

More than a side issue

SoRSA Conference 2026



Introduction

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Founder of City Infinity.

Associate Member since 2010



What are side road junctions?



What are side road junctions?

- Side road junctions.
- Priority junctions.
- Marked and unmarked.
- Continuous treatments.
- No-priority junctions.
- All the junctions that aren't signalised or roundabouts.
- The most common type of junction **by far**.

What's in the data?



Table 4: Percentage of pedestrian casualties by severity and junction detail where the collision occurred, GB: 2020 to 2024

Junction	Fatalities	Serious	Slight	All Casualties
Not at or within 20 metres of junction	61.5%	49.8%	48.7%	49.3%
T or staggered junction	23.3%	30.2%	30.0%	29.9%
Crossroads	7.1%	8.2%	7.5%	7.7%
Other junction	5.6%	7.1%	7.6%	7.4%
Using private drive or entrance	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%	2.0%
Unknown	0.2%	0.9%	2.3%	1.8%
Junction with more than four arms (not roundabout)	0.7%	2.0%	1.7%	1.8%

Source:
Reported road casualties in Great Britain: pedestrian factsheet, 2024

What's in the data?



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Junction	Fatalities	Serious	Slight	All Casualties
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Of course, this is far from the whole story

Source:

Reported road casualties in Great Britain: pedestrian factsheet, 2024

Using private drive or entrance	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%	2.0%
Unknown	0.2%	0.9%	2.3%	1.8%
Junction with more than four arms (not roundabout)	0.7%	2.0%	1.7%	1.8%

