

Restricted

Environmental Visual Audit of **The Castle & Trinity** Northampton

For the purpose of the
Safer streets funding application

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Date: March 2021

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Fighting crime, protecting people

This EVA has been created using the 7 Attributes of Safer Places - the planning system and crime prevention (2004 Archived)

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.

This document was superseded in 2014 with updated planning practice guidance. However, the attributes provide a simple yet effective framework for surveying the built environment

The attributes:

Access and movement: places with well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security

Structure: places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict

Surveillance: places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked

Ownership: places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community

Physical protection: places that include necessary, well-designed security features

Activity: places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and always creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety

Management and maintenance: places that are designed with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present and the future

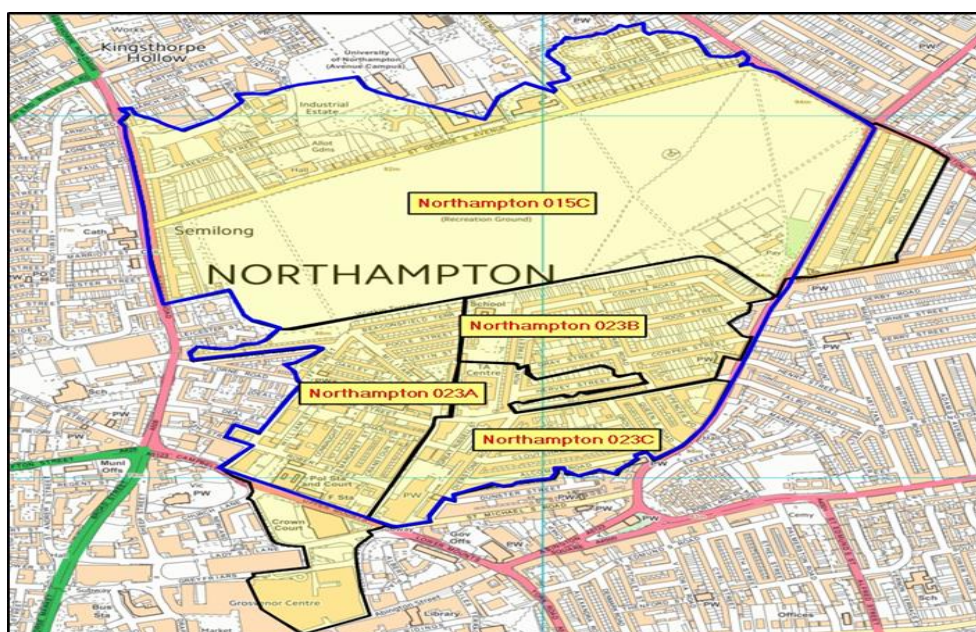
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Introduction

This timely bid coincides with the concerns nationally regarding Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), particularly in public spaces. Whilst the bid focuses on 'All Neighbourhood Crime', we have paid attention on high levels of Robbery where most victims are younger women walking through the Racecourse park in the evenings without the benefit of risk commensurate security provisions being provided to maximise their safety. Despite Police and Council's best efforts, we have been unable to make significant inroads into the Robbery figures, due to a lack of funding to comprehensively install the physical and surveillance interventions collectively needed.

The area is coterminous with the Town Centre, awarding winning Purple Flag status. It's also coterminous with St Crispins, through last years safer streets bid 025b, 023c and 023d where we have successfully implemented our chosen interventions. However, to help avoid deflection, we have chosen the upper part of the Castle Ward.

The area covered by this EVA falls within four Local Super Output Areas (LSOA's) identified below, mainly focusing on Northampton 015C as marked on the map below (Trinity Ward) predominantly the Racecourse.



