

Safeguarding our spaces: integrating hostile vehicle mitigation in the public realm

A perspective paper from
Marshall's Landscaping





Foreword

Hostile vehicle mitigation (HVM) is an increasingly valued measure to protect the public realm. From deterring ram raiders to stopping terrorists in their tracks, it is a vital tool in the public safety portfolio.

In the UK, the latest Government guidance around the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – also known as Martyn's Law – has further focused attention on how HVM can either completely prevent a hostile vehicle incident or significantly reduce its risk.

HVM is designed first and foremost to protect people, but it should not be considered in isolation. At Marshall's Landscaping, we believe protection should be designed as part of a complete public realm system – alongside surfaces, movement, street furniture and user experience. The best schemes deliver safety and security while also supporting what makes public spaces successful, whether that is a multi-use destination combining restaurants and retail, a town square, a university campus, a sports stadium or a concert arena.

Public spaces matter because of the experiences and memories people create in them. They succeed when they encourage people to gather, dwell, connect and navigate with confidence. Martyn's Law is named after Martyn Hett, one of the 22 people killed in the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017. The legislation aims to help ensure that people can go to concerts or meet loved ones in public spaces with confidence that the relevant authorities have taken appropriate steps to make those spaces safe.

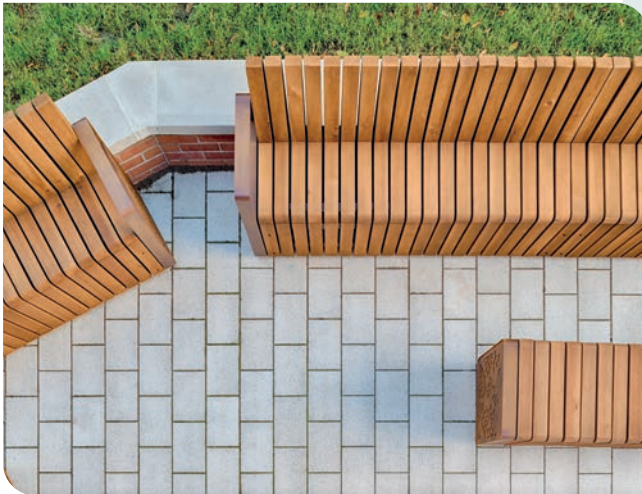
Security should support the experience of a place, not dominate it. When HVM is considered too late, it can become visually intrusive and disconnected from the wider landscape. The opportunity is to design protection as one part of a successful place – safeguarding people while preserving, and where possible, enhancing the identity, functionality and experience of the public realm.

**By Paul Haggerty, National Business Development Manager
and Protective Street Furniture Specialist, Marshall's Landscaping**

Why HVM matters

The deployment of hostile vehicle mitigation has grown in recent years, in response to terrorist attacks using vehicles such as at Glasgow Airport in 2007 and on London Bridge 10 years later. For the authorities responsible for critical infrastructure and public spaces, HVM is already an established part of their remit.

However, the advent of Martyn's Law means that HVM is now also on the agenda for the owners and operators of visitor attractions from conference and concert venues to sports stadia and museums. In some cases, these places are looking at HVM for the first time.



Making the right calls on HVM

- There is no “one size fits all” approach – assess each space accordingly
- A thorough risk assessment will inform a proportionate response
- Police counterterrorism security advisers (CTSAs) and qualified security consultants can accurately assess risk
- If the CTSA or consultant deems the threat low to medium, HVM might not be needed
- If the CTSA finds the threat is medium to high, HVM or other physical measures both appropriate and proportionate are likely to be required
- Remember: HVM is only part of the public safety measures mix mandated by Martyn's Law

Start preparing now

Those in charge of public buildings, parks and university campuses might already be familiar with HVM standards, processes and procurement. However, others might be new to HVM and are looking at it ahead of the impending implementation of Martyn's Law. In both cases, the best time to start thinking about HVM is now.

HVM at a glance

Early HVM was sometimes untested and unproven. Modern HVM, however, is manufactured to high standards and subject to extensive crash testing. Security specialists can advise on the level and location of protection required, while landscape architects, urban designers, specifiers, engineers, manufacturers and contractors determine how that protection can be integrated into the wider public realm.