Fashion and experimentation



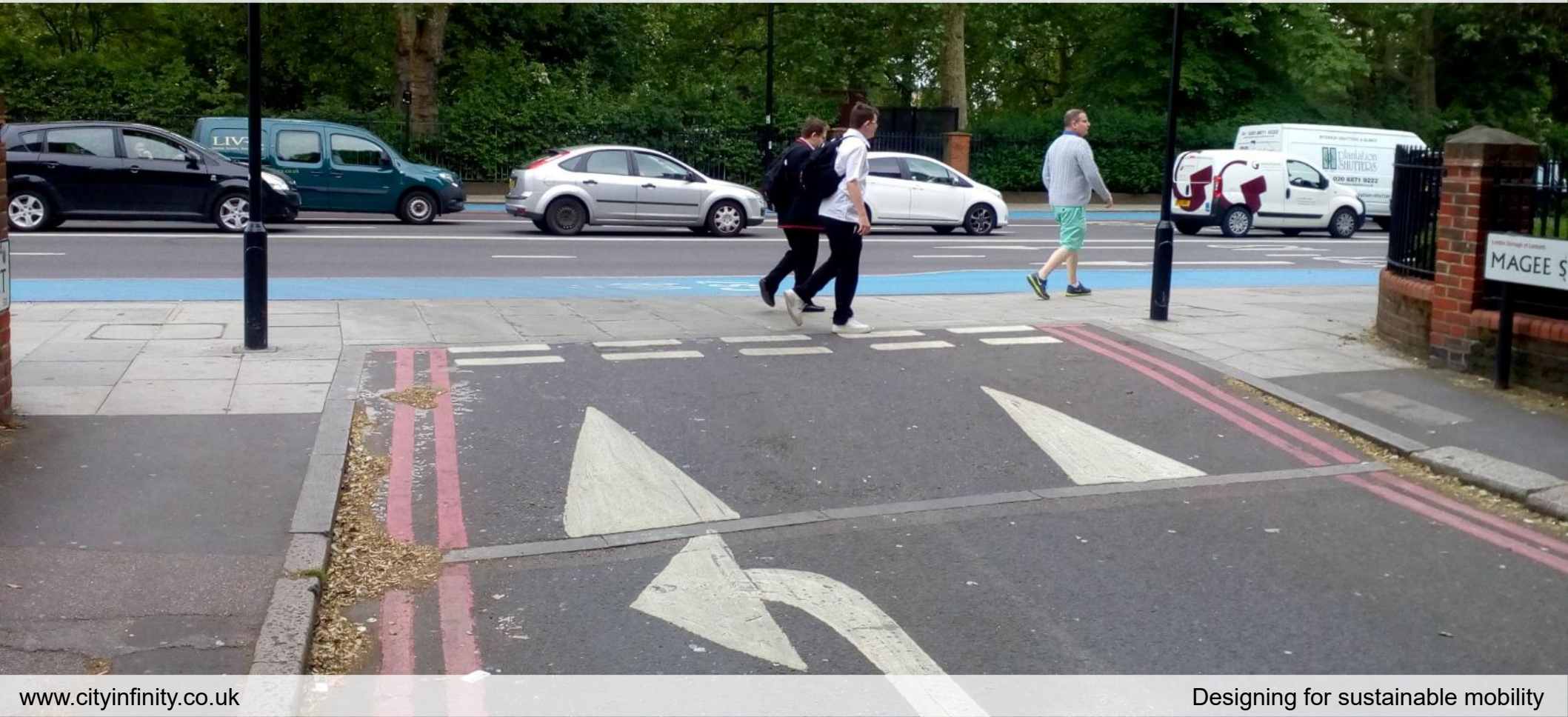
Fashion and experimentation



Fashion and experimentation



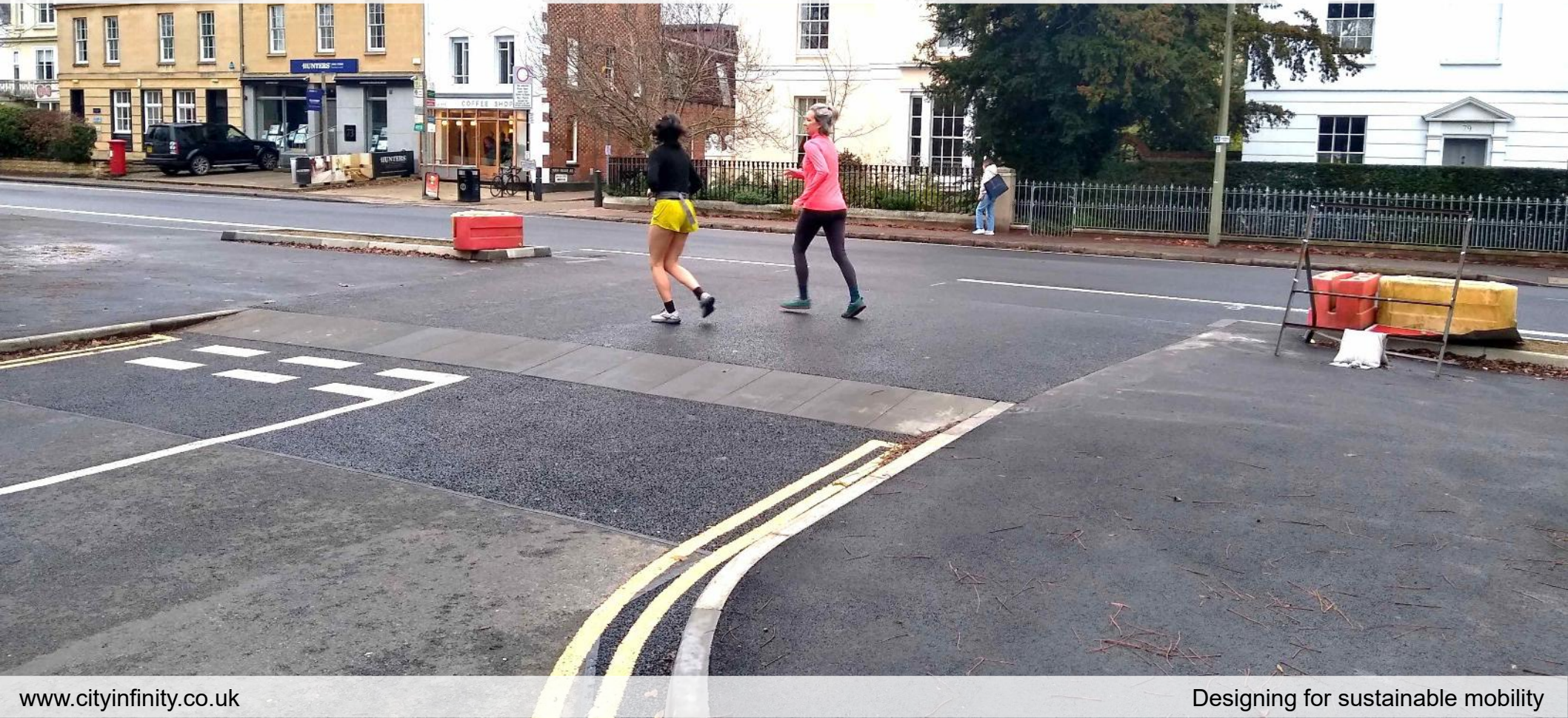
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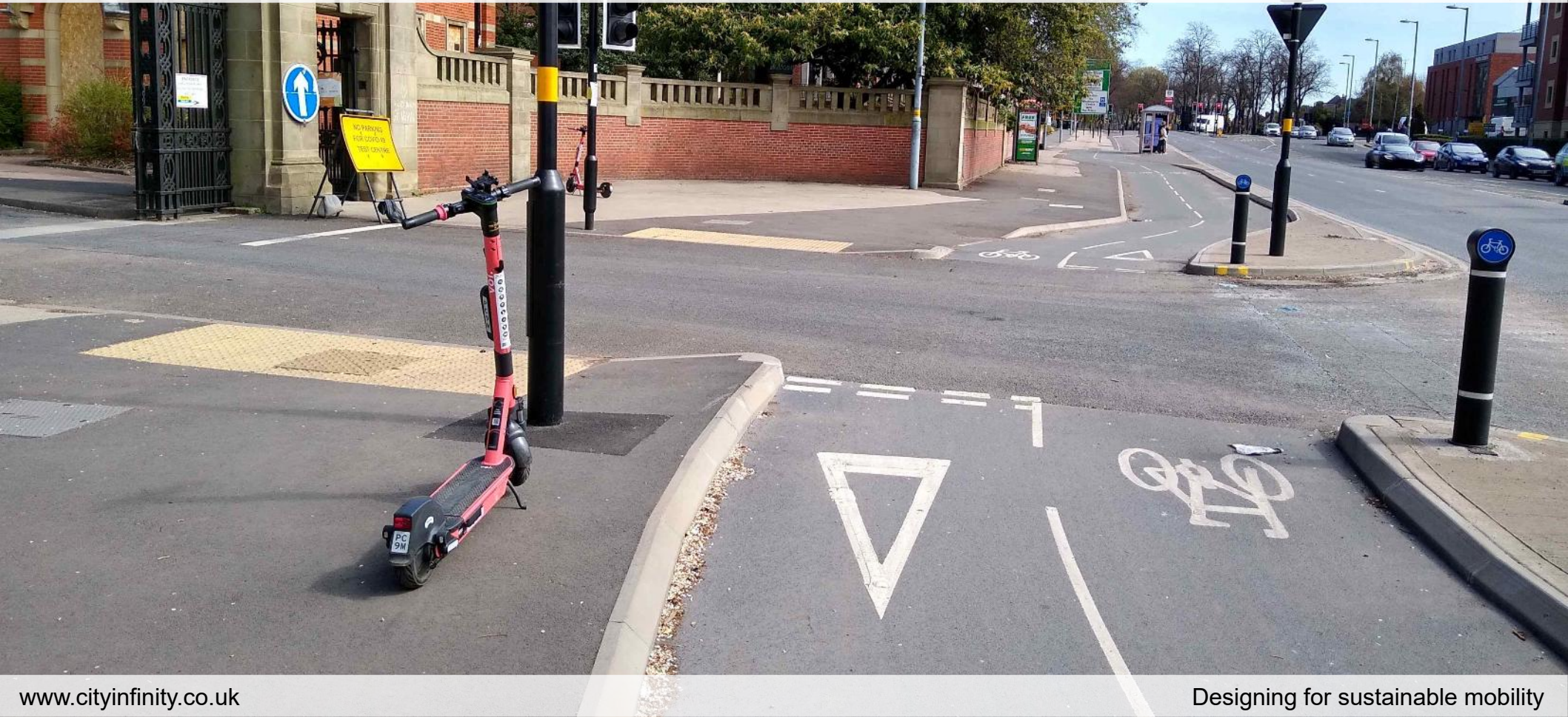
Fashion and experimentation



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Fashion and experimentation



Serious questions



- Do we want to place walking and wheeling at the top of the transport hierarchy?
- Do we want to improve pedestrian accessibility?
- Do we want to give older and younger people independence?
- Are we serious about delivering Vision Zero?
- Do we want to enable transport choice?
- Do we want simpler maintenance?
- Do we want nicer, more inclusive streets?

Some serious questions



- Do we want to place walking and wheeling at the top of the transport hierarchy?

- Do

- Do **The answers to which is yes, I hope** **ence?**

- Are

- Do we want to enable transport choice?

- Do we want simpler maintenance?

Should we paint zebras everywhere?



Are continuous treatments the answer?



Maybe more signals will work?



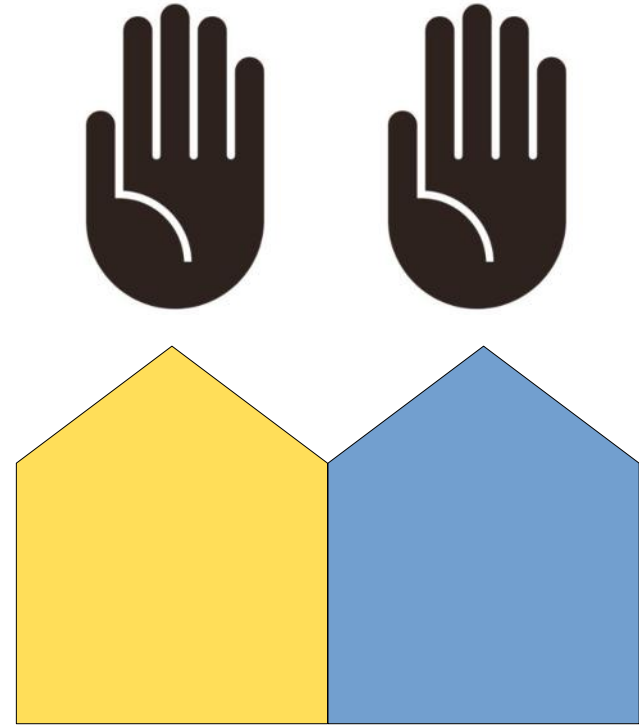
Reframing the discussion



Hands up!



Who has read the Highway Code recently – maybe within the last year?



Who has read the Highway Code recently?

