

crime and antisocial behavior issues. The designers proposed a system of very visible young “guides” in bright T-shirts, who help people find their way through the area and who are also approachable when help is needed. This proposal makes perfect sense: research has shown that people do not approach officials for help unless these officials are approachable for other, low-threshold questions too. These bright and cheery Info people create a more caring social environment, a stark contrast to the huge private-security men in black who lurk, Death Eater–like, in every corner. In fact, the introduction of these security personnel has, paradoxically, been a major contribution to the grim atmosphere of the area.

CASE 9

Save us from the bollards:

On safety in a public space

Circular Quay, in the middle of Sydney, is a truly spectacular site. The beautiful views of the harbor are framed by the iconic Harbour Bridge on one side, and the Sydney Opera House at the other side. It is a picture-perfect destination for millions of visitors every year. Unfortunately, these very qualities also make Circular Quay a high-profile site, and as such an attractive target for a possible terrorist attack. The DOC designers were asked to come up with proposals for averting such an attack, or minimizing the damage if an attack occurred. Initial investigations showed that it would be important to limit car access to certain areas of the site. The police counterterrorism experts, very much aware of this need, were on the verge of proposing the placement of dozens of massive bollards to achieve this end. But they also realized that bollards would all but ruin the site and make life very difficult for locals and visitors alike. To get beyond the yes-or-no-bollards discussion, the DOC designers knew the problem needed to be widened to include many more complex issues and a whole network of stakeholders. And there was no shortage of problems with the area that could be addressed in concert with the counterterrorism question. Apart from the uniquely wonderful setting, the public spaces around Circular Quay were actually not that great—just some large open squares with nothing much to do. The DOC designers seized the opportunity, and proposed a complete