Urban Design Interventions Towards a Bike Friendly City

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This paper’s goal is to present findings of the research project titled Bikeability – funded by the Danish Research Council – concerning the investigation of how Urban Design interventions in consolidated urban areas can promote cycling – having a special focus on alterations in the urban fabric and design qualities of the streetscape.

The research was structured as a before-after study case based research where a bike infrastructure with distinct typology – Hans Broges Gade in Aarhus (an dedicated bike lane functioning as extension of abicycle route linking the suburb to Aarhus Central station) – had data collected, analysed and compared. It was possible to identify the behavior of the cyclists before and after the intervention.

Statistical tests were applied to identify possible relations between socio-demographics (independent variables) of the sample and the respondents’ answers from the questionnaire (dependable variables). Moreover, there were other sources of data – interviews with key actors, visual analysis of the site, counting, etc.

The findings highlight important factors as such the relevance of fast connectivity, aesthetic value of the streetscape and safety for cyclists. Therefore, these three qualities are strategic dimensions of a design solution that must be taken in consideration by architects, planners and engineers. Bridging research and policy, the findings of this research project can also support bike friendly design and planning, and cyclist advocacy.