

The impact of large scale pick-up/drop-off on the urban environment and people's experience of it

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Shared modes of transport will result in large-scale pick-up/drop-off (p/d), what physical form will this take and what will be the impact on our urban environments?

There are perhaps two basic models of p/d:

- Nodal pick-up/drop-off location
- Kerbside pick-up/drop-off i.e. locations on demand

The reality will probably be a mix of the two.

Nodal P/D

Currently, where nodal p/d occurs there is often significant degradation of the urban environment in the immediate vicinity and over a radius surrounding the node where the increased density of vehicles converging on the node impact on the urban environment and pedestrian/cyclist experience. Existing examples include:

- Bus stations
- Bus stops
- Taxi ranks for pick-up
- Kiss and ride

What will our towns and cities look like if this form of infrastructure is replicated multiple times across the urban environment? Where will these facilities be located, in the centre of town where people want to be or on the edge of a town centre? Where they are located in the centre of town how will they be accessed and will there be restrictions on the types of vehicles that can access particular p/d nodes? Where they are located on the edges of town centres, will the associated infrastructure dominate key gateways with negative impact on townscape and active travel?

Kerbside P/D

Current examples of kerbside p/d include:

- Taxi p/d on kerbside
- School drop-off
- Arriva click style shared mini-bus
- Informal private ride sharing

There will be risk of blocking roads, exaggerated if pick-ups result in vehicles waiting for a passenger to arrive. Will busy roads require a p/d lane or laybys to keep traffic flowing? Will there be an impact on unprotected cycle lanes which will become de-facto p/d laybys and will vehicles bump up onto footways to avoid blocking roads? Will the open, flexible form of shared spaces facilitate p/d or will they become filled with vehicles pausing to p/d?

Vehicle penetration

How should we manage vehicle penetration in Town Centres. Currently a lot of areas are restricted to bus and taxi traffic, this enables anybody, willing to pay, too directly access the town centre. The restricted traffic environment curbs the number of vehicles in a Town Centre but if there is a vast increase in the number of shared vehicles will these be allowed into the heart of town centres, with consequent impact on urban environments? If not, then will this restrict access for people to town centres, this would not only impact people with mobility issues but also families with buggies, toddlers and prams and also people who presently use taxis?