

Introduction

In 2010, I undertook a Study Tour to the UK to investigate shared spaces. The Study Tour was part funded by the Institute of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ) Transportation Group Study Award. The findings of the Study Tour are being used to create a Best Practice Guidance Note with regard to the implementation of Shared Spaces in New Zealand. A summary of the main findings are illustrated in this poster.



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In addition to the funds received from the IPENZ Transportation Group, this tour was only possible due to the generosity of the UK practitioners who gave their time and shared their knowledge and experiences. I therefore would like to express my sincere thank you to the IPENZ Transportation Group and everyone else involved.

Shared Spaces in the UK

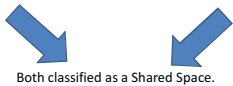
In the UK the term shared space is used very broadly and refers to all streetscape designs which:

"seek to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motorvehicles, primarily through lower speeds and encouraging drivers to behave more accommodatingly towards pedestrians (UK DfT, 2011)."



Kensington High Street, London
40,000 vehicles per day
Conventional kerb and channel design

New Road, Brighton
Less than 1,000 vehicles per day
Level surface design



Different design elements influence whether sharing occurs. The most appropriate design should be selected for the context of the site.

Figure from Department of Transport, Local Transport Note 1/11, Page 13 Table 2.1

Less shared design	More shared design	
Kerbs	Low kerbs, chamfered kerbs	No kerbs
Pedestrian barriers	No pedestrian barriers	No pedestrian barriers
Vehicles restricted to parts of street, e.g. by bollards, street trees, etc.	Implied vehicle paths using surface materials, for example	No barriers to vehicle movement
Floor quality or unleveling public space characteristics	A few places where people can rest and chat	Presence of features such as cafes, markets, abundant seating, plantings, public art, etc.
Conventional road markings	Limited road markings	No road markings
Traffic signals	No traffic signals	No traffic signals
Signal controlled crossings	Zebra crossings	Courtesy crossings or no crossings

In New Zealand the term Shared Space is generally used to refer to designs which include design elements from the more shared end of the spectrum.

Design Considerations for Shared Spaces in New Zealand

Vehicle Speeds

The most important factor to the success of a Shared Space.

A preferable design speed of no more than 32 km/hr (ideally 24 km/hr) has been identified as a target for the successful operation of a Shared Space. This is achieved through:

Visual Narrowing, Place Making and Edge Friction.



Use of double "kerb" to visually narrow the carrieway in Ashford, Kent

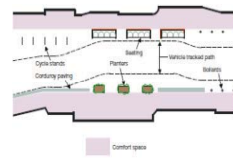


Use of monuments or artwork in place making in London

Demarcation

A level surface does not mean there is no demarcation between pedestrian and vehicle space. The provision of "comfort" or a "safe space" for pedestrians is recommended.

Comfort Space = Areas where vehicles are unlikely to go

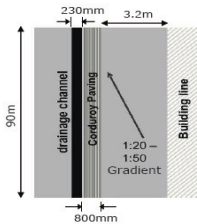


New Road, Brighton

Vulnerable Users

Significant research in the UK has concluded that vulnerable users can be safely provided for in shared space through:

- A safe zone or comfort space located adjacent to the building line (as above)
- A navigational strip marked by appropriately designed tactile pavers and drainage channel.



Design Adopted for Exhibition Road, London

Pedestrian Volumes

Successful Shared Spaces include people so location is key.

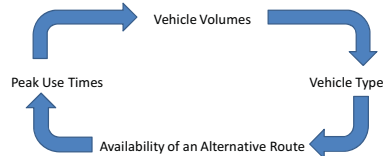
- Streets where adjacent land uses support the creation of social/people places
- Streets on pedestrian and cycling desire lines
- Streets which have food based retail.



New Road, Brighton

Vehicle Volumes

There is no specified limit for vehicle volumes in a shared space but research indicates that for designs with over 100 vehicles per hour some less shared design elements (for example marked crossing points) may be necessary to ensure sharing occurs successfully. However, vehicle volumes can not be considered in isolation.



Thresholds

The transition into and out of a Shared Space requires particular design consideration to:

Slow vehicles and signal a Different Environment to drivers.

This may require the use of different paving types, changes in grade and/or signage and markings.



Parking and Loading

When considering signage, there needs to be a balance between regulatory requirements, communicating a clear message to the driver and maintaining the philosophy of reduced signs and markings.

Consideration should be given to:

- Restricted parking or loading zones
- Enforcement Requirements



Provision For Cyclists

In the UK there is no evidence of increased conflict between pedestrians and cyclists in Shared Spaces. Cyclists should be considered in the design of Shared Spaces in the same way in which they are considered in all streetscape designs:

- Connectivity to the surrounding cycling network
- On-street facilities such as cycle parking
- The location and style of any design features should also consider the needs of cyclists.



Shared Spaces and Shared Zones

The NZ Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 does not define the term Shared Space, however it does include the definition of the term Shared Zone which is defined as:

"A road that has been designed to slow traffic and give priority to pedestrians. Drivers give way to pedestrians who, in turn, should not impede traffic."

Classifying a Shared Space as a Shared Zone has implications regarding priority as well as regulatory requirements such as signage. This needs to be considered carefully.



Approved NZTA sign for Shared Zones

Generally it is recommended that a shared space with a level surface be classified as a shared zone but rules and signage alone will not guarantee a successful shared space.

The design is more important than the classification!

Post Implementation

The design of a Shared Space is not complete when it first opens! The majority of Shared Spaces visited in the UK were altered slightly following implementation. For example the addition, removal or relocation of street furniture, signage or other traffic control devices. This is considered to be the best approach, although it is noted there are implications for how shared space budgets are allocated.

Minimalist Approach



Retrofit If Required

References and Acknowledgements

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