

**PROPOSED COMMERCIAL BUILDING
89 GEORGE STREET, PARRAMATTA**

**SAFETY BY DESIGN
ASSESSMENT REPORT**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION..... 1

2. TERRITORIAL RE-ENFORCEMENT 1

3. SURVEILLANCE..... 2

4. ACCESS CONTROL 3

5. SPACE/ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT..... 3

6. CONCLUSIONS 4

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an outline of “*safer by design*” principles and details how the design of the commercial building proposed for 89 George Street, Parramatta, responds to the NSW Police Force’s “*Safer by Design*” principles. These planning and design principles are intended to encourage the design of safe environments that minimise the risk of crime.

The *Safer by Design* guidelines require that consent authorities ensure that development provides safety and security to users and the community and are a matter of consideration for consent authorities when assessing development applications for developments likely to require a crime risk assessment.

The guidelines promote the principle of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). CPTED aims to create environmental and social conditions that:

- * *Maximise risk to offenders (increasing the likelihood of detection, challenge and apprehension);*
- * *Maximise the effort required to commit crime (increasing the time energy and resources required to commit crime);*
- * *Minimise the actual and perceived benefits of crime (removing, minimising or concealing crime attractors and rewards);*
- * *Minimise excuse making opportunities (removing conditions that encourage/facilitate rationalisation of inappropriate behaviour).*

CPTED employs four key strategies, being territorial re-enforcement, surveillance, access control and space/activity management. All CPTED strategies aim to create the perception or reality of “*capable guardianship*.”

The manner in which the proposed design has responded to the four key CPTED strategies is outlined in the following discussion.

2. TERRITORIAL RE-ENFORCEMENT

Territorial re-enforcement is based on the principle that community “ownership” of public space sends positive signals to the community that when places are valued by the community, they will be used, enjoyed and revisited. People who use such spaces will take guardianship of these spaces and will be more likely to provide effective supervision and intervene in the event of criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.

Territorial re-enforcement uses actual and symbolic boundary markers, spatial legibility and environmental cues to ‘connect’ people with space, to encourage communal responsibility for public areas and facilities, and to communicate to people where they should/not be and what activities are appropriate.

The proposed development includes public or semi-public space comprising the George Street footpath and forecourt fronting the site, a colonnaded walkway extending south from George Street to the building entry foyer, the entry foyer, and an emergency egress access on the eastern side of the building extending to George Street.

The design clearly defines those areas accessible to the public and ensures that such spaces are clearly visible to passers by and occupants of adjoining buildings and the proposed ground floor café/restaurant. Extensive glazed areas are proposed to public and semi-public spaces to enhance visibility.

Apart from the emergency egress pathway, the above public and semi-public spaces will experience a high level of pedestrian activity. The design provides for an active street frontage to George Street and the colonnaded pedestrian link from George Street to the building entry. The proposal will contribute to safety in the courtyard to the rear of Perth House by forming an active, pedestrianized southern edge to this courtyard.

The emergency egress pathway adjoins a planned future north-south pedestrian link identified for the western side of 91 George Street, extending south to Macquarie Street, as shown in the Parramatta City Centre DCP 2007. The emergency egress pathway will assist in reinforcing this link and provide greater width for pedestrian movement and in the future benefit from additional surveillance opportunities arising from pedestrian traffic along the planned link to Macquarie Street. There is also a clear line of sight to the emergency egress door from George Street and existing buildings on the opposite northern side of George Street.

The driveway entry is stepped back approximately 5 metres from the front alignment of the building at ground level so that vehicles entering and leaving the car park do not have to park over the pedestrianized forecourt and footpath area of George Street. The driveway setback is directly visible from George Street and buildings on the opposite northern side of George Street.

3. SURVEILLANCE

Providing surveillance of spaces promotes community safety by deterring persons from committing crime because criminal activity is likely to be readily observed by others in or near the space. Surveillance techniques include passive surveillance of space where users can be seen and be seen by others; technical/mechanical surveillance such as CCTV; and formal surveillance such as site supervisors or security officers.

The proposal incorporates a high level of passive surveillance by orientating public and semi-public spaces to areas that either have pedestrian activity or include activities such as cafes and restaurants that have outlooks towards public and semi-public spaces.