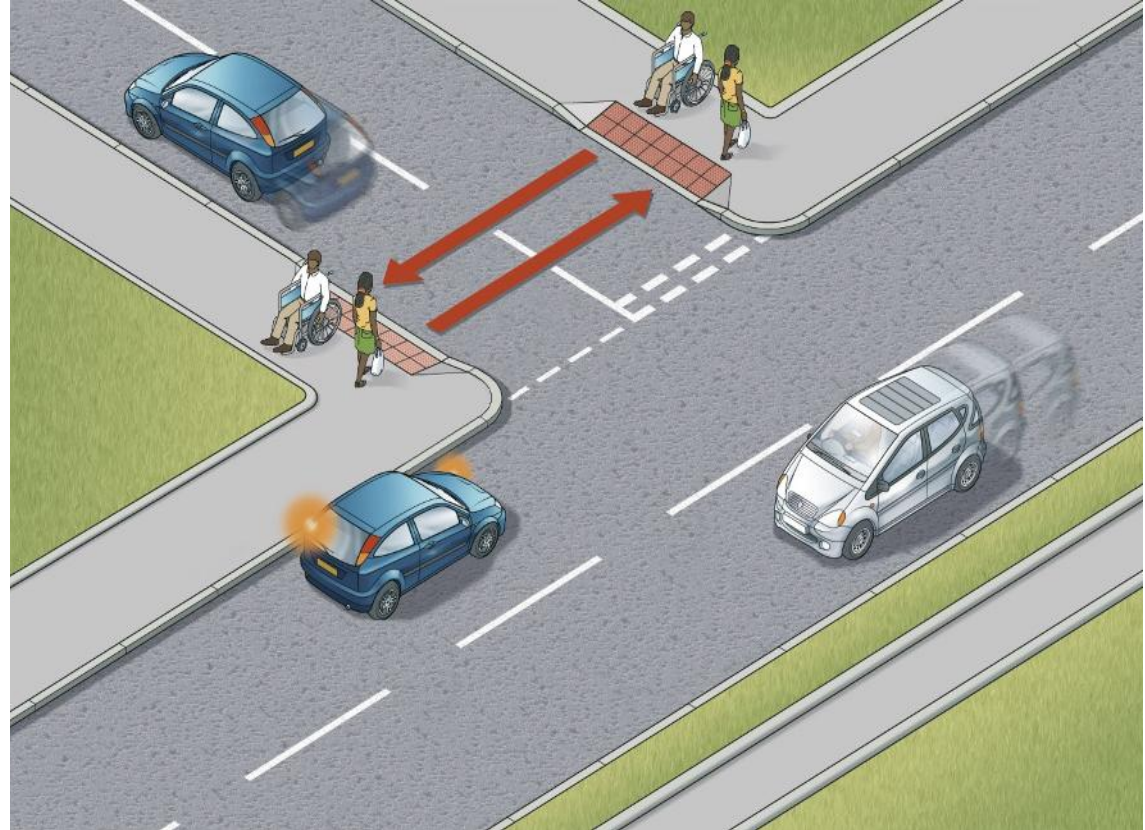


Rule H2

Wait for the pedestrian to cross the junction before turning. This applies if you are turning right or left into the junction.

Source: Highway Code

Open Government Licence v3.0



Who has read the Highway Code recently?

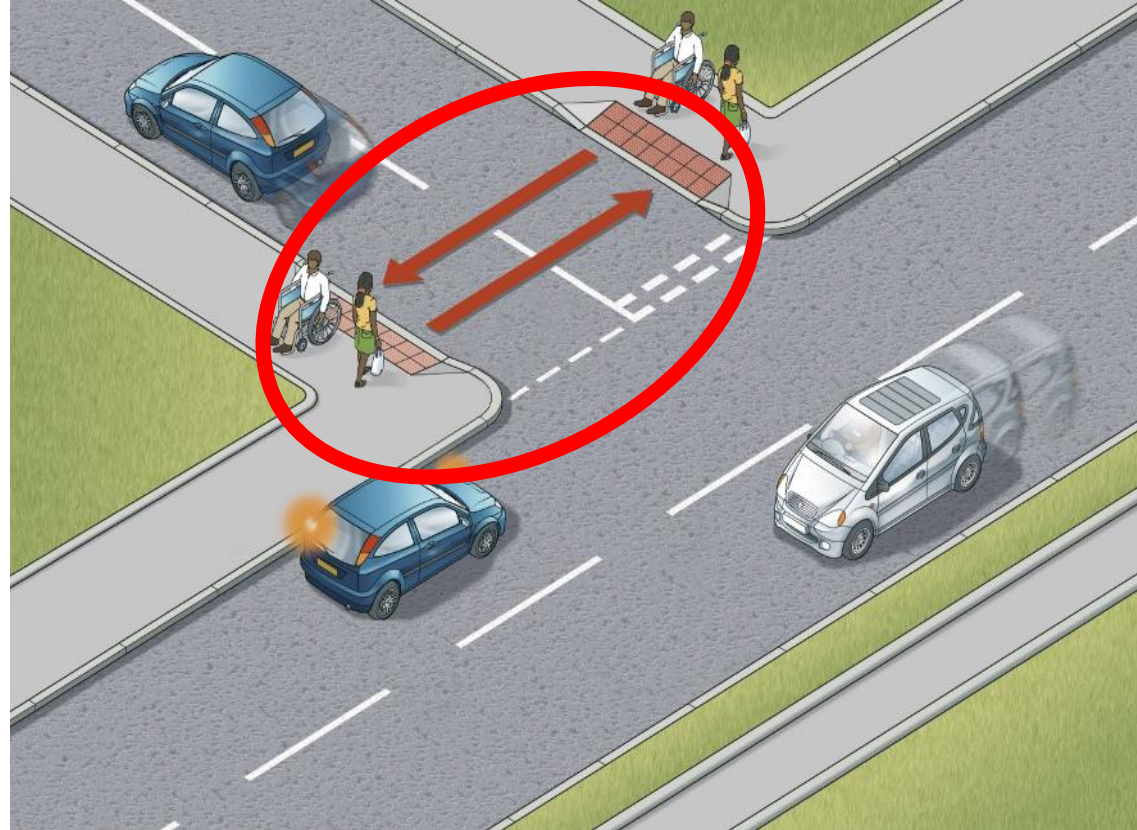


Rule H2

Wait for the pedestrian to cross the junction before turning. This applies if you are turning right or left into the junction.

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Other than to argue on social media!



Rule 170

Give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. If they have started to cross they have priority, so give way.

Source: Highway Code

Open Government Licence v3.0



Other than to argue on social media!

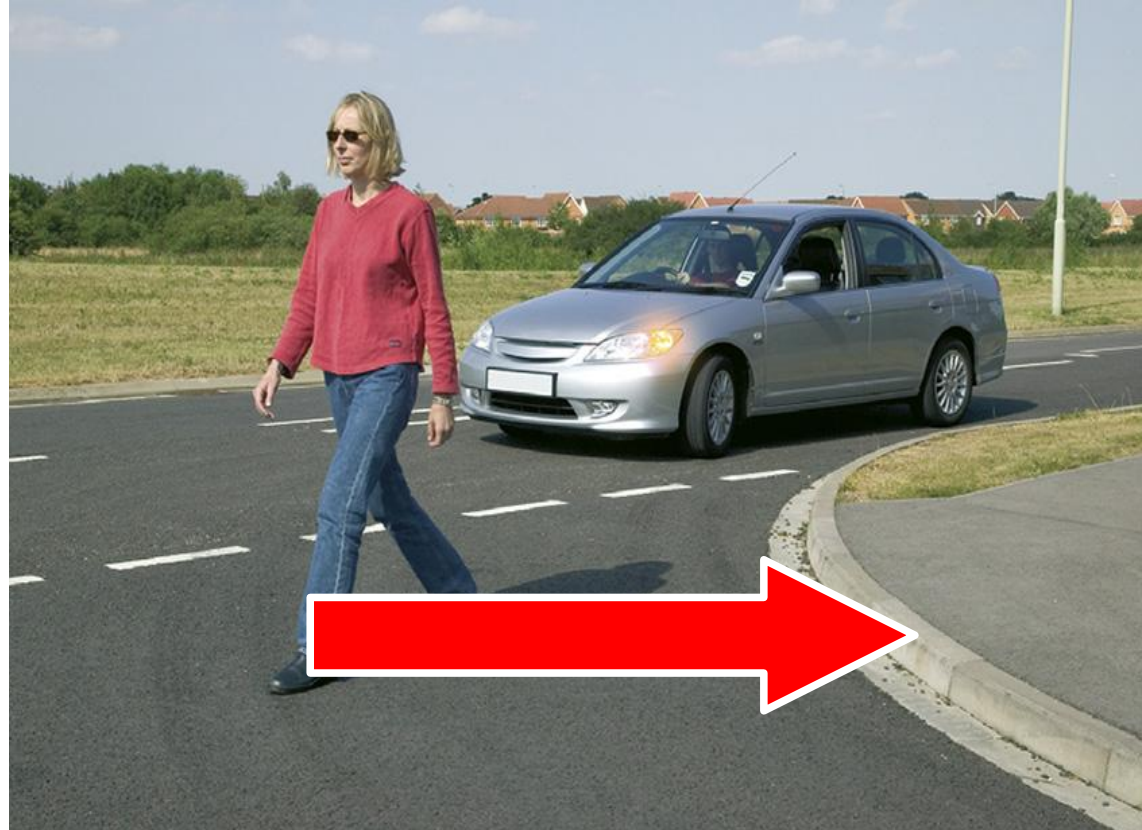


Rule 170

Give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. If they have started to cross they have priority, so give way.