Partnership walk about 4th March 2021- focusing on the Racecourse

Summary of Recommendations

1. Extension of Borough monitored CCTV system to cover the Racecourse and all entrances/exits, including the preferred offender desire line, Shakespeare Road.
2. NBC Town Centre Management have agreed to take over ongoing costs maintenance of any CCTV cameras installed as a result of this project.
3. CCTV signage will be installed to deter offenders reminding them that they are being watched and consequences of crime committed in the area. But to also include signage to help residents of the park and surrounding area feel safer when using it.
4. Install Secured by Design accredited Street Pods on the Racecourse. Conduct BikeRegister cycle marking events. Provide Sold Secure D locks and Bike Register kits to the cycling community.
5. Upgrade Racecourse car park to 'Park Mark' standard.
6. Landscaping and areas of planting should be cut back and well maintained as part of long-term maintenance plans for the area. Graffiti, including 'tags' identified where possible and remove quickly. The Council should establish a regime for regular removal
7. Removing knives from the streets, turning their metal into gym equipment- <https://www.steelwarriors.co.uk/>
8. Houses of multiple occupancy- consider security items to reduce burglary/theft from the person and Robbery and the awareness of good security routines.
9. Work with Friend of the Racecourse Northampton, a local community group who run events and promote positive use of the racecourse. To achieve a variety of community opportunities which will increase the legitimate use of the Racecourse.
10. Promotion of good news where offenders are arrested and dealt with. Promoting Crime Stoppers, helping the community feel safer and improving confidence and reporting
11. Using a crime data led approach, to promote home/vehicle security and personal safety by providing a range of crime prevention packs.
12. Student personal safety education programme regarding personal safety and crime prevention, working with University of Northampton and student letting agents to promote good practice.
13. Develop more NHW/Street Watch schemes. Build a rapport with other community groups, such as dog walkers and sporting clubs.
14. Conduct vehicle crime awareness events supplying tamper proof number plate screws and other cost effective crime prevention initiatives.
15. Promote the increase of NPT patrols of NPT and Neighbourhood Warden patrol at school drop off/ pick up times.
16. Conduct Mobile phone theft awareness events educating members of the public on how to de-value their phones and safe storage of them when out and about. Including registering them on the Immobilise website.
17. Rectify access control issues to existing flats

Crime Overview

An environmental visual audit was conducted in February 2020 covering the St Crispin area of Northampton including the Kettering road.

Data period captured- 01/04/2017- 31/03/2020

Source- Northants Police Crime Data

772 Neighbourhood Crimes reported

LSOA Name	Ward	No. of residents	Neighbourhood crime	Residential burglary	Robbery	Vehicle crime
015C	Trinity	1,233	58.1	16.2	14.3	24
023A	Castle	2,191	38.3	10.2	3.8	17.9
023B	Castle	1,653	30.6	9.9	3.6	17.1
023C	Castle	1,577	31.7	8.2	2.7	19.4

The top 4x streets for Burglary Dwelling are:

1. Freehold Street
2. Baliff Street
3. Bunting Road
4. Overstone Road

The top 5x streets for vehicle crime are:

1. Overstone Road
2. Freehold Streets
3. Duke Street
4. Hood Street
5. Shakespeare Road

The top 2 locations for Robbery are:

1. The Racecourse
2. Shakespeare Road

The Racecourse

Overview- this is a significant crime generator location for Robbery. Recorded levels of Robbery are 9x times over the Safer Street Benchmark.

Located about 500 meters to the north of Northampton town center, The Racecourse comprises of around 118 acres and has a long tradition of being the major open space in the town for both regular formal sports and for major events. The parkland includes public footpaths running throughout and alongside open space. Facilities include changing rooms Sports pitches and courts and playground areas catering for young and older children.

The Racecourse is accessed from main roads includes via the Barrack Road (A508), Kingsley Road (A5095) and East Park Parade / Kettering Road (A5123). It can also be accessed from St George's Avenue (north-west), Colwyn Road, Beaconsfield Terrace and Leicester Street via the Mounts Estate.

Robbery data for the Racecourse indicates that knives are the preferred weapon to aid the theft of mobile phones and other personal items. Steel Warriors is an initiative that could break this pattern of offending by removing knives from the streets, turning their metal into gym equipment- <https://www.steelwarriors.co.uk/>

Lighting

Lighting can imply that an area is safe and provides an invitation for people to enter the area. A situation made worse by the high level of illumination covering the footpath routes across the Racecourse.

It's recommended that CCTV/ANPR is installed to complement the lighting and help create a safer environment for users.



