



# MPS Crime Prevention

## Environmental Visual Audit

**GSC: Official**

**Location: Finsbury Park**

**Prepared by:** The Metropolitan Police Designing-Out Crime Group working under the Continual Policing Improvement Command.

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**Prepared for:** PS Matt Clarke under Op Tiapan

**Our Reference:** NE 7212 (addition to NE 6602)

**Date:** 26/01/2023 – original

07/03/2022 – revised

This report gives recommendations. Please note that Crime Prevention Advice and the information in this report does not constitute legal or other professional advice; it is given free and without the intention of creating a contract or without the intention of accepting any legal responsibility. It is based on the information supplied and current crime trends in the area. All other applicable health, safety and fire regulations should be adhered to.

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# 1. Introduction

## Location description

There have been various reports on Finsbury Park and the issues that occur in and around it. This report focuses specifically on the south entrance situated opposite Finsbury Post Office and next door to Lidl's supermarket. In particular the report focuses on the space between the park entrance and the gable end of the Lidl building.

Finsbury park is bounded by three boroughs Haringey, Islington and Hackney but the park itself sits inside the ward of Harringay. Focus for this report is the south entrance of the park and a relatively small area that is a busy town centre type junction.



## 2. Executive Summary

A request has been made internally by Op Tiapan (MPS problem solving team) to provide supplementary support to the previous EVA NE 6612 which gave an overview of the main issues within the park itself and recommendations to reduce the crime that occurs.

A particular focus is being given within this report on activity that is occurring within this specific location that is having a detrimental effect on the public safety and wellbeing with a focus on VAWG (violence Against Women and Girls).

Op Taipan has made a considerable difference in reducing crime within the park itself through problem solving and additional patrols, possibly displacing the criminal and antisocial activities to the park entrances which lends itself

The purpose of the report is to provide supporting evidence of the activity taking place at this specific location and to provide short term and long term solutions to improve the physical environment and create a safe sense of place for members of the public by disrupting drug and ASB related activities.

### **Revised Summary**

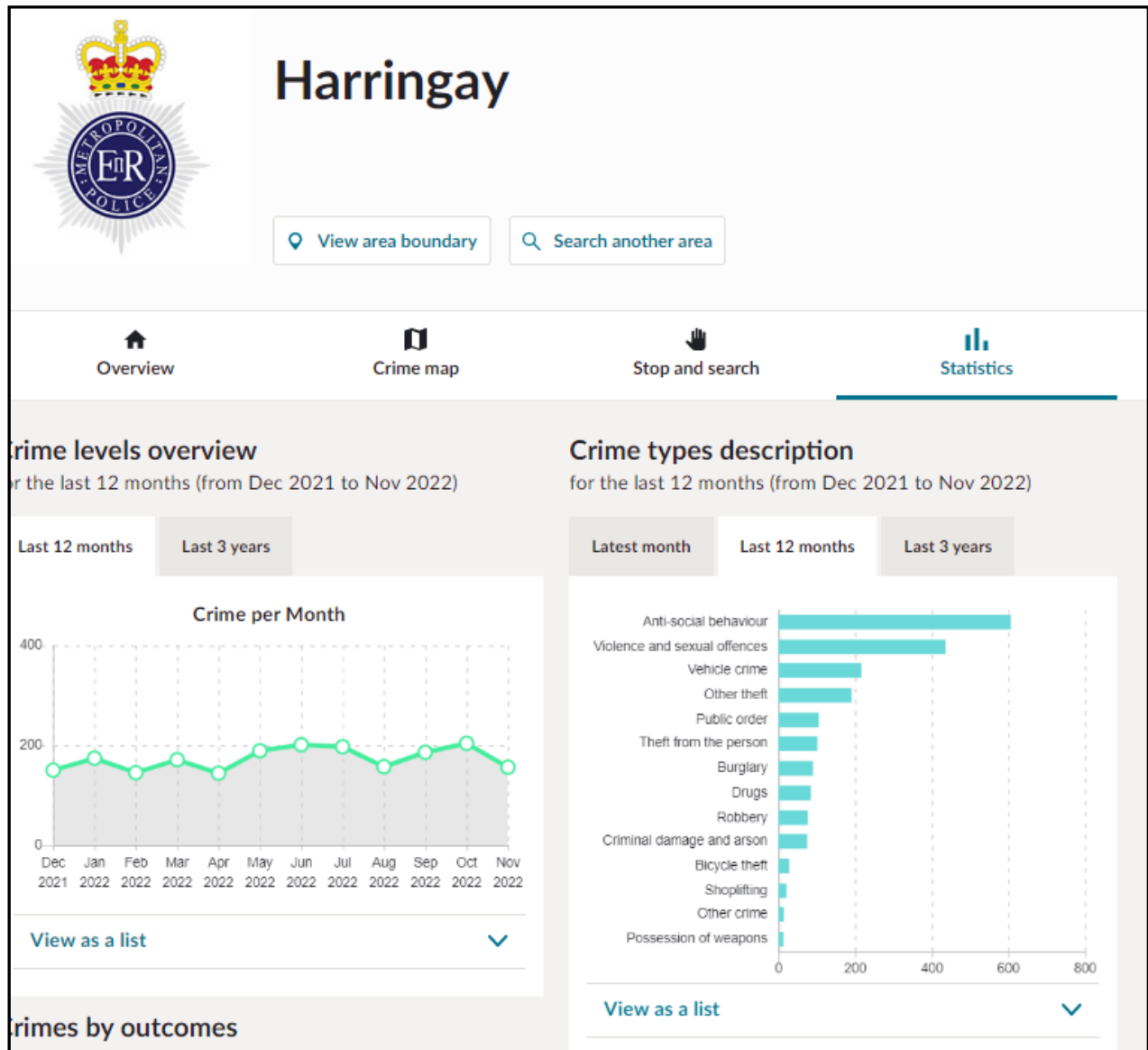
In addition to the above a site survey was conducted with Sergeant Matt Clarke and a potential supplier of the fencing to determine the most practical method of securing the space to reduce crime and ASB whilst maximising the benefits to local resources ( local authority, police and localised services).

No additions have been made to the body of the report, only the final recommendations

### 3. Crime Statistics

This report has been requested internally and is based on specific local intelligence provided by OP Tiapan which may not be in the public domain, this intelligence when provided adds weight to the report findings.

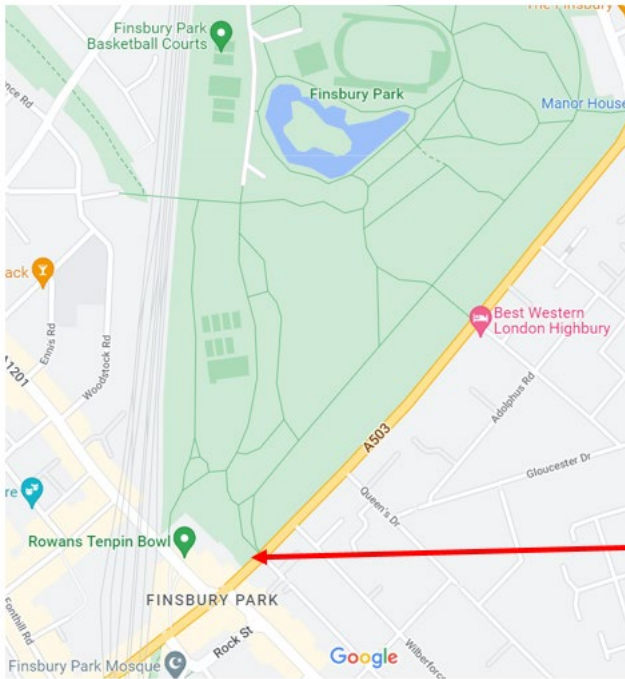
The information below gives an indication of the level of crime in the Ward of Haringey and this would have been predominantly in the Finsbury Park area.



