



Basic Principles

2.1 The Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) has given this useful definition of Home Zones:

Home Zones are residential streets in which the road space is shared between drivers of motor vehicles and other road users, with the wider needs of residents (including people who walk and cycle, and children) in mind. The aim is to change the way that streets are used and to improve the quality of life in residential streets by making them places for people, not just for traffic. Changes to the layout of the street should emphasise this change of use, so that motorists perceive that they should give informal priority to other road users.



Using the street differently.

2.2 Home Zones are based on a change in the way that people perceive the street. Motorists should feel that they have left the normal highway and have entered an area where they can expect to find people who are using the whole of the street. In essence, the Home Zone should make motorists feel they are guests in a pedestrian environment, and should drive accordingly.

2.3 Home Zones are about promoting quality of life and removing traffic barriers to neighbourliness. Although the introduction of a Home Zone can contribute to road safety, the main benefit to local people is a change in how the street can be used. Introducing a Home Zone should encourage a wide range of activities to take place in streets that were formerly considered to be principally for vehicles.

2.4 Home Zones may consist of shared surfaces, indirect traffic routes, areas of planting, and features to encourage the use of the street, such as seating. "Gateways" and signing will be needed to mark the limits of the area.

2.5 In existing streets, the demand for a Home Zone should ideally come from the local community, and the design of the changes to the street should be developed in partnership with them. This will ensure that the scheme meets the needs of the community; and will encourage residents to use the street and to take a pride in its future maintenance.

2.6 The key benefit of a Home Zone is that it turns a residential street into valued public space, and not just a place for movement.



A shared surface street in a new development.



2.7 Successful Home Zones will also:

- ❖ Reduce or remove the dominance of the car in residential streets;
- ❖ Foster a sense of community;
- ❖ Encourage a greater diversity of activity and use of the street by residents;
- ❖ Reduce social isolation, particularly amongst older people;
- ❖ Increase opportunities for active and creative children's play;
- ❖ Increase natural surveillance, deterring casual crime;
- ❖ Reduce traffic speeds significantly – to around 10mph;
- ❖ Improve the safety of residential areas, and perhaps more importantly, residents' perception of safety;
- ❖ Enable all members of the community – including children, older people and disabled people – to reclaim their local environment from the car;
- ❖ Encourage people to walk and cycle within their local area, and to nearby destinations;
- ❖ Improve the quality of the built environment; and
- ❖ Help to increase the demand for urban living.

2.8 Home Zones must be designed to meet the needs of all members of the community. Disabled people will have particular requirements, which must be taken into account.

What a Home Zone is Not

2.9 Home Zones are not anti-car but they do offer a highly effective way of reducing the impact of car use in residential areas.

2.10 A Home Zone is much more than a "typical" 20mph Zone. A 20mph zone usually has a traditional footway and carriageway. Traffic speeds are normally controlled by installing traffic calming features, such as road humps and chicanes. Within a 20mph zone, and unlike in a Home Zone, vehicles retain their effective priority over pedestrians.

2.11 Home Zones are not accident prevention schemes. Whilst there may be significant road safety benefits from converting a street into a Home Zone, this will not usually be the primary aim of the scheme. Where the objective is simply to improve road safety, it will normally be more cost effective to introduce measures such as traffic calming, or 20mph zones, to address the problem.



Extensive Community participation is essential to "retrofit" schemes.



Encouraging ownership of the Home Zone design.

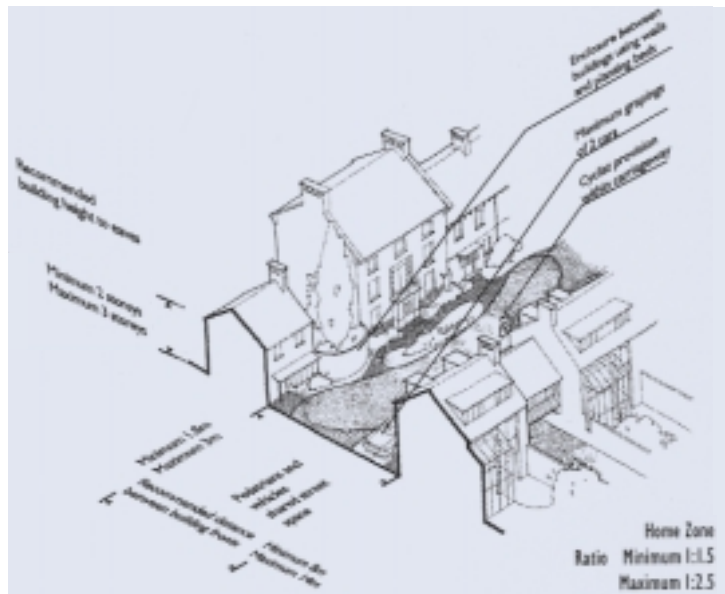
Existing and New Home Zone Streets

2.12 Home Zones fall into two distinct categories – they can involve the remodelling of existing streets to change how they are used (so-called “retrofit” schemes); or they may be delivered as an integrated part of new housing developments – “new-build” Home Zones.

