



Project Case Study

Waterloo IMAX Improvement Project

Transport for London (TfL) commissioned TRL to carry out a PERS audit within the London Borough of Lambeth in June 2014 as part of the Waterloo IMAX Improvement Project. The project presents an opportunity to regenerate an area of central London which has been the subject of many studies and attempts to progress a transformational scheme in the last decade. The PERS audit was undertaken to assess the current level of service for pedestrians around the Waterloo IMAX Cinema and the surrounding area.

PERS is a pedestrian street audit methodology, combining on-street assessments conducted by trained auditors with a software data analysis and graphical tool for presenting results.

The Project

The study area is generally dominated by Waterloo Rail Station transport hub, which is a significant trip attractor. There are also a high number of onward pedestrian, cycle and bus passenger trips on exiting the Station, as well as high pedestrian flows on the surrounding streets due to the location of University buildings and surrounding commercial land. The audit area is also dominated by vehicles along Waterloo Road, Waterloo Bridge and York Road which reduces the pedestrian permeability of the area and brings both noise and poor air quality.

The PERS audit covered a fairly large area which comprised mainly of a mix of retail and commercial units and Waterloo Rail Station. At the outset, TRL undertook a review of local pedestrian collision data. This identified particular issues along Waterloo Road, such as the occurrence of informal pedestrian crossing movements which resulted in collisions.

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It was also found that a high number of collisions occurred at formal crossing locations which suggested that the existing crossing provision might be poor or incorrectly used.

TRL carried out a comprehensive on-site PERS assessment within the immediate area to assess the current level of service for pedestrians. The audit was conducted by a team of TRL PERS auditors who completed on-street review forms and evaluated parameters by recording scores and comments. The audit results were entered into the TRL Streetaudit software for further analysis and to provide output for the study report. The report focused on the areas and components identified by the audit as being critical for the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians.

Objectives

- Undertake a comprehensive on-site audit of all pedestrian and environment components within the study area.
- Prepare a summary report which presents the findings of the audit and assesses the baseline situation.



Outcomes

The study identified some key themes that were recommended in order to improve the safety, legibility and comfort of the street environment for pedestrians.

These recommendations included:



- Improving the quality of the environment through increased street cleaning to clear the footways of litter and vegetation, resurfacing to deal with ponding issues, the refitting of street furniture and the addition of landscaping.
- Providing and improving existing provision of tactile paving to assist visually impaired pedestrians. In particular, to provide a consistent approach to the use of tactile paving within the area so that it is not misleading.
- Upgrading the quality footways to address the surface quality issues, improve the visual appeal of the area and to minimize the potential for trips and slips to occur.
- Providing regular crossing opportunities to deter pedestrians from crossing the road in unsafe conditions.
- Providing colour contrasting materials to aid in the navigation, orientation and protection of hazards for partially-sighted pedestrians.
- Considering extending or widening specific areas which were identified as having particularly high levels of pedestrian congestion, primarily around nearby bus stops and links within nearby public spaces.
- Improving accessibility and reducing potential user severance within the IMAX and undercroft area by considering the provision of above-ground alternatives to the existing steps and ramps.

The PERS recommendations fed into the design proposals for the project and highlighted those areas or components that required the most improvement. At the same time, the work acted as a baseline for future PERS assessments to ascertain the benefits of the proposed redevelopment.

For more information, please contact:

TRL Software

Telephone: +44 (0)1344 770558

Email: software@trl.co.uk Website: www.trlsoftware.co.uk

TRL Software