CCTV Extension

Northampton Borough Council's (NBC) CCTV camera system covers streets adjacent to the Racecourse, but there are no cameras on the park itself. For the purpose of image continuity and to provide extended coverage of The Racecourse itself which is a relatively high crime area extend and build on the existing system. The image below shows additional camera locations required.

ANPR Camera to the main vehicle entrance of the pavilion area will also be installed.

UTS Feasibility Survey

Further to our on-site survey 04/03/21 we were tasked with putting together a CCTV system to cover as much of the Racecourse park as possible. Areas are to include Walkways, Pedestrian Entrances, Key Crossover points and Car Park. It was suggested that around 10 PTZ cameras on columns would be a good starting point and a rough plotted drawing was issued. The reason is to implement an infrastructure to prevent and reduce crime rate to make the Racecourse a safer place to be.

This budgetary quotation is to install 8 x Hikvision Darkfighter PTZ camera with 42x zoom, 1 Long range Darkfighter with 53x zoom and 500 metre IR.

We propose a main 10m pole is installed in a central location as detailed in the layout drawing. This location gives the best line of sight to the lift tower for radio siting and will become a main hub for the rest of the cameras to radio back to. In addition to the Darkfighter PTZ cameras, we will install 3 x Thermal imaging sensor Cameras, this will give images of any heat signature in the park even if somebody is hiding behind a tree or bush whereas normal camera might not see this in low light conditions.

We will install the thermal cameras on double pole brackets in three locations across the park alongside a Darkfighter PTZ on one side and a thermal camera on the other, please see images below and proposed plan.

We also plan to install an ANPR Camera to the main vehicle entrance of the pavilion area, this is so that you can read car registration plates that enter and exits the car park.

The camera locations in the attached drawing below are to be confirmed some of the cameras will be radioed to each pole whereas if possible soft dug ducts to each pole so that the poles can be hardwired instead of radio.

A deep minded NVR will be installed at St John's control room and the cameras will record here as discussed, we can set motion alarms to alert the control room that somebody is present in the park on a schedule between 12pm and 5am this schedule is to be confirmed and can be adjusted to suit with installing the deep minded NVR it gives us many more alarm options to help alert the control room of possible incidents.

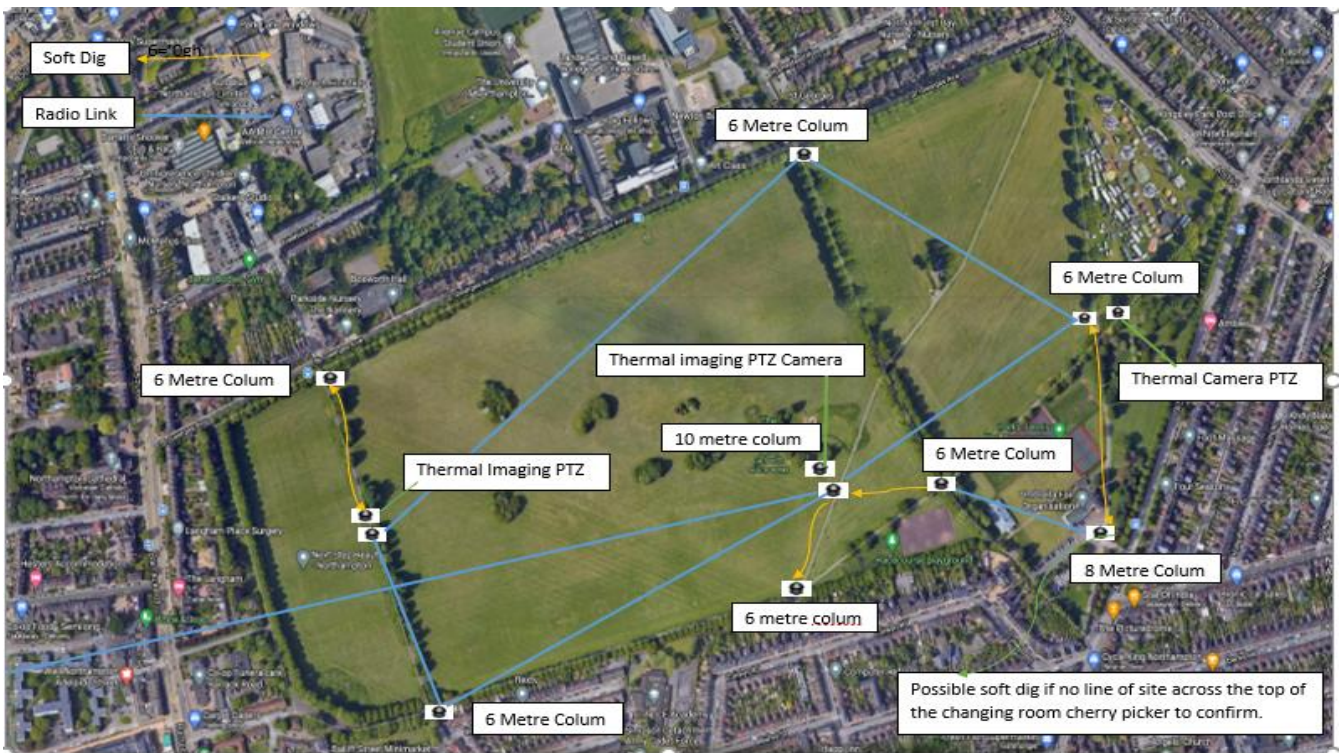
The cameras will also record on a local NVR this will be used as a backup recorder in case of radio failure the cameras will still record locally until the radio connection is regained unless there is a power failure.