Source: Highway Code

Open Government Licence v3.0



Defining pedestrian-friendly design



- Draws on work with Robert Weetman for Manchester City Council.
- We spent lots of time thinking about how side road junctions could be made better.
- We also spent time thinking about what it would **actually** take to deliver Vision Zero.

Defining pedestrian-friendly design



- The idea of drivers (and cyclists) stopping to let people cross side road junctions is a good feature of pedestrian-friendly streets.
- Having rules in a book few people have recently read won't achieve pedestrian-friendly side road junctions.
- Design is the thing that actually changes behaviour.
- **But** the Highway Code rules are a useful starting point for the behaviour we want to enable.

Defining pedestrian-friendly design



The rules can be boiled down to three key scenarios:

Defining pedestrian-friendly design



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- What are the conditions under which drivers are **LIKELY** to obey the Highway Code rules H2/ 170?

Defining pedestrian-friendly design



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- What are the conditions under which drivers are **LIKELY** to obey the Highway Code rules H2/ 170?
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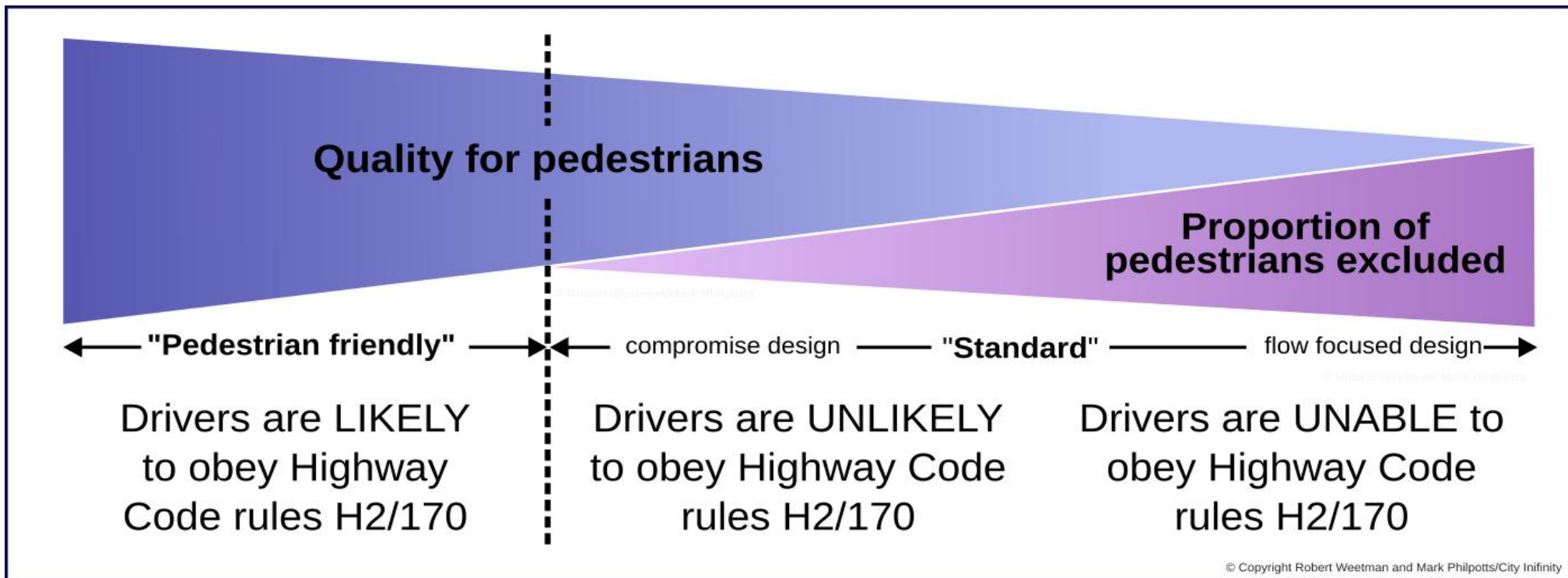
Defining pedestrian-friendly design



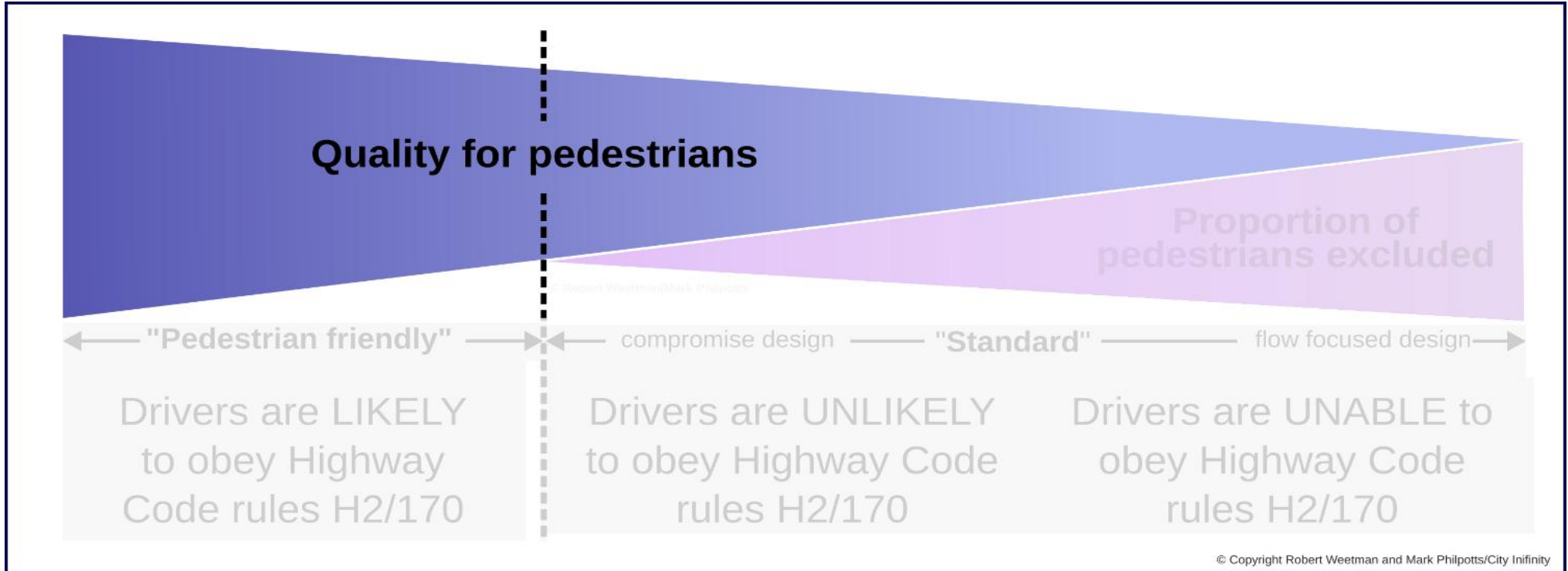
The rules can be boiled down to three key scenarios:

- What are the conditions under which drivers are **LIKELY** to obey the Highway Code rules H2/ 170?
- What are the conditions under which drivers are **UNLIKELY** to obey the Highway Code rules H2/ 170?
- What are the conditions under which drivers are **UNABLE** to obey the Highway Code rules H2/ 170?

