Infrastructure and Policy Needs for the Last Mile

Mitigating the Impact of Last-Mile Deliveries on Kerbside Space and Road Occupancy

Trouble at t’Kerbside

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Future Streets
Walk down any busy urban street, and it won’t take long to grasp that we’re usually trying to fit a quart into a pint pot... that the demand for kerb-space typically exceeds the supply.

Little further thought will be needed to reach the additional conclusion that the tools we currently use to manage both supply and demand are largely rudimentary and often ineffective.

In short, the kerbside is an increasingly contested space that is inefficiently used.
Messages from the Kerbside
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Messages from the Kerbside

- The kerbside may be the most contested space in any city
- What’s out there now is more or less a basket case!
- We apply very little science in allocating kerb-space
- We rant about non-compliance, but we make it inevitable
- Enforcement is both difficult and friendless
- The kerbside is a hugely valuable public asset and usually in high demand; yet, most of the time, we just give it away
- The same piece of kerbside cannot be designated for two different uses in the same time period: highly inefficient
- The quality of the walking experience seems an afterthought
- Latitude, not just longitude: we need to consider all the space between buildings

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Further Reflections

• While flexibility in using the kerbside is more efficient, compliance reduces as complexity increases
• Users struggle to understand all but the simplest regs
Chelmsford bus gate signs 'confusing drivers' brains'

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As of January, there had been more than 153 appeals against fines for using the bus gate.

A psychologist fined for driving through a bus gate has won her appeal after arguing there were too many signs for the brain to process.
“Operation simplify: signs can include up to five different parking schedules; the new signs would make it much simpler to establish which schedule affects you.”
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Further Reflections

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- Users struggle to understand all but the simplest regs
- We’re hopeless at understanding user needs (data)
Local Transport Note 1/08: Traffic Management and Streetscape Design Process – Flows, Inputs and Links

Show me the data!

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Further Reflections

- While flexibility in using the kerbside is more efficient, compliance reduces as complexity increases.
- Users struggle to understand all but the simplest regs.
- We’re hopeless at understanding user needs (data).
- We aren’t much better at communicating with users.
- We need to be more rational about rationing kerb-space.
- Increased automation offers many opportunities, but…
- …what do we do while we wait for the future?
Towards a Kerbside Access Strategy

A possible 4-step process:

1. How do different users/uses need to occupy the kerbside for different lengths of time?

2. Calculate the kerbside space requirements for different users/uses

3. Determine local priorities, to guide decisions on allocating space to different users/uses in the light of Steps 1 & 2

4. Consider opportunities for allocating the same stretch of kerbside to different users/uses at different times/days
Back from the Future

• What kind of streets do we want?
• Technical solutions must meet our policy objectives
• Many individual demands for kerb access are predictable, within certain limits, on the day. But a week/months ahead?
• And who owns/shares the information?
• Automation presents the opportunity to digitise access – not just to the kerbside, but to whole streets
• From fixed-signs-to-distracted-drivers to system-to-system

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Back from the Future

- Start by obtaining and providing better information
- Explore how we can improve efficiency, simply; including legal changes to enable flexible use
- Switch from enforcing non-compliance to ‘Charging for a Service’
- Innovation and regulation
- ‘My pub, my rules’
“Turn your kerbside into a commodity with the AppyParking data driven mobility platform that increases revenues and reduces congestion.”

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