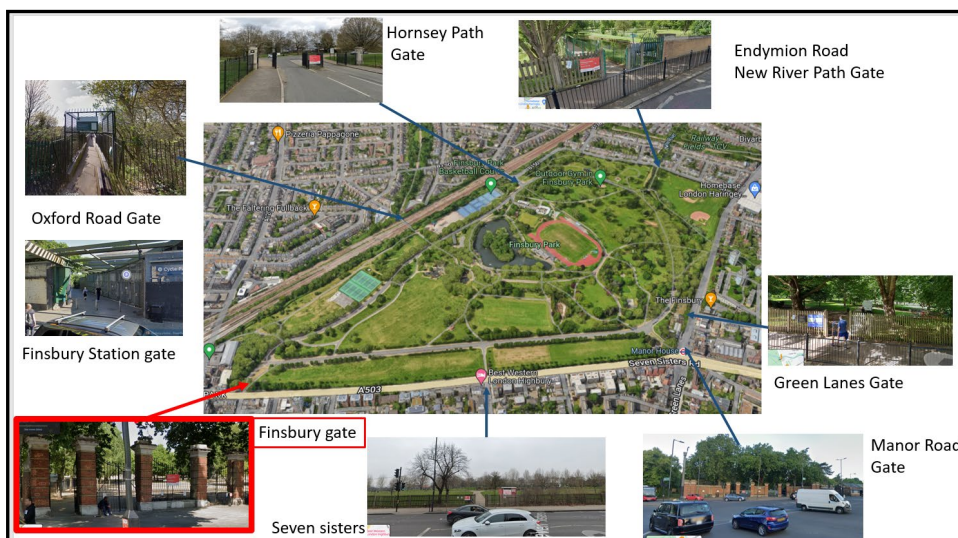
Whilst the information shown provides the statistics for the ward of Haringey, it does indicate that there is an increase in ASB, Violence & Sexual offences, robbery and drugs. Often such crimes are intrinsically linked and when concentrated in a small location such as the entrance to Finsbury park will create a space that feels unsafe. ASB and Drug related crimes often go unreported as they become more acceptable and part of the “norm” in a public space.

# 4. Design and Layout

The entrance to the park is located by a comprehensive and busy junction and is part of the main thoroughfare for pedestrians. Whilst the journey through the park is not always the shortest, it does present open green space that is beneficial to both mental and physical health of an individual who may make a subconscious decision to use the park as part of their journey to a final destination.



As can be seen from the image above the majority of foot traffic comes from the direction of Lidl (includes the crossing, Rowans Tenpin bowl, Finsbury Station and various PHs).



The park currently has free moving access with no gates being closed of a night time, some of this is due to the large scale of the park and the current associated risk of “locking” a member of the public in the park.

There are only three original major park entrances

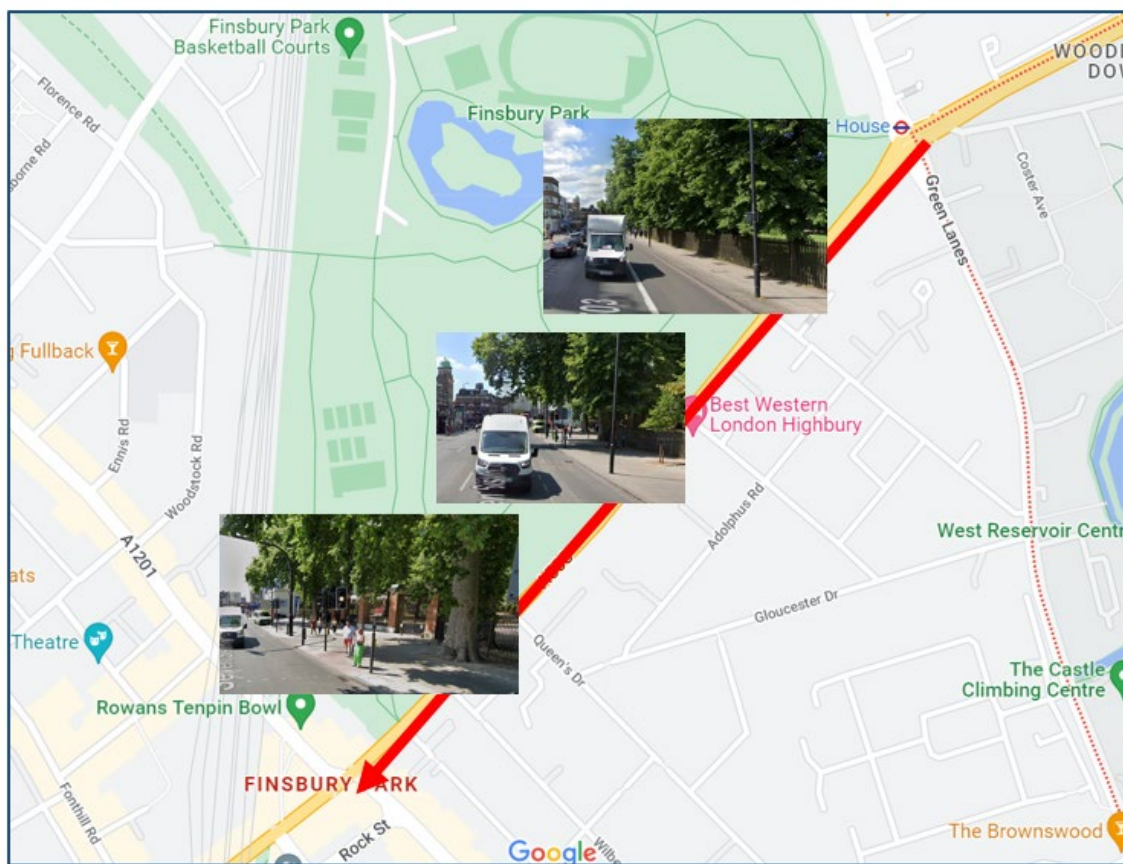
**Finsbury Gate** – Main focus of this report

