

DOI: 10.24904/footbridge2017.09367

STRUCTURES ON PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PATHS IN HISTORIC PARTS OF CITIES

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Summary

The paper demonstrates, based on the example of the topography of the historic center of the city of Wrocław, possible solutions to the problem of discomfort and decreasing pedestrians and cyclists traffic flow due to the dense buildings, usually reaching river embankments or due to busy streets. Several solutions, which enabled creation of recreational routes stretching over several kilometers in the historic center of Wrocław, running along the Odra River and other rivers, have been used to separate the recreational traffic along the rivers in Wrocław. The selected solutions, among others, have been presented in the paper.

Keywords: pedestrian / bicycle paths, historic centers; structural concepts; planning

1. Tourist pedestrian-cyclist route in the historic city centre

Throughout its 1000-year history, Wrocław belonged to the Kingdom of Poland and later it was the capital city of the independent Silesian duchy. In 1335, the city was incorporated into the Kingdom of Bohemia and, subsequently, in 1526, it became part of the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy. After the war between Prussia and Austria in 1741, Wrocław fell into the hands of Prussians and became a German city after the unification of Germany in 1871. As a consequence of the Second World War, Wrocław returned to Poland. The complicated history has caused Wrocław to become a multicultural city. Currently, the authorities of Wrocław have adopted a policy emphasizing the cultural continuity of the city's development, the effect of which are reconstructions of historic buildings and monuments ruined during the war.

The Odra River that flows through Wrocław divides into a number of arms within its historic centre, forming picturesque islands in this area. Early Wrocław, during the reign of the Piast dynasty, was developed on islands, which guaranteed security of its citizens but required construction of bridges. Numerous churches, museums and buildings housing state and university institutions are located on these islands and along the riversides. During the tourist season, which lasts all year round in Wrocław, there is an intense pedestrian and cyclist traffic along the riversides and on the islands and the Malt Island and the Sand Island make a perfect place for summer recreation and mass events. For this reason, it is essential to streamline the pedestrian-cyclist traffic routes and to separate that traffic from the urban traffic.

Based on the example of the topography of the historic center of the city of Wrocław, the pattern of the pedestrian-cyclist route, running along the riversides of the Odra river that have been adapted to fit this purpose, is presented. The following solutions, among others, have been used to separate the recreational traffic along the rivers in Wrocław:

- bringing the pedestrian traffic under bridges and placing them on cantilever structures fixed in abutments, (Fig. 1a),
- revitalization of old historic structures, (Fig. 1b),
- placing the pedestrian traffic on cantilevers mounted over the historic embankment walls, (Fig. 1c)
- construction of new footbridges in places with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic, (Fig. 1d, f).
- changing the function of old historic road bridges to footbridges, (Fig. 1f).



Fig. 1. The main engineering structures along the tourist route developed in the historic centre of Wrocław: a) the deck placed on a cantilever under the Peace Bridge, b) arch footbridge (1928), c) pedestrian route on a cantilever along the embankment of the Odra River, d) Malt Footbridge (2003), f) Tumski Bridge

2. Conclusions

Small bridges often influence the aesthetic climat and architectural value of a complex. The presented solutions applied in the development of the tourist route in Wrocław may be used in planning of similar routes in other cities.