To join the existing network back to St Johns we will install a long-range Radio that will send the signal back to express lift tower, where the racecourse will join into the Main CCTV control room network and be viewed 24/7 from the control room suite.

We Have allowed for the cameras to be professionally spread black to be in keeping with the black camera poles as discussed.

Trees- The Racecourse has many trees following the path line, it is recommended that the trees be crown lifted down each walkway to give the cameras the best view possible. This will be down to others and has not been allowed for in this quotation.

Radio Pitfalls- The cameras will be part of the existing radio network currently installed around the town. When this survey was carried out the trees were not in full bloom certain trees may need to be trimmed as could cause radio interference unfortunately, we may not know this until they are in full bloom. Further surveys will be required, and third-party maintenance will be needed by others.



- 8 x Dark Fighter 42x PTZ, 1 x Long range Darkfighter 53 x PTZ, 3 x Thermal imaging PTZ
- 1 x ANPR Camera
- 12 x Camera Bracket
- 12 x PSUs, 10 x AMG switches, 10 x AMG PSU
- 12 x Radio links
- 1 x long range Radio Pair
- 1 x 32 Deep minded NVR 20terabyte
- 1 x 16 channel NVR with 12 Terabyte

Pricing Summary

Capital Costs for all CCTV equipment- **£58,000.00 +VAT**

Costs for 9 columns and the required electrical works/grounds works -**£108,488 + VAT**

Contingency budget- £10,000

Total funds requested to extending Borough CCTV onto the Racecourse= £176,488

Basketball Court

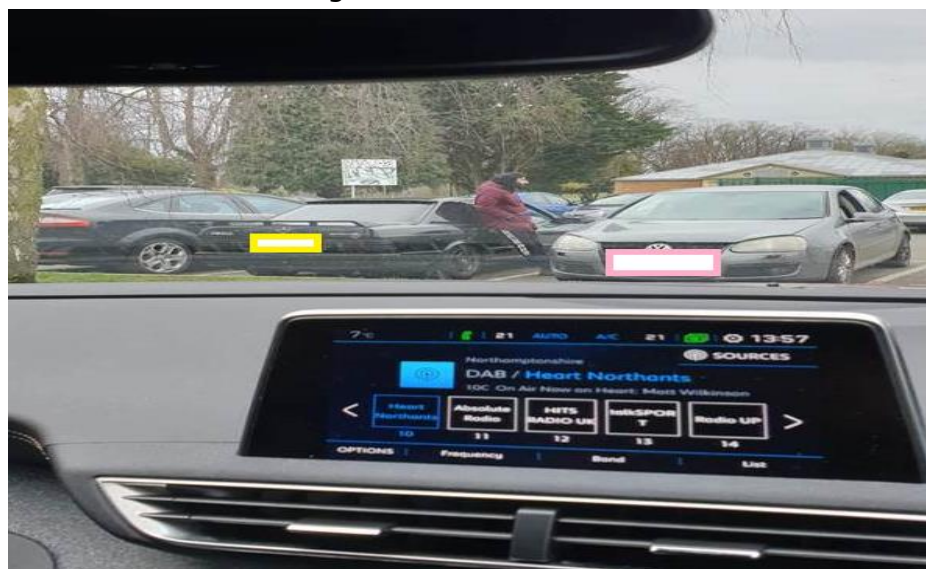
This area of the part is showing signs of neglect and misuse with broken glass left on the playing surface, which reduces legitimate use. To rectify this, the existing Basketball Court (pictured below left), would require a lighting upgrade and improvement to ground works- the Council have agreed to undertake these works as part of a match funding to the safer streets bid- [click here](#) . Neighbours however are concerned about the proposed improvements due to the lack of formal surveillance, which will be mitigated by the proposed CCTV within supporting bid.

