



The history of the „traffic corner“



Lange Strasse ('long street') and Mühlenstrasse ('mill street') were relatively equal in the Middle Ages. When the two districts of Altstadt (the 'old town', around St George's Church) and Neustadt (the 'new town', around St Mary's Church) grew together around 1325, Lange Strasse took on more importance. Lange Strasse then came to lead directly to Neuer Markt ('new market'), the town's centre. Mühlenstrasse also had greater significance before the two districts grew together, as it led to Alter Markt ('old market'), the central point of the old town at that time. So, you could say that this junction was quite important for trade in the town even centuries ago.

The history of the 'traffic corner' begins in the 19th century

A look at the historical town maps from 1859 shows how the urban infrastructure has changed over the years and the importance that the various streets have for trade and transport. The junction was formed by Lange Strasse, Mühlenstrasse, the former Scharfrichterstrasse ('executioner street') and Güstrower Strasse ('Güstrow road'). Kietzstrasse (after a person named Kietz) as we know it now did not exist back then. Scharfrichterstrasse had a tight curve leading to Alter Markt, which resulted in the access from the junction being very narrow and the 'traffic corner' developing into a real bottleneck (on the block with Mecklenburger Backstuben). Although there were only horse-drawn vehicles back then, there would still have been certain difficulties if a timber wagon wanted to get through this corner.

The 'traffic corner' in the first half of the 20th century

With growing traffic and increasing motorisation in the 20th century, this junction became more and more of a problem. At that stage, Kietzstrasse had been built without widening the very narrow access route. Part of Scharfrichterstrasse is today Richterstrasse ('judge street'), with Kietzstrasse beginning directly at the junction. Often there would be a situation where two lorries carrying trailers and driving towards each other would become so stuck that the trailers would need to be taken off so that the vehicles could drive further. Because Lange Strasse did not lead directly into Kietzstrasse and instead only into the very narrow street via a small curve around Thiemannsches Haus, there were accidents here very often. This junction developed into an accident black spot in Waren. In the 1930s, and later, too, it was mainly horse and carts that failed to make it around the curve. They then ended up

either in the shop window of Thiemannsches Haus (which was the Fürstenau fruit and vegetable dealer back then) or later in the shoe shop (called 'Schuhhaus Meier' back then). The horses were often so severely injured that they had to be euthanised. Once, in the 1960s, a bus coming out of Lange Strasse even drove into the entrance of Schuhhaus Meier. The door and its frame were propelled into the shop, though fortunately nobody was injured. Everyone left with nothing more than a fright, including the passengers on the bus who in this instance were more like prisoners. The fright was probably so great that none of these prisoners wanted to do a runner. After 1945, police officers often stood at the 'traffic corner' and made sure that traffic did not get stuck. When Mühlenstrasse and later Lange Strasse became one-way streets, the situation calmed down somewhat. It meant that Mühlenstrasse could only be used for entering and Lange Strasse for exiting from the market.

Nevertheless, the junction still remained a bottleneck. If a long heavy goods vehicle needed to drive through Waren, it was guided by the police and traversed the one-way streets in the opposite direction. This was necessary as they would hardly have stood a chance of driving through Waren's tight bends without incurring damage.

The expansion of the 'traffic corner' in 1959/60

By the end of the 1950s, the traffic issues were becoming so urgent that something had to be done. The council bought up the three properties on the corner of Lange Strasse and Friedensstrasse, and they were demolished in 1959. Consequently, the junction area could be expanded significantly. With the demolition of Thiemannsches Haus in 1971/72 as well, the junction ceased to be a bottleneck. For the people of Waren, however, it remained the 'traffic corner'.

When these buildings disappeared and Lange Strasse was able to be widened, the bottleneck was largely eliminated, even if the traffic issues at the junction were not completely resolved. On top of that, the people of Waren received an attractive, little green space in the old town centre, which elder citizens in particular were grateful for. A riverside landscape was later painted on the bare gable of building number 3 (on the left-hand side of Lange Strasse) by the master painter Fritz Dechow, something that many Waren residents will still remember. In 1982, Sieghard Bittner, a painter and graphic artist from Malchow, redesigned the gable.



In the centre is Thiemannsches Haus, on the right the bottleneck – Mühlenstrasse runs to the left and Friedensstrasse to the right (towards Schweriner Damm)



In 1977, Lange Strasse was declared a pedestrian zone from Neuer Markt

The closure of Lange Strasse to vehicular traffic became possible because a bypass (Schweriner Damm) had by then been constructed through the complex traffic solution (1974–1977). As a result, Lange Strasse had finally lost its significance as a primary traffic route, and the junction its significance as a traffic hub. In 1981, the cobbles and pavements were removed and paving slabs were installed throughout. The green area was likewise updated.

By 'banishing' fast-moving traffic from Lange Strasse, the town had now also gained a 'boulevard'. As part of urban renewal, which saw the roads being overhauled comprehensively, the 'traffic corner' also received a new design starting in 1994.



The former green area around 1980, with a painted gable towards Lange Strasse; this space was redeveloped in the 1990s and is now the restaurant Roma (as at September 2024)



A view of Mühlenstrasse around 1990 – the state bank was located on the corner. Today, Mecklenburger Backstuben is at the corner (as at September 2024)



Quelle: Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Waren (Müritz)



Touristisches Leitsystem Mecklenburgische Seenplatte - ein Projekt der Leader-Aktionsgruppe Mecklenburgische Seenplatte - Müritz gefördert aus Mitteln der Gemeinschaftsaufgabe „Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur“ in Verbindung mit Mitteln des „Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung“