**Manor Road Gate** and

**Hornsey Gate.** Other gates are situated around the park and these may have originally been installed to give local residents access to the park without the need to walk to the main entrance.

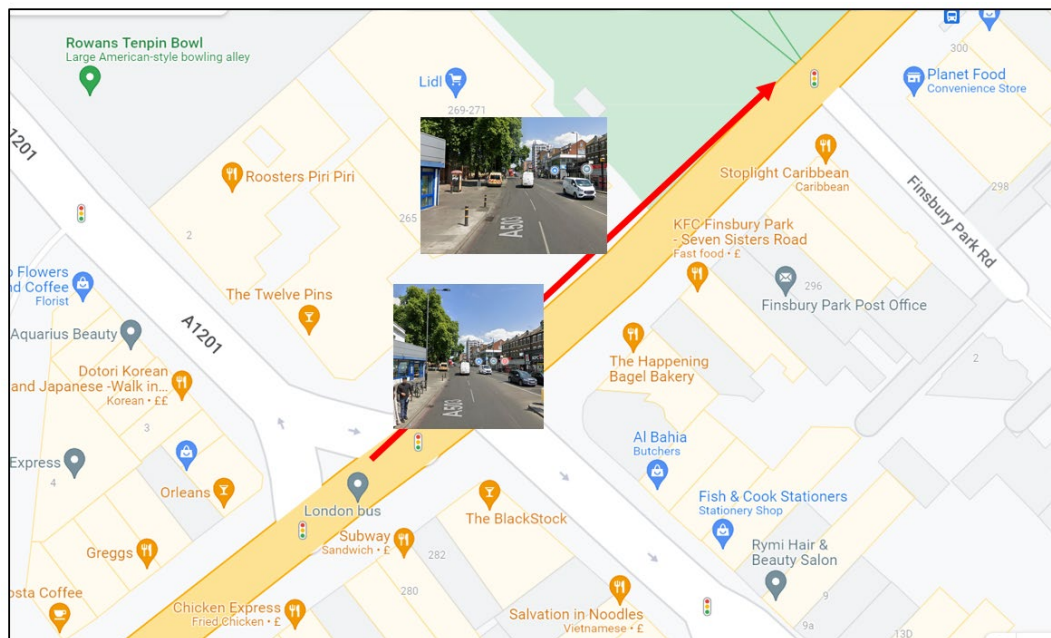


The north exterior footpath from the direction of manor house is transient by its nature and provides fewer opportunities for drug related crime, in particular where the perpetrator needs to be static (loiter) and in a location that is known to their buyers.



This image demonstrates the typical view that the pedestrian would get when walking along the park edge south towards Finsbury Park entrance.