Other play equipment

Throughout the park there are signs of damage to play equipment which needs to be addressed.

Racecourse Car Park

The car park has a long history of drug related problems which in recent years has become very transparent with offenders, apparently having very little regard to detection. The image below taken during the survey of a male dealing drugs with the occupants of the two vehicles either side illustrates the extent of the problem. While this event occurred during the day, the extent of the drug problems is more prevalent in the evening. We know through liaising with local police that county lines drug dealing occurs in the area. This open car park is creating the perfect meeting point to undertake criminal activities due to the provision of lighting and total absence of formal surveillance and capable guardianship. We believe this inevitably impacts on the Robbery levels, not only to students and users of the park, but from rival drug gangs as a result of their criminal dealings.



To remedy the issues, the car park should be evaluated to Park Mark Standards, which will require both monitored CCTV and ANPR coverage, supported by increased NPT and warden patrols.

There is a single point of vehicular access and egress leading into two separate rectangular parking areas. The perimeter is protected by bollards which acts to limit vehicle movements but does deny pedestrians a route of escape.

Cycle Security

The level of cycle stowage provision is insufficient given the amount of cycle use. To remedy that, it is proposed to install Secured by Design accredited Cyclepods at nodal points across the park. In addition, conduct Bike Register cycle marking events and provide Sold Secure D locks to students and other cycle owners



Maintenance

This EVA was conducted during the winter months when tree canopies are bare (Picture above left). General maintenance of landscape and areas of planting looks good at this time.

Overall the level of maintenance and trimming of tree canopies well maintained throughout the year. However, the maintenance regime does not fully take into account the impact that trees have on lighting and CCTV. The Council have agreed as part of their match funding to

increase the level of maintenance and trimming to ensure lighting and CCTV is efficacy provided. An example of this will be the raising of tree crowns in support of CCTV posts.

Graffiti and general damage

There are signs of graffiti including tagging which has been identified by the NPT that needs regular removal. The worst area is a maintenance equipment building in the centre of the park, owned by the Council under renovation. Graffiti left up can indicate environmental cues, signal and crime generators issues as evidence in the Broken Window Syndrome.

Surrounding Streets

Streets surrounding the racecourse are currently experiencing unacceptably high levels of acquisitive crime, which is having a negative effective on fear of crime and community safety. To remedy this, a crime data led approach that tackles specific crime categories on individual streets needs to be delivered using a range of focused crime prevention packs and initiatives.

There are a number of pubs and takeaways on the periphery of the park that encourage residents to use the park as a through route back to their homes. Kettering Road has two pubs at this end of the road, The Picture drome and The White Elephant.

The park is overlooked by large terraced town houses, which falsely gives the impression of observation due to the existence of trees and other foliage blocking informal and natural surveillance.

Garage Block- Colwyn Road

This space is owned by Northampton Partnership Homes. The garage blocks are disused and are focus for anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drug misuse and Neighbourhood crime. To remedy this, it is proposed that the garage blocks are demolished and that the parking area is redesigned to meet Park Mark Standards including access control for vehicles. This will provide valuable parking spaces and potentially reduce the level of vehicle crime, along Colwyn Road.

