

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

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Submission to the enquiry into the use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options

I am a keen cyclist living in Surry Hills. I cycle at least four times a week in Centennial Park for exercise. I have never used or owned an e-bike.

Many e-bikes are really large, heavy motorbikes which can go up to 50km an hour and should not even be categorised as bicycles. The current use and abuse of such e-bikes is reckless, dangerous and anti-social.

As an example, one Sunday morning in November 2019, in Moore Park next to South Dowling Street/Fitzroy Street, a man on an e-bike crashed into me head on - he was going much too fast and was not looking where he was going. My fingers were crushed between the metal bars on the front of the basket on the e-bike and my own bicycle handlebars and I suffered two broken fingers in my right (dominant) hand. I had excruciating pain, I had to attend my GP, then have X-rays, then attend St Vincent's Hospital A & E and the Hand Hospital in the Sydney Hospital. My fingers were in splints for six weeks, I had to have time off work, my work was affected as I could not type, and I later suffered broken nail beds, I lost both fingernails and I got an infection in one finger as a direct result of this accident.

I want cycling to be encouraged and I want to see less cars on the road. Accordingly, I do not want e-bikes banned altogether, because they are, in principle, a very good thing. I would just like to see all e-bike use properly controlled, monitored and the road rules enforced.

I would like to see:

- docking stations for share e-bikes to ensure that they are not left all over the pavements creating hazards for pedestrians, wheelchair users and others;
- the police visit fast food delivery companies such as Hungry Panda and give some education sessions to their delivery riders;
- in appropriate cases, the police to prosecute e-bike riders who ride on the pavements, too fast and/or without helmets, to act as a deterrent to others.

I set out more details about the problems below.

E-bikes generally

E-bikes tend to be used and ridden recklessly and dangerously. As stated above, they are large, heavy, fast and so potentially dangerous.

I have frequently witnessed people riding them much too fast in the bike lanes, creating risks for other cyclists, and, even worse, they routinely ride them illegally on pavements. I also see E-bike riders riding around without helmets, wearing headphones, with their hands off the handlebars, and even intoxicated.

Share bikes are left all over the narrow pavements in the inner city. This obviously blocks access for wheelchairs, other cyclists, pedestrians and children's buggies. As an example, a few days ago, an e-bike was standing at the pedestrian crossing at Lang Road/Driver Avenue obstructing access to the button to press the timer on the lights at the crossing.

As stated above, e-bike use needs proper regulation, monitoring and enforcement action when the rules are broken.

Fast food delivery riders on e-bikes

This is a huge, separate, problem altogether.

These riders tend to be young foreign students who barely speak English and who have no understanding of the road rules. They may also see each other riding on the pavements and assume (rightly) that nobody is going to take action against them.

Every single day for the last two years I have witnessed numerous instances of e-bike food delivery riders riding at speed on the pavements in Surry Hills, Darlinghurst and Paddington, when they should be on the road or in the bike lanes. To date, I have lodged a total of six reports to Crimestoppers NSW about six specific instances of this kind since 23 May 2024. I have added photographs to all of these reports.

E-scooters

Please don't allow them at all, at least until the above problems are addressed and e-bikes are properly controlled.

Abigail Sheppard

15th July 2024