By contrast the pedestrian direction from Lidl and all of the other amenities provide a narrow line of sight and places for unlawful activity to take place. It is a dead space which serves no purpose and has no sense of place or public safety.





# 5. Observations

## The Open Space

There are several issues with this space that have led to the area being misused for criminal activity and ASB. The issue is not just from pedestrian traffic, but also mopeds that are parking on the pavement. Although some of the moped riders may have genuine and legitimate reasons to be there, this often leads to all moped users, legal and illegal making the assumption that this acceptable practice and creating a desire line equivalence with mopeds in this area. (note- that a desire line is the line of least resistance from A to B, which once established is difficult to remove even when it is to the detriment of the general public)

It has also been noted that the majority of moped users are there under the pretence of being delivery drivers but are facilitating the supply of drugs.



### Note the following concerns

1. Blank elevation of Lidl building with no natural surveillance
2. Lack of rule setting for moped parking.
3. Lack of natural surveillance due to the narrowing of the footpath.

### This image demonstrates

1. How easy it is for someone to hide behind the corner
2. Lack of legitimate ownership of the open space leading to park entrance.
3. Lack of rule setting
  - a. Poor pavement markings or change of pavement
  - b. No signage demonstrating the legitimate usage of the area



**Note** the additional security from Lidl, with the extension of the perimeter treatment above the gate. It is easy for a car to park against the wall and moped to park in the open space without restrictions.

(previous bike stands have been removed)



## What has been done already

Op Taipan has been operating within Finsbury Park since July 2022 and in that time it has built up a significant amount of local intelligence. OP Taipan has utilised operational policing techniques above and beyond day to day policing to break the current paradigm of crime and ASB within the park itself. These include (not exhaustive)

- Engaging with local residents and shop owners who frequent the park
  - On their way to work or during their break time
  - After work if they live locally
  - For their journey to work or as part of a recreation and wellbeing
- Targeted patrols with subsequent stops and multiple arrests of perpetrators
- CCTV to identify crime and ASB within the park and outside the gate.

Whilst the work conducted by OP Taipan and has made a considerable difference within the park itself, it has highlighted that the design of the gates, which cannot be changed (and the location indicated at the front of the gates) is a crime generator. This leads to open drug dealing, violence and ASB, mainly committed by young males 16 years and upwards that work in large groups.

The open space allows for large groups to congregate and feel safe in numbers whilst they conduct their drugs supply. The large groups generate a fear of crime in particular amongst lone females or vulnerable individuals who wish to use the park, especially at night as they feel that is not safe to approach the park entrance, let alone enter the park.

All of the above information is supported by evidence provided by OP Taipan and is available on request



## 6. Recommendations

Normally the focus on recommendations is for short, medium and long term, but this report requires recommendations to fulfil funding needs and therefore will focus on what can be achievable now and in the Short term to Medium term

### Now

**Fence off Open space** - Implementing a temporary enclosed space that is controlled by railings at 1.8m in height. Incorporated into this space should be a manual gate operated by Lidl's to allow vehicle access during delivery times.



The above image is for illustration purposes in both colour and position. The following attributes should be part of the fence treatment

- 1.8m in height
- Match the appearance where feasible of the park fencing
- Bolted to the ground so that it can be removed
- Have a vehicle access gate for Lidl and the enclosed space.

Closing the open space is intended to reduce the criminal activity at the location.

**Note** – Following must be considered when fencing off the location

- Lighting and CCTV must be re-evaluated and adapted according to the change in landscape and design
- Advertising Banners and signs are to be omitted from the railings to ensure natural surveillance through the railings.

