# The street through Emily’s eyes

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| Often as professionals, we look at a design with our technical eyes. We know the design guidelines and can apply them to a task. We assume that as the design may be technically correct, it is fit for purpose. But have we missed the mark for the user experience? Yes, the provision of adding new multimodal transport facilities into existing road networks is a big challenge. With the devil being in the detail, the process of route selection, linkage of facilities along with social and network impacts has a large impact on the viability of a route or area for suitable treatments. Yet how do we know that we have considered all users?Over time projects showed that we required a special blend of assessment and technical skills to consider multimodal user needs, but also consideration of potential subconscious bias. We needed to therefore look at solutions from different angles, or different technical areas to ensure that we had a suitable solution. We asked ourselves: Do I understand the implications of the design from the other person’s perspective? Ask! An assessment with Emily gave me insight to issues that needed consideration yet had somehow been overlooked. Emily the engineer? No, it’s better to call her Emily the insightful urban designer. Emily saw things from a different perspective. Elements such as personal safety, urban form, gender, and what is right for everyone led the discussions. Emily presented a strong case on things that were not right.This process challenged me as a male engineer. How well did I really understand the safety issues that affected females? Or did I just think that I knew? Was I applying my risk acceptance as a male, assuming that it would apply to all? Did this bias affect my capacity to consider all users and influence my assessment of the design? What were the other perspectives?Through these discussions and the applications of this thinking, a new process was born. Learn how a multi-discipline team brought equity and diversity to the assessment process, resulting in a more inclusive design. |