



Understanding the Evolution of Community Severance and its Consequences on Mobility and Social Cohesion over the Past Century

Dr Annabel Bradbury

- Halcrow
- Associate Transport Planner
- bradburya@halcrow.com

Halcrow



Structure of Presentation

A historical overview

Definitions of community severance

Concluding remarks









8819. KINGSWAY LONDON.





Courtesy of 'Streets before Cars' website







Originator	Year	Definition and meaning
Liepmann	1944	Severance of dwelling and workplace and its effect on community life
Ministry of Transport – Buchanan Report	1963	Reflected the idea that geographical areas could contain a local cohesiveness
Urban Motorways Committee	1972	The sum of the divisive effects a major urban road has on the inhabitants either side of it
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	1973	Disturbance to established neighbourhoods, social patterns, life styles and shopping patterns that have cultural and psychological impacts
Lee et al	1975	A complex social response to the presence of a physical barrier and is measured at the levels of perception, cognition and behaviour
Department of Transport	1983	The separation of residents from facilities and services they use within their community, from friends and relations and perhaps from place of work as a result of changes in road patterns and traffic levels
Highways Agency	1993	The separation of residents from facilities and services they use within their community caused by new or improved roads or by changes in traffic flows
Chinn and Davies	1995	The range of community effects from small increases in journey lengths or times through to the situation where journeys are no longer made, or alternative facilities are visited because of the additional inconvenience, delay or danger caused by the barrier or because the barrier is perceived to be impassable
Scottish Executive	2001	The positive or negative effects of a scheme on the ability to move around on foot bicycle or horseback. It reflects in particular the improvement in or deterioration of the ability of the community to cross major road or rail links and thereby reach local destinations





Why is Community Severance an Issue?

SEU 'Making the connections report' (2003) highlighted:

Large or busy roads that intersect neighbourhoods can drive a wedge through a community

Limiting people's ability or desire to travel through that area

Reducing accessibility to key services (health services, education and employment opportunities, and food shopping)

Reducing social interaction which can damage local social networks and community cohesion

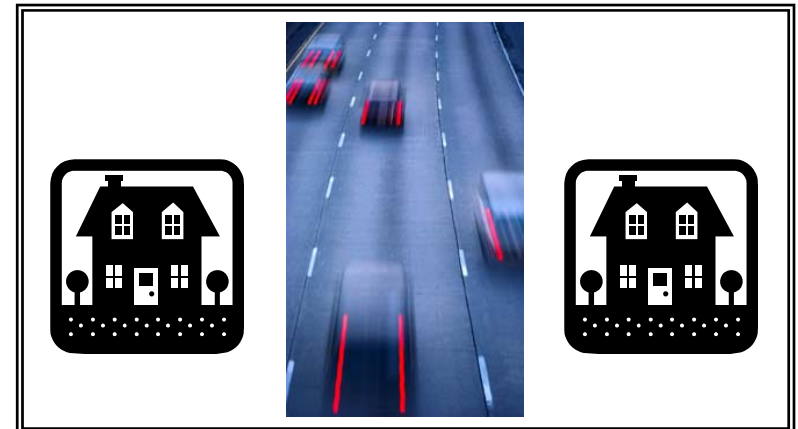
Physical Barriers

1. *Static severance:*

Transport infrastructure artificially divides area into 2 parts

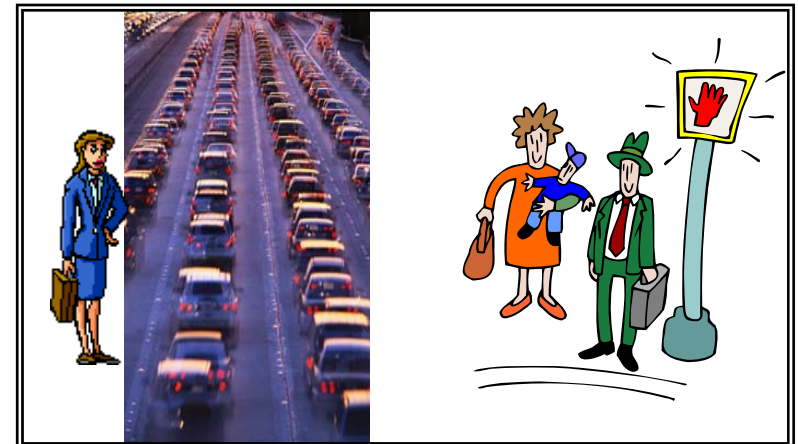
2. *Dynamic severance:*

Traffic on road causes an intermittent barrier to crossing



Physical barriers can have impact of:

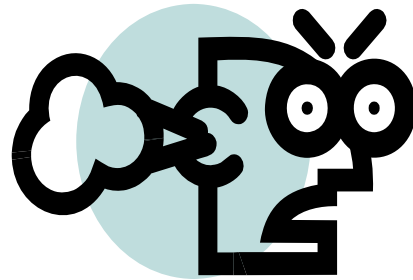
- o trip delay
- o trip diversion



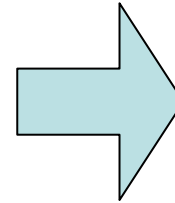
Psychological Barriers

How people feel about moving through an area:

- **Traffic noise**



- **Traffic pollution**



Can combine to produce:

- **Perceived danger**





- **Trip Suppression**





Concluding Remark

Given its history and legacy in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, community severance is increasingly being acknowledged as a principal barrier to social inclusion and wellbeing among more deprived and vulnerable neighbourhoods. The challenge now is for our governments to recognise the merits of assessing the severance impacts of transport networks on our contemporary society and to reduce the inertia effect of infrastructure that pre-dates severance concepts.



Dr Annabel Bradbury
bradburya@halcrow.com
+44 (0)20 7348 3026
www.halcrow.com

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