

# **Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report**

## **NORTHERN BEACHES FLYING-FOX CAMP MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Consultation period: 21 October 2022 to 20 November 2022**

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# 1. Summary

This report summarises community and stakeholder feedback that was sought as part of the public exhibition of the draft Northern Beaches Flying-fox Camp Management Plan (CMP) (Ecosure 2022) between 21 October 2022 and 20 November 2022. The CMP aims to manage issues associated with flying-fox behaviour whilst ensuring flying-foxes and their ecological services are conserved. It focuses on three camps located on Council-managed land:




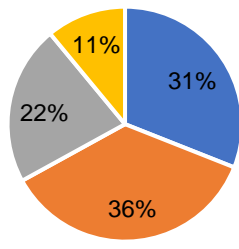
- Balgowlah – Burnt Bridge Creek Reserve (Balgowlah camp)
- Avalon – Cannes Reserve (Avalon camp)
- Warriewood Wetlands (Warriewood camp).


Feedback received on the draft CMP indicated a high level of interest in flying-fox conservation, with 36% of submissions highlighting the ecological importance of flying-foxes, and 20% of submissions stating opposition to any dispersal of the camps. In contrast, some submissions raised concerns about impacts to residents living near a camp, with 20% of submissions advocating for dispersal and/or culling of flying-foxes to address these impacts.

Feedback received was used to inform development of the final CMP, with changes made to the plan where appropriate to address the issues raised.






Overall, the feedback received highlighted the diverse range of perspectives on flying-fox management, and the importance of a considered management approach in balancing the needs of the community and the natural environment.

## 1.1. Key outcomes

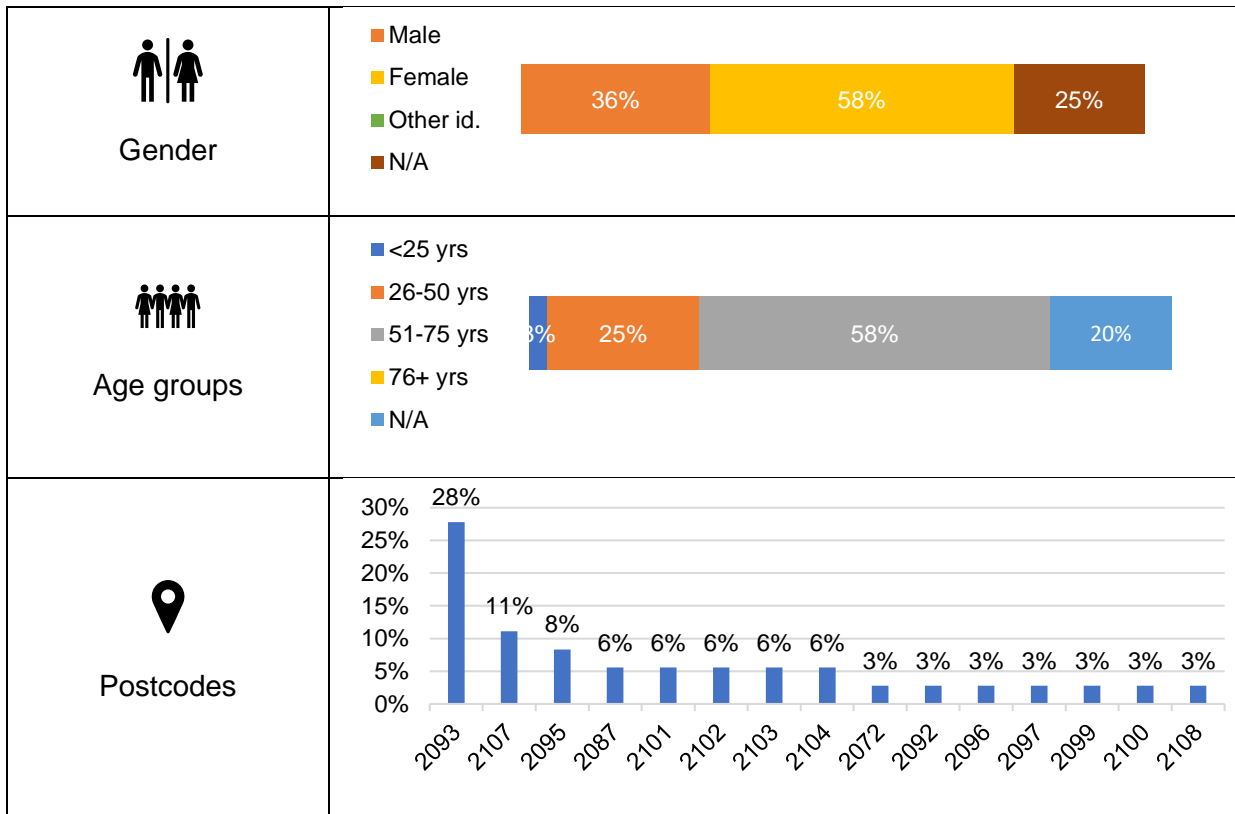
 <p>Total unique responses</p>	<h1>44</h1>	
 <p>How responses were received</p>	<p>Submission form</p> <p>Other responses (email/letter/phone calls)</p>	<p>Completions: 36</p> <p>Number received: 8</p>
 <p>Online sentiment question:</p> <p><b>Do you support the Draft Northern Beaches Flying-fox Camp Management Plan?</b></p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Yes</li> <li>■ Yes, with changes</li> <li>■ No</li> <li>■ Neutral/Prefer not to say</li> </ul> <p>Total online responses = 36</p> <p>*The above graph only represents sentiment provided in the online submissions, email submissions did not respond to a sentiment question.</p>	