2.13 Although there will be similarities between the two categories of scheme in design terms, there are important differences in the way that they are conceived, designed and delivered.

2.14 In existing streets, the sustained involvement of the community in the planning and design of the Home Zone will be essential. Extensive participation by local people in the planning and design process will enable the scheme to reflect local people’s needs and aspirations for their street; and will encourage their “ownership” of the completed Home Zone.

2.15 Home Zone streets in new developments will normally be planned and designed by developers (including housing associations) and it will seldom be possible to consult with prospective residents. It will be the responsibility of the local highway and planning authorities to consider the suitability of the proposed Home Zone scheme – principally whether it will create attractive, accessible and safe spaces that will be used by the whole community.



An example of new build proposal.

2.16 Authorities are encouraged to use the detailed guidance contained in this document when assessing developers’ proposals for new-build Home Zone schemes, within the development control process.



Hand made paving bricks in Methleys Home Zone – see Case Study 11.



Legal and Policy Framework

Details of the legal and policy framework for Home Zones are given in Appendix A.

2.17 In England and Wales the Transport Act 2000 makes provision for introducing Home Zones. These powers took effect on 1 February 2001, and give local traffic authorities a specific power to designate any road as a Home Zone, for which they are the traffic authority.

2.18 In due course, authorities will also be able to make orders covering the use of the roads (Use Orders) and speed reduction measures (Speed Orders) in designated Home Zones, subject to regulations to be made by the Secretary of State (for England) or the National Assembly (for Wales). Detailed guidance on the procedures for designating Home Zones and making use and speed orders in England and Wales will be issued alongside the regulations.

2.19 In Scotland, the powers to introduce Home Zones are contained in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001. This Act received Royal Assent on 25 January 2001 and local traffic authorities may designate any road for which they are the traffic authority as a Home Zone with a view to implementing measures for securing any of the following purposes:

- (a) to improve the safety of persons using the road or any area in the vicinity of the road;
- (b) to improve or preserve the environment through which the road runs;
- (c) to improve the facilities provided on, or in the vicinity of, the road in such a way as to bring benefits to any persons using the road (not being persons using motor vehicles), and
- (d) to any extent to implement their transport policies.

2.20 Where a road or roads have been designated as a Home Zone in Scotland, the local traffic authority is required to prepare and publish a report on the measures that they have implemented. Regulations which prescribe the procedures local authorities must follow when setting up Home Zones were due to come into force in Scotland in May 2002.

2.21 Traffic signs for Home Zones across the UK have been developed by the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions.



Start of Home Zone.



Variant of Home Zone start sign with name of scheme.



End of Home Zone.

2.22 These signs will indicate to road users that they are entering streets where drivers no longer have the right to expect people, including children, to relinquish priority to vehicles. In Home Zones there is a right to use the street for purposes other than passage, a right to drive and, for all road users, an obligation not to obstruct or deny reasonable access to premises.

2.23 The appropriate Home Zone signs should be used to mark the start and end of designated Home Zones. It is anticipated that the signs will be included in the forthcoming revision of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions, but in the meantime special authorisation for signs will be considered on a scheme by scheme basis. (In Northern Ireland, further legislative and procedural steps will be required before the signs can be used).

2.24 Usually, Home Zones will consist of adopted highways and the local traffic/highway authority will have an important role to play in guiding the design and construction of the Home Zone street. The “highway” in this context will normally include the carriageway and footways, and could also include street trees and planted areas, cycle tracks and any adopted parking areas.

2.25 Home Zone design principles can also be applied to unadopted streets. The Local Traffic Authority could still designate as Home Zones any unadopted streets that are public rights of way, even though there is no public responsibility to maintain these streets.

2.26 Home Zones are supported in a number of key policy documents, including *PPG13 Transport* and *PPG3 Housing*. Further details of current policies on Home Zones are given in Appendix A.

2.27 The next section of these Guidelines provides detailed guidance for designing Home Zones.