

Simon Lightwood MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

19 November 2024

Dear Simon,

Introduction of a regulatory framework for dockless e-bikes and e-scooters

I am writing to you to express my support for powers to be granted to strategic transport authorities to regulate micromobility markets and develop micromobility schemes for their areas in partnership with local authorities.

I am the Chief Executive of Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA) which is a Business Improvement District (BID) representing over 500 businesses in the West End of London. Spanning Piccadilly Circus, Piccadilly, Leicester Square, Haymarket, Jermyn Street and St Martins, the Heart of London (HoL) area contributes over £10 billion to the UK economy and attracts over 150 million visitors annually. HOLBA focusses on enhancing the commercial and cultural viability of one of London's most iconic districts through placemaking initiatives, improvements to the public realm, visitor safety and sustainability measures.

We recognise that dockless e-bikes and e-scooters have been highly successful in enabling a modal shift towards more sustainable travel in London - a measure that aligns strongly with our Net Zero Carbon Strategy. However, our member businesses and visitors to the West End have significant concerns regarding careless parking and the dangerous operation of dockless e-bikes and e-scooters, which can impair the use of pavements by pedestrians, cause hazards for those with mobility issues and visual impairments and impede the ability of businesses to operate effectively.

At present, there is no legislation which enables local or strategic authorities to manage micromobility operations and efforts to pro-actively engage operators on these issues have been largely unsuccessful, signalling the need for a regulatory framework to govern the use of e-bikes and e-scooters. These regulations should give authorities the powers to determine how micromobility vehicles are used and parked, reducing the disruption and dangers they pose to other users of the public realm.

Whilst HOLBA fully supports the introduction of a regulatory framework, we acknowledge that this will not in itself be sufficient to safely accommodate e-bikes within high density urban areas like the West End.

At present, there is insufficient infrastructure to accommodate the nearly 40,000 e-bikes currently operating in London. Public realm space is finite, and there is an urgent need to increase roadside provision in the form of parking spaces to facilitate parking infrastructure without removing foot space for pedestrians. A holistic reimagining of the high street is required, including creation of roadside parking bays for dockless e-scooters and e-bikes that reflect Londoners' changing travel behaviour. Any regulation should also enable strategic transport authorities to determine a financial charging regime to support authorities to manage the scheme and deliver the necessary supporting infrastructure.

A regulatory framework also relies on effective enforcement to be impactful. The Metropolitan Police and local councils therefore need proper funding to address issues such as inconsiderate e-bike parking and riding, which can contribute to low-level antisocial behaviour. With dedicated resources for enforcement, a regulatory framework can successfully enhance pedestrian accessibility and safety.

We therefore support the call from London Councils (and a number of other London-based governmental and non-governmental organisation) to grant powers to strategic transport authorities to regulate micromobility markets and develop micromobility schemes for their areas in partnership with local authorities. For regulation to be effective, however, it is essential that additional measures be taken to provide sufficient infrastructure to accommodate e-bikes and e-scooters and increase enforcement capacity within the police and local authorities.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely



Ros Morgan
Chief Executive