



**Statement of  
Management Intent:  
Flying-fox  
Roost Management**

**2022**



## 1. Purpose

Council recognises that flying-fox roosts in urban areas can cause health, economic and amenity concerns amongst neighbouring residents and communities. We are committed to managing flying-fox roosts in a way that balances community values with flying-fox conservation and welfare.

The purpose of this Statement of Management Intent (SoMI) is to articulate the approach that Gladstone Regional Council will take in managing flying-fox roosts in the Gladstone Region.

## 2. Flying-foxes in the Gladstone Region

The Gladstone Region is home to three species of flying-foxes: the black flying-fox, little red flying-fox and grey-headed flying-fox. All species feed on the nectar and fruit of various native forest species and play a key ecological role as a long-distance pollinators and seed dispersers.

Flying-foxes are social animals that roost in communal camps during the day. These areas serve as resting places and are important for social interaction, mating and rearing of young.

Flying-foxes appear to be more frequently roosting and foraging in urban areas, likely due to a combination of habitat clearing, human encroachment, drought and the availability of year-round food sources in urban areas. This has resulted in increased interactions and conflict between humans and flying-foxes.

## 3. Authority to manage flying-fox roosts

All flying-foxes are native species and are protected under the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NC Act). The grey-headed flying-fox is also afforded additional protection under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Under the NC Act, local governments in Queensland have an as-of-right authority to undertake roost management of flying-fox roosts in designated Urban Flying-fox Management Areas (UFFMAs). While the NC Act authorises local governments to undertake certain actions to manage flying-fox roosts, Council is not obligated to do so.

UFFMAs for local government areas are defined by maps produced by the Department of Environment and Science (DES). Within UFFMAs, local governments are authorised to use non-lethal management actions in accordance with the Code of Practice: Ecological sustainable management of flying-fox roosts. Outside of UFFMAs, a local government requires a flying-fox roost management permit (FFRMP) from DES.

All persons are authorised to undertake low impact activities at roosts in accordance with the Code of Practice: Low impact activities affecting flying-fox roosts. Low impact activities include weeding, mulching, mowing and minor tree trimming. Management of roosts by private landholders outside of this code require a FFRMP irrespective of the location.

## 4. Flying-fox roost management intentions and considerations

A key objective of Council's flying-fox management approach is to increase community understanding of flying-fox behavior and ecological role, and support residents to self-manage impacts from roosts. Council will achieve this by:

- Providing comprehensive and accurate information to the community on flying-fox ecology, behaviour and options available to reduce impacts from roosting and foraging flying-foxes;
- Respond to customer enquiries relating to flying-foxes and direct to appropriate contacts and resources as required;
- Participate in research and knowledge sharing opportunities to enhance understanding and address knowledge gaps in flying-fox ecology; and
- Monitor flying-fox roosts occurring on or partially on Council-controlled land and contribute data to the National Flying-fox Monitoring Program.

### 4.1 Flying-fox roosts on Council-controlled land

Council will coordinate the management of flying-fox roosts on Council owned or State land placed under the control of Council pursuant to the *Land Act 1994* (i.e. Council-controlled land) within and outside the UFFMA.

Council recognises that the risk and cost of flying-fox roost management increases with the level of intervention. We intend to take an integrated approach to flying-fox roost management, guided by a Regional Flying-fox Management Plan. The level of conflict of each roost site will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and appropriate management actions determined. Factors that Council will consider in determining appropriate management actions include:

- The type and level of conflict presented by the roost and associated impact on community health, safety, amenity and wellbeing;
- The cost of management actions, contribution and funding sources;
- The risk to flying-fox conservation and welfare, particularly if flying-foxes are rearing their young or in a period of population stress; and
- The likelihood of success. For example, whether dispersal would result in flying-foxes relocating to a site of greater conflict with the community.

Where a flying-fox roost occurs on a combination of Council-controlled and either State land(s) or private land(s), Council will undertake appropriate in-situ management actions (i.e. actions that retain the roost in its established location) on parts of the roost that occur on Council-controlled land only. Where dispersal or other actions affecting the entire roost are considered, Council will engage with the relevant landholder/s to negotiate implementation of roost management actions. Costs relating to the management of the flying-fox roost will be the responsibility of both Council and the relevant landholders, proportionate to land ownership. Management actions and costs must be mutually agreed prior to the application for or implementation of any permit or action.

Flying-fox roosts occurring on Council-controlled land outside of UFFMAs will be managed in accordance with the Regional Flying-fox Management Plan and will require a FFRMP from DES.

Neighbouring residents or leaseholders seeking to undertake roost management actions on Council-controlled land must obtain a FFRMP and other relevant permits, and seek permission from Council. Council will not support management activities that will risk flying-fox welfare and/or worsening impacts to other residents or areas of the community. Residents are not permitted to undertake unauthorised roost management actions on Council-controlled land.

#### **4.2 Flying-fox roosts on other land**

Council will not carry out management actions at flying-fox roosts located solely on State land(s) or private lands(s) or a combination of the two. Council may provide information to residents and landholders about flying-foxes, asset protection and management options. Where required, Council will also refer residents to relevant Queensland Government departments such as DES, Queensland Health and Biosecurity Queensland. Council will not support management activities that will risk flying-fox welfare and/or worsening impacts to other residents or areas of the community.

#### **5. Further information**

Please refer to the below resources for further information:

- Gladstone Regional Council - <https://www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/wildlife#flyingfoxes>
- Department of Environment and Science – <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/animals/living-with/bats/flying-foxes>
- Queensland Health - <http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/14/bats-and-human-health>

#### **6. Review**

This SoMI will be reviewed every 3 years or as determined by a resolution of Council.