 Feedback themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flying-fox conservation</li> <li>• Dispersal/nudging of camps</li> <li>• Impacts to residents</li> <li>• Community education</li> <li>• New/expanded buffers</li> </ul>
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## 1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 977	Visits: 1294	Average time onsite: 1min3sec
 Print media and collateral	Mailout: Yes  Site signs used: Yes		Distribution: 480  Number of signs: Seven
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2 editions  Council (weekly) e-News: 2 editions		Distribution: Approx. 22,000 subscribers  Distribution: Approx. 160,000 subscribers
 Face-to- face/Online sessions	Webinar with Q&A  Telephone bookings		Registrations: 23 Attendance: 15  Bookings: 2
 Key stakeholder engagement	Meeting: NSW Department of Planning and Environment		

### 1.3. Who responded<sup>1</sup>



## 2. Background

The grey-headed flying-fox is a threatened species which plays a vital role in spreading the seeds and pollen of our native rainforests and woodlands. Despite their ecological importance, living near a flying-fox roost (or ‘camp’) can be challenging, with nearby residents often experiencing conflict due to impacts such as noise, odour and faecal drop.

The Flying-fox Camp Management Plan (CMP) seeks to achieve a balance between the ecological and legal requirements to conserve flying-foxes with the needs of residents living near a camp. It sets out management actions to be implemented over a five year period to achieve the following objectives:

- Minimise conflict and reduce impacts to residents living near a camp
- Improve understanding of flying-foxes and their ecological role
- Conserve flying-foxes and their habitat
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and policy.

A draft CMP was prepared by ecological consultants Ecosure following consultation with Council, a review of previous literature, and site inspections. The draft CMP was exhibited on Council’s YourSay page for a period of 28 days between October and November 2022. This Community Engagement Report provides a summary of feedback received during public exhibition. Feedback received was then used to inform development of the final CMP, with changes made to the plan where appropriate to address the issues raised.

<sup>1</sup> Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

The final CMP has been prepared to align with the NSW Government's Flying-fox Camp Management Policy and Camp Management Plan Template. These documents set out a hierarchy of actions which may be included in a CMP, with management to focus on the use of 'lower level' actions before more intensive interventions are considered:

- Level 1 – community education, subsidised items/services to residents (e.g. window glazing, air conditioners, car wash vouchers, dryers, air purifiers), routine reserve management (e.g. path maintenance, mowing, weed control, revegetation).
- Level 2 – removal/trimming of roost trees to create buffers between flying-foxes and residents, noise attenuation fencing.
- Level 3 – 'nudging' of flying-foxes away from conflict areas, partial or total dispersal of a camp

The CMP proposes to manage the three camps *in situ* (i.e. in their current location), focussing on Level 1 and Level 2 actions in the first instance. Level 3 actions are also discussed in the plan as a potential 'last resort' option if previous management actions are considered to have been ineffective.

