

Creating Safer Streets

For maximum pedestrian safety, especially for the young, the old, and the handicapped, "shared space" streets are unsatisfactory. Rather, pedestrians and moving vehicles should be separated, and where their paths have to cross, they should be at right angles to each other, to prevent most accidents.

Design procedures to achieve this by making safest use of the safest guardrail, Visiflex, are as follows:-

For new guardrail sites

1. ***From accident maps and site inspection, identify where pedestrians require safer crossing facilities.***
2. ***Decide where to install Visiflex to guide pedestrians to these crossings and to prevent them crossing diagonally. British Standard 7818 recommends "a minimum distance of 20 m in either direction from the crossing".***
3. ***For each crossing, check casualty rate for pedestrians over the length of street to be guarded by Visiflex.***
4. ***Assess reduction in casualties due to installing Visiflex as 80% of the initial rate.***
5. ***Calculate cost-effectiveness of that casualty reduction, aiming for an economic rate of return in excess of 500% per year.***
6. ***Install Visiflex. Later, carry out Stage 4 Road Safety Audit as advised by the Dept. for Transport, to check accuracy of estimates and to guide future installations.***

For existing guardrails which restrict visibility

1. ***From site inspection and accident records, identify where lack of visibility through guardrails is a hazard.***
2. ***Decide where to replace and supplement these guardrails by Visiflex to safely prevent pedestrians crossing diagonally.***
3. ***For each crossing, check casualty rate for pedestrians over the length of street to be guarded by Visiflex.***
4. ***Assess reduction in casualties due to installing Visiflex as 40% of the initial rate.***

5 and 6 as above.

The veracity of these design procedures may be checked by applying them retrospectively to sites with old, high-visibility guardrails, such as Visirail, whose accident record before and after their installation is known.

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