Defining pedestrian-friendly design



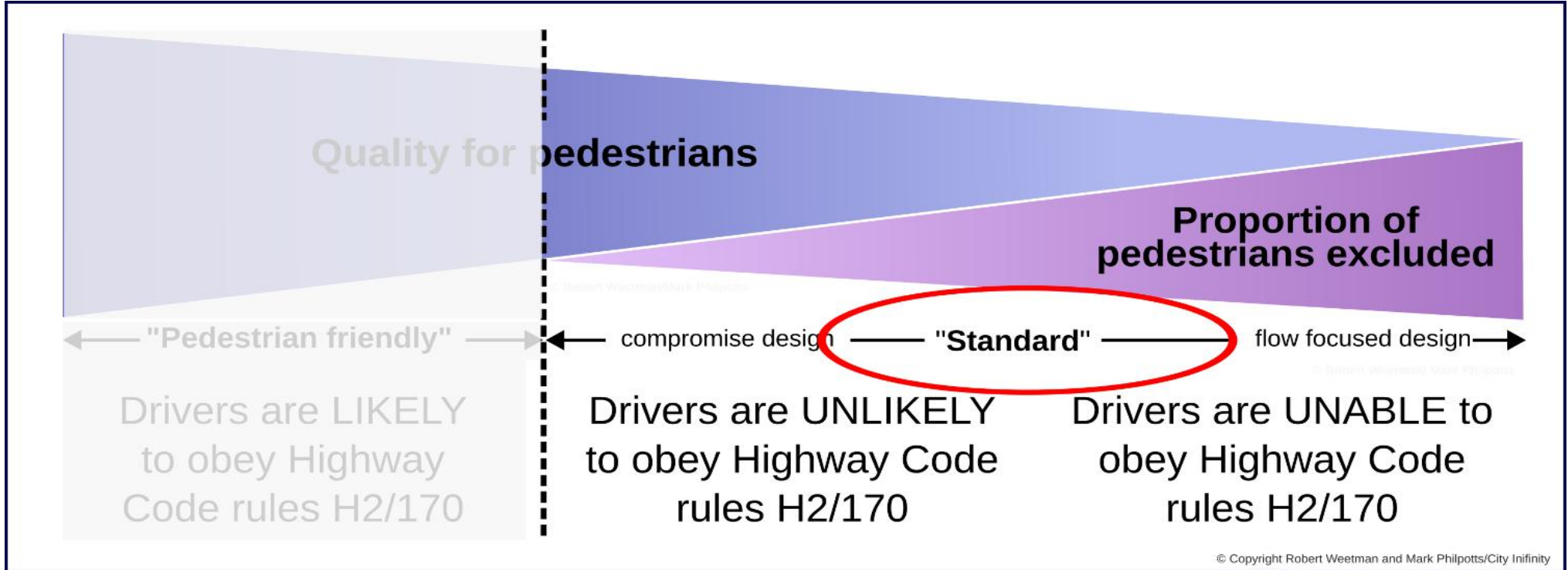
Defining pedestrian-friendly design



Defining pedestrian-friendly design



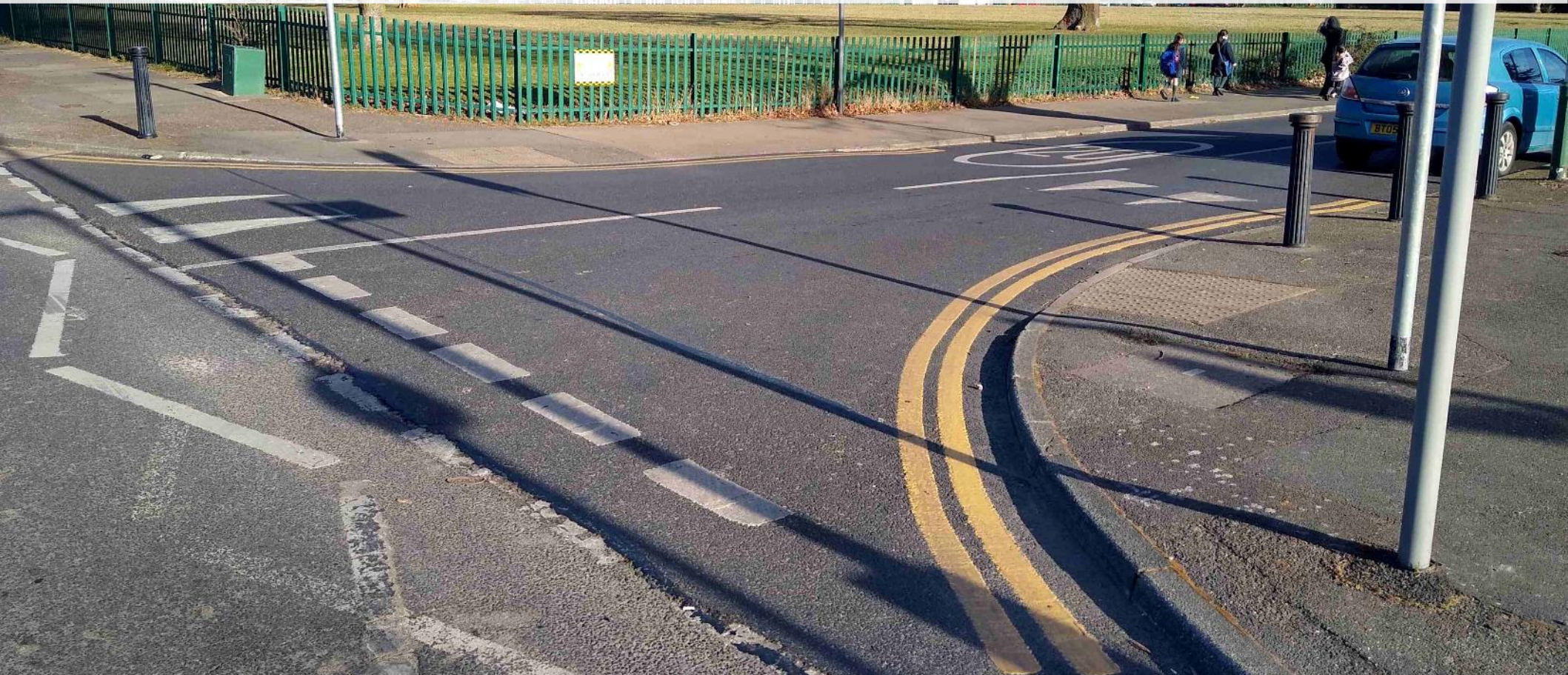
Defining pedestrian-friendly design



Defining pedestrian-friendly design



Standard design



Standard design



Standard design



Pedestrian-friendly design



Pedestrian-friendly design



- Background vehicle speed.
- Through traffic volume (on the major arm).
- Turning speed.
- Turning vehicle size.
- Turning levels and complexity of traffic movement.
- Visibility character and crossing distance.
- Presence/absence of physical barriers to pedestrian movement.