### 3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities
- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values.

### 4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement was conducted between 21 October 2022 and 20 November 2022 and consisted of a series of activities that provided opportunities for community and stakeholders to contribute feedback.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Matrix (2017). Key stakeholders were informed of the public exhibition period by mail and included:

- residents and owners of properties close to a camp
- local resident associations
- sensitive receptors identified in the CMP
- peak conservation bodies and wildlife rescue groups
- the Aboriginal Heritage Office
- adjoining councils

Project signage was installed at the three flying-fox camps, while the project was promoted to the broader community through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels.

A project page<sup>2</sup> was established on our Your Say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format, including a snapshot summarising the draft CMP and some frequently asked questions.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/flying-fox-camp-management-plan>

Feedback was captured through an online submission form embedded onto the Your Say project page. The form included a question that directly asked respondents for their level of support on the proposed CMP. An open-field comments box provided community members a space to explain or elaborate on their support, not support or neutral sentiment, as well as any other feedback they wished to contribute.

Email and written comments were also invited and contact details provided on the page.

We offered one-on-one telephone appointments via Microsoft Bookings where people could book in to speak with the project manager on the telephone or online via Microsoft Teams.

We also invited people to register and join us on for a presentation by our consultants at Ecosure and Council staff, followed by a Q&A. We ran this session online as a Teams event and uploaded the recording of the session on the project page afterwards for people who had not had the chance to attend.

#### **4.1. Reaching diverse audiences**

A thorough stakeholder mapping exercise was completed to identify and understand the needs of the whole community.

It was determined for this project that it was particularly important to hear from residents near the camps, businesses and organisations identified as 'sensitive receptors' in the plan, (e.g. schools and health care agencies), and wildlife care and rescue organisations.

We sent letters and emails to these stakeholders, as well as to resident groups in the three camp areas.

### **5. Findings**

Feedback received during public exhibition highlighted the diversity of perspectives and opinions which exist in relation to flying-fox management and conservation. Submissions were provided by residents and owners of properties located near one of the camps, conservation groups (e.g. WIRES, Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society), the Warriewood Residents Association, and general community members.

A total of 44 submissions were received, in addition to formal feedback from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). The majority of feedback was obtained from residents located in Balgowlah (37%), followed by Avalon (13%), and Manly and Narrabeen (both 7%).

Consultation indicated a high level of interest in flying-fox conservation, with 36% of the 44 submissions highlighting the ecological importance of flying-foxes, and 20% of submissions stating opposition to any dispersal of the camps. In contrast, another commonly raised issue was conflict with flying-foxes and the impacts being experienced by residents living near the camp, with 20% of submissions advocating for dispersal and/or culling of flying-foxes to address these impacts.

Key themes identified across the submissions (in approximate order of frequency) were:

- The importance of conserving flying-foxes and their ecological role
- Impacts of the camps on residents
- Dispersal or 'nudging' of camps, with some opposing this action and others supporting
- Support for further community education about flying-foxes
- New/expanded buffers, with some opposing this action and others supporting.

Specific issues which were raised included support for subsidy programs to assist in mitigating impacts to residents, concerns about the impact of dispersal and buffers on flying-foxes, the importance of increasing public understanding of flying-fox conservation, the need to address perceived health risks associated with camps, and opposition to the Balgowlah camp being designated as a 'Nationally Important Camp'.

Some submissions recognised the impact on residents and subsequent need for conflict mitigation measures, though emphasised the importance of prioritising flying-fox welfare when undertaking any on-ground works.

In relation to dispersal/nudging (Level 3 actions), some submissions called for dispersal/nudging actions to be removed from the CMP entirely, while others requested immediate dispersal of a camp/s or culling of flying-foxes to address ongoing impacts to residents.

