

**Submission
No 72**

**INQUIRY INTO USE OF E-SCOOTERS, E-BIKES AND
RELATED MOBILITY OPTIONS**

Name: Mr Hendrik Zeeman

Date Received: 14 July 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my concerns about the increasing number of e-bikes and bicycles being ridden on footpaths in our city. While I appreciate the efforts to promote sustainable transportation, I believe there are significant safety and usability issues that need to be addressed.

Recently, I have observed numerous instances where individuals, who appear to have limited experience riding bicycles, are navigating e-bikes and bicycles on footpaths. This has led to dangerous interactions with pedestrians, including myself. Many riders seem unaware of basic cycling etiquette and the potential hazards they pose to those on foot.

An additional area of concern is the size of many e-bikes, which are comparable to motorbikes, yet they are not licensed. This creates further safety hazards, as these larger vehicles are often ridden at high speeds on footpaths and quite often by children, significantly increasing the risk of accidents and injuries to pedestrians.

My primary concerns include:

1. The safety of pedestrians, particularly children and the elderly, who are at greater risk of accidents.
2. The lack of awareness among riders about the appropriate places to ride and the importance of sharing space respectfully.
3. The potential for increased accidents and injuries due to inexperienced riders using these e-bikes and bicycles without proper training or guidance.
4. The shared pathway on the Honeysuckle foreshore has become the preferred traffic corridor for cyclists and e-bikes travelling to and from work. They are quite often travelling at an unacceptably fast speed for a shared pathway.

I urge the Council to consider implementing measures to address these issues, such as:

- Enhanced public education campaigns focusing on safe riding practices and the importance of keeping footpaths clear for pedestrians.
- Designated bike lanes that clearly separate cyclists from pedestrians.
- Mandatory brief training or instructional guides for individuals riding e-bikes and bicycles.
- Enforcing the removal of illegal e-bikes, electric scooters and electric skateboards from roads and public places. There is absolutely no policing of this matter at the moment.
- Either banning any cyclist that are unable to proceed at a safe speed for a shared pathway and or creating a cycle lane on Honeysuckle drive which incidentally is a 30 km/hour which one would consider a safe environment for cyclists.

I was at a recent information session with HCCDC and the question was asked regarding this issue. The response was that when planning was happening no one envisaged such a large volume particularly of E-bikes.

Addressing these concerns will help ensure that both pedestrians and cyclists can coexist safely and harmoniously in our city. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response and any actions the Council may take to improve the current situation.

Yours faithfully

Henk Zeeman

Newcastle