Streatham attack could have been prevented, inquest jury concludes

From tAt an unusually grave briefing at 6am on 1 February in Mitcham police station the surveillance team were told to expect Amman to attack. The usually "bubbly" officer in charge was uncharacteristically serious, colleagues recalled. He told them to "stay safe" and warned that he had a "funny feeling" about Amman.

The Streatham attack had striking similarities to the deadly Fishmongers' Hall attack carried out by Usman Khan, 28, just nine weeks earlier. Like Khan, Amman, 20, carried out his attack after being released on licence for earlier terrorist offences.

Both had a fascination with waging jihad and were both radicalised further by fellow convicted terrorist in Belmarsh high security prison. Khan had discussed Islam with the killer of Lee Rigby and sought out the hate preacher Abu Hamza while in prison. Amman expressed regret that he had not been involved in the fusillier's murder and mixed with the brother of the Manchester Arena bomber.

Both Khan and Amman were regarded as highly dangerous, but were still automatically released despite intelligence that they were likely to carry out an attack. Both used knives while wearing fake suicide belts in their attacks.

The crucial difference was that Khan was allowed to go to Fishmongers' Hall unattended, leaving only conference delegates, at a prisoner rehabilitation event, to resist his killing spree on 29 November 2019

Amman was under much closer watch when he was released from

Belmarsh on 23 January 2020 into a probation hostel in Streatham. What is less clear is why he had been released at all. MI5 and the police had both wanted him to be kept in prison for longer because intelligence showed he maintained an extremist mindset and wanted to carry out a knife attack.

One of the nine surveillance officers tracking Amman saw him enter a hardware store on Streatham High Road and warned colleagues over the radio that the shop sold knives. Amman dashed out of the shop with a stolen knife before any of the officers could investigate.

His attack began almost immediately. “He’s stabbing people,” another of the surveillance officers told colleagues over the radio. A man and woman were badly injured. Just 62 seconds after stealing the knife, Amman was shot dead by surveillance officers at close range.