

MIXED USE STREETS



PRIAN
Public Realm Information
& Advice Network

PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY

The Swiss “encounter” zones have a very high rate of compliance.
Drivers stop for pedestrians along the whole length of a zone



Essential deliveries in pedestrian areas



Town centre traffic gives way to pedestrians



Drivers at edge of town centre stop to let people cross, as if at a 60m long pedestrian crossing



Changes to road and pavement design help



People with disabilities appear to cope well

PRIORITY FOR PEDESTRIANS

For fifty years UK roads have been designed to keep pedestrians separate from vehicles. The concept of shared space is a timely reaction, but it is not fully understood.

A simpler concept to understand is a street where pedestrians have priority over vehicles.

This is what happens in the Swiss “encounter” zones, which have been in operation since about 2000. The concept has been innovatively applied to a variety of road conditions and streets of different characters.

COULD IT WORK HERE?

In legal terms the zones are similar to our Home Zones in that drivers have to take account of pedestrians, including people with disabilities, who may be in the road.

Added to that there is a 20kph (12mph) speed restriction and very often, though certainly not always, physical changes to the road layout, as well as local publicity, to stress that the zone is a special place.

The main difference from UK practice is that the zones are located in commercial, and shopping streets as well as purely residential streets.

INNOVATIVE APPLICATIONS

Examples of Swiss applications are:

- Centres of historic towns and villages
- Town centre junctions in larger cities
- Lengths of through routes where they pass close to a town centre;
- Local shopping streets which are impractical to completely close

Could these ideas be taken up in the UK so that Home Zones are used more widely to provide pedestrian priority streets that have legal backing?

Refs: Transport Act 2002, Sect 268
DfT Circular 02/2006