Pedestrian-friendly design

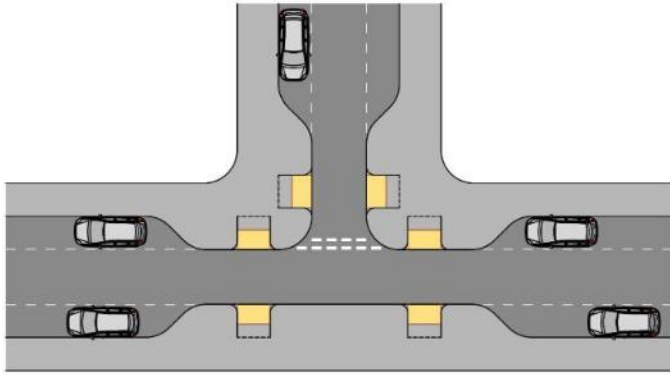


- Background vehicle speed.
- Through traffic volume (on the major arm)

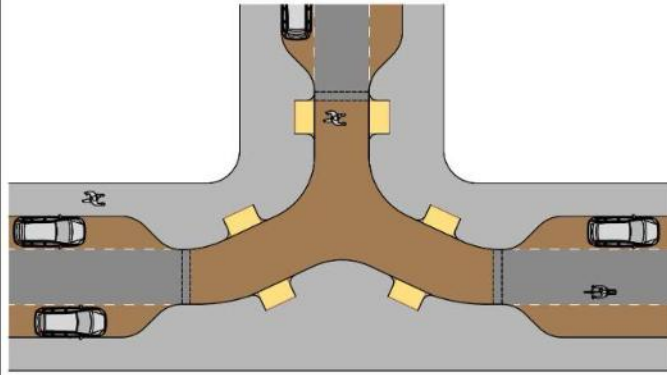
**Low traffic, low speed neighbourhoods are crucial.
Some junctions cannot be left as priority junctions.**

- visibility character and crossing distance.
- Presence/absence of physical barriers to pedestrian movement.

