based explanation for the above recommendations in line with the 25 techniques from the Crime Prevention Matrix.

### **Surveillance**

- Target harden (Increase the effort)
- Assist natural surveillance (Increase the risks)
- Utilise place managers (Increase the risks)
- Strengthen formal surveillance (Increase the risks)
- Rule Setting (increase signage in areas)

### **LIGHTING: (Shropshire Council)**

The SBD guide, Lighting Against Crime, A guide for crime reduction professionals (2011), states, “A good lighting system is one designed to distribute an appropriate amount of light evenly with uniformity. Good lighting will use energy efficient lamps in suitable luminaries.”

The College of Policing, Street lighting toolkit (accessed Feb 2020), mentions that by improving street lighting on the street or in other public spaces it serves many purposes including crime prevention by increasing visibility in those areas, especially where lighting is initially poor. Additionally, by demonstrating investment in improving street lighting it impacts on crime by improving community conditions and creating a sense of community pride and ownership.

Attention should be given to ‘times of lighting’ and what times lighting is turned on/off, consideration given to leaving lights on in hotspot areas as 61% of domestic burglary crimes occur in the evening/night (College of Policing, 2020), Domestic Burglary Presentation

Lighting Standards: As listed in the SBD (Homes 2022). Lighting should be in accordance with BS 5489-1:2013.

Medium/long term intervention. Strong evidence supports this intervention so cost can be justified, as it will assist in the reduction of crime and fear of crime.

### **CCTV: (Town Council)**

Formal surveillance in the form of CCTV has a strong evidence base (College of Policing, 2020). The use of CCTV is currently used in Brookside and the system is undergoing an upgrade. All management, maintenance and monitoring costs are covered by WMP and TWC.

- I would recommend that CCTV signage is installed, rule setting is important and is cost effective deterrent.
- I would recommend that non-working CCTV cameras are repaired.
- I would recommend that CCTV is increased within the hotspot areas.

### **Access & Movement**

- Control Access to facilities and Deflect Offenders (Increase the effort)

- Deflect Offenders (Increase the effort)
- Set Rules (Remove Excuses)

### Gating an area

Community consultation should be considered regarding impact and amount of use per area. However, areas that show increased level of crime/hotspots should be considered for gating as they are an effective tool in preventing burglary and acquisitive crime, additional benefits – prevention of littering, ASB by discouraging and deflecting access into that area and therefore increasing control and ownership over that area.

From a safety point, it would discourage the use of this area, encouraging the use of the other pathways that are no so long, have lighting and active surveillance (formal or informal).

Depending on what gates are required, they may differ depending on location, it is imperative that security standards are adhered too for product and installation for it to be an effective crime prevention tool.

### Ownership

- Target harden (Increase the effort)
- Assist natural surveillance (Increase the risks)

Cut back and maintenance of trees/foliage to increase surveillance into vulnerable areas. This will also allow for clear lines of view from a CCTV unit and formal active surveillance.

Remove or restore structures where anti-social behaviour has been identified. Reducing the potential for criminality.

### Activity

- Assist natural surveillance (Increase the risks)
- Utilise place managers (Increase the risks)

The College of Policing, Neighbourhood Watch (accessed online 2020), Neighbourhood Watch Schemes aim to reduce crime by directly involving the community in activities that promote safety or assist with the detection of crime. They actively see the greater involvement of local residents in crime prevention activities. Whilst there is limited evidence of some positive impact on crime and disorder, possible reductions in crime may be as a result of the propensity of residents to look for and report suspicious activity.

Encouragement should be given to include all residents (including youths) in new developments/ remodelling for projects that they will use. Inclusion is important as they will be part of an activity, with the potential of reducing crime, ASB and fear of crime in an area.

Other recommendations to be considered:

- Business Watch Scheme
- Crime prevention leaflet drop, posters to go up in local shops, GP's, schools etc
- Community crime prevention days, where crime prevention officers and environmental teams can be hand to speak to residents/business owners about crime prevention and environmental issues.
- Utilise social media to inform residents on crime prevention.

### Management and Maintenance



- Target harden (Increase the effort)
  - Assist natural surveillance (Increase the risks)
  - Discourage imitation (Reduce Provocations)
  - Remove targets (Reduce the rewards)
- 1) Discourage imitation by ensuring the rapid repair and maintenance of properties, such as fences in disrepair, graffiti, fly-tipping.
  - 2) I would recommend that tall trees & hedges/foilage are reduced in height, thinned out and undercut to 2 metres to increase lines of sight and levels of surveillance. This will assist in natural surveillance.
  - 3) Management and Maintenance issues to be discussed with the management companies to address issues, e.g. graffiti and fly-tipping, physical protection and ownership. It is important to ensure that a premise/building etc are free from signs of disorder, this signals that an area is cared for.

### **Physical Protection**

- Target harden (Increase the effort)
- Control access to facilities (Increase the effort)
- Assist natural surveillance (Increase the risks)
- Strengthen formal surveillance (Increase the risks)

Burglars consider the quality of the security present and may be deterred by high quality alarms, locks and gates. Domestic Burglary (College of Policing, Accessed 2020).

I would recommend that vulnerable residential/commercial properties are fitted with Window Sets that are to standard PAS 24:2022 or similar as set out in Secured by Design Homes 2022.

I would recommend that vulnerable properties are fitted with the relevant standard locks to the front and back doors and windows. This should be to standards set out in Secured by Design Homes 2022. Please ensure that where new locks are installed, the door/windows are in a good state of repair.