3.6 Dedicated teen space

RECLAIMING SPACE

Campaigners such as David Engwicht have written about the need to reclaim street space from cars to once again make it available as social space, available to the full range of users of all ages. He argues that 'the more space a city devotes to movement, the more exchange space becomes diluted and scattered. The more diluted and scattered the exchange opportunities, the more the city begins to lose the very thing that makes a city: a concentration of exchange opportunities' (Engwicht 1999: 19).

Urban designers have typically interpreted these ideas in terms of 'walkability', in other words, if a city is walkable, opportunities for social interaction also develop; opportunities that will be particularly pronounced by reclaiming the existing urban fabric, as well as by reflecting these principles in the design of new areas. Prescriptions abound, but one of the simplest is Llewelyn Davies' (2000: 71) 'Five Cs':

- Connections – good pedestrian routes that connect places where people want to go;
- Convenience – direct routes and crossings that are easy to use;
- Convivial – attractive routes that are well lit and safe and that offer a varied streetscene;
- Comfortable – an adequate width of footway without obstructions;
- Conspicuousness – easy to find and follow routes with surface treatments and signs that guide pedestrians.

They conclude that the best streets are designed for low vehicle speeds that allow all users to mix safely – cars, pedestrians and cyclists. They also take the most direct routes, and therefore do not separate modes of travel in order to get users from A to B (Figure 3.7).

3.7 Shared space

Consumption space

In *Variations on a Theme Park* edited by Sorkin (1992: xiii-xv) it is argued that a new corporate city has emerged heralding an end to traditional public space. This new space is a global space, where economic phenomena cross over to society and culture. In the introduction to the book, Sorkin describes a world dominated by multinational companies, producing a standard departicularised urbanism where public space is for consumption. He argues public space is being heavily managed with an obsession on security, and that public space is at the forefront in creating a city of simulation where spaces are defined by pseudo-historic links to the past.