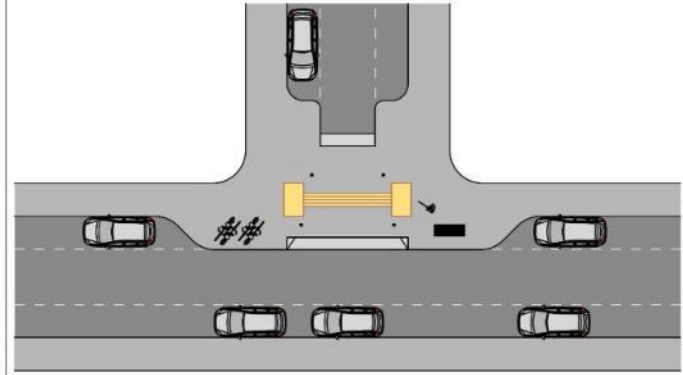
Pedestrian-friendly design



Pedestrian-friendly
marked priority

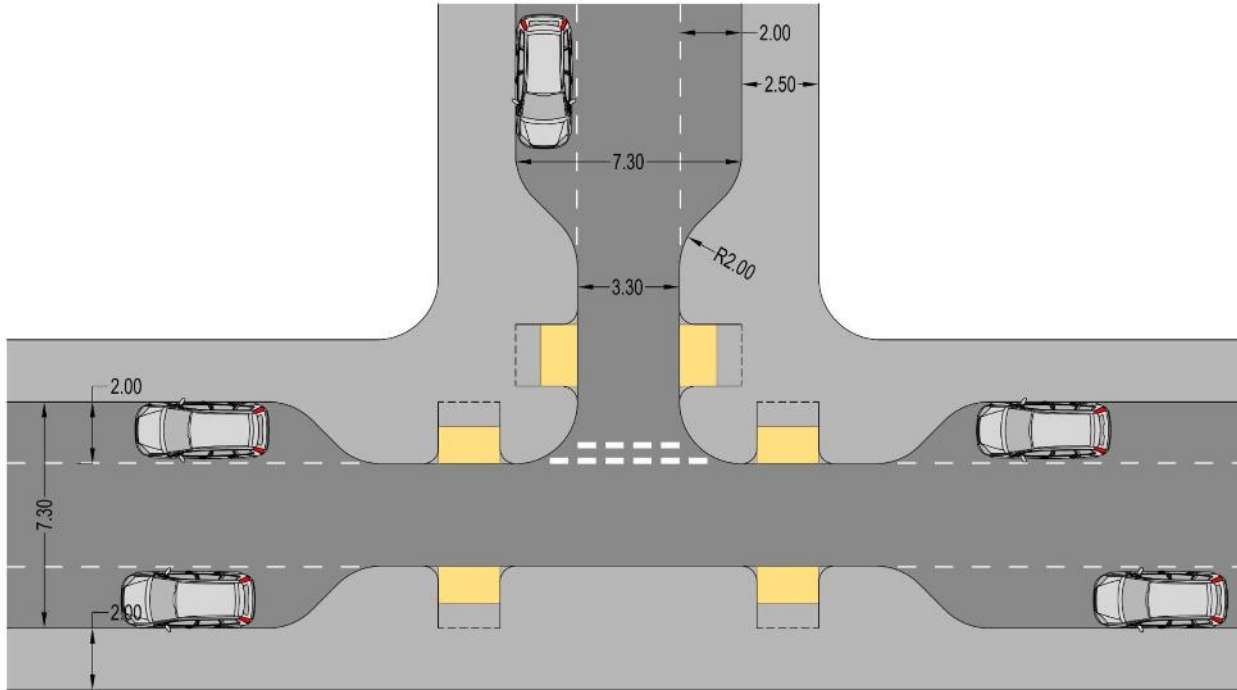


No-priority junction



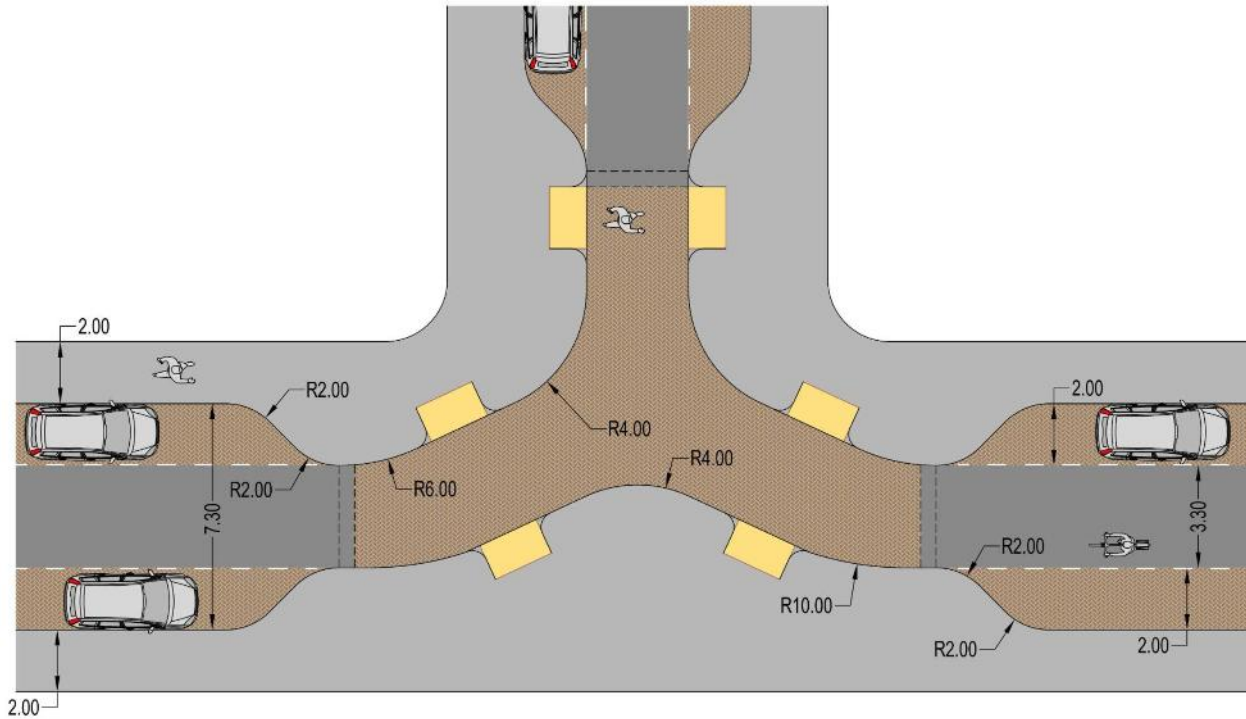
Continuous footway

Pedestrian-friendly marked priority



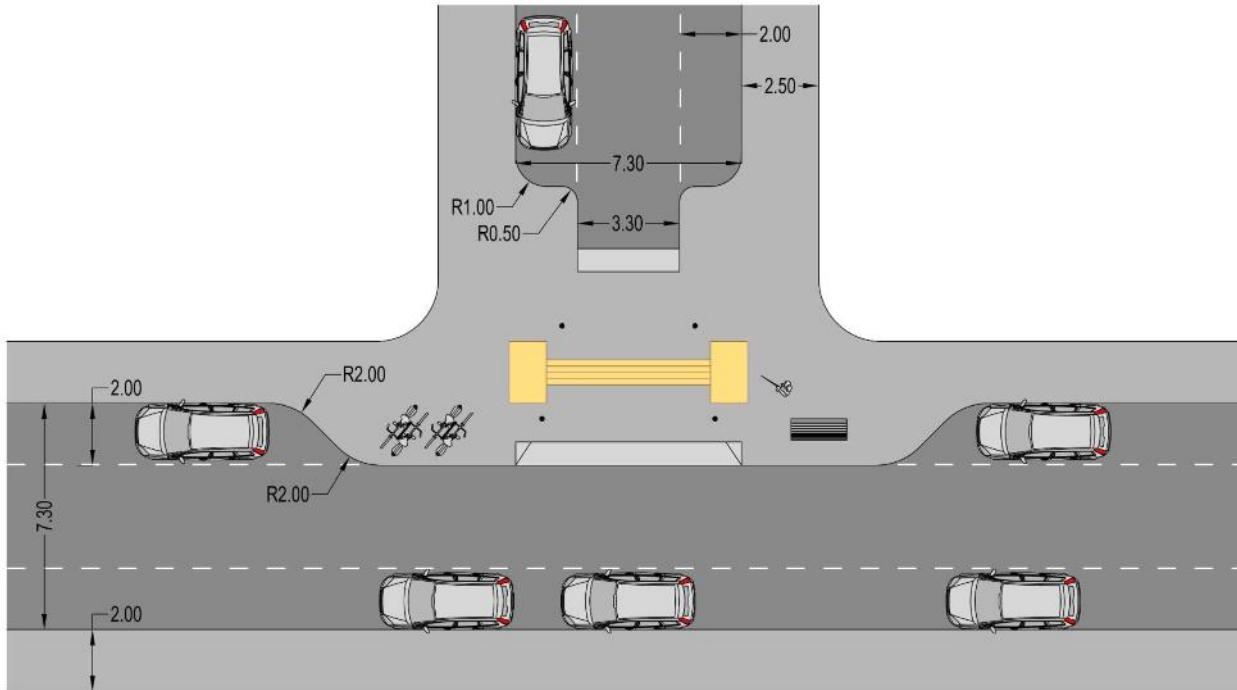
- Good visibility
- Dropped kerbs on desire line
- Can consider crossing major road
- Low speed geometry vital
- Can include a raised **entry treatment**

No-priority junction



- Equal status
- Overall geometry
- Useful within low traffic neighbourhoods?

Continuous footway



- Clarity of priority
- Steep ramps
- Equivalent geometry
- Easy to get wrong
- Tactile paving tricky and unresolved
- Gateways to low traffic neighbourhoods?

Continuous footway



The term continuous footway has been used widely and casually.

Many of the designs currently given this title in the UK would not meet the key principles.

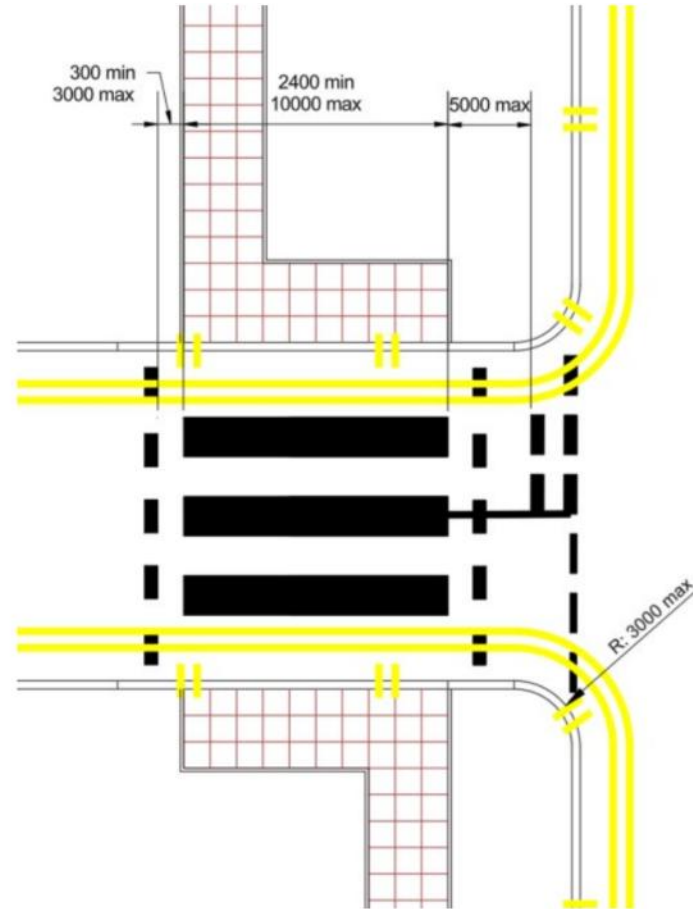
What about side road zebras?

- 20mph on both roads
- Turning design speed 10mph
- Likely needing 3m corner radii or other speed reduction measures

Source:

Side Road Zebra Crossing Guidance, Welsh Government, Figure 3.1, new locations

Open Government Licence v3.0



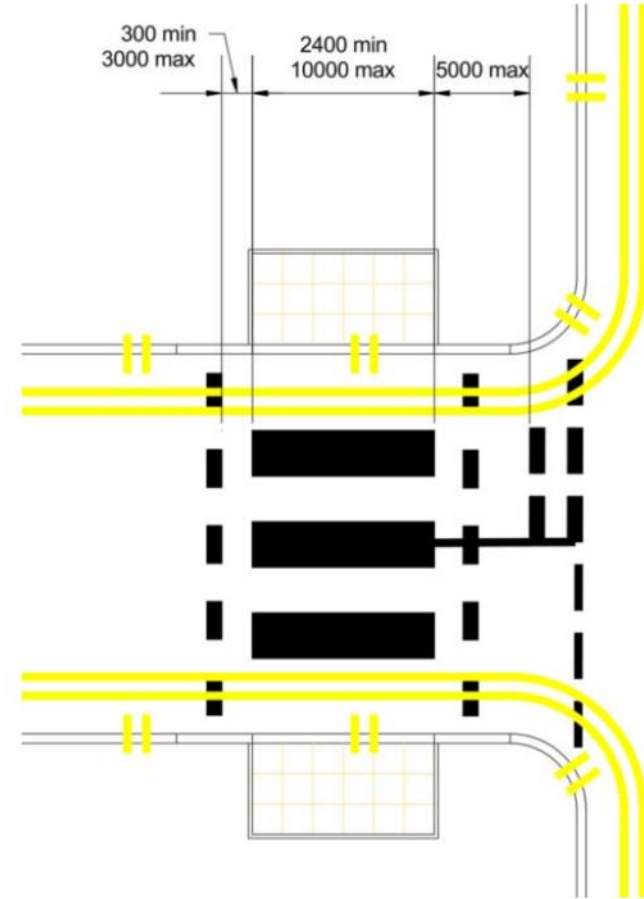
What about side road zebras?

