

# PUBLIC / PRIVATE INTERFACE

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The private/public interface is the semi-private/semi-public area surrounding buildings.

These guidelines largely deal with the small scale elements at the front of buildings and in the intervening spaces between buildings. Such spaces have been termed the public/private interface.

Modern design theories and practice have unfortunately lead to the creation of many unsafe spaces at the public/ private interface. To promote the perception of safety and reduce the opportunity for criminal behaviour, the public/private interface needs to be designed to discourage crime and enhance the perception of an area as safe.

The underlying issue for the public/private interface areas are those of ownership and surveillance of the space. Spaces in or around buildings need to be designed to allow for incidental surveillance and to promote a feeling of ownership of the space by the users and residents of the area. If the persons using and living in an area feel that they “own” the interface areas, then they are more likely to take responsibility for, and use that area. If the design of areas provides for incidental surveillance then people using the area perceive the area to be safe. This in turn discourages criminal behaviour as it increases the likelihood of being observed and creates an impression that the area is being watched.

Building features in interface areas such as forecourts and foyers provide visual cues, creating the impression in normal users and observers that the area is safe. Activity in interface areas such as cafes and retailing enhance ownership and need to be provided. Interface areas should be well lit, attractive space that are observed, or gives the impression of being observed, by surrounding buildings and activity.

Conversely spaces such as recessed doorways, blank facades and poorly lit service lanes discourage territoriality because of the ambiguous nature of such space. The ownership of such space is ill defined and discourages legitimate use of the space.



# ACTIVITY GENERATORS

The by-product of activity is passive surveillance and a perception of safety in an area. Activity that will contribute to passive surveillance can be generated in an area itself and/or in spaces that adjoin an area.

Activity is not a material requirement like visibility. You cannot design activity. You can design for the possibility of activity and qualities of design can have the effect of encouraging or discouraging activity. Therefore safe design is design that provides for, and encourages, activity generating uses to locate in an area.

To encourage activity, public spaces should also provide facilities and visual cues (eg. street furniture, signage) which emphasises the public nature of the space.

## OBJECTIVE

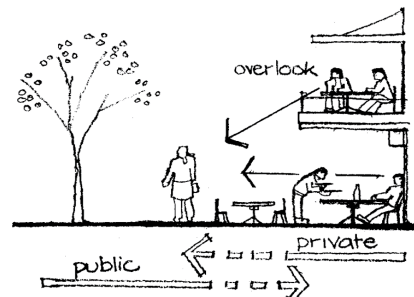
*To generate activity by people in an area, so that passive surveillance takes place.*

## GUIDELINES

### 1. General

1.1 Activity that provides passive surveillance can be:

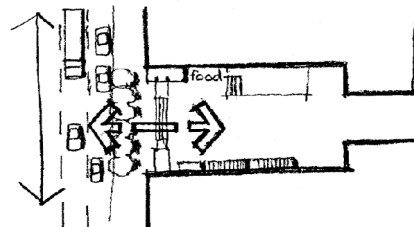
- located within a public space;
- located in adjoining spaces;
- located overlooking public areas and involves those activities that spread from private spaces into public areas;



1.1 Passive Surveillance

1.2 To encourage activity, places for public use should be located:

- close to main public routes;
- where they can be readily seen from other public areas;
- where they can be easily accessed.

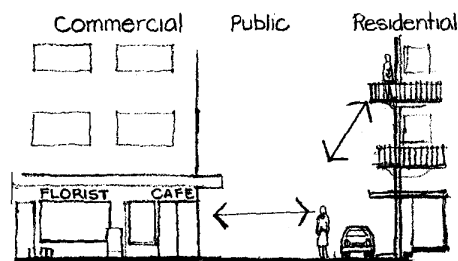


1.2 Areas of public use to be close to main public route(s)

### 2. Adjoining Spaces

2.1 To achieve passive surveillance from adjoining spaces there should be at least one of the following:

- Activities at grade level;
- visibility from the public areas to adjoining activity areas and or an awareness of visibility into the public area;
- In addition access to the public area from adjoining spaces should be provided and the access should be apparent to the persons using the public area



2.1 Visibility between public areas and adjoining activity areas



### 3. Visual Cues, Facilities and Uses

3.1 Development involving public spaces should include:

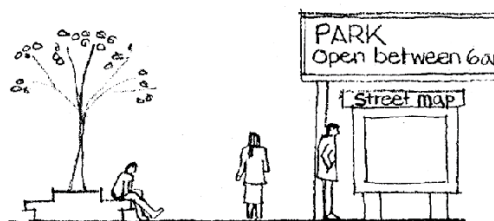
- a variety of uses;
- complementary activities;
- at street level, provision for a number of smaller activities rather than fewer larger activities.



3.1 Small and varied shop fronts

3.2 To encourage activity, public spaces and places should provide public facilities such as seating and information signage (hours of operation, location etc).

3.3 Buildings bordering public spaces should be designed to be sympathetic to human scale to encourage enjoyment of the public spaces.



3.2 Public spaces to provide seating and information signage

3.4 The design and layout of public spaces should allow for incidental activities such as busking or street vending.



3.4 Public spaces to allow for incidental activities

### 4. Through-Site Links

Activities should be located adjoining and along through-site links.



## 5. Underpasses and Overpasses

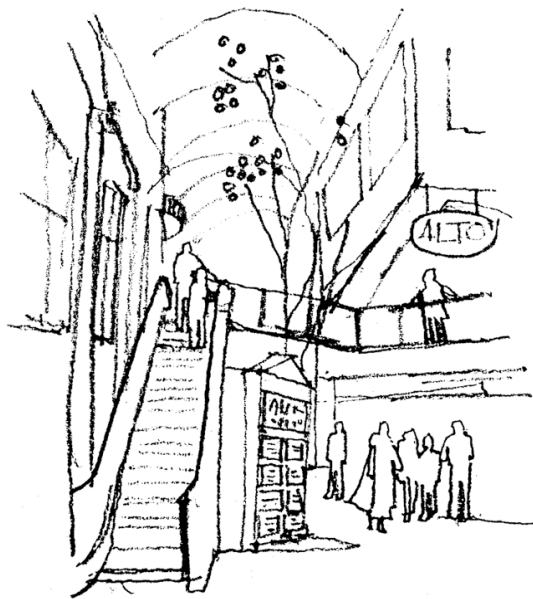
- 5.1 To increase safety, activities should be located along the route where possible.
- 5.2 Activities should be located at the entrance and exit of underpasses and overpasses



5.2 Overpasses - activities at entrance

## 6. Escalators and Travelators

- 6.1 Activities should be located to overlook the route of escalators and travelators.



6.1 Escalators surrounding activities