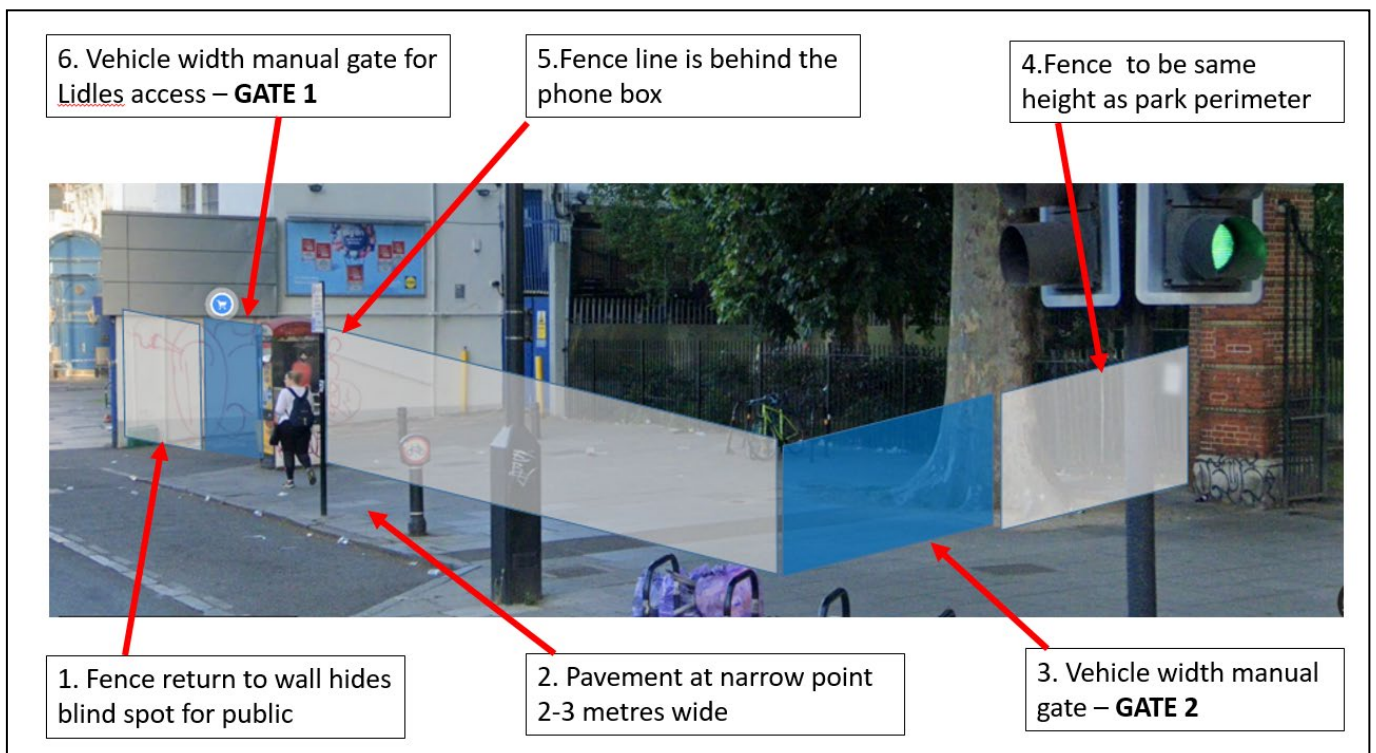
## ADDITION – Revised 07/03/23

The principle of fencing the area off to reduce crime and ASB is still the purpose of the report but the following recommendations are further refined to ensure that the space can be utilised effectively, in particular for events and crowd control. The space should be controlled via two gates:

**Gate 1** – Lidl's side entrance

**Gate 2** – Park entrance

The purpose of the two gates are to allow access to capable guardians on a daily basis and during events to create a sterile area or control the flow of public. The diagrams (for illustration purposes only) show how the area can be utilised.



1. An angled return fence is required to remove blind spots when public pass the corner from Lidl's reducing fear of crime
2. Sufficient space has been allowed for 2-3 people to pass on the pavement. It is not illustrated but the proposed new pavement width here matches the pavement width beyond the Finsbury gate towards the Manor Park entrance.
3. Gate 2 will return back towards the tree or fully back towards the fence where it can be locked in the open position when required.
4. Final return to the park perimeter prevents intrusion from the rear
5. Fence line goes behind BT phone box to ensure that the facility can still be used by the public
6. Gate 1 is a vehicle gate for Lidl deliveries however general vehicle access is not required.
7. If required Gate 1, will return back towards the wall, where it can be locked in the open position if required
8. **This strategy will only work if the railing and gates are visually permeable to allow natural surveillance into that space at all times.**

