

Inquiry into e-mobility safety and use in Queensland

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Mackay Regional Council
PO Box 41
Mackay QLD 4740
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Att. the Mayor and Councillors,

Dear Greg and all councillors,

I am writing to formally raise concerns regarding the use of privately owned personal mobility devices (PMDs) on council pathways, specifically along the Bluewater Trail. As an experienced cyclist who has traversed this circuit multiple times per week for over 15 years, I have observed a concerning increase in the presence of high-speed PMDs—including electric scooters, skateboards, e-bikes, and mono boards—particularly along the section from Canelands to the Base Hospital.

These devices frequently travel at dangerously high speeds, my experienced estimate up to 60km/h, without warning signals such as bells, posing a substantial risk to other path users. My own experiences include several near head-on collisions, on bends, which have required swift evasive action to avoid serious accidents.

Bluewater Trail Should Be Safe for All Users

The Bluewater Trail is intended as a welcoming and enjoyable space for residents and visitors—a place where families, joggers, cyclists, dog walkers, hospital employees, and disabled mobility users can safely appreciate the outdoors, exercise, and commute without fearing for their safety. However, the current situation could discourage people from confidently using the trail, as they face the risk of encountering speeding PMDs operated recklessly. No one should feel forced to abandon the trail or modify their behaviour out of fear of an accident.

Regulatory Speed Limits and Enforcement Issues

Queensland regulations stipulate that e-scooters and electric skateboards must not exceed **12km/h on footpaths** and **25km/h elsewhere**, while e-bikes must cut motor assistance at **25km/h**. However, in practice, many privately owned PMDs exceed these limits due to modifications or lack of compliance, creating hazardous conditions for other path users.

Moreover, even when PMDs adhere to official speed limits, these speeds may still be unsafe under certain circumstances. Shared pathways with frequent bends, high foot traffic, and mixed users require cautious navigation. The combination of excessive speed, silent operation, and lack of enforcement significantly heightens the risk of collisions and injuries.

Despite these concerns, enforcement remains inconsistent. Reports indicate that penalties for non-compliance are weak compared to other states, and there is a concerning lack of enforcement regarding speeding, helmet use, and pedestrian right-of-way. This regulatory gap has led to increased safety risks, with pedestrians and cyclists frequently experiencing near-misses or collisions.

Council's Obligation to Maintain Safe Public Spaces

Local councils have a **duty of care** to ensure public spaces remain safe and accessible for all users. Under the **Civil Liability Act 2003 (Qld)**, councils must take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable risks, including those associated with unsafe infrastructure or hazardous conditions. Once a risk has been identified—such as the dangers posed by high-speed PMDs—the council is obligated to take **proactive measures** to address the issue. Failure to do so may expose the council to potential legal liability in the event of an injury or fatality, particularly if a claimant can demonstrate negligence in risk mitigation.

Community Safety and Financial Implications

Beyond personal safety concerns, there is a broader community risk—affecting pedestrians, runners, dog walkers, parents with strollers, hospital employees, elderly individuals, casual cyclists, and disabled mobility device users.

The financial implications of serious accidents are also significant.

Serious head trauma or serious spinal injuries can cost \$5-8 million dollars.

Given the likelihood of taxpayer-funded medical costs and legal liabilities, this issue must be addressed proactively.

Proposed Solutions

To mitigate the risks, I propose the following measures:

1. **Installation of pedestrian speed humps** at say 300-metre intervals along the trail. These would be designed to accommodate regular path users while discouraging excessive speeds among PMD riders.
2. **Consideration of a ban on privately owned PMDs** on the Bluewater Trail, aligning with existing path-use regulations in New South Wales.
3. **Immediate action by Council**, rather than awaiting the conclusions of the Queensland State Government's ongoing PMD inquiry, to prevent potential liabilities in the event of an incident resulting in injury or legal action.

The tragic death of a pedestrian in Perth on 6 June 2025, as reported [here](#), exemplifies the dangers posed by PMDs when operated irresponsibly.

Given the immediacy of these concerns, I urge the Council to take swift action to mitigate risks and protect vulnerable path users. Residents and visitors should feel confident and safe while using the Bluewater Trail, free from the fear of reckless PMD riders.

I look forward to your considered response on this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

Graeme Ransley