

ITEM 6 UNANDERRA SKATE PARK SAFETY REPORT

Council at its meeting of 29 May 2017 requested an investigation into appropriate actions and strategies to best ensure the safety of all users of Unanderra Skate Park. The resolution was:

Minute 53

- 1 a *Council investigate appropriate actions and strategies to best ensure safety of all users of Unanderra Skate Park.*
 - b *This investigation to include consideration of implementing CCTV, tree plantings and picnic facilities and other measures that encourage more families to “stay and play” and provide positive active surveillance.*
 - c *A report return to Council with options for consideration.*
- 2 *Council also contact the Illawarra Local Area Command of the NSW Police Force informing them of our concerns and request their assistance by way of additional routine patrols in this area and any other service or program they provide to address youth and community safety.*
 - 3 *In addition, Council consult with the broader community, as well as with the local Primary Schools and the local Neighbourhood Centre.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council receive the report and note the following recommendations:

- 1 Prioritise the removal of graffiti and keep monitoring for regular removal.
- 2 Encourage the community to report graffiti and any acts of vandalism.
- 3 Encourage the community to report incidents of abuse or violence to police.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Sue Savage, Manager Community Cultural and Economic Development (Acting)
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Engaged City (Acting)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Unanderra Skate Park Community Safety Audit

BACKGROUND

A complaint was made to former Councillor Curran from a community member about bullying and abusive behaviour occurring at the Unanderra Skate Park. The community member requested CCTV be installed at the park to reduce antisocial behaviour. A motion was passed which requested an investigation into strategies and initiatives that could be deployed to improve safety for users of the skate park.

In response to the resolution of 29 May 2017, a community safety audit was conducted with Council's Community Safety Officer and the Police Youth Liaison Officer from Lake Illawarra Local Area Command at Unanderra Skate Park on 14 June 2017. As part of the community safety audit the Unanderra Neighbourhood Centre's Youth Coordinator was also consulted. The Youth Coordinator has strong links with the local schools and Church youth groups as well as the young people who frequent the skate park.

The key findings of the community safety audit are that the skate park is one of the facilities in this 'play' precinct. There are good sightlines into the precinct. There is passive surveillance from the street level but little in the way of other activities which would have people present who by their mere presence would deter potential offenders from committing a crime.

The Youth Coordinator from Unanderra Neighbourhood Centre is working with the local schools and Church youth group to improve behaviour in the precinct, which will act to increase activities and people being present at the site. The NSW Police advised that the incident such as the one reported to former Councillor Curran is a rare occurrence. The type of behaviour as reported is unlikely to be prevented by the installation of CCTV if it were to occur again.

Recommendations from the community safety audit include:

- Remove graffiti and keep monitoring it for regular removal.
- Encourage the community to report graffiti and other acts of vandalism.
- Encourage the community to report all incidents of abuse, violence or threatening behaviours to police.

For full details of the Community Safety Audit refer attachment: Unanderra Skate Park Community Safety Audit.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Consultation was conducted with:

- Unanderra Neighbourhood Centre’s Youth Coordinator and Manager
- WCC Community Safety Officer
- Community and Cultural Development Manager
- Recreation and Open Space Project Officer
- Youth Liaison Officer Lake Illawarra Local Area Command.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Wollongong 2022 goal 5: ‘We are a healthy community in a liveable city’. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2012-2017	Annual Plan 2017-18
Strategy	5 Year Action	Annual Deliverables
5.4.2 Local crime continues to be prevented and levels of crime reduced.	5.4.2.2 Deliver projects and programs to reduce crime in the Wollongong Local Government Area.	Complete and finalise Safety Audits and relevant reports.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs to conduct the community safety audit and graffiti removal are within the respective Council divisional operational budgets for 2017-2018.

CONCLUSION

The Unanderra Skate Park is in open parkland surrounded by sports fields, a children’s playground and the local tennis club. The Lake Illawarra Local Area Command reported only two minor incidents were reported to them at this site over the last two years. As a result they do not consider this site a ‘hot spot’ and are not ‘tasking’ the skate park for special consideration or ‘drive bys’.

The site does however look neglected due to the amount of graffiti covering signs, the skate bowl, children’s playground equipment and the toilet. Rapidly removing graffiti and monitoring the site to keep it graffiti free would send a clear message the site feels safer which will in turn increase usage and active surveillance.



COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT

INTERNAL ONLY

TITLE	Unanderra Skate Park
DATE	14 June TIME
ADDRESS	Unanderra Park, Central Road, UNANDERRA NSW 2526
ATTENDANCE	Steve Maidment, Lori Hanley Lake Illawarra Local Area Command
AUTHOR	Radda Jordan
	<p>Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design</p> <p>Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is a crime prevention strategy that focuses on the planning, design and structure of cities and neighbourhoods. It reduces opportunities for crime by using design and place management principles that reduce the likelihood of essential crime ingredients (law, offender, victim or target, opportunity) from intersecting in time and space.</p> <p>Predatory offenders often make cost-benefit assessment of potential victims and locations before committing crime. CPTED aims to create the reality (or perception) that the costs of committing crime are greater than the likely benefits. This is achieved by creating environmental and social conditions that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise risk to offender (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); and • Minimise excuse making opportunities (removing conditions that encourage/facilitate rationalisation of inappropriate behaviour). <p>CPTED employs four key strategies. These are territorial re-enforcement, surveillance, access control and space/activity management. All CPTED strategies aim to create the perception or reality of <u>capable guardianship</u>.</p>
PURPOSE	The purpose of this safety audit is to determine what physical amendments can be introduced that may reduce anti-social behaviours, reported at the skate park.
BACKGROUND <small>(eg Issues identified and any relevant additional notes)</small>	A report of violence and intimidation has been made by a local resident whose children use the skate park. The report indicated the resident's children were being bullied, hurt and intimidated by other older children, while using the skate park. The resident requested if CCTV could be installed at the skate park, to reduce incidents of this nature continuing.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT

SITE INSPECTION



Skate bowl showing proximity to tennis courts and playground



From skate bowl across sports fields to closest neighbours



Directly opposite the skate park showing no natural surveillance from the street



COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT

OBSERVATION NOTES

Crime Levels (eg Nature, known methods)

The Lake Illawarra Local Area Command Youth Liaison Officer attended the safety audit with Council officers. Lori Haney (YLO) checked police reports to see what levels of disturbance or crime is associated with this location. Lori reported there has only been one report in 2017 (recently) and one in November 2016, which was a minor incident. Lake Illawarra Local Area Command do not consider this location a hot spot and are not 'tasking' the skate park for special consideration or drive bys.

Surveillance (eg list site features)

The site includes the skate park, tennis centre and courts, an excelloo and children's playground. There are several sporting fields in the precinct and lighting for the tennis courts and sports fields.

Territorial Reinforcement (eg community guardians, place making, reputation, signage)

The site is marked by signs identifying the skate park as well as signs indicating appropriate behaviours.



Examples of signage at the park

Environmental Maintenance (eg Area image, ie graffiti, rubbish, decay, landscaping)

There is an abundance of graffiti at this site.



Examples of graffiti across a number of facilities at the skate park location. Some of the graffiti is offensive



COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT

There is no rubbish bin within the precinct. The skate bowl has a number of cracks and is covered in graffiti. A drain for the skate bowl is cracked and raised, making it a dangerous hazard.



Drain covered in graffiti and creating a trip hazard.

Activity and Space

Management (eg clarity of land use, street activity, proximity to other areas, displacement, neighbourhood)

At the time of the audit there were a number of young boys using the skate park with their scooters. They are regular users. They indicated the playground was never used, the toilets were not used by them but by drug users and older boys mostly went to Berkeley skate park now.

Access Control (eg street type, linkages, access points and type, walking routes)

The skate park is in close proximity to the train station and shopping precinct. It's an easy walk from the highway.

Design/Definition/Designation (eg design and purpose in harmony, responsibility of space, boundaries, social norms suit function, legal and administration requirements reinforced).

The skate park is one of the facilities in this 'play' precinct. There are no obstructions to prevent good sightlines into the precinct. There is passive surveillance from the street level but little in the way of capable guardianship. Opposite the skate bowl is the Wests Leagues Club wall and Unanderra fire station. Both are open for long periods but do not offer any connection to the skate park or any of the activities in the play precinct.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations include:

- Remove graffiti and keep monitoring it for regular removal
- Encourage the community to report graffiti and other acts of vandalism
- Encourage the community to report all incidents of abuse, violence or threatening behaviours to police

There is no indication the installation of CCTV will prevent abuse. The local youth worker at Unanderra Community Centre is aware of the issues and has been encouraged to work with the local high school and Church groups to deliver strategies to encourage more respectful behaviours