Research Paper – Utilising problem orientated policing strategies to reduce street based prostitution in Kings Cross, New South Wales, Australia.

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Abstract
Illegal Street Prostitution: An innovative strategy to reduce crime through environmental design in Kings Cross.
Background: There are clearly defined links between prostitution and drug distribution in the East Sydney area, providing a substantial and lucrative market for those involved in all forms of prostitution.
In 2002 the local community of East Sydney was experiencing an increase in illegal prostitution. Indecent acts were being committed in front of residences, the local school and church. Residents were experiencing an increase in vehicular traffic due to the demand of kerb crawlers (men who drive around looking for a prostitute). These street based workers were defecating, urinating and having sex on resident’s doorsteps and a number of offences such as soliciting and break, enter and steal offences were being committed to support drug habits of the prostitutes.
Objective: To reduce crime, improve safety in the area and develop an innovative strategy for street prostitution utilising the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
Method: Based on the Dudley Research Project in the United Kingdom a strategy was implemented to reduce street based prostitution. After close consultation with the local community and various stakeholders, the local council conducted a study into the vehicular flow of traffic during peak periods of solicitation. Crime patterns were compared to the council study which revealed a ‘circuit’ that kerb crawlers were using to engage with a prostitute. The local area reflected one of neglect by local council and there was no ownership by the community. Consequently, a trial of various road closures throughout East Sydney for a period of 12 months was implemented. Temporary road barriers were strategically placed in the streets of East Sydney. The road barriers were then heavily scrutinised by CPTED practitioners with a number of key recommendations being implemented.
Results: There was a significant reduction in crime and the displacement of street sex workers was minimal. The road barriers have since been aesthetically modified to suit the environment. Consequently the local community now uses the streets day and night.
Conclusion: East Sydney had reduction in crime, displacement was minimal and safety was improved. The experimentation of road barriers was the first of its kind to be tested in Australia. By utilising the principles of CPTED, this innovative strategy is now being used as best practice amongst other commands in reducing illegal prostitution in New South Wales.
Introduction – Kings Cross
Kings Cross has been the red light district of Sydney since the 1960’s. It is a suburb with a bohemian atmosphere which over time has turned towards a centre of Sydney well known for sex and drugs. Drugs have become an ever-prevalent problem, usually associated with prostitution. Policing in the area has changed as well. From the days of the Wood Royal Commission investigating illegal conduct of police officers, police have become smarter and focused their efforts solely on intelligence response policing. Police are now listening to the gentrifying community. Real estate prices have soared, attracting more affluent people to the area. Due to its close proximity to the city, young male and female workers are beginning to move back into the centre of Kings Cross. Due to this fact, gentrification is taking its toll on how effective policing strategies really are. Demographically, customers are wanting a better service and issues which previously did not concern local residents, are beginning to be major problems for police and local council. Kings Cross also shares similar problems to that of its neighbouring suburb East Sydney.

East Sydney has always had its fair share of problems with street based prostitution, particularly in Forbes Street. This streetscape has beautiful historic terraces and townhouses. Two of Sydney’s most elite schools along with the local Anglican Church and the Christian Church of Scientology are all neighbours. However, the street is a circuit for kerb crawlers (men who cruise the streets looking for prostitutes). Local laneways that connect a number of streets are used for street prostitution. Police are constantly receiving complaints via the community consultation meetings about street sex workers engaging in sex on the doorsteps of residents; people urinating and defecating on their front porches and injecting drugs and discarding the syringes in the street. Obviously, this type of business attracts pimps and crime. East Sydney has long been subjected to break enter and steal offences, drug offences, vandalism, damage offences and assaults of both prostitutes and local residents.

The problem
In January 2001 it became apparent that street sex work in the Darlinghurst and East Sydney area was a key concern for the local community. At that time community members were threatening to form vigilante groups to rid their area of street sex workers. Residents were holding small public protests in the streets and there were occasional fights and breaches of the peace between street workers and residents. The residents complained bitterly of the incessant car traffic late at night, girls screaming, sex occurring on their verandas, with used condoms and syringes being left behind (Darcy 2003).

Residents were afraid to use their own streets at night due to the perception of fear. Local streets being turned into ghettos, with maintenance of lights and general upkeep of these streets being ignored by council. Graffiti tagged most laneway walls and there was an uneasy feel about the area. Crime associated with illegal street sex prostitution was increasing and a number of recent murders of street sex workers became the catalyst for change by the Kings Cross Police Local Area Commander, Dave Darcy.

In 2001, Police commenced community consultation meetings, which were open forums for the public to vent their concerns of crime in the East Sydney area. The first one attracted over 50 people, ranging from prostitutes to local residents. The local member for
parliament attended and chaired the meeting. Resident action groups also attended. Complaints were being made within the first five minutes about lack of police action; some complaints dating back over four years. Police came to the conclusion that short, medium and long-term strategies must be formulated to kerb illegal street prostitution in the local area.