- AADT less than 8,000
- Perhaps a maximum of just over 13 vehicles per minute (compare with ATE critical issue for side road junctions)

Source:

Side Road Zebra Crossing Guidance, Welsh Government, Figure 3.2, existing locations

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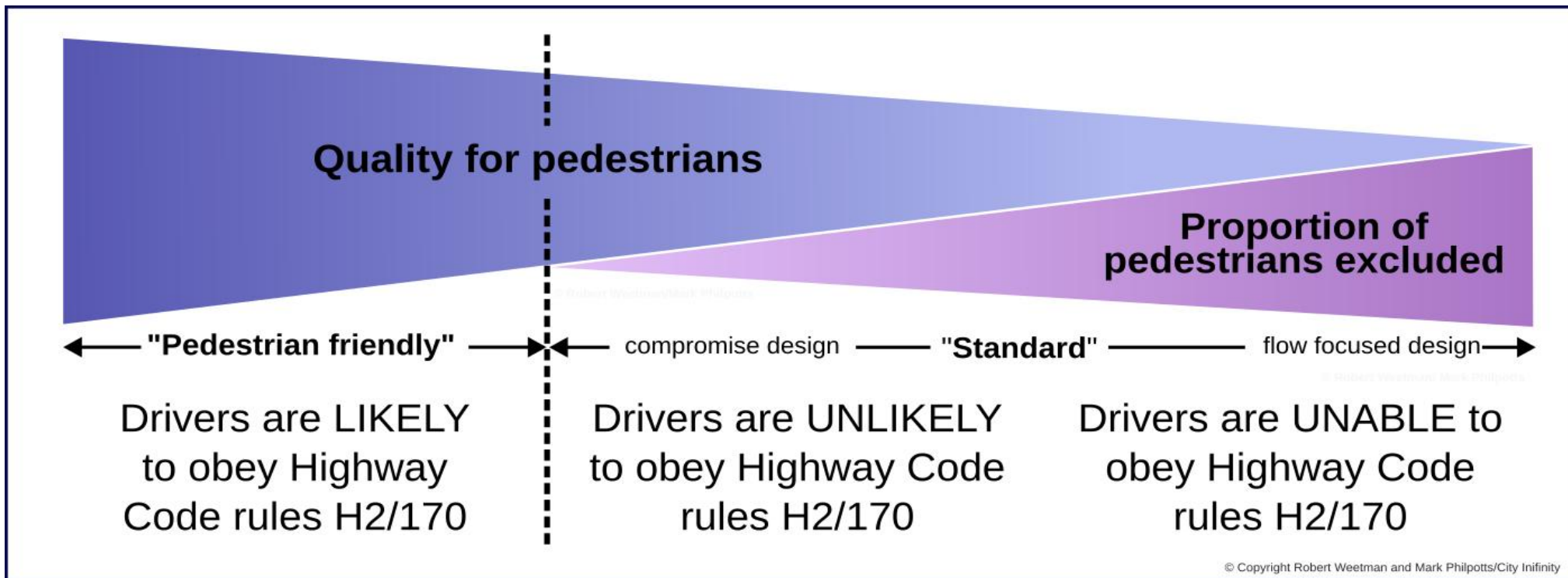


What about side road zebras?

Questions that time might answer:

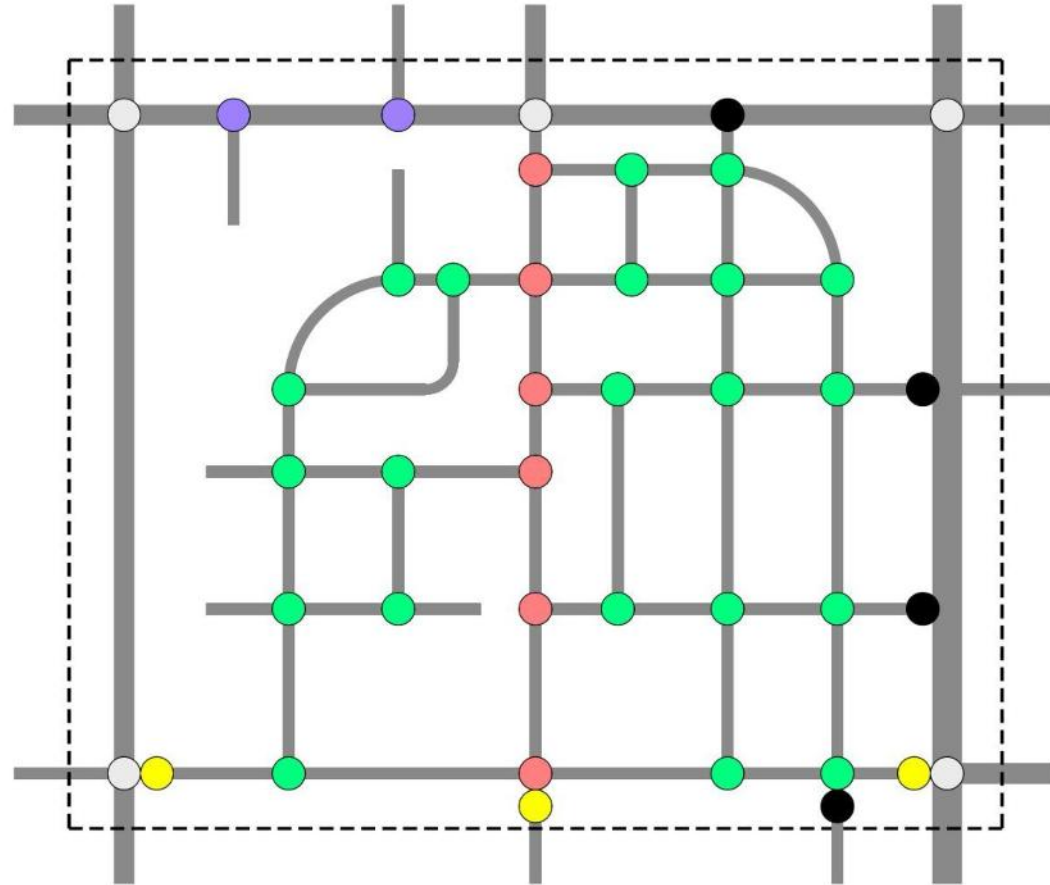
- Are they actually a cheap solution?
- Does high compliance risk congestion?
- Where do they sit in terms of pedestrian friendliness?

What about side road zebras?



Impossible without network (re)design

- Signalised
- Closed to motors
- Bus gate
- Standard treatment
- Pedestrian-friendly marked priority
- Pedestrian-friendly no-priority



Impossible without network (re)design



- The local **features** of a junction can be changed by a designer.
- The network-level **factors** are strategic and cannot be changed by a designer.
- This is perhaps the key issue for an auditor to have in mind.
 - Unless the network supports pedestrian-friendly design at the local level, adding pedestrian-friendly features to a junction won't make it pedestrian-friendly.

Thoughts for auditors



- Does the designer have enough information about network-level factors to be able to deploy pedestrian-friendly designs?
- Treatments at single junctions risk failing, unless network-level factors are supportive.
- Corridor projects often try to provide side road junction design consistency, but how does the local network operate?
- Does the designer have the data to support their approach?

Thoughts for auditors



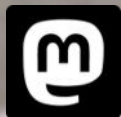
- If there is doubt about network-level factors, then good-quality “standard” designs might be better in the short to medium term, but some people will be excluded.
- In some cases, the use of zebra crossings or signals might be the correct answer, but they come with their own challenges.
- Simple and clear designs will help explain how people should behave, but network factors heavily influence this.
- Is the designer trying to make decisions that should be made by those with strategic responsibility?



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