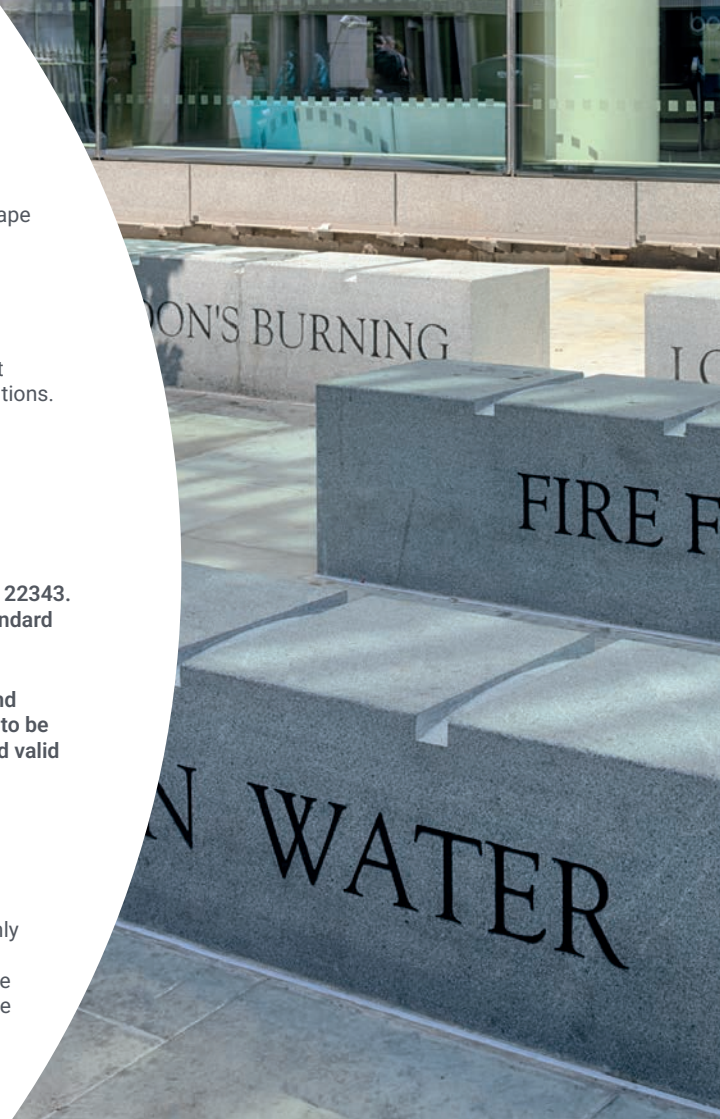
As projects become more complex, organisations increasingly need both security expertise and landscape design and engineering expertise. Marshalls Design & Engineering (MaDE) helps project teams make better decisions earlier in the project lifecycle, combining creative thinking with technical rigour to develop buildable solutions.

What standards should HVM meet?

Standards for HVM were introduced in 2007 and continue to evolve.

- Extensive crash testing covers various vehicle types, all travelling at different speeds
- The benchmark global standard is ISO 22343. This replaces IWA 14 international standard and PAS 68 UK standard
- CTSA's and consultants will recommend HVM from a list of approved products
- However, products tested to IWA 14 and PAS 68 before March 2024 don't need to be retested – these will still be considered valid
- Look for products with Secured by Design approval from the Police Crime Prevention Scheme
- Most manufacturers are focused on meeting these standards, not on aesthetics

Protecting the people who use public spaces must be a priority. But protection is only one requirement of a successful project. Schemes also need to support movement, accessibility, identity, usability and the way people experience a place. The challenge is therefore not simply how to make HVM less visually intrusive, but how to integrate protection so that it contributes to a place that works as a complete system.





Getting HVM right

While the principles of good design are clear, delivery remains challenging. Local authorities continue to face a number of significant barriers.

Integrated by design

Good HVM is considered as part of the wider landscape system; the best solutions support the design and experience of the place

High protection

Benches and planters are still crash tested and compliant with the same standards

Sensitive retrofit

For existing public spaces, protective street furniture can introduce proportionate protection while respecting the established identity and use of the place

Placemaking integration

For new spaces, protective street furniture can be integrated with surfaces, movement, drainage, planting and other street furniture from the outset

Active travel

Protective street furniture can support active travel schemes

Crowd and traffic flow

You can also conceal HVM within crowd and traffic flow measures

The deployment of HVM is only likely to increase in the coming years. It is therefore important that everyone involved in shaping public space – including landscape architects, urban designers, specifiers, engineers, security consultants, manufacturers, contractors and town planners – understands how to design, specify and deliver it. Security specialists may identify the risk and protection requirement, but the wider project team determines how that protection is integrated into a successful public realm system. The end goal is proportionate protection that works technically, visually and operationally over the life of the place.

Marshall's Landscaping has pulled together five priorities to help industry professionals...

PRIORITY

01

Get ready for Martyn's Law

Martyn's Law is not simply about compliance. It is about creating safer environments for the people who use them every day. As an industry, we have an opportunity to rethink how security is approached within public realm design – making it more integrated, more intelligent and less intrusive.