Research for local solutions to solve local problems
In late 2001, Kings Cross Police began researching effective strategies to reduce street based prostitution. The resident action group of East Sydney suggested implementing road closures as recommended by the U.S Department of Justice, Office of Community Orientated Policing Services. Other studies of situational crime prevention by Clarke (1997) who supports the theory of road closures and crime prevention through environmental design principles (CPTED) of an overall crime prevention strategy. This research revealed that closing neighbourhood streets and alleys could prevent crime as there is a relationship between street access and crime rates. Clarke (1997) argued that:

1. Offenders found targets in familiar territory. They gained knowledge about vulnerable areas and potential opportunities through their contacts with other offenders and through their daily routines. This supported the current situation of local prostitutions using Forbes Street to attract their clientele.
2. Offenders are quick to recognise a close-knit neighbourhood and the presence of people who might notice them. From litter and other signs of neglect, they can judge whether they are likely to be challenged if they deal drugs or solicit for prostitution.
3. Burglars avoid cul-de-sacs and prefer corner sites where neighbours are less likely to see them. Offenders look for heavily travelled streets and locations near major highways, where there are many potential victims and where they can easily escape. Forbes Street has back laneways, a number of egress routes to other streets and leads to William Street which is the main entry to Sydney and also the legal area for prostitution.
4. Reducing through-traffic by closing streets or alleys means that criminal outsiders are less likely to become familiar with the area; residents learn who does not belong in the neighbourhood, which helps them to more effectively keep watch on the streets near their homes. Due to the perception of fear, residents became victims in their own homes, as they were scared for their safety on the street after dark.

The rationale for closing streets and alleys in a particular neighbourhood is that outsiders commit much of the crime there, either going there specifically to do so or doing so when passing through. However, research shows that criminals typically offend close to home, so before closing streets, arrest records should be checked to determine if most of the active criminals in the neighbourhood are not residents. Otherwise, the closures cannot be justified. Kings Cross Police intelligence conducted their own research and found that a high proportion (approx 85%) of those arrested were indeed outsiders. Displacement was also discussed. Did we just want to move the problem down to the next street? However, Clarke (1997) supported the notion of displacement, suggesting that it could be beneficial to local neighbourhoods. Fortunately, research generally showed displacement is by no means inevitable. Most research suggests that if it occurs at all, the crimes displaced are far fewer in number than those prevented, as criminals will go elsewhere to commit their crimes. Displacement was a risk the command was willing to take in order to reduce this problem.
Measuring Disorder in Kings Cross
To understand the level of disorder Police refer primarily to reported crime, observations of staff, and feedback from the community in both formal and informal settings and to a lesser degree communication with other government and non-government agencies. The command also relies on community safety audits and Community Safety Mapping (CSM) The CSM project was another opportunity for the command to gain a ‘snap shot’ of crime within the community. This was undertaken by the University of Sydney’s criminology students who surveyed residents, tourists, visitors and young people. The results will be presented within the evaluation summary of this paper. However, it was evident that people had created avoidance behaviour in many areas of East Sydney due to its reputation and perception of fear instilled in residents.

How Effective Are Street and Alley Closures on their own?
Unfortunately, only a relatively small number of projects involving street closures have been evaluated. No published evaluations exist of substantial street-closure schemes such as those in Dallas; Houston; Chicago; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Oakland, California. The studies that have been published tend to focus on successful projects, simply because studies of unsuccessful projects are less likely to be published. In 1981 road closures were introduced in Britain to reduce street prostitution. A series of diverters were installed in various streets of street level prostitution. However, the "hardened,” drug-addicted prostitutes adapted by displacing to nearby areas. The barriers also helped prostitutes to solicit kerb crawlers who were forced to slow down (Wagner, 1997).

Current Legislation
Kings Cross Police were using the powers of arrest when a street sex worker was found contravening the summary offences act. That is, a person must not solicit for the purposes of sex within 500 metres of a school, church or residence. Police also found that the use of kerb crawling legislation was effective in reducing prostitution by targeting the client. However, these powers had momentum on the street, but were less of a deterrent in court where a street sex worker would receive a $50 fine and instructed not to solicit outside the area again. Hence police were becoming powerless against such acts of prostitution. Magistrates actively enforced the use of the Bail Act when restricting prostitutes to certain areas after an offence had been committed.

What worked and what did not – Kings Cross Police Strategies
As any crime prevention practitioner will tell you, crime prevention strategies are a spanner in the crime prevention tool kit. Crime prevention through environmental design on its own does not reduce crime, whereas an holistic approach does. In East Sydney public outcry necessitated a number of short-term strategies for the local community in an attempt to provide the residents some relief at night from street sex work outside their houses. Consequently a meeting was organised with the crime management unit within Kings Cross Local Area Command where a number of Policing strategies were devised. It was decided to increase Police numbers and beat policing in the area based on intelligence. Other nights random breath testing was implemented in streets of illegal soliciting to reduce the number of kerb crawlers looking for the prostitutes. Operation Vikings, a unit of the New South Wales (NSW) Police were deployed to areas of high crime (similar to that of the New York
Model zero tolerance policy) to saturate the area and enhance high visibility policing in the hotspots of East Sydney. A number of kerb crawling operations were executed with undercover police women dressed as prostitutes to attract kerb crawlers into solicitation. These operations were successful, with over 20 men being arrested each night. Mounted Police were also deployed to well-known areas of criminal behaviour in East Sydney. Such effective operations were, however, costing the command over $12,000 for each deployment. The short-term relief was working but at high expense to the rest of the command.

