

versus personal and collective responsibilities. Returning to Jane Jacob's (1961: 39) assertion that society acts together to establish and police norms of behaviour, and in doing so controls what she described as 'street barbarism', the question arises, are such zones any more than the codification of these rules in areas where the voluntary controls have broken down? Are they therefore a delimitation of person freedoms, or simply a statement of the freedom of others to use public space in a manner that reflects societal norms?

In this regard, Ellickson (1996) has argued persuasively that if users of public space are not able to enjoy a basic minimum level of decorum in public spaces, then they will be all the more likely to flee to the privatised world of suburban shopping malls, gated enclaves or the internet. He makes the seemingly controversial argument that to avoid this, those who transgress societal norms should be confined to zones set aside for their use – in other words the skid row model of social control. In fact, as Kohn (2004: 169) contends, this is no more than codifying what already happens in many cities where the homeless and other 'undesirables' are tolerated in some areas – red light districts and the like – but herded out of others, including shopping and commercial districts. Davies (1992: 232–3), points to the danger of such a strategy, arguing that the no-go environments that result merely exacerbate rather than solve the problems, with the resulting problems inevitably spilling over into surrounding urban areas.

Carr *et al.* (1992: 152) argue that freedom with responsibility necessitates 'the ability to carry out the activities that one desires, to use a place as one wishes but with the recognition that a public space is a shared space'. The question of management, and what is appropriate and what is not, is therefore a matter of local judgment and negotiation. Lynch and Carr (1991: 415) establish that this involves:

- distinguishing between 'harmful' and 'harmless' activities, controlling the former without constraining the latter;
- increasing general tolerance towards free use, while stabilising a broad consensus around what is permissible;
- separating – in time and space – the activities of those groups with a low tolerance for each other;
- providing 'marginal places' where extremely free behaviour can go on with little damage.

#### HARD AND SOFT CONTROLS

Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee (1998: 183–5) identify two basic options, hard or soft controls. Hard controls are active and use a variety of private security, CCTV systems, and regulations; the latter either prohibiting certain activities or allowing them subject to control (permits, scheduling



3.18 Hard controls

or leasing). Soft controls are passive, using a range of symbolic restrictions that passively discourage undesirable activities or make others impossible through removing opportunities. Much of the concern in the literature over a perceived loss of freedom and a resulting change in character of public space relates to a view that the former set of controls are increasingly being favoured over the latter by those with responsibility for managing public space – both public and private (Figure 3.18).

Fyfe and Bannister (in Fyfe 1998: 256), for example, point out that:

Responses to the fortress impulse in urban design, and the broader 'surveillance society' of which it is a part, range from optimism at the discovery of potential technological fixes to chronic urban problems, to despair at the creation of an Orwellian dystopia. Laying between these extremes, however, is a middle ground characterised by a profound ambivalence about the impact of increased surveillance.

They quote Ellin (1996: 153) who argues that while gates, private policing and CCTV will contribute to give some people a sense of greater security, for others, they will simply raise the levels of paranoia and distrust that they feel.

Extensive research in the UK reveals that the actual impact of CCTV on reducing crime is in fact very low, whilst the popularity of such systems grows at a seemingly exponential rate (Welsh and Farrington 2002). In such a context, Fyfe and Bannister (in Fyfe 1998: 265) conclude that: