Transport and Other Legislation (Managing E-mobility Use and Protecting Our Communities) Amendment Bill 2026

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Submission to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee
Transport and Other Legislation (Managing E-mobility Use and Protecting Our Communities) Amendment Bill 2026

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Overview

This submission outlines our perspective on the proposed e-mobility legislation, drawing on the concepts of the "economy of movement" within the public realm. We strongly support the behavioural and enforcement improvements introduced by the Bill. Also, we urge the Committee to address critical gaps in state-coordinated infrastructure, road/footpath design, and speed moderation, particularly in central traffic areas.

South East Queensland represents a region that is experiencing significant increases in population density and is likely to represent 75% of Queensland's total population shortly after 2030. Greater Brisbane [Brisbane City, Ipswich, Logan, Moreton Bay, and Redland] is anticipated to accommodate 50% of Queensland's population by then also. Greater Brisbane and SEQ Region will be subject to significant intensive event activity leading up to and at the Olympic games. This will place a significant focus on driver and pedestrian safety with the prospect of significant reputational damage if pavement infrastructure standards and motor vehicle speeds are not administered effectively in key venue locations. For this reason especially, we see it as critical that planning and operational integration [between the State and Local Authorities] of infrastructure within the total road reserve is initiated as part of this important legislative initiative.

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Significant Benefits and Improvements Introduced by the Bill

The proposed legislation represents a necessary and proportionate response to a genuine public safety problem. This is a vital initial step towards formalising e-mobility as a legitimate, safe, and accountable mode of transport in Queensland.

The Bill introduces several highly commendable improvements:

- **Targeting Illegal Devices:** It introduces sweeping new police powers to seize, impound, and destroy prohibited, high-powered e-motorbikes directly off the streets, addressing a core threat to public safety.
- **Expanding Road Access:** To ensure e-mobility remains viable for commuting, the legislation actively expands road access for Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs), permitting them to be ridden on roads with speed limits up to 60 km/h. This is a strategic shift that legally encourages faster riders to transition off pedestrian footpaths and onto appropriate road infrastructure.
- **Behavioural Nudging:** Lowering the default speed limit on footpaths and shared paths to 10 km/h acts as a deliberate "behavioural nudge" to frustrate fast commuters into selecting road routes that better support higher speeds.

The Critical Need for Coordinated Infrastructure Upgrades

While the regulatory elements of the Bill are strong, the legislation does not explicitly mandate local councils to develop infrastructure plans or force them to upgrade footpaths to specific road design standards. Relying predominantly on behavioural rules, like the 10 km/h limit, without concurrently improving deficient infrastructure is not likely to achieve comprehensive safety outcomes.

Currently, many existing pavements lack the minimum desirable width and surface smoothness required for small-wheeled PMDs. If a footpath is "narrow and bumpy," even a reduced speed of 10 km/h poses a severe stability risk to PMD riders. Local councils face an "unfunded liability" to maintain these footpaths, often lacking the budget to systematically upgrade paths that are degrading faster due to heavy PMD use.

State Coordination in Road Design and Speed Limits (Focusing on Central Traffic Areas)

For the Bill's expanded road access to be successful, there must be a coordinated effort to reduce motor vehicle speeds. Recent initiatives by the Brisbane City Council (BCC) demonstrate a clear desire to reduce motor vehicle usage in the inner city, but critically, they fail to address traffic speeds.

BCC uses the **Brisbane Central Traffic Area (BCTA)** to apply area-wide parking conditions across high-demand suburbs including the CBD, Fortitude Valley, Newstead, Petrie Terrace, South Brisbane, South Bank, and Spring Hill. Furthermore, BCC has recently introduced a Tailored Amendment Package for Car Parking into the City Plan 2014, specifically redefining the parking area boundaries for the "City core" and "City frame".

These mechanisms send a clear signal that the Council is actively managing and restricting motor vehicle storage to discourage car dependency in the inner city. However, there is no corresponding indication that the Council is dealing with the high traffic speeds on these exact same streets. In constrained inner-city

locations with narrow streets and on-road parking, it is simply impossible to safely sustain 50 km/h or 60 km/h speed limits for cars while expecting them to mix with PMDs and cyclists.

We propose that the State mandates a structured reduction in speed limits that piggybacks on these council initiatives. Once councils have introduced central traffic areas (like the Brisbane Central Traffic Area) or amended their city core parking arrangements, the urban default speed limit must be automatically reduced by a minimum of 10 km/h (down to 40 km/h), and further down to 30 km/h according to local circumstances. By forcing this speed reduction within these explicitly defined parking zones, PMD riders can safely ride on the road, directly solving the footpath crisis with minimal impact on motorists.

Reinforcing the Need for a Strategic Public Realm Design Framework

The road reserve is best viewed as an 'economy of movement' where the competing interests of pedestrians, PMDs, and motor vehicles are balanced and actively managed. Currently, there is no clear step toward developing a strategic framework for managing footpath infrastructure and street furniture using standard configurations that match the hierarchy of the road network.

To rectify this, councils need to be guided or mandated to adopt a holistic Public Realm Design Framework that encompasses all aspects of the movement economy.

The State's Role and Existing Powers

Because a local council such as Brisbane has a local law covering parking areas and is willing to restrict parking but reluctant to lower speeds, the State Government's E Mobility reforms could use existing legislative powers to enforce these design standards. In particular -

Under the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*, the State can update the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to require councils to implement safe speed signs and traffic control. The State can enforce compliance with the *Queensland Guide to Road Design* by making it a mandatory condition for councils receiving state construction grants. Under the *Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994*, the State has the legislative power to issue a "State Planning Policy" to legally compel council compliance regarding safe local road speeds.