The City of Sydney Council in conjunction with Kings Cross Police decided to utilise CPTED principles and enhance the lighting in two streets well known for prostitution. However, once the lighting was enhanced it could not be changed which the community supported. Lighting was increased from 400 watts to 750 watts. However, it did not have the desired effect. The lighting was so bright that the local working girls could be seen from a distance, they began using windows, car mirrors and car windows as mirrors to put make up on and inject drugs. Kerb crawlers could be seen looking for girls from a distance. In fact, steal from motor vehicle offences increased due to the extra visibility and residents began to complain again. Three months later, the residents were suing the council, as they were not sleeping at night. A settlement was reached and blinds costing thousands of dollars were erected in residences to shield the light. This strategy, which had proven to be ineffective previously in another street, was also unsuccessful. The principles of light, going from dark to light were not considered an holistic approach to reduce crime through environmental design was not implemented. This supports Painter’s (1996) research that lighting on its own does not deter or reduce crime but that lighting in conjunction with other crime prevention strategies does.

Council also decided to improve the cleanliness of the streets. This worked for one week, until it became an adhoc approach, whereby council were only attending on certain days and would not approach the area at night due to occupational health and safety issues.

As one can see, it was evident that all the strategies employed in the area had minimal effect on crime. Such short-term strategies enhanced police presence, keeping the community happy with an adhoc approach of government services attempting to reduce the problem. It was evident this approach was not working.

Finally, CPTED and road closures are seen as the light at the end of the tunnel.

**How did we do it?**

As mentioned previously street and alley closures may reduce crime, but the available research cannot determine whether closures will work in specific situations. Interpreting the research findings in the light of the problem analysis may determine such that may be beneficial. However, effectiveness is not the only thing to consider. Street closures are often very controversial and may be strongly opposed (this is generally less true of closing alleys). While some communities have petitioned authorities to close streets, it is more likely that there will be a need to convince a divided community and sceptical city authorities of the likely benefits. In the trial there were several groups which needed persuading: residents, neighbouring communities, essential service providers, local
politicians and officials, and the media and public at large. Do not underestimate the importance of gaining the support of all these groups, or the time and effort this may take. In the case of East Sydney a working party was formed. For road closures and CPTED to be successful, the local Mayor, Member of Parliament, representatives from the community, emergency services, sex industry representatives, health clinic professionals and the sex industry liaison officer for council were present on the committee. The issue of road barriers was raised, and in theory there was support. However further investigation was required in order to convince the local council for a trial of road closures.

The circuit - Areas Where Street Prostitution Exists

Research suggests that street prostitution markets go through stages of development; they emerge, expand, stabilise, and disappear (Pease 1997). Sometimes they emerge by accident, when a few prostitutes happen upon a new location; because of changes in an area's traffic or commercial patterns (e.g., new roadways or new businesses such as adult entertainment establishments); and because police enforcement displaced them. It is important that an area be known for street prostitution so clients will know where to look. Street prostitution is more prevalent in run-down neighbourhoods. However, for street prostitution to thrive, it became apparent that the surrounding neighbourhood should not be too crime-ridden or appear too threatening to potential clients. Neighbourhood redevelopment or gentrification frequently prompted stronger community opposition to street prostitution, and clearly drives much of the pressure on the police to control it. However, if this type of street prostitution was seen as a safe area for the working girls and research supports this theory that street prostitution thrives in areas where it does not conflict with legitimate business, but rather, supports and is supported by that business (Clarke, 1997). The following research of East Sydney found that street prostitution fostered:

• places where sexual transactions can occur - dimly lit parking lots, alleys, and abandoned buildings;
• convenience stores where prostitutes could take a break for a coffee;
• places near a street drug market, so prostitutes and clients can readily buy drugs such as William Street Sydney;
• many routes and laneways offering easy avenues from the police and dangerous clients; and
• roads that allow drivers to slow down or stop, ideally where the driver's side of the vehicle is closest to the kerb.

It was evident from policing intelligence, local knowledge, crime statistics and community feedback that a ‘kerb crawling circuit’ had been formed in East Sydney. It consisted of eight streets, two different circuits. These streets were monitored by police over a month at various times. The ‘circuit’ became effective from about 3pm – 4am each day. Once the streets had been identified, they were presented to the committee. It became apparent that many community members wanted East Sydney to become its own community and completely block most of their streets to rid themselves of crime. Police presented the case for road closures. The streets were then identified for closure. Yurong Lane, St Peters Lane and St Peters Street were earmarked for closure.
The type of barrier
It was decided after many meetings that the trial would be over a six-month period, with an evaluation strategy in place to monitor the crime, displacement and location of prostitutes. There were many different types of barriers that were considered. One must remember that at this stage it was a trial, so no fixed barrier was to be erected. Steel guardrails, planters, posts and chains, removable bollards anchored in sleeves in the road, and other purpose-built barriers were discussed. In the end the most effective barrier were the cement ‘Jersey’ barriers, lifted by crane and put into place. Due to the local school having an increase in traffic in the afternoons, gates were placed at St Peters Street and operated by the local school in the mornings and afternoons, and at all other times the gates remained locked and shut. These gates were also a necessity for emergency services. Forbes Street had a 45-storey building and access would be required in the event of an emergency via St Peters Street, so emergency services had a key to the lockable gates.