The George Street footpath and forecourt is a primary pedestrian space that is highly visible from George Street, buildings on the northern side of George Street and from adjoining properties, as well as the front window of the proposed ground floor café/restaurant. The western windows of this café/restaurant provide surveillance over the adjoining colonnaded pedestrian link from George Street to the foyer of the building. The café/restaurant entry provides passive surveillance of the entry foyer, which is also readily seen from the courtyard behind Perth House and patrons of the Perth House café in this courtyard.

There is a direct line of sight from George Street and buildings on the northern side of George Street to the driveway entry and the emergency egress pathway on the eastern side of the building and the colonnade leading to the entry to the foyer of the building.

4. ACCESS CONTROL

Safety can be enhanced by maintaining controls over access such as restricting or channelling entry, way-finding, desire lines and formal or informal access routes. Access control techniques include natural access control such as design measures (building configuration, pathways etc); technical/mechanical access control such as security hardware, keyed entry etc; and formal access control such as security officers.

Access points to the building are clearly defined and readily visible from George Street. The proposed colonnade is designed not only to provide weather protection, but also as way finding mechanism to direct pedestrian traffic to the entry foyer and the rear courtyard of Perth House.

The foyer of the building will be generally accessible, however security is available by way of a reception desk. Lifts will be designed so that tenants can prevent unauthorised entry to their tenancies. Doors to fire stairs are not openable from the outside. The rear setback area at ground floor level is provided with security fencing and keyed access doors to prevent unauthorised entry.

Detailed security measures will be implemented in consultation with future tenants. There is a probability that the foyer, emergency egress and colonnaded pedestrian areas will be proved with CCTV.

Door access to the emergency egress on the eastern side of the building will be locked to preclude external entry, but openable from within the building to allow egress in the event of an emergency. It is anticipated that the shutter door to the vehicular driveway entry/exit will be accessible only by security card to prevent unauthorised access to the basement car park.

5. SPACE/ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT

Appropriate space management enhances community safety through formal supervision, control and care of a development. Even the best planned and designed spaces need to be effectively used and maintained to maximise community safety. Crime risk is increased in places that are infrequently used and/or poorly maintained.

The ground floor level and adjoining public and semi-public spaces will be well utilised and regularly maintained. High quality finishes are proposed and generous width provided to the main pedestrian routes. An appropriate level of external lighting will be provided to optimise safety at night.

Predominance of glazing at ground level with minimal areas of blank masonry wall will ensure that opportunities for graffiti are minimised. The western wall adjoining the emergency egress will be treated with a finish that enables easy removal of graffiti. This side wall is not readily seen from the public domain and so is not likely attract graffiti.

The density of development in the locality ensures regular and frequent pedestrian movements in George Street fronting the site. The colonnaded pedestrian link on the western side of the building connecting George Street to the building foyer, café/restaurant entry and the rear courtyard of Perth House is also anticipated to generate regular and frequent pedestrian movements.

Supervision of public and semi-public spaces is available from the proposed ground floor café/restaurant and the foyer reception desk. Extensive use of glazing ensures good sight lines to public and semi-public spaces. As noted in Section 3, these spaces are provided with a high degree of active and passive surveillance.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development has been designed in accordance with safety by design principles. The proposal offers good quality well maintained public and semi-public spaces, with a high level of both passive and active surveillance. Excellent sight lines are provided and publicly accessible concealed spaces avoided. Public and semi-public spaces will be actively used and may be expected to attract frequent pedestrian movements, enhancing perceived safety.

The foyer area and external areas at ground level enjoy a high level of natural light in the daytime and will also be provided with lighting to enhance safety at night. The development includes an active street frontage comprising a café/restaurant that provides surveillance of the street frontage and colonnaded pedestrian access to the foyer entry. This colonnaded pedestrian access also enjoys the benefit of passive surveillance from the rear courtyard of Perth House and pedestrian movements generated along this access will contribute positively to safety in this rear courtyard, as well as the entry and foyer to the proposed building.

The foyer includes a reception desk for added security and entry to individual floor levels anticipated to be controlled by an access card. Access to the basement car park will be similarly controlled. Specific security control mechanisms such as security cameras, alarms and after hours security surveillance will be considered in consultation with future tenants.

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