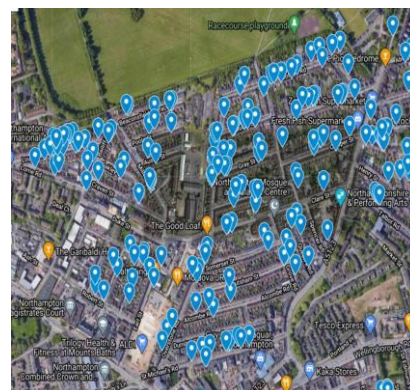


Student Lets HMOs and Flats

Most of the disused factories and commercial premises have been converted to flats with many of the larger family homes converted to HMOs and student lets. It is likely that the remaining factories that have not been converted in the near future.

Student Lets

It is estimated that around 500 students live in the area with an average of 5 students per dwelling. The university of Northampton liaises closely with local letting agents to try and provide quality accommodation for students. However, their definition of quality mainly concentrates on the build quality and level of provision provided within each let, but do not specifically address issues of personal safety or crime. To remedy this, a student pack needs to be developed that balances the situational and empowers the student to take personal responsibility for their own safety and adopt security routines. In support of this, the working group have made contact with the University of Northampton and local letting agents who are supportive of the bid.



HMOs

HMO's we have 18 registered HMO's along the top 5 streets we picked out for burglary. May be worth including the figure.

HMOs feature across the area and while residents are vulnerable to crime it will be very difficult to instigate many traditional target hardening approaches. However, to better inform this very diverse population it is proposed to use crime prevention packs and information possibly produced in different languages to reflect the diverse community.

Flats

One of the keys issues identified is poor access control, which should be addressed in partnership with local social housing providers.

Our approach

Using a crime data led approach we have identified a four tier strategy that will target specific crimes being committed on particular areas, in a way that will achieve more sustainable and cost effective outcomes, through educating, awareness and getting support from community groups which will provide longevity throughout the project.

The four tiers will include a mix of risk and cost commensurate preventive measures including door replacements, target hardening, crime prevention packs (standard, enhanced and student variations), crime prevention advice and local crime prevention initiatives.

Product Scoping

We have liaised with security product suppliers to provide quotes for standard packs and crime focused enhanced security packs covering Robbery/Personal Safety, Vehicle Crime and Burglary.

We have received various quotes outlining products from Secured by Design approved suppliers that can offer proven/tested security standards to reduce crime and raise awareness and develop good crime prevention routines.

Chosen products need to be cost effective, easy to use and reduce hard fixing to meet the requirements of private let and landlord authority issues. Many student accommodations will be classed as Houses of Multiple Occupancy, therefore there is a need to keep the type of products compliant with fire regulations and ensuring one's that students will use. To reinforce our scoping, we have engaged a student advisor from the University to advise us on products that younger people would use on a frequent basis.

We have engaged with student letting agents who already provide packs of information for students moving into new lets. However, these packs are generally devoid of crime prevention information, which could be provided to the letting agents for inclusion in their packs. To keep costs down and ensure longevity after the initiative ceases, relevant OPFCC branded materials would be provided in electronic format letting agents to product themselves and insert into the packs. Should the North Unitary be successful with the bid, quotes have already been collated and we are ready to hit the ground running.

Sustainability

For the project to be truly successful there needs to be a commitment from both partners and the community and anyone who has a duty of responsibility under the crime and disorder act 1998 if the project is to be truly successful. The partners and communities below illustrate that commitment.

Partner engagement is several partners have committed both time and resources to the successful implementation of the bid, which has resulted in match funding commitments that extend beyond the life cycle of the project.

Community Engagement

A key element of success will be in engaging with community groups and leaders so that the benefits of the project are delivered beyond the life of the bid. Early work suggests that there is a core nucleus of community interest that can manifest itself into a delivery arm of the project, working with partners to deliver a positive and proactive outcome.

In bid 1, the proactiveness of street watch following involvement with the bid outcomes achieved far more than could have been initially expected.