Community Consultation
Once the gates were approved local council and police began using various media outlets to inform the community. Signs were erected at the beginning of the streets outlining closure dates. A 1300 phone number was devised which council manned to gather feedback of the road barriers. Various community meetings were held informing local residents of the changes. City of Sydney Council placed ads in local newspapers and visual media was used advertising the changes. One cannot underestimate the community’s involvement in such an important project. Without the community’s help the trial would have failed.

CPTED approach
It was clearly evident that CPTED amongst many other strategies had to be implemented at the right time and place. In order for the road barriers to work effectively a number of crime risk assessments were undertaken. Police and local council conducted community safety audits. This was an important tool to gauge the community’s fear or perception of safety both day and night. The results were not surprising. Most community members felt unsafe to leave their homes at night, hence the streets were left isolated and crime increased. During the day, when the residents were able to walk outside their house they would find syringes, faeces, condoms and other drug paraphernalia on the front doorsteps. The image being created was one of fear and retribution. The audit identified many factors contributing to this problem.

Failure to report crime
Many of the residents would not report crime due to fear of retribution and the perception that police were powerless to act. This was creating a haven for would be criminals to prey on these streets, knowing residents would not report crime. If they did, bricks would be thrown through the windows, houses would be broken into and assaults would occur on the occupier. Hence, police were not being told the full story.

Urban amenities
East Sydney was an affluent suburb, however this was not the impression when walking down the streets. Rubbish, syringes and condoms were found on the street footpath and gutters, graffiti was evident on church walls and stolen vehicles gathered leaves and parking
fines. Overgrown trees, with their roots lifting the footpaths, or tree branches growing over light poles were evident. Abandoned houses marked for development were housing prostitutes and homeless men. Fires in these buildings were common. Street signs were being stolen, so finding one’s way through the suburb was almost impossible. There was no surveillance on the streets because residents were too scared to be outside their houses at night. Lighting was ineffective, some luminare were 400 watts others 750 watts and some were not working at all. Local gardens which were acting as road calming devices were destroyed. In one day alone when the audit was being conducted over six prostitutes were seen ‘waiting’ on a corner with their minder only minutes away. Police observations found most pedestrians were avoiding the area completely with only tourists walking down the street, and then becoming victims of robbery. It was clear that ownership of the area belonged to the prostitutes and criminal element of the community.

Local shops and cafés were not operating due to the criminal element. The local school had given strict instructions to the students on what to do in the case of a prostitute approaching them or in the event of a needle stick injury. This was just a normal day at school for most students. However, criminal behaviour was becoming entrenched in the community. Parking signs and no stopping zones outside schools were being removed, creating a haven for paedophiles to groom their victims. All the streets involved in the trial had access areas from various laneways and other streets, so access was not controlled. This gave the prefect excuse making opportunity for local kerb crawlers. Comments provided to police by kerb crawlers when arrested included: “Sorry officer, I got lost, I was on my way to Oxford Street” or “I wasn’t aware this area had such a reputation”. Such excuses were from men who drove the ‘circuit’ almost 15 times in the spate of 30 minutes looking for a prostitute. With the increase in robberies and drug use in the area, East Sydney was becoming an area to avoid.

The holistic approach
In April 2002 the cement ‘Jersey’ barriers were erected via a crane at the north end of Forbes Street, west end of Yurong Street and gates were erected at St Peters Lane cross of Bourke and Forbes Streets. The community safety audit’s key actions were then put into place. The working party’s plan was to ensure an holistic approach was adopted by the Police and local council.

Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement and Access control
In order to gain ownership of Forbes Street, local council and police devised a plan to encourage people to adopt the public area outside their residence to create a feeling that the community own the semi public and public space, being the two-metre footpath. Council provided the manpower and police provided the education on how to enhance ownership of an area. This resulted in gardens being made (about one metre square). Each house was enlisted to develop a garden which reflected their individuality. Some gardens were bold, others had the country flavour, and some were full of flowers. Plant species were recommended to the owners which created a barrier, were low growing and which were native to the area. Mulching outside their houses had a spin off, not only did it provide moisture to the gardens, but acted as an alarm, if any person was walking toward their house or front door. The sheer noise of walking on crushed mulch at night was similar to the same
effect of a doorbell ringing. Tall tree species gave definition to the street and were planted strategically so as to not interfere with light or provide canopies to would be criminals.