Preparing for Martyn's Law:

- Identify areas that need additional HVM for compliance
- Work with experts to create HVM checklists for each space
- Build HVM requirements into your processes
- Encourage early-stage thinking about HVM in upcoming projects
- Consider how protection can be integrated with placemaking, movement, street furniture and the wider landscape design

Marshalls' Perspective

For many in the built environment, Martyn's Law still feels like something on the horizon, but with the government now setting out statutory guidance, it's becoming clearer how the legislation will eventually shape how public spaces are designed, managed and protected.

But the reality is this: the projects being designed today are the projects that will need to comply tomorrow.

That means landscape architects, urban designers, specifiers, engineers, security advisers, manufacturers and contractors should already be thinking about how security measures are integrated into schemes – not as an afterthought, but as part of the design conversation from the very beginning. Successful public realm schemes must balance protection, usability, maintenance, whole-life value and long-term stewardship.

Because when security is introduced too late in a project, it almost always becomes more expensive, more disruptive and more visually intrusive.

PRIORITY 02

Integrate HVM into placemaking and landscape design

Stop thinking about HVM as an added extra. Public spaces succeed when they encourage people to gather, dwell, connect and navigate with confidence, so security should support the experience of a place rather than dominate it. For new or substantially redesigned spaces, early consideration creates the greatest opportunity to integrate protection naturally into the landscape through protective street furniture and other coordinated measures.

For retrofit projects, protective street furniture can help introduce the required protection while respecting how an established place looks, feels and functions. Rather than simply replacing visually intrusive bollards or barriers with something more attractive, the aim should be to select measures that contribute positively to the experience, identity and functionality of the place.

- Public spaces are cherished places
– let's keep them that way
- Protective street furniture can contribute positively to the identity, usability and experience of a place
- Retrofit protection in a way that respects the existing character, movement and use of the place
- Integrate HVM with surfaces, movement, drainage and street furniture during the design phase for new sites
- Bring landscape, security, engineering, manufacturing and delivery stakeholders together early

Marshall's Perspective

One of the biggest misconceptions around HVM is that it sits separately from placemaking and public realm design. In fact, protection should be considered as one layer within the complete landscape system - alongside the surfaces people walk on, the routes they take, the places they pause, the street furniture they use and the drainage and planting that help the place function.

The most successful schemes start with people and place, then integrate proportionate protection around how the space needs to work. Good security should support movement, gathering, dwelling and connection, rather than dictating the character of the public realm.

When that integration does not happen early, teams can be left retrofitting visible security infrastructure into spaces that were never designed to accommodate it – limiting design choice and compromising movement, usability, maintenance and the overall experience of the place.

PRIORITY

03

Consider multi-purpose HVM

Protective street furniture should not simply minimise the visual impact of security infrastructure. At its best, it contributes positively to the experience, identity and functionality of a place. Its multi-purpose capabilities can reduce duplication and clutter while supporting other public realm objectives such as seating, planting, active travel, pedestrian movement, crowd management and traffic flow.

This integrated approach can also improve whole-life value. A concrete planter can contribute planting and identity to a street scene while being rated to stop a 7.5t truck; a bench can support rest and social interaction while also protecting the public. The objective is not simply to disguise security, but to make every element work harder as part of a coherent landscape system.

- Protective street furniture can support active travel
- It can also support crowd control and traffic flow
- Smarter design can mitigate the additional costs of HVM
- This can also avoid making public spaces feel cluttered
- Fully integrated HVM can enhance the public space it protects

Marshall's Perspective

The challenge for the industry is to balance protection with usability, accessibility, identity, maintenance and the long-term experience of public places.

We've seen a major evolution in HVM over the last decade. Today, protective street furniture can form part of the wider design language of a project, integrating seamlessly into landscapes and urban environments.

The goal should be to create protection that feels like a natural part of the place. That requires thoughtful landscape design and engineering, with security considered alongside the other systems and functions that make public spaces successful.

Too often, security considerations arrive after planning, after layouts have been signed off, or when installation constraints already exist.

By that stage, options become limited. On the other hand, early engagement creates flexibility. It gives project teams the opportunity to integrate protection naturally into the scheme, rather than forcing it in later.

PRIORITY

04

Collaborate earlier for better outcomes

Successful HVM is rarely the result of one discipline working alone. The strongest outcomes come when landscape architects, urban designers, specifiers, engineers, security advisers, manufacturers, contractors, clients and operators collaborate before key design decisions become fixed.

Security advisers can help establish the risk and protection requirement, while the wider project team brings the expertise needed to integrate that protection into the landscape. Manufacturers and design specialists can contribute product, engineering and buildability knowledge as part of that collaborative process. Earlier collaboration creates more opportunity to consider protection, movement, aesthetics, drainage, buildability, maintenance and cost together. It also gives teams greater freedom to develop protective street furniture and other measures as an integral part of the public realm rather than forcing them into a scheme later.

