

Policy Type	Corporate
Function	Environmental Management
Policy Owner	Manager Environment and Health Services
Policy Contact	Coordinator Public Health and Environment
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## Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate the approach that Council will take to the management of flying-fox roosts within the Burdekin Shire and specifically within an Urban Flying-Fox Management Area (UFFMA).

## Background

The *Flying-Fox Roost Management Guideline* produced by the Department of Environment and Science provides that a local authority may provide a statement of management intent on how it intends to manage flying-fox roosts within its area.

Over eighty different species of bat occur throughout Australia. Most bats have a diet that consists of insects; however, several species feed primarily on flowers and fruit and are known as fruit bats or due to their fox-like faces, flying-foxes.

Flying-Foxes are amongst the world's largest bats (often referred to as megabats) weighing as much as one kilogram with a wingspan stretching over one metre. Flying-Foxes are also highly adapted for activity at night, with large eyes particularly suited for recognising colour at night and a strong sense of smell; essential senses for finding their food.

Flying-Foxes are classified as protected wildlife in Queensland under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

Four species of *Pteropus* species flying-fox are native to mainland Australia and occur mostly in northern and eastern temperate and sub-tropical coastal areas, these include:

- The Little Red Flying-Fox (*Pteropus scapulatus*);
- The Black Flying-Fox (*Pteropus alecto subsp. gouldii*);
- The Grey-headed Flying-Fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*);
- The Spectacled Flying-Fox (*Pteropus conspicillatus*).

Of these, the Little Red Flying-Fox and the Black Flying-Fox are commonly found in the Burdekin Shire Council (Council) local government area.

Table 1: Flying-Foxes found within the Burdekin Shire region.

Name	National Status	State Status	IUCN Status
Little Red Flying-Fox	Not listed	Least Concern	Least Concern
Black Flying-Fox	Not listed	Least Concern	Least Concern

Flying-Foxes typically congregate in camps/roosts made up of a large number of individuals, however, may also roost singly or in small groups. Camps are found in a range of vegetation types and are usually close to water and in an area that has a dense understorey. The activities of flying-foxes sometimes bring them into conflict with residents. Primary concerns include noise, odour, droppings, feeding on fruit trees and orchards, human health and disease.

The *Nature Conservation (Animals) Regulation 2020* gives the Council an 'as-of-right' authority to destroy a flying-fox roost; drive away, or attempt to drive away, a flying-fox from the roost; or disturb a flying-fox in the roost; within an Urban Flying Fox Management Area (UFFMA) and only in a way that complies with the flying-fox roost management code. An UFFMA encompasses all land that is zoned as urban in a local planning scheme and is inclusive of a one kilometre buffer (Appendix 1).

The as-of-right authority does not mean that Council must take action if a roost is located within an UFFMA, but gives Council the ability to undertake non-lethal management actions to manage a flying-fox roost, without the need to apply for a Flying-Fox Roost Management Authority (permit).

Outside an UFFMA, Council requires a flying-fox roost management permit (FFRMP), available from the Department of Environment and Science. A non-council applicant requires a FFRMP irrespective of the location of the roost.

## Scope

The scope of this policy is limited to management actions to control or mitigate flying-fox roosts within an UFFMA.

All management options considered by Council will be in accordance with the relevant codes of practices issued by the Department of Environment and Science as follows:

- The Code of Practice – Ecological sustainable management of flying-fox roosts.
- The Code of Practice – Low impact activities affecting flying-fox roosts.
- Flying-Fox roost management guideline.

Local known habitat sites (current and historical) include the following:

- Lloyd Mann Park, Home Hill.
- Kidby's Gully, Home Hill.
- Fourth Street/Twelfth Avenue, Home Hill.
- Arch Dunn Park, Tenth Street, Home Hill.

## Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- to reduce conflicts between flying-fox roosts and the community; and
- to improve the coordination and planning of flying-fox roost management activities within Burdekin Shire Council UFFMA.
- Adopt and implement recommendations from Flying fox management plan subject to funding.

## Definitions and Abbreviations

**UFFMA** An Urban Flying Fox Management Area (UFFMA) encompasses all land zoned as urban in a local planning scheme and is inclusive of a one kilometre buffer.

## Policy Statement

Management intent for flying-fox roosts located on Council controlled land and within an UFFMA

Where Council owned or controlled land is within an UFFMA and is inhabited or affected by flying-foxes and their presence “significantly” impacts residents or the community, Council will consider, after the completion of a Flying-Fox site assessment, appropriate non-lethal measures to manage flying-fox roosts.

Non-lethal measures include the following:

- destroy a flying-fox roost;
- drive away or attempt to drive away, a flying-fox from a flying-fox roost; or
- disturb a flying-fox in a flying-fox roost.

Where a roost is located on public land and there is a suitable buffer from private residences (i.e. roads, mangroves) and is not causing damage to any Council asset, Council will not seek to relocate such roosts and will seek to manage such roosts to minimise disturbances to the colony. This will help avoid these animals colonising in less suitable areas.

Council will take pre-emptive action to prevent flying-fox numbers building up on non-traditional roost sites.

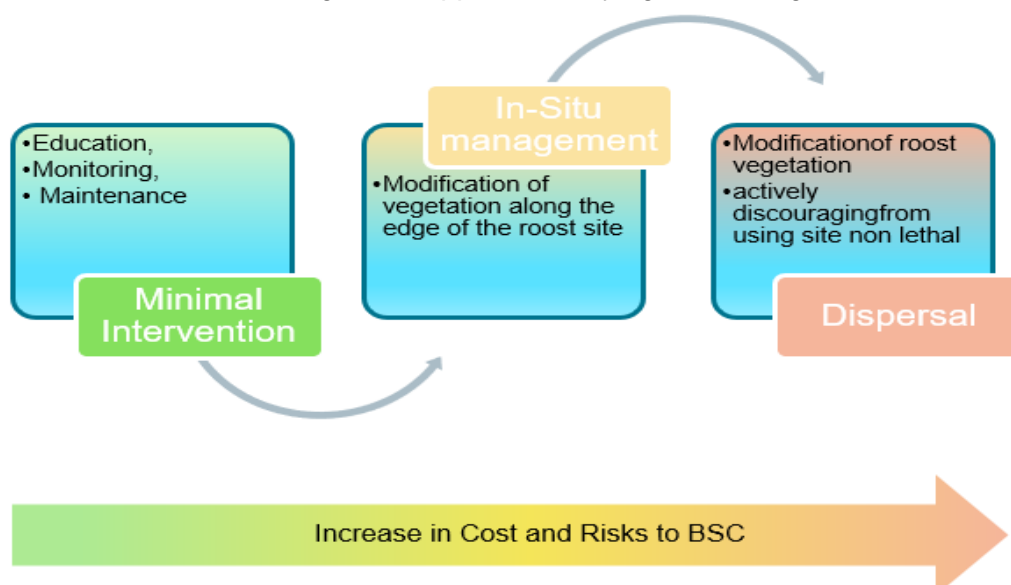
All management options considered by Council will be in accordance with the relevant code of practices and legislation.

Choice of management options for a flying-fox colony will depend on the characteristics of the site and the level of potential conflict at that location.

In order to assess the level of potential human/flying-fox conflict, aspects such as the distance to the roost site and therefore the likelihood of conflict, the number of residences impacted, the impact of Council infrastructure and the size of the flying-fox camp and its potential to expand need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Management options that Council will consider will be determined on the outcome of a flying-fox site assessment and will be based on risk and cost to Council. This is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Burdekin Shire Council management approach to flying-fox management.



Management intent for flying-fox roosts located OUTSIDE an UFFMA

Council does not have an as-of-right authority for the management of flying-fox roosts outside of an UFFMA. All enquiries regarding roosts outside of an UFFMA will be referred to DES.

Management intent for flying-fox roosts located on private land

Landowners are responsible for managing the flying-foxes on their own property.

In urban areas where flying-fox colonies naturally occur on private property or through no action of Council, Council can provide advice and will defer action to the local landholder in compliance with relevant legislation.

In general, Council will not support actions to relocate flying-fox roosts from rural areas, given the probability of transferring the problem to other landholders/communities.

Private property owners who wish to undertake low impact activities, mowing, mulching, weeding and minor trimming of trees, on their own land may do so as specified in the '*Code of Practice – Low impact activities affecting flying-fox roosts*'.

For any activities not considered "low impact" but intended to manage flying-fox roosts located on private property, the landowner may apply directly to the Department of Environment and Science for a Flying-Fox Roost Management Authority. Any dispersal activity on private land will be at the expense of the landowner.

## Legislation

*Nature Conservation Act 1992*

*Nature Conservation (Animals) Regulation 2020*

## Related Documents

Reference Number	Document Title
<a href="#">External website</a>	Code of Practice – Ecological sustainable management of flying-fox roosts
<a href="#">External website</a>	Code of Practice – Low impact activities affecting flying-fox roosts
<a href="#">External website</a>	Flying-Fox Roost Management Guideline
	SOP – Flying-Fox Management

## Document History and Version Control

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## APPENDIX 1

## BURDEKIN SHIRE UFFMA MAP

