

ETC Leiden 2007 - Abstract

Title: Designs for Life: Learning from Best Practice Streetscape Design

Proposed Theme: The contribution of transport to regeneration and growth

Authors:

Charlotte Marceau
Halcrow
Vineyard House
44 Brook Green
Hammersmith
London W6 7BY
Tel: 020 7348 3103

Email:

marceauc@halcrow.com

Dr Annabel Bradbury
Halcrow
Vineyard House
44 Brook Green
Hammersmith
London W6 7BY
Tel: 020 7348 3026

Email:

bradburya@halcrow.com

Robin Hickman
Halcrow
Vineyard House
44 Brook Green
Hammersmith
London W6 7BY
Tel: 020 8233 3555

Email:

hickmanro@halcrow.com

Abstract

Much recent highway design in the UK runs contrary to supporting quality in the built environment and local landscape, and there appears to be a huge gap between evolving policy thinking and implementation on the ground.

The Manual for Streets (due to supersede Design Bulletin 32 in Spring 2007) will provide design criteria for delivering multi-functional streets, emphasising place over movement, but is focused on design guidance for urban areas, and predominantly for new residential developments. There remains insufficient guidance for practitioners involved in the planning and design of intermediate roads, including existing high streets and rural lanes, in the UK.

This paper reviews evolving best practice in rural areas in the UK and abroad, including innovative work in Kent, Dorset, Suffolk, the Netherlands (Freiland), France, Germany and Sweden, and synthesises common lessons for future scheme implementation in rural areas in the UK. The paper considers a number of critical issues in the evolving streetscape design debate:

- ✍ How far travel behaviour on roads can be influenced by the expression of the environment, rather than the usual tools of traffic engineering;
- ✍ How important psychological retreat from street use is in determining traffic speeds;
- ✍ The difference between highway design and streetscape design;
- ✍ Potential litigation difficulties.

A case study from Shipbourne, Kent is worked through to show the likely issues involved in implementing a streetscape design based on a contextual and shared space approach. The key message is that streetscape design should always act to enhance the design of the local built environment and landscape.