**Note** - keys for capable guardians can be provided ( Police, Local Authority, Lidl )

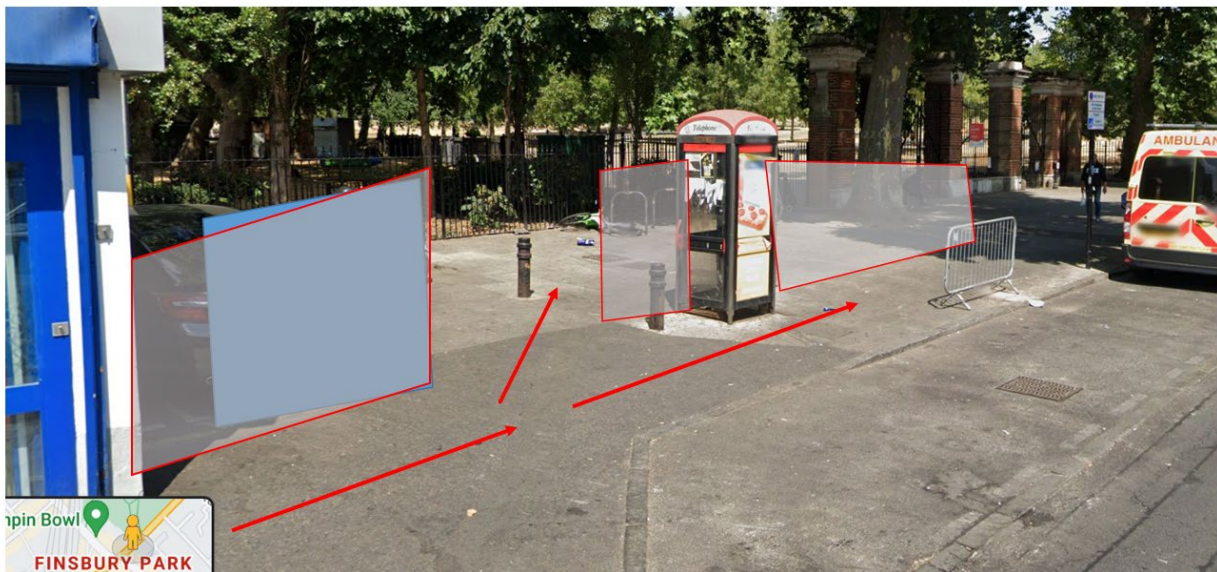
## When Gates are closed

- Act as a fence barrier to reduce crime and ASB
- Can create positive spaces with an option to open or close one or two gates
  - Sterile police area during events
  - Market space
  - Public support events – Homeless assistance



## When gates are open

- Creates a controlled flow of public through the space during events as either side of the fence line can be used.
  - Image below is one illustration that can demonstrate flow of foot traffic with the gate open.





### Short to medium term

If the target hardening proves to be successful in reducing the size of the crowds gathered and the criminal activity taking place then would look to improve the fencing to have the following attributes as well as the above.

- Removability and repositioning of fencing to widen the pavement space for functions within the park. This may require some engineering design to allow the fence posts to be slotted and secured into the ground as opposed to bolted to the ground as per previous recommendations.
- Inclusion of gates to allow the space to be utilised for functions such as
  - Sterile area for organisers and police during park events
  - Use of pop events such as small markets or art exhibitions
  - Use of space for charity interventions such as homeless or drug interventions.

**Additional Consideration** - The space can also be occupied by a food or coffee outlet with the space allocated to seating and secured off at night time. This has been successful in Ducketts Common and has increased natural surveillance of an area plus increased positive activity.

If utilised, consideration must be given to the reduced surveillance into the park itself, which may require further enhancement through lighting or CCTV

### Types of railing

Typically we are looking at designs similar to the following and below are example companies that provide this type of fencing



<https://allsteelfencing.co.uk/product/1-8m-high-standard-vertical-bar-railings/>

<https://www.aafencing.co.uk/900mm-high-vertical-bar-railings-4.html>

<https://www.grammbarriers.com/our-products/security-fencing/railings/arma-bar-light/>

<https://www.externalworksindex.co.uk/entry/47433/Barkers-Fencing/StyleGuard-R-round-tubular-steel-railings/>

**END OF REPORT**