

**Submission  
No 214**

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

**Name:** Mr Paul Gilchrist

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RE: Submission to Inquiry into the use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options

Dear Chair and Committee Members of Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and the Arts,

I would like to address in part the following Terms of Reference of this Inquiry into the use of e-scooters, e-bikes (including shared schemes):

(b) opportunities to reform the regulatory framework to achieve better and safe outcomes for riders and the community

(d) opportunities to improve safety for users and the community

As a Sydney sider who does not own a car and relies on walking and public transport, I am very concerned with the safety of the community, in particular that of pedestrians, in regards to e-bike and e-scooter use. My main concerns about pedestrian safety are:

- That e-bike and e-scooter users ride their vehicles on pedestrian footpaths at dangerous speeds. For example: as a resident of the Redfern area, I have witnessed e-bike and e-scooter users riding on the footpath of Redfern Street at speeds in excess of that of the traffic on the road itself. My estimate is that they commonly exceed 40 km/h. Exiting my property on Redfern Street on to the footpath, I need to use the same caution as I would if I were stepping on to a major road. E-bike and e-scooter users, more so than riders of traditional bicycles, seem either unaware or oblivious to the fact they are not legally allowed to ride on the footpath. The danger to pedestrians is exacerbated by the fact that these vehicles achieve dangerous speeds quickly and without any physical effort on the part of the user.
- Though permitted to ride on shared pathways, a similar dangerous speed in e-bike and e-scooter users is common on the shared pathways that cross both Prince Alfred Park and Redfern Park. For example: e-bike and e-scooter riders do not slow down sufficiently at the northern exit of Price Alfred Park and Chalmers Street endangering pedestrians, particularly at morning peak times between 8:30am and 9am. The expectation is that pedestrians, which include adult commuters and high school students from Inner Sydney High School, will give way to bicycles not the other way around.
- Similarly in Redfern Park, the diagonal thoroughfare from Redfern Street to Elizabeth Street becomes at times an e-bike and e-scooter highway, particularly for food delivery e-bike riders who use this as a major thoroughfare. They do not slow down or warn of their approach but overtake people walking on the footpath at excessive speeds. I am very concerned about the safety of the many older people and children who use the footpaths. And I have been concerned for my own safety on the footpath as well.
- e-bike and e-scooter users also cross Chalmers Street at the northern of the Redfern Street exit to Redfern Park at dangerous speeds. They then do not follow signage that instructs them to ride on the road but continue at these speeds along the southern footpath on Redfern Street.
- An additional danger created by e-bikes results from the proliferation of shared scheme vehicles left in public spaces. There appears to be no regulation regarding where these hire vehicles can be placed by the share scheme companies or where they can be abandoned by hirers. Apart from the ugliness of this random littering of our public places, these hire vehicles

are often left in close proximity to pedestrian crossings of major roads. Safe pedestrian movement crossing both Regent Street and Gibbons Street in Redfern, for example, is often impeded by these abandoned hire vehicles, as is pedestrian flow in and out of Redfern Station.

These are examples from my local area but I have witnessed many such examples across the city, including an accident on the corner of Broadway and Abercrombie Street where an e-bike user sped past me and my partner on the footpath and proceeded to cross Abercrombie Street against a red pedestrian light and was subsequently hit by a motor cycle. This resulted in an ambulance being called and the injured e-bike user being taken to hospital and the police making a report. (Incident on 11 July, 2024, report written by Constable Bolton Plummer of Sydney City PAC.)

Some possible solutions:

- a state wide, state government funded, education campaign targeting e-bike and e-scooter users;
- licensing and registration of e-bike and e-scooter users similar to the licensing and registration of drivers and cars. This would make e-bike and e-scooter users easier to identify and report when they are riding dangerously and would also serve to educate e-bike and e-scooter users on the road rules;
- clearer updated signage at intersections where shared paths end so that bicycle riders are safely diverted back onto the road;
- traffic calming devices such as bollards placed at intersections where shared paths end and also on paths in parks;
- increased policing of e-bike and e-scooter users around the Redfern area, similar to that conducted in the Sydney CBD recently. I have not seen any policing of e-bike and e-scooter users in the Redfern area;
- shared scheme e-bikes should only be hired from and returned to specific locations. These locations should have racks that e-bikes are locked into. These racks should not block pedestrian movement across intersections or access to public transport entrances;
- shared scheme e-bikes companies should bid for a tender from local government or state government and be regulated closely, with strong penalties to deter the current lack of responsibility towards their e-bikes which results in unsafe situations, particularly for pedestrians.

Kind regards,

Paul Gilchrist