

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

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**Date Received:** 16 July 2024

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An email to Councillors at Northern Beaches Council following persistent complaints about the increasing number of young people riding ebikes in the LGA in Feb 2023 Dear Councillors, I urge you to read the Council's Move - Northern Beaches Transport Strategy 2038 which was adopted in August 2018 and sets out policy directions for improving transport on the Northern Beaches during the next 20 years.

It is worth noting that the second theme of the Strategy relates to the adoption of cycling as an attractive alternative to car use.

Move – Northern Beaches Transport Strategy 2038 Theme 2 - Prioritise smart, active travel network improvements (through technology, end of trip facilities and way-finding signage). Expand footpath and shared path networks to improve connectivity and safety, making walking and cycling attractive alternatives to the car.

We now find that the Northern Beaches community has embraced this theme with the incredible uptake of e-bikes in recent months. E-scooters are also on the increase, however they do not seem to have the same utility as the current <https://dirodi.com.au/> e-bike craze. However, the massive e-bike uptake has alarmed many in the community, and we now find that the trend is causing some to demand police action to moderate the behaviour of the e-bike free-for-all.

It should be noted that the increase in e-bike riding has had unexpected benefits such as reduced cars on local roads and at schools and sportsfields. This achieves the Council objective to reduce car dependency and subsequent emissions.

In addition, action on the lack of bus services, including school bus capacity and in some locations parking on the NBs has become redundant as the students ride their -e-bike to and from school as well as sporting and recreational (beach) areas.

Rather than the punitive policing approach Council should instead consider getting the Active Transport Staff and Youth Workers along the relevant TptforNSW departments to consult with the local High Schools to develop a strategy for immediate implementation to address the increase in e-bike riding that would complement the strategies already existing, specifically Theme 2 above.

Educate young e-bike riders to become safe riders. Schools have previously collaborated with various authorities and offered Driver Safety education, why not e-bike rider safety?

Audit all High Schools with a view to

Determine the infrastructure available at the schools for e-bikes including but not limited to

- Adequate and secure and safe bike racks, including locations for bike helmet storage.
- E-bike battery charging facilities,
- Safe egress in and out of the school, including separating car, pedestrian, and bike access. In some schools current pedestrian gates act as a funnel and are only approximately one meter wide, not designed to allow for safe use of both bikes and pedestrians at the same time at school opening and closing times. Car access limited to driveways to carparks. Bikes, including e-bikes should have specific entry and exit locations.
- Education on riding safely on footpaths and roads in high pedestrian areas, particularly during the hours when School zone speed limits are in operation.

- Once dispersed from the school e-bike riders should be aware of the road and footpath conditions. Driver training has been a feature in schools, now e-bike rider training should be a feature.
- Schools should consult with their insurers to ascertain the risks of not providing safe egress and storage of e-bikes on the ground of their school.
- Parents should also consult with their insurers, medical and general, to ascertain they have appropriate insurance in the case of an accident, (the riders' fault or otherwise) damage or stolen.
- In consultation with the schools and riders Council should map the popular routes and adapt the cycle and shared path routes on the NBs for e-bike riders to make these routes safe for all users.

#### Other Actions

The Move Strategy and the NB Bike Plan mentions that Council will Prioritise smart, active travel network improvements through technology, end-of-trip facilities and way-finding signage.

Food and Deliveries by e-bike riders.

Council should consult with the Delivery companies and riders and map the popular and most used routes from the local hubs where food delivery companies work in the context of the above statement from the Move Strategy and Bike Plan with a view to making these routes safer for everyone. Parking, storage and charging of commercial e-bikes has now become an issue in Manly with some companies using the public spaces as permanent bike storage for their branded bikes. However, most e-bikes are owned by the riders. But the popularity of e-bikes in the area deserves further consideration by Council Active Transport staff.

Consider e-bike 'end of trip' infrastructure in the local hubs.

Management of e-bikes and e-scooters There are several locations where bikes are prohibited and there should be an immediate blitz to enforce compliance in these locations.

Manly to Fairlight walk was declared to be bike free when the so-called Manly East/West shared bike path was installed along Lauderdale Ave to facilitate bikes and ensure a safe path for pedestrians along the harbour foreshore. This stretch of the Manly to Spit walkway is now a highway of speeding bikes and scooters in the peak transport hours, morning and afternoon and again on the weekend with uncaring visitors ignoring the signs.

Marine Parade, Manly to Shelly, was declared bike free on the weekends because it is simply too busy with pedestrians on the weekends. Council should enforce this on weekends.

On the plus side at least we don't have colourful and branded e-bikes left all over the place like in the City.

Regards

Local e-bike rider