

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set the strategic direction for Council's response to flying fox colonies across the region.

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

1. Little Red Flying fox (*Pteropus scapulatus*),
2. Black Flying fox (*Pteropus alecto* subsp. *gouldii*),
3. Grey-headed Flying fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), and
4. Spectacled Flying fox (*Pteropus conspicillatus*).

Of these, the Little Red Flying fox and the Black Flying fox are commonly found in the Whitsunday Regional Council (Council) Local Government Area (Table 1).

Name	National Status (EPBC Act)	State Status (NCA)	IUCN Status
Little Red Flying Fox	Not listed	Least Concern	Least Concern
Black Flying Fox	Not listed	Least Concern	Least Concern

Table 1: Flying Foxes found within the Whitsunday region.

Flying foxes typically congregate in camps/roosts made up of a large numbers 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.

Changes to the Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1992 (QLD) in 2013 has given Council an 'as-of-right' authority to manage, including disperse, flying fox roosts within an Urban Flying Fox Management Area (UFFMA). 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).

## Scope

This policy is applicable to flying fox roosts located within an Urban Flying Fox Management Area UFFMA, within the Whitsunday Region.

## Guiding Principles

1. Council management intent for flying fox roosts located on Whitsunday Regional Council controlled land and within an UFFMA:
  - 1.1 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 (Appendix 2), appropriate nonlethal measures to manage flying fox roosts.
  - 1.2 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.
  - 1.3 All management options considered by Council will be in accordance with the relevant code of practices.

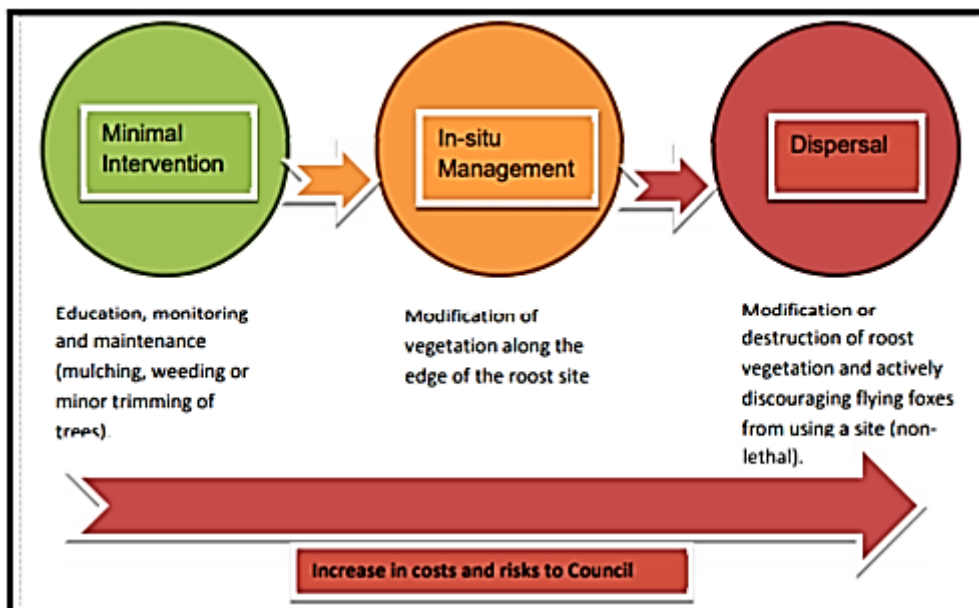


Figure 1: Council's Management Approach to Flying Fox Management

2. Council management intent for flying fox roosts NOT located on Whitsunday Regional Council managed land and contained within an UFFMA (ie. on private land):
  - 2.1 Council will coordinate the management of the flying fox roost on private property in consultation with the landholder(s).
  - 2.2 Where private 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 (Appendix 2), appropriate non-lethal measures to manage flying fox roosts.

2.3 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.

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

2.5 Council will pay for the costs associated with the Council approved flying fox roost management actions on private land within the UFFMA.

3. Council management intent for flying fox roosts located OUTSIDE an UFFMA:

3.1 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 DEHP.

### Related Policies and Legislation

*Local Government Act 2009*

Local Government Regulation 2012

*Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1994*

Whitsunday Regional Council Flying Fox Management Plan

Appendix 1 - Whitsunday Regional Council UFFMA's

Appendix 2 - Whitsunday Regional Council Flying Fox Site Assessment

Appendix 3 - Whitsunday Regional Council Flying Fox Complaint Approach

### Definitions

**CEO** refers to the Chief Executive Officer of the Whitsunday Regional Council appointed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*.

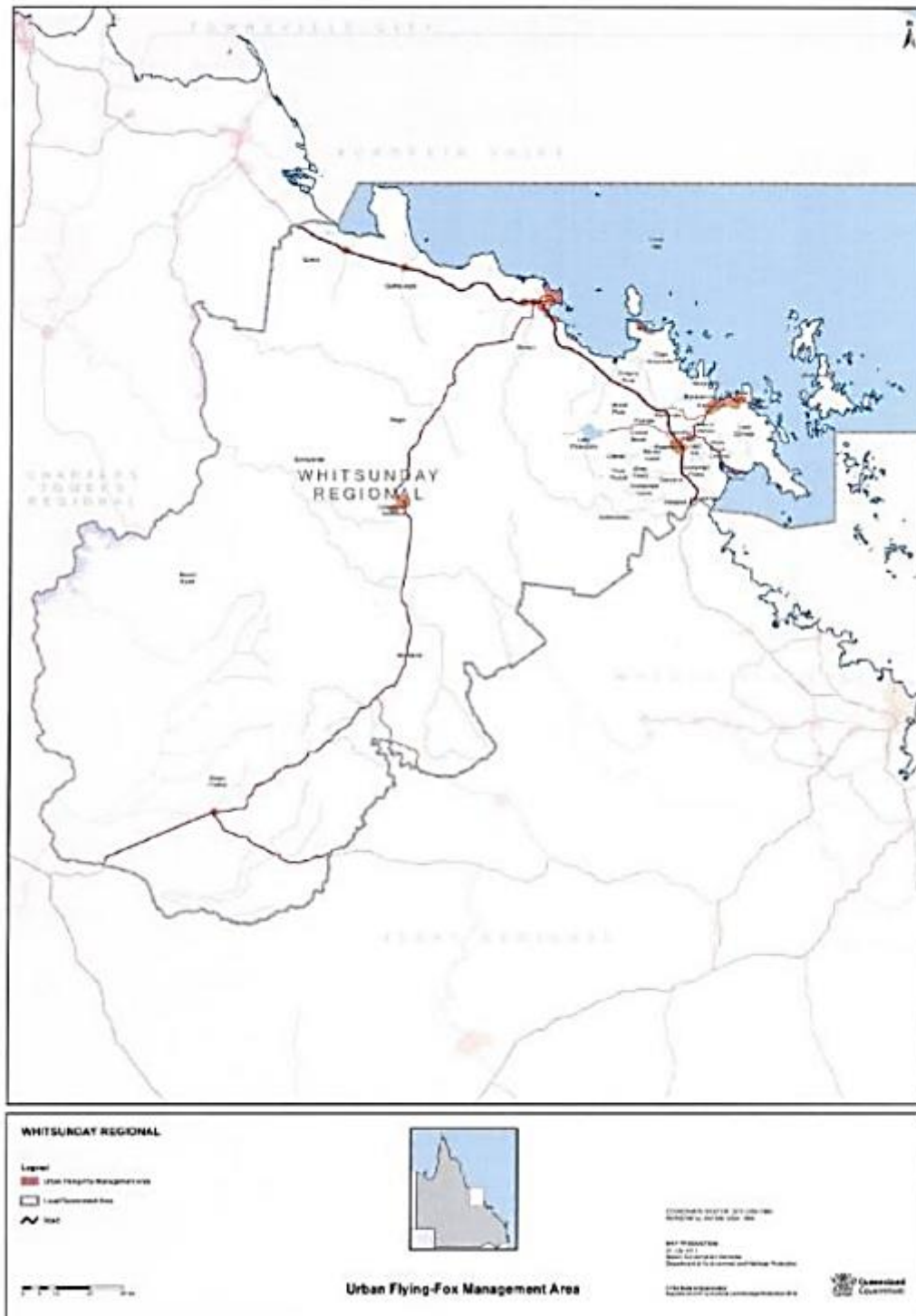
**Council** refers to the Whitsunday Regional Council

