

Design and Access Statement

RE SUICIDE DETERRANT FENCING

MSCP, THAMESGATE SHOPPING CENTRE, GRAVESEND, DA11 0AU

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to outline the rationale, design approach, and implementation details for the installation of suicide prevention fencing at Thamesgate Shopping Centre, Gravesend. The proposed intervention is aimed at enhancing public safety, specifically in regard to potential incidents involving suicide or self-harm.

2. Site Context

The car park is a multi-storey facility located in the heart of Gravesend, in relative close proximity to Gravesend Railway Station. The building consists of a commercial area, primarily serving customers of retail outlets and office tenants. The structure consists of six levels. There is existing palisade fencing to the south boundary and part east and west boundaries. The remaining east, west and all of the north elevation are open. Recent incidents have identified the need to implement measures to mitigate potential further incidents.

3. Design Rationale

The proposed fencing design seeks to:

- **Prevent Climbing:** Use anti-climb mesh or perforated panels that discourage climbing while maintaining transparency for visibility and aesthetics.
- **Mitigate Risk:** Create a physical barrier that deters potential self-harm incidents.
- **Blend Aesthetically:** Integrate with the car park's existing architectural language using durable and visually complementary materials.

4. Design Proposal

The fencing will be installed along the perimeter edges of the top two levels of the car park.

- **Height:** The fencing will be 3.1m above deck level and 2m above the concrete parapet.
- **Material:** Galvanized steel anti-climb mesh with a powder-coated finish in neutral colours (green) for durability and minimal visual intrusion.
- **Fixings:** Secure fixings will be used to attach the fencing to the concrete structure without impacting structural integrity.
- **Features:**
 - Integrated return at the top to further discourage climbing.
 - Rounded edges and concealed hardware for safety and visual refinement.

5. Access Considerations

- **Accessibility Compliance:** The fencing design will not impede access routes for users with disabilities. All walkways and ramps will remain clear and compliant with Equality Act 2010 and Approved Document M.
- **Emergency Access:** The design will not affect any emergency access requirements.
- **Maintenance Access:** Detachable panels or hinged sections will be incorporated for ease of maintenance while maintaining secure everyday operation.

6. Impact Assessment

- **Visual Impact:** The fencing will use neutral colours and open mesh designs to minimize visual dominance and maintain sightlines from within the car park.
- **Safety Impact:** This intervention intends to significantly reduces the likelihood of incidents.

- **Environmental Impact:** Perforated panels are being used to minimise the amount of material needed to provide the functionality needed.
 - **Operational Impact:** The fencing will not interfere with traffic flow or the functionality of the car park.
-

8. Construction and Implementation

- **Timeline:** The project is expected to be completed within 3 weeks.
 - **Construction Access:** Work will be carried out during Monday to Friday and is not anticipated to interfere on the operation of the car park.
-

9. Conclusion

The proposed suicide prevention fencing is a proactive and necessary measure to enhance the safety and wellbeing of car park users. The design respects the architectural integrity of the structure, ensures compliance with accessibility and safety standards, and is informed by evidence-based practices in suicide prevention.

We are confident that this proposal meets all functional and aesthetic requirements and look forward to implementing these critical safety enhancements.