Conclusion

We commend the Government for taking strong steps to manage illegal devices and expand road access. However, we urge the Committee to recommend that these laws be coupled with a mandated Public Realm Design Framework. We propose that the State leverage its existing powers to ensure that wherever a local council defines an inner-city parking or central traffic area, the local speed limits are structurally moderated to make the 'economy of movement' safe for all Queenslanders.

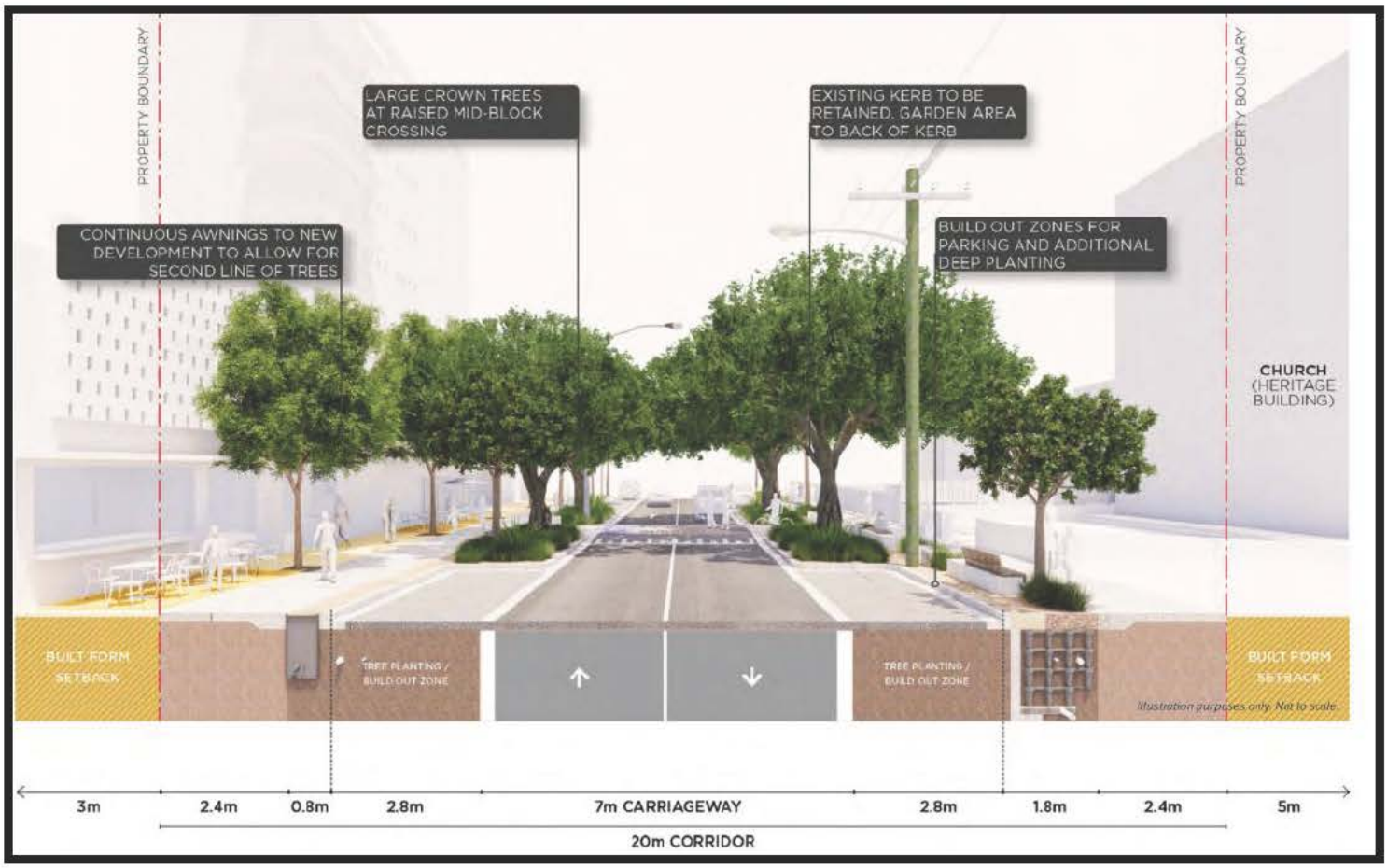
Below we present :

- **TABLE ONE:**Proposed Streetscape Typology : Seven indicative framework elements
- **GRAPHIC ONE:** Example typology for a 20m corridor
- **PHOTOGRAPH ONE**: Example of an existing Road Corridor in Spring Hill [Leichhardt Street]

TABLE ONE: Proposed Streetscape Typology : Seven indicative framework elements

Road width	**20m +**	**20m**	**8 - 15m**
1. Verge width	3.75m	3.75m	N/A (3.75m for a locality street)
2. Minimum unobstructed pavement width	2.4m	2.4m	1.5m
3. Buffer	1m	0.6m	N/A
4. Vehicle speed	50km/h	30km/h	10km/h
5. Micro-mobility	Separated bikeway	Shared on-road	Shared on-road
6. Minimum green canopy on verge	Minimum double sided canopy 75%+ canopy cover	Minimum double sided canopy 80%+ canopy cover	Minimum one sided canopy 80%+ canopy cover
7. Street furniture	Cycle and micro-mobility infrastructure, seating, bins, water fountains	Cycle and micro-mobility infrastructure, seating, bins, water fountains	Cycle and micro-mobility infrastructure

GRAPHIC ONE: Example typology for a 20m corridor



PHOTOGRAPH ONE: Example of an existing Road Corridor in Spring Hill [Leichhardt Street]