In conjunction with the planting and resurfacing of street footpaths, it was evident that some type of lighting was required. The aim was to encourage people to move about more at night, hence providing capable guardians. This was achieved in a number of ways. To encourage ownership of the street, residents were encouraged to install sensor lighting placed on their front porches. Some residents had already taken the initiative and placed sensor lighting on their front porches. Within months every resident had erected similar lighting. Such lighting also supplemented the street lighting and began to encourage people to use one side of the street which assisted with safety in numbers and guardianship. Next, pedestrian and street scale lighting was repaired and met the Australian Standards in lighting of streets. However, it was evident that other studies such as the Dudley and Stoke on Trent projects indicated that enhanced lighting had some disadvantages. The issues Painter (1996) raised in her evaluation of street lighting were very similar to the issues raised by residents. Increased social activity outside the home after dark would mean residents homes would be vacant and become a target from would be thieves. Increased lighting may lead to residents becoming an obvious victim as to their vulnerability and what they can carry. Finally, enhanced lighting in other streets compared to that of repaired street lighting may cause temporary blindness (using the analogy of going from a well lit room into a dark room). All these issues were considered, and the benefits of lighting in conjunction with other activities outweighed some of the issues. Education campaigns on ‘keeping your house safe’ and ‘walking at night’ were introduced to counteract those problems. A plan of management for lighting the entire area was also introduced.

Prior to the barriers been introduced, it was suggested by Police that a community safety audit be conducted in the area to address a number of concerns. Such audits are designed to incorporate local community members, council and police to walk around the identified area both day and night to identify any issues which reflect the perception of safety. Signage and safe routes for tourists were a major concern. Oxford Street, (being one of the most prominent gay areas in Australia and host to the annual Mardi Gras parade) joined Forbes Street which led into William Street which is the major arterial route for pedestrians and traffic to Kings Cross. This street was also the identified legal area for prostitution. It was evident that poor street signage was confusing and lead to a number of tourists being robbed at night. The audit identified the need to encourage people back into the local streets and use Forbes Street as a main arterial route for pedestrians. All street signs were either replaced or enhanced, so they could easily be read from 20 metres away at night. Maps and brochures were changed to reflect the new route and placed in all backpacking establishments. Local council identified the need for a new campaign called ‘Safe routes’ which encouraged safe areas to walk at night from Oxford Street to adjoin Surry Hills and Kings Cross. Bright red and pink signs were placed on telegraph poles and visual cues included bright markings on footpaths.

As the road barriers were going to be the major physical cue to deter prostitution and kerb crawlers it was important that a plan of management for localised traffic in East Sydney was implemented. Many community groups forwarded their ideal traffic management plan. Some of their ideas reflected those of Jacobs (1965) and her strategy of making the area a
town centre or village and controlling urban development to reflect this. Local council accepted a revised plan which would cut the circuit, encourage local traffic only through the areas and changed some streets to one-way traffic. At the time the Cross City Tunnel was under construction, so road barriers were placed in some areas to control traffic, the diffusion of benefits meant that this assisted the aim to reduce kerb crawling as well. Road calming devices, such as mass planting of shrubs on islands either side of the road reduced speeding and improved the urban landscape. Pedestrian crossings were enhanced in Forbes Street and surrounding streets and two hour parking was introduced during the day to encourage daytime use of the area. These strategies improved natural surveillance and reduced opportunity of theft. Parking patrol officers were also deployed in the area, this assisted with the turn around of vehicles in two hour zones, but also acted as a capable guardian in both day and night. Appendix A outlines Clarke’s (1997) suggested theories and solutions to street based prostitution.

In order to change the profile of east Sydney from the local red light strip to an area of ambiance and community a yearly calendar was developed. A number of community stakeholders became the lead agency, which empowered the local community to take ownership of their area, not just their local street. Food and Wine festivals, the Gay pride and leather show, fresh food markets and local school activates all became part of the local community. To date, all these fairs have been a success encouraging more then 20,000 people to East Sydney on various days and nights (Surry Hills Licencing Accord, 2004).

Another important link was to encourage local businesses back into the area in conjunction with the physical improvements of the local streets. Again, this was not planned at the time, and the diffusion of benefits reaped a number of rewards. Within two years of the barriers being in place two coffee shops had opened in Burton Street opposite Forbes Street. A plant nursery opened its doors on what was one of the busiest intersections for street prostitution in East Sydney. A clothes shop and existing car hire business utilised William lane which lead off Forbes Street. This increased natural supervision each day, in a laneway which, before was used for the buying of drugs and injection of illegal substances.

Police enforcement was an integral part of the road closures for East Sydney. Staff were deployed upon intelligence response policing. This meant that local displacement was catered for and policed proactively. More beat police were seen in the area, which was changing and increasing the perception of safety after dark. Regular random breath testing in local streets occurred on various nights of the week. The sheer presence of flashing lights, police in reflective vests and police officers deterred kerb crawlers from the area and assisted in the community’s perception of policing. Community orientated policing was an essential competent of the road closures and remained an important factor to the success of this strategy. When crime prevention design changes are being made to existing environments, care must be taken to ensure that residents and other legitimate users are consulted in detail about the proposed improvements. Otherwise, changes may be resisted and prove impossible to implement as planned (Clarke, 1997). The community’s satisfaction was reflected in the quarterly community consultation meetings. The community were happy with the increased police presence and the general impression of safety in the area had increased, encouraging them out at night. However, there were some unhappy community members.
Displacement was always going to occur when any strategy was put into place to reduce street based sex work. Hesseling (1994) reviewed the literature on displacement for the Dutch Ministry of Justice. He examined 55 studies in which displacement had been studied. What he found was very revealing. In 22 of the studies, no evidence of displacement was found. In the remaining 33 studies some evidence was found, but the displacement was often relatively small. In no case did the crime displaced elsewhere equal the crime prevented. In addition, researchers are now beginning to find evidence of the reverse of displacement so that focused situational prevention projects have produced wider reductions in crime beyond the direct reach of the prevention measures.

