

COLOGNE · KALKER
STRASSE · GERMANY

CONTEXT

Kalker Strasse is a main radial road on the east side of the Rhine, which acts as an important focus for the suburban community of Kalk with intensive shopping, commercial and apartment uses. Following the opening in 1982 of a new radial road to the north of Kalk, the traffic function of Kalker Strasse was downgraded, and rebuilding was necessary when the street tramway was upgraded to “U bahn” and placed in a cut-and-cover tunnel beneath the street. The street is roughly 26m wide between buildings.

OBJECTIVES

The objective was to exploit the opportunities presented by rebuilding to improve the “town centre” function and character of Kalker Strasse, in conjunction with housing and commercial regeneration work in the Kalk district. This was to be achieved by reducing through traffic and providing greater priority to pedestrians and the so-called “staying” functions of the street.

DESCRIPTION

The former 18m carriageway (including tram tracks) has been reduced to 7m, with one lane in each direction clearly marked. Alternative routes were provided for cyclists. Turning lanes have been retained at major junctions only.



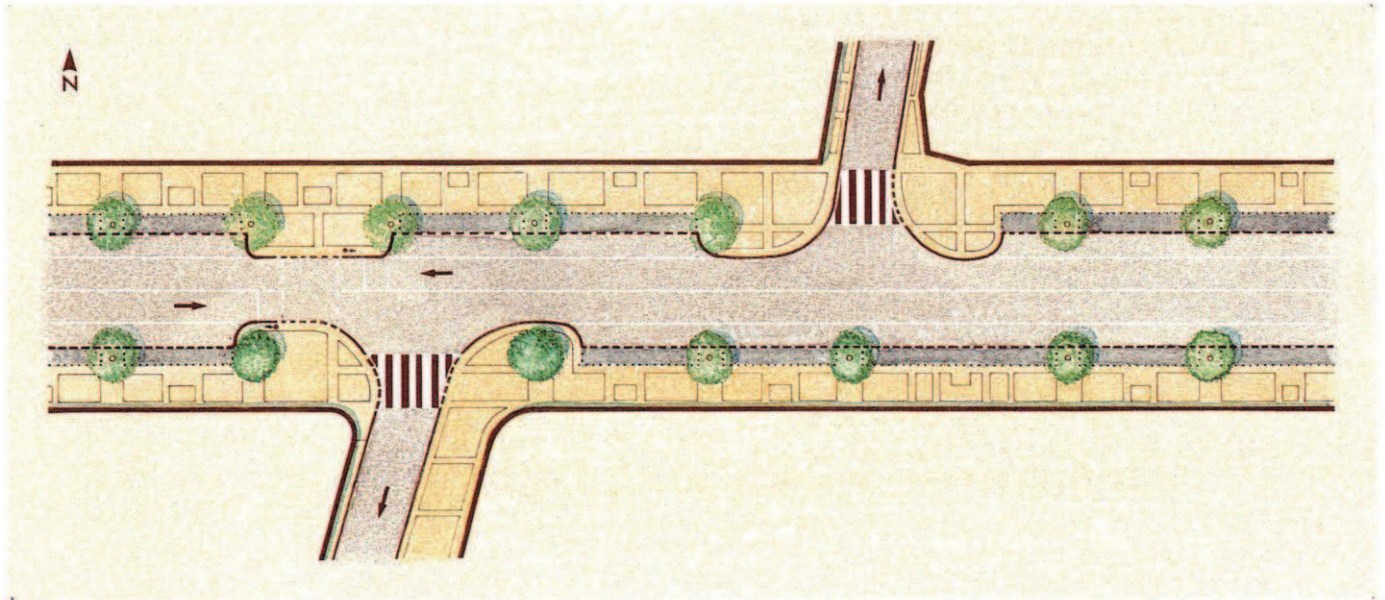
48: The carriageway in Kalker Strasse has been narrowed to a single lane in each direction, providing more space for other purposes. (Photo: T. Pharoah)

An unusual feature is a discontinuous loading lane (2.5 m) provided adjacent to the carriageway. Linear meter-controlled parking has been provided at the side (at footway level). Thus formalised double-parking has been created.

Footways were widened to a minimum of 5m, with further extensions at junctions and at signal controlled crossings.



48



Functional surfacing has been used, with asphalt for the carriageway and loading lane, and concrete tile paving elsewhere. Accentuation of the “place” has been achieved through ornamentation of the side areas and trees planted between parking spaces. The loading lane is designed to be formally (aesthetically) in the carriageway, while the parking spaces are formally part of the side (footway) areas.

Separate lighting has been provided for the carriageway and side areas, the latter being on short standards and designed to be sympathetic to the pedestrian scale and atmosphere.

Infill developments in the frontage have been designed to provide new pedestrian access ways to renovated housing areas to the rear. Pedestrian crossings are located to coincide with these access ways.

COST

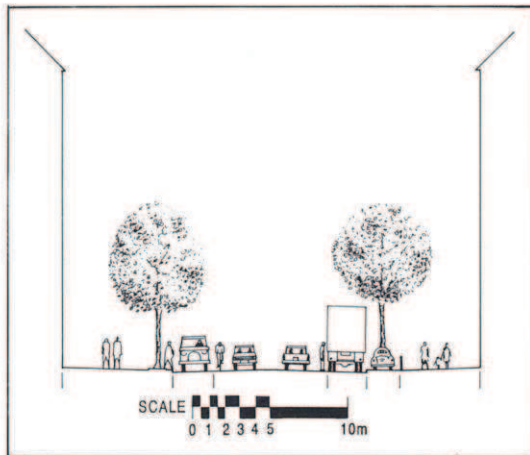
The scheme was part of the works related to upgrading the tram system, and relocating the tracks under Kalker Strasse. The cost of the traffic calming works cannot be separately identified.

ASSESSMENT

An improvement of the “town centre” atmosphere has been achieved with the building developments and a “boulevard” character has been created by the extension and ornamentation of the side (pedestrian) spaces.

Through traffic has been reduced from 27,000 to 13,000 vehicles per day.

The intensive function-mixing has led to some speed reduction in the street, especially during shopping hours when it is most beneficial.



CROSS SECTION OF FOOTWAY AND CARRIAGEWAY

As the loading lane is part of the traffic space, it is accepted and obvious that it is for short-stay only. The carriageway is clearly “outside” the pedestrian space but crossing still presents problems. All pedestrian crossings are light controlled, but are too widely spaced (up to 130 m) to prevent some pedestrians crossing at intermediate points. Accident trends have been rather disappointing and are the subject of continuing study.

The appearance and furnishing of the side areas encourages pedestrians to stay/rest in the street, rather than just hurry through as before.



49

49: Former carriageway converted to a broad pedestrian area with seating, trees, cycle racks and other features which help people to enjoy the street. (Photo: T. Pharoah)



50

50: Footways are extended at light-controlled pedestrian crossings. The short-term waiting lane between the meter-parking area and the carriageway can also be seen. (Photo: T. Pharoah)