

1 Qld banning 200W e-bikes
2 Brisbane CBD BUG <brisbanecbdbug@gmail.com> 7 February 2018 at 15:10
3 To: transportandmainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au
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5 Dear Minister Bailey
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7 The Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) has become aware
of a Queensland Government consultation process regarding draft changes to the
legislation relating to the sale and use in this state of e-bikes (bicycles with a
motor that function by turning the throttle irrespective of the cyclist pedaling).
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9 Our understanding is that if adopted, the changes will effectively ban the use of
all 200 watt twist and go (throttle only) e-bikes, with the legislation to be
implemented prior to the 4 April 2018 commencement of the Gold Coast Commonwealth
Games.
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11 Apart from the lack of consultation with the broader community on this change, which
as far as the Brisbane CBD BUG understands has to this time been limited to members
of the Australian bicycle industry, the very short timeframe for this change process
is also deeply concerning.
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13 With e-bikes becoming increasingly more popular thanks to new and emerging
technologies there has been a recent noticeable growth in their usage both on-road
and along Brisbane's bikeways. E-bikes are a key factor in overcoming a number of
the reasons commonly given by non-cyclists in Australia as obstacles to them not
adopting cycling for transport i.e. "It's too hot", "It's too hilly" and "I have no
access to end-of-trip facilities". They can also assist people who, due to age,
incapacity or injury, would be otherwise unable to pedal a bicycle.
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15 Apart from the obvious negative impact on the growth of a form of sustainable
transport that should be fostered by the Queensland Government, banning e-bikes with
what would seem to be no prior notice for the public would have a substantial
financial cost to the population of e-bike owners/users who have already previously
purchased these devices.
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17 One suggestion offered about the motivation for such a change has been the
difficulty police currently may have in correctly identifying an e-bike ridden in
the public domain with an illegal motor i.e. having an output greater than the 200
watt maximum. If this is the case, simply banning all e-bikes to address deficient
government enforcement processes would be grossly unfair to the vast majority of
people with legally powered e-bikes. Such an indiscriminate approach would also
stand in stark contrast to the manner of dealing with people who illegally modify
their motor vehicles, with only the owner/user of that vehicle being penalised
rather than all motor vehicle drivers.
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19 If safety is an underlying reason for making e-bikes illegal we would welcome
provision of the data covering recent years detailing the number of crashes /
fatalities involving e-bikes with illegal motors as a demonstration that these bikes
are such a significant hazard that this entire class of bike needs to be made illegal.
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21 In closing, there should be no changes made affecting the current use of e-bikes
without appropriate community consultation. Furthermore, prior to any changes an
assessment should be made of the resulting impacts on the bicycle wholesaler and
retailers, bearing in mind that with little to no notice the businesses with stock
on hand of these bikes will be negatively exposed to losses. An assessment needs to
also be made of the impacts on the members in the community, who overnight may be
unable to continue to ride the e-bikes they purchased to use in good faith according
to the relevant legislation, who may well then be forced back into their cars or on
to overstretched and often unreliable public transport services.
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23 Yours sincerely
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