The problem with Sydney, in particularly East and central city was that unlike other areas around the world, there were no areas to accommodate street based sex work, as the laws prohibit this due to schools, residences and local churches. William Street was the ideal legal area, however, territoriality of the working girls and lack of safety for the prostitutes did not allow for any further women to utilise the current space. Western Sydney was too far away, so a longer term strategic plan needed to be devised. This is still currently being discussed. According to anecdotal evidence, the local neighbourhood action group conducted a survey into the number of vehicles that were alien to the street used in the area over a three-day period during summer. A total of 600 vehicles (predominantly kerb crawlers) used this street prior to the road closures. This survey identified unfamiliar cars not known to the local residents in the street, the typical male who had driven around the circuit more than three times was counted. This was significantly reduced in 2003 when a similar study was conducted revealing 30 vehicles which were predominantly local traffic. Over the first three months, the local working girls on Forbes Street dramatically lost business. In conjunction with policing and other CPTED strategies, the kerb crawlers were not entering the streets. According to the local needle exchange organisation, 5-6 prostitutes had moved to the adjoining street, namely Bourke Street, 5-6 had relocated to Canterbury road Western Sydney and 7 had relocated to William Street Sydney. A number of prostitutes could not be contacted or were not seen again. Many residents in Bourke Street began to complain which was expected. However our policing strategy had catered for this, as Bourke Street was an easier and smaller area for police to target, more open and exposed to the public and more active at night. Hence the majority of problems in Forbes Street were not being experienced in Bourke Street.

Crime statistics had revealed a dramatic decline over two years in offences of steal from motor vehicle, break, enter and steal; assaults and drug offences. Over that period of 2002-2004 a number of kerb crawling operations were conducted in the streets of displacement. Undercover police were being used as prostitutes, and when information was exchanged between the driver and the undercover officer, they would be arrested. This received significant media attention, hence reducing the number of kerb crawlers to the area. On an average 30-40 kerb crawlers were prosecuted receiving a criminal conviction and a $500 fine. Police continue to actively patrol this area, as they did two years ago. Street based sex work does continue however, in smaller numbers which in turn reduces the offences listed above and generic policing has resulted in the community policing themselves.
Evaluation
When compiling the statistics for this project the following were useful measures of the effectiveness of responses to street prostitution:
Quantitative
• Total reported crime in target areas compared to control areas (keeping in mind that changes may be due to other factors and reported crime does not always correlate with actual crime).
• Number of citizen complaints about street prostitution;
• Number of prostitutes visible on the streets at particular times;
• Arrests of repeat offenders (both prostitutes and clients);
• Volume of discarded condoms, syringes and other prostitution-related paraphernalia.

Qualitative
• Traffic congestion in areas where curb-crawling is a problem;

Preliminary Results of the Community Safety Mapping Project
Prior to the road barriers being installed the command surveyed 603 respondents who agreed to be interviewed. Of those respondents 372 (62%) stated they felt unsafe in the Kings Cross Local Area Command. The distribution of the areas where those respondents felt unsafe very closely aligns with the distribution of reported crime in the command. The top ten reasons for feeling unsafe in Kings Cross are listed in table 1.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junkies/Homeless</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prostitutes</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>(13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spruikers/Intoxicated persons</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
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<td>Dark Laneways</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
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<td>Vulnerabilities</td>
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<td>(6%)</td>
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<td>Intimidation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
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<td>Lighting</td>
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<td>(5%)</td>
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<td>Lack of Cleanliness</td>
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<td>(5%)</td>
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<td>Laneways</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 1: Top ten responses to those respondents that felt unsafe. Total respondents 372. Of those 603 respondents 231 (38%) stated they felt safe in the Kings Cross area. The distribution of those locations where respondents felt safe was very different to the distribution of reported crime. The two key areas nominated by respondents are located on the southern side of William Street that is about 70 metres from the adult entertainment strip. Unsafe areas included Forbes Street East Sydney and surrounding laneways.
Reasons for feeling safe 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved areas</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>(19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>(17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetscape</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>(13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrification</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>(12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved services</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of public space</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression of crime</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease in drugs/prostitutes/homeless</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour of locals</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved behaviour</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Top ten responses to those respondents that felt safe. Total respondents 231. The top ten reasons listed for respondents feeling safe are dominated by improvements in local government services and are a strong message the community is appreciating the benefits of City of Sydney’s cleanliness strategies.

The development of such a system allowed police to take regular ‘snapshots’ of the Command. The aim is that by the end of the year to have a robust data collection system based on palm pilots that any community group could use that allows collected data to be seamlessly downloaded and easily analysed (Darcy, 2003).