**Employee** refers to any employee, contractor, volunteer etc. of the Council

**UMFFA** refers to Urban Flying Fox Management Area - encompasses all land zoned as urban in a local planning scheme and is inclusive of a one-kilometre buffer.

Appendix 3 - Whitsunday Regional Council Flying Fox Complaint Approach

Appendix 1 - Whitsunday Regional Council UFFMA's





<b>STRATEGIC POLICY:Community Services</b>	
<b>Flying Fox Management Policy</b>	
<b>Endorsed by Council</b>	<b>11/12/2024</b>

**Flying Fox - Site Checklist**

**LOCATION OF FLYING FOX ROOST (INCLUDE MAP IF NEEDED) .....**  
 .....  
 .....

**FLYING FOX SPECIES. ....**

**INSPECTION OFFICER ..... DATE .....**

**SIGNATURE .....**

**Site Assessment Process**

**Part A - Pre-Checklist**

Flying fox roosts are extremely dynamic and can change quickly. It is for this reason that it is important to have a good understanding of the Flying fox population dynamics to make a good judgement about possible future management actions. Part A, helps to gather a good understanding of the flying fox population and can be used to monitor the population over a period of time.

**Part B - Site Risk Assessment**

Part B helps to make a decision whether a Flying fox population should be managed. It identifies whether any risks are associated with the Flying fox roost and whether a more in depth evaluation is required.

**Part B - Scoring**

- Yes = 1
- No = 0

If the total score for Part B of the site inspection is over 4, Whitsunday Regional Council must undertake an evaluation of the site and determine the most appropriate management approach.





**STRATEGIC POLICY:Community Services**

**Flying Fox Management Policy**

**Endorsed by Council**

**11/12/2024**

*Appendix 2 - Whitsunday Regional Council Flying Fox Site Assessment*

Management approaches will be in line with Whitsunday Regional Council's Statement of Management Intent		
<b>Part A: Pre-Checklist</b>		
Item	Consideration	Assessment
1	Has the full perimeter of the flying fox roost been walked around?	.....
2	Has a population count been undertaken for the site?  Species #1 ..... Count ..... Species #2 ..... Count .....	.....
3	Has the population been counted in the past? If so, when .....	.....
4	Have GPS locations been taken for the site? GPS Coordinates .....	.....
<b>Part B: Site Risk Assessment</b>		
1	Does the Flying fox roost have a noticeable noise impact to the surrounding community? If so, explain .....	.....

**STRATEGIC POLICY:Community Services**

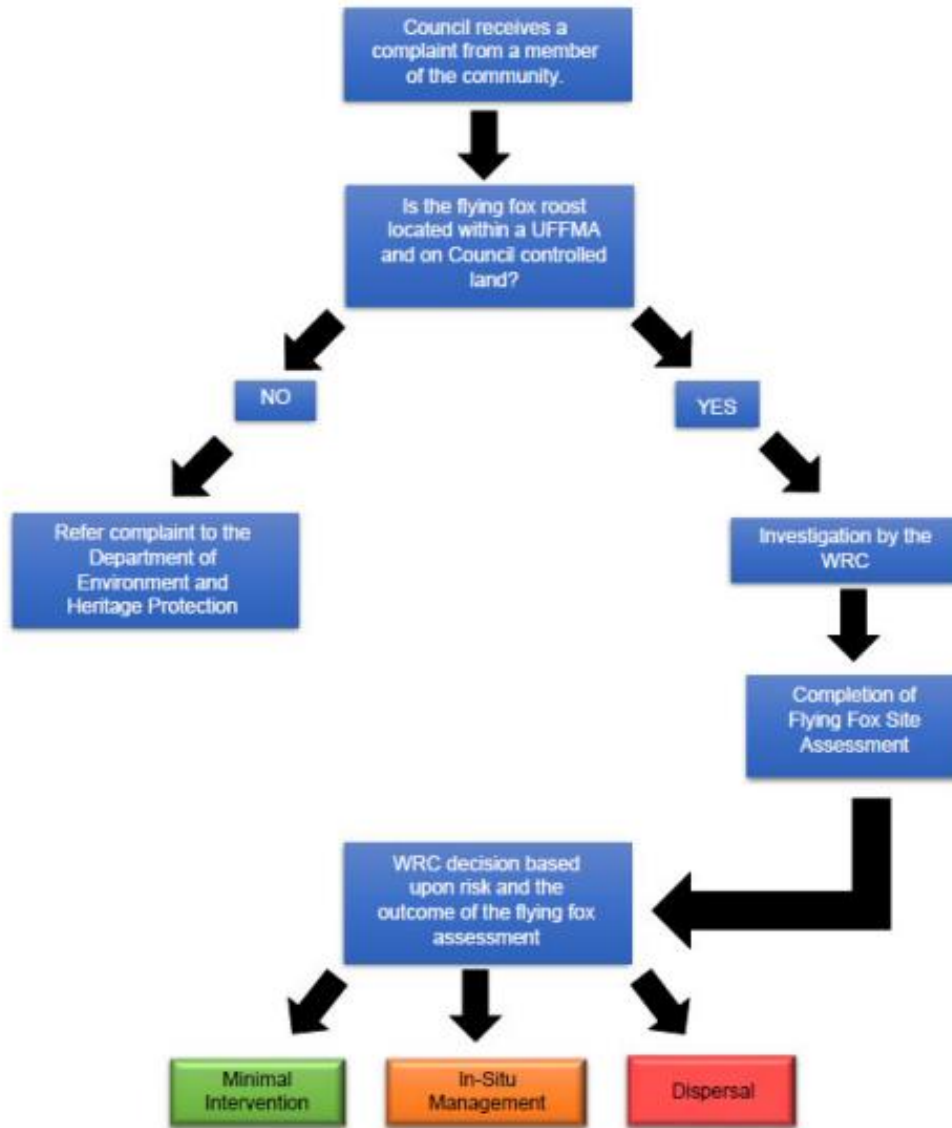
**Flying Fox Management Policy**

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**11/12/2024**

2	<p>Does the Flying fox roost have a noticeable odour impact to the surrounding community? If so, explain</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
3	<p>Does the Flying fox roost have a visual impact to the amenity of the surrounding community? If so, explain</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
4	<p>Are the droppings from the Flying fox roost impacting the surrounding community and/or located within close proximity of an animal watering point? If so, explain</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
5	<p>Is the Flying fox roost impacting the surrounding vegetation? If so, explain</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
6	<p>Is the flying fox roost within close proximity of a habitable place and/or community infrastructure? If so, explain</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
Score		

*Appendix 3 - Whitsunday Regional Council Flying Fox Complaint Approach*



COUNCIL POLICY			
Date Adopted by Council	11 December 2024	Council Resolution	OM2024/12/11.6
Effective Date	11 December 2024	Next Review Date	8 September 2021
Responsible Officer(s)	Coordinator Natural Resource Management and Climate	Revokes	LSP_C&ENV_15
Public Consultation: Yes / No			