Reviewer's report

Title: Environmental interventions to reduce fear of crime: Systematic review of effectiveness

Version: 2 Date: 4 January 2013

Reviewer: Mai Stafford

Reviewer's report:

I found this article to be very well written, clear in its description of the work that was undertaken and thorough in including all the information needed for the reader to replicate the work. This is a well conducted study which provides important new information likely to be of interest to an international audience from a variety of disciplines.

Minor essential revisions

The background section refers to reducing inequalities. I would like to see 1-2 added sentences which expand on what is meant by inequalities here.

Typo “on” appears twice on page 3: “impact on on upstream determinants….”

The discussion refers to evidence from Categ 5 versus Categ 7. First, did the authors mean Categ 4 (Multi-component interventions for crime prevention”) here rather than Categ 5? This section points out that crime-led interventions may in fact have unintended consequences that increase fear of crime and refer to two other pieces of literature that show aspects of the built environment may be protective. Those cited studies don’t appear to relate to possible increases of fear of crime post-intervention though, so don’t very clearly relate to the stated hypothesis. Did the authors have any suggested explanations for this hypothesis?

I couldn’t find reference to Appendix table 5.

Discretionary revisions

The 7 categories into which interventions were grouped is mentioned on page 4 but in more detail in the results section so it may be clearer to signpost that, or remove the last line on page 4.

Have the authors considered updating the search beyond Jan 2011?

Have the authors considered including the effect sizes, where available, in Table 1?

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests