

The clash between place-making and kerbside deliveries

Jolyon Drury explores the mismatch in spatial planning between place-making and essential kerbside deliveries. See also the presentation and discussion at the London Planning & Development Forum

The residual impact of the COVID pandemic including the growth in demand for direct deliveries for e-commerce combined with carriageway restrictions from pavement widening, al-fresco dining and the addition of cycle lanes has resulted in the current planning mismatch reducing the efficiency and increasing costs of kerbside deliveries.

Before and then in parallel with the effects of the pandemic the clean air and cycle safety programs aimed at making London a healthier and safer place to live in with particular emphasis on place making for the safety and low emission levels for pedestrians and cyclists stimulated developers and the design industry into accepting the challenge. But the result of these ongoing schemes is to severely inhibit the timely re-supply to shops, restaurants, offices and building maintenance services whose performance is key in delivering the quality of life expected in these neighbourhoods just at the moment when rapidly rising costs need control.

It is an increasingly up-hill struggle to integrate developing London spatial and traffic planning policy with sustainable cost-effective deliveries to resolve kerbside conflicts.

On 13 December the London Planning and Development Forum hosted the Central London Freight Quality Partnership's (CLFQP) presentation "Balance in spatial planning. The mismatch in spatial planning between place-making and essential kerbside deliveries." As well as the CLFQP kerbside team clearly setting out the range of operational delivery constraints highlighting safety concerns and rising costs from their research, Roy McGowan of Momentum transport consultants illustrated the objectives of the place making and active travel agenda, this dichotomy the crux of the kerbside delivery and spatial planning dilemma.

CLFQP recommend a program of continuing dialogue already in hand with planners from the London cities and boroughs and policy makers from TfL, Cross River Partnership and GLA and with organisations which, through their customers influence demand robust delivery performance from the supply chain logistics and transport industry, including the BIDs and market authorities.

In addition to working with the local authority planners and their elected members it is proposed for CLFQP to seek to advise New London Architecture (NLA) with their innovative place making schemes to provide clear access to optimise kerbside delivery locations and timed controls necessary to accommodate the required frequency of deliveries, the volume of the loads and time required to safely off-load them also accounting for chilled chain integrity and rationalized waste recovery: access for the required scale of goods vehicle combining environmental and supply chain best practice (size and quiet low emissions are not mutually exclusive), accommodating required dwell time necessary to safely handle the volume of the load including proximity to the user's premises: of course with the minimum of intrusion and maximum safety for local inhabitants, not forgetting discrete parking for longer term servicing. ■

Examples of Kerbside loading challenges, practice and some resolutions

The following images recorded by Jolyon Drury in the last six months illustrate the reality of difficulties being experienced every day by the logistics industry in the re-supply of of commercial premises in central London.



ABOVE AND LEFT: Restricted access often for construction or road closures results in illegal parking with protracted dwell times. A particular problem with chilled food deliveries



BELOW LEFT AND RIGHT: Popular catering and entertainment venues command large replenishment deliveries. But impeded access requires "trammings" for long distances e.g. by powered pallet truck (bottom left). This results in longer dwell times for the delivery vehicle (right) in turn impeding others

Jolyon Drury FCILT RIBA MInstRE combines his knowledge of architecture and built form with the science of logistics operations and industrial engineering. He is a member of the Central London Freight Quality Partnership's team focussing on improving access and safety for inner city kerbside deliveries for the essential re-supply of materiel within the increasing constraints of traffic restrictions as a result of place making and active travel.

The Central London Freight Quality Partnership (CLFQP) with Westminster University provides a forum for its member stakeholders including the seven central London boroughs including the Cities of London and Westminster, together with Transport for London, the transport trade and professional associations (Logistics UK- formerly FTA), the Road Haulage Association (RHA) and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) plus a variety of key stakeholders such as the major retailers, the Brewery Logistics Group and AICES for the parcels integrators.



Jolyon Drury is an architect and logistics expert



ABOVE AND LEFT:
Uncoordinated construction deliveries result in further impediments to deliveries. Results in tail backs and pushes other deliveries further from their drop zones



ABOVE AND BELOW

The distribution industry always adapts to the impeded environment, often at the expense of operating cost, (PCNs, longer delivery times through long "tramping") and driver safety.

BOTTOM LEFT: reserving a place by leaving the tail lift down. TOP RIGHT Having to deliver away from the vehicle: see the driver with the yellow tabard in the right distance tramping 200m away from the delivery vehicle.

BELOW: Operators where distance is critical in term of Health & Safety guidance from the Health and Safety Executive are under increasing pressure and often fail their deliveries due to lack of access and distances that increase the risk to all stakeholders. As these pictures show, some distance critical operators are moving away from their agreed safe systems of work and are moving heavy goods greater distances to ensure that businesses can still operate, this practice should not be encouraged as it inevitably puts all parties who use the kerbside at risk of injury and could lead to prosecutions





ABOVE AND LEFT: The retention of al-fresco external dining zones long after the pandemic seriously inhibits goods deliveries and is subject to abuse. Charlotte Street in Fitzrovia is a particular example



ABOVE AND LEFT: Well planned examples do exist: in London and New York: in Bond Street for fashion and art deliveries with clear signage. And more flexible attitudes to delivery periods and equipment



BOTTOM LEFT NY: a crew of three - the truck is a mini-consolidation centre.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Right - a bike trailer