Opening up multidisciplinary discussions early can streamline design and specification, enhance compliance and reduce costly rework later. This approach can bring the following benefits:

- Brings more flexibility to the project
- Ensures HVM is integral to the design
- Creates better integration between protection, placemaking and the wider landscape system
- Enhances compliance
- Avoids costly rework and delays later

Marshall's Perspective

The introduction of Martyn's Law is going to raise awareness and accountability of public safety across the industry.

Clients, local authorities and site operators will increasingly need to demonstrate they have considered risk and implemented proportionate protective measures. That doesn't just affect security consultants; it affects everyone involved in shaping public space.

And with that comes greater scrutiny around specification, compliance and accreditation.

It is no longer enough to simply install a product that looks secure. Specifiers and project teams need confidence that systems have been properly tested, accredited and engineered for the environments in which they will be used. They also need to understand how those systems interact with the wider public realm. That is why early engagement between landscape architects, urban designers, engineers, security advisers, manufacturers, contractors and specialist design teams matters so much.

PRIORITY

05

Design & Engineering expertise

Integrated public realm design requires more than product selection. It requires access to specialist design and engineering expertise that can help the wider project team understand constraints, coordinate systems and turn ambitious ideas into buildable, sustainable and commercially viable places.

The strongest project partners provide access to designers, engineers and digital specialists who can work alongside landscape architects, specifiers, contractors and security advisers. Their role is to help shape design, engineering and specification decisions early, when there is still flexibility to improve outcomes.

This specialist design and engineering support can help shape schemes, solve challenges before they arise and identify opportunities to create public spaces that are safe, welcoming, buildable and resilient over the long term.

- Look for access to specialist design and engineering expertise
- Engage design and engineering specialists early in the project lifecycle
- Look for partners who can understand and coordinate the complete landscape system
- Build confidence through tested, engineered and integrated solutions
- Create safe, successful places that balance protection, usability and long-term value

Marshall's Perspective

Marshall's Design & Engineering (MaDE) brings together Marshall's Landscaping's design and engineering expertise under one banner. Working as an extension of the project team, MaDE combines creative thinking with technical rigour across the wider landscape system, helping landscape architects, specifiers, engineers, contractors and security stakeholders make better decisions earlier in a project's lifecycle.

Creating successful public spaces requires decisions that balance protection, performance, usability, maintenance, whole-life value and long-term stewardship. By engaging MaDE early, project teams gain access to trusted specialists who can help integrate HVM with surfaces, movement, drainage and street furniture to create lasting benefits for communities.

The MaDE team works to create resilient, practical and future-ready public spaces, supported by trusted technical expertise and long-term thinking.

Your HVM journey checklist

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- ✔ Understand and prioritise the risks facing each public space
 - ✔ Use Police CTSAs and qualified security consultants to establish the appropriate risk assessment and proportionate protection requirement
 - ✔ Ensure that all HVM meets the relevant standards such as ISO 22343
 - ✔ Treat protection as part of the complete public realm system, not as a standalone product decision
 - ✔ Use protective street furniture to contribute positively to placemaking, usability and identity, including on retrofit projects
 - ✔ Coordinate HVM with surfaces, movement, drainage, planting and street furniture from the earliest design stages
 - ✔ Bring landscape architects, urban designers, specifiers, engineers, security advisers, manufacturers and contractors together early
 - ✔ Consider how protective measures can support multiple functions, including seating, planting, movement, active travel and crowd management
 - ✔ Consider maintenance, adaptability, whole-life value and long-term stewardship
 - ✔ Use specialist design and engineering expertise to turn the protection strategy into an integrated, buildable solution

The future of HVM

HVM is a rapidly evolving sector.

The opportunity for the industry is not simply to develop protective products that have less visual impact, but to design protection as part of more successful public spaces. Protective street furniture can contribute to the way a place looks, works and feels while safeguarding the people who use it.

The ability to specify an HVM-compliant bench or planter with the same design language and functionality as standard street furniture opens up wider placemaking opportunities. When protection is coordinated with other materials and placemaking features, the public realm can, and should, work as a connected system rather than a collection of separate products.

Maximising those benefits requires more than choosing products from a single source. It requires early collaboration between security specialists and the wider project team, supported by landscape design and engineering expertise. Through MaDE, Marshalls can help teams integrate protection into the complete landscape system – creating places that are safe, welcoming, buildable and designed for long-term stewardship.

What is the biggest challenge in creating safer, more successful public spaces?



Share your thoughts in
our quick 10-second poll
Scan and have your say

Delivering safer, future-ready streets starts here

Get in touch with Paul Haggerty, National Business Development Manager and Protective Street Furniture Specialist, to learn more and find the right solution for your scheme.

T: 07817 848270

E: paul.haggerty@marshalls.co.uk

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