Success and Failures
Due to the involvement of the crime prevention officer and the collaboration of many community services the road closures were extensively researched. However, like most things, there were a number of successes and failures. The most outstanding success was the improved community cohesion, reduced prostitution in the nominated areas and a significant reduction in crime. Having the local council work closely with police and other relevant stakeholders assisted in the success. The increase in reported crime was significant. The local courts also began imposing curfews on prostitutes. Curfews were imposed on prostitutes as a condition of either bail or probation. The purpose was to deny prostitutes the opportunity to work during the hours of peak demand. This has a degree of success, but most working girls moved down the street creating further issues.

Another success was that many of the existing laneways became beautified by residents reclaiming their streets, some with council permission erected heritage style gates which were never locked, but acted as a physical barrier. These laneways now look more inviting and the surveillance and guardianship has increased. Children now play in the laneways and council does not need to clean the gutters as residents have taken over this role.

Some of the failures included not reforming the Street Prostitution Working Party which was disbanded prior to the road barriers being trialed. This was a successful committee
consisting of community members, police and local council which looked at short – long term strategies for street based prostitution. Due to the other community action groups and various stakeholders on this project, it was impossible at the time to reform the group. In hindsight it would have assisted in the long-term strategy for the area. At present this group is in the process of being reformed. Community members were publicly protesting against prostitutes or clients. There was, however, direct community activism in the form of organised marches, rallies and confrontations with prostitutes on the streets. The aim was to effectively disrupt and move street prostitution. This response was intended to intimidate prostitutes and clients, and to demonstrate the community's resolve against street prostitution. However, such rallies resulted in assaults by residents and by prostitutes. The area was only made more volatile. There were instances where local police viewed this project as another attempt to solve the problem. Their lack of knowledge and participation in patrolling the area did not help with the project. If more time permitted, an entire strategic plan regarding CPTED incorporating Kings Cross, East Sydney and Woolloomooloo would have been useful when developing key outcomes for crime reduction.

Where to from here?
Once the trial was complete, further consultations between various groups were held. The outcome was that the new barrier would be a ‘bollard’ type system. Low-level shrubs, lighting, signage and extra parking was created and the bollards were installed. However, many residents had seen road closures as the key to reducing crime, hence many other streets have been put forward to be closed. It is important to take a step back, look at your success, but also remember not to turn an area into a plethora of one way streets that go no where. Long-term strategies require planning and support from all stakeholders. The reintroduction of the Street prostitution working party is on the agenda with local council. There have been discussions looking at relocating some of the street based work to safer areas or off the street completely. The most important factor is to observe what is happening in other countries, learn from their mistakes and use their successful strategies, incorporating them into local practice.

In Summary
Since the implementation of the road barriers, there has been a significant reduction in crime, improved community cohesion and the physical changes through CPTED has changed East Sydney historically. It is important to remember that if the perceived difficulty, risks and rewards of crime are altered then there will be a reduction in crime. CPTED has been the catalyst for the change in the environment within East Sydney. Whether it has been incidental in the diffusion of benefits or intentional, it could not have worked in isolation. CPTED and prostitution is only one element in the armour of situational crime reduction, however it does require consideration when looking at imaginative and innovative ways in a crime reduction strategy.

Acknowledgements
I am particularly grateful to Superintendent Dave Darcy for his management, support and innovative ideas when developing this strategy. I am also grateful to the City of Sydney council Lord Mayor Clover Moore, for her support and councils financial assistance. In
particular Andrew Miles, the sex industry liaison officer who coordinated the complaints and evaluation of this project. Sue Pyneburg, business manager for SCEGGS school Darlingtonhurst and the local community of their support and dedication to revitalising East Sydney.

Appendix A
Understanding Your Local Problem by Ronald V Clarke (1997)
The information provided above is only a generalised description of street prostitution. You must combine the basic facts with a more specific understanding of your local problem. Analysing the local problem carefully will help you design a more effective response strategy.

Asking the Right Questions
The following are some critical questions you should ask in analysing your particular problem of street prostitution, even if the answers are not always readily available. Your answers to these and other questions will help you choose the most appropriate set of responses later on.

Police and Community Members
• How concerned is the police department about street prostitution? How concerned is the community? What groups are particularly concerned and why? What specific concerns are expressed?
• How organised and active are community members who oppose street prostitution? What level of street prostitution are they willing to tolerate?

Street Prostitutes
• Does street prostitution take only one form (e.g., female prostitutes and male clients), or are there several different forms (e.g., homosexual or transvestite prostitution)?
• What is known about the prostitutes (e.g., age, gender, race, criminal history, social service history, substance abuse history, residence)?
• Do street prostitutes commit crimes against clients (e.g., robbery or theft)? Are street prostitutes the victims of crime?

Environment
• Does street prostitution take place in more than one area? What conditions make the area(s) attractive for street prostitution? If street prostitution occurs in several areas, how are they similar and different?
• What area businesses are harmed by the presence of street prostitution?
• What area businesses support and/or benefit from street prostitution?

Current Response
• What is the police department's current policy in dealing with street prostitution? What is the prosecutor's current policy regarding prostitution-related offences? What are the typical sentences handed out to those who are convicted?
Do the prostitutes and clients complete those sentences?
What effect, if any, does the imposition of a sentence have on subsequent involvement in prostitution?

- What responses do police officers’ use, other than arrest and prosecution? Are any of these responses especially effective?
- What social, health and substance abuse treatment services are available to assist prostitutes? Are prostitutes using available services?

**Deterring Prostitutes and Clients**

1. Enforcing laws prohibiting soliciting, patronizing and loitering for the purposes of prostitution. The main strategy police use to control street prostitution is enforcing laws prohibiting soliciting, patronizing and loitering for the purposes of prostitution. Street prostitutes can be valuable informants to police about other crimes, and the threat of enforcement gives the police leverage for information. In some jurisdictions, controlling street prostitution is left to the vice squad. Limiting patrol officers’ involvement is intended to reduce corruption, but it can give the public the impression that only corrupt officers would ignore the problem. Historically, the police have arrested far more prostitutes than clients, although some police agencies have shifted toward a more balanced enforcement strategy, targeting clients as well as prostitutes. To promote a consistent response and improve the chances for successful prosecutions, police agencies should prepare written guidelines to govern how and under what circumstances they will enforce prostitution laws. Enforcement strategies are expensive; each arrest costs thousands of dollars to process. By themselves, they are ineffective at either controlling street prostitution or protecting prostitutes from harm. Increased police enforcement temporarily reduces the number of prostitutes on the street, but they usually reappear in new areas. This may actually increase street prostitution if the police follow it up with more permanent strategies. It can also create the perception that the area is unsafe.

2. Establishing a highly visible police presence. A highly visible police presence, typically with extra uniformed officers, is intended to discourage area street prostitution. Extra police presence is expensive, of course, and is effective only if the police follow it up with more permanent strategies. It can also create the perception that the area is unsafe.

3. Relaxing the regulation of indoor prostitution venues. Whether changes in enforcement levels against indoor prostitution venues (e.g., massage parlours, call girls, bar girls, and escort services) will affect street prostitution depends on how easily prostitutes can move back and forth between the streets and indoors. The conventional wisdom is that there is little movement between them. Relaxing the regulation of indoor prostitution may be perceived as condoning prostitution.

4. Enhancing fines/penalties for prostitution-related offences committed within specified high-activity zones. Some communities have enhanced penalties for
prostitution-related offences committed within specific geographic areas. These penalty enhancements are intended to move the street prostitution market to other locations so the target area can be redeveloped. You should be careful that the problem is not displaced to areas where the impact will be even worse.

5. Banning prostitutes or clients from geographic areas. Many courts order prostitutes and clients to stay out of specifically defined areas where street prostitution is prevalent, as a condition of either bail or probation. This practice is commonly referred to as "mapping" offenders out of areas. This practice may, however, displace prostitutes to more remote areas outside the prohibited zone, areas which may prove more hazardous to the prostitutes.

**Changing the Environment**

Closing streets and alleys, diverting traffic or regulating parking. Traffic flow and patterns influence potential clients' perceptions about their chances of negotiating a transaction and their risks of getting caught. Traffic-related factors are especially significant where sex acts take place in vehicles. Many clients stop to solicit prostitutes while on their way somewhere else—commonly to or home from work. Responses that make it more difficult or risky for clients to negotiate a transaction will either discourage them from soliciting street prostitutes or encourage them to seek prostitutes in indoor venues. Under some circumstances, the traffic changes may lock the problem into an area rather than force it out. You should also be careful that any traffic changes do not cause undue harm to legitimate commerce in the area.

Securing abandoned buildings. Street prostitutes and clients sometimes use abandoned buildings for sexual transactions. If demolishing or rehabilitating the buildings is not feasible, securing them can help reduce street prostitution and other offences in the area.

Enhancing lighting. Improved lighting reduces the attractiveness of certain areas for street prostitution because it reduces the level of privacy prostitutes and clients seek to negotiate and complete their transactions. Motion-sensitive lighting is useful for secluded areas like alleys and doorways.
Photos of the redevelopment

The kerb crawling circuit

The trial period for road barriers. Concrete blocks were used as a temporary measure.
New road barriers.
Versatile road barriers. Opened and closed during school hours to reduce traffic congestion.
Road plantings and parking signage assisted with traffic flow and natural surveillance of the area.

Angled and two hour parking
Speed humps and improved pedestrian crossings to channel people to and from the school.

Incorporating the syringe exchange service which manages the problem instead of moving it.
Lighting and CCTV assisted in improving the perception of safety in adjacent laneways.

The removal of brick fencing and replacing with dark palisade assisted with natural surveillance, reduce graffiti and enhanced the perception of safety day and night.
Gated Laneways – Private use of public space

Neighbourhood Shops

Plant Nursery – taking ownership of public space. This area was a regular area ‘hotspot’ for prostitutes during the day.
Outdoor dining improves surveillance on streets day and night. This corner was well known for street based prostitution.

Alfresco dining late into the evening. This area was the congregation point for prostitutes prior to the redevelopment.
Condition of footpaths and vegetation prior to the redevelopment

Individual Initiatives as a measure of Territorial Re-inforcement
Residents taking ownership of public space

Improved sightlines and resurfacing of footpaths
Improved access control to local school. Incorporation of palisade fencing to improve surveillance.

Proactive Policing Patrols and signage enforced the road barriers objectives.
Local Police and rangers enforcing the streets
Reference List