Overall, the feedback received highlighted the diverse range of perspectives on flying-fox management, and the importance of a considered management approach in balancing the needs of the community and the natural environment.

**Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations**

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Flying-fox conservation	The ecological role of flying-foxes and the importance of conserving them	The plan acknowledges the ecological role of flying-foxes and seeks to manage the camps <i>in situ</i> (i.e. in their current location) in the first instance. This includes revegetation with appropriate roost species in appropriate areas.
	Concerns about increasing numbers of flying-foxes in residential areas	While monitoring indicates that numbers at the three camps are declining or stabilising, the plan proposes actions to mitigate the impacts of flying-foxes on residents. The plan also discusses the factors causing flying-foxes to move into urban areas (e.g. habitat clearing elsewhere).
Dispersal / nudging (Level 3 actions)	Opposition to any Level 3 actions and requests to remove references to Level 3 actions from the plan	The plan proposes to manage the camps <i>in situ</i> but also discusses Level 3 actions as a potential 'last resort' option should Level 1 and 2 actions be ineffective. This is consistent with the hierarchy set out in the NSW Flying-fox Camp Management Policy.
	Support for Level 3 actions to be immediately implemented at one or more camps	
Impacts to residents	Concerns about impacts to residents living near camps e.g. noise, odour, droppings	The plan proposes to support residents through a grant program subsidising items such as double glazing, air conditioning, pressure washers, dryers, car covers and detailing and shadesails. The plan also
	Support for subsidy programs to assist residents in mitigating impacts	

		allows for additional measures such as odour/vegetative buffers.
Community education	Support for further community education initiatives to highlight ecological role of flying-foxes	Improving awareness of the complexities around flying-fox conservation and management is a key focus of the plan. Proposed actions include additional online resources and educational public events.
New/expanded buffers	Requests for expanded buffers at the Avalon and Balgowlah camps	In response to resident feedback, the appropriateness of expanding existing buffers or creating new buffers was assessed. Due to the presence of Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) at Avalon and Warriewood, it was determined that existing buffers should be maintained at these camps. At Balgowlah where vegetation is not a TEC, a new action to consider expanding the eastern buffer (subject to further assessment of impacts and flying-fox behaviour) was considered justified, given the high density of residential development on the eastern boundary.
	Opposition to any new or expanded buffers at any camp	



## Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses\*

### A. Online submissions

No.	Submission <sup>3</sup>
1	If dispersal is rarely successful and has significant impacts on these threatened species, then it should not be an option at any camp. Bats are suffering enough impacts with the impacts of climate change and habitat destruction. The last remaining camps should be protected and neighbouring residents need to accept the impacts of nature on their amenity.
2	Flying Foxes are vital pollinators, I am glad to see the council trying to take a fair approach for our largest flying fox. Australia has such a poor history conserving our threatened species and we have driven them here through land clearing etc - I feel community education is vital. As a rate payer I am happy for council to use resources to advise / assist closest residents where necessary - maybe some means test?
3	Council needs to support wildlife co-existing with residents.
4	The flying foxes live here too, if residents don't like them they should move, not terrorize the flying foxes and uproot them from their habitat. Anyone who complains about nature should leave a place where nature flourishes.
5	I think the flying-foxes camps are one of the few natural areas left in our area (specifically Balgowlah), and the management plan is a balanced approach to ensuring their able to live in their natural habitat while keeping locals happy. I support the plan and believe maintaining flying-fox camps is essential for biodiversity and connectedness with nature.
6	The bats are a protected species and are quite special. However, their numbers in suburbia are out of proportion and they are difficult for humans to live closely with (noise, stench etc). Unfortunately, they need culling in suburban areas.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Way more habitat restoration required across all of the Northern Beaches for flying foxes (and for all indigenous flora and fauna)</li> <li>- Totally opposed to "Level 3 – 'nudging' of flying-foxes away from conflict areas, partial or total dispersal of a camp". Along with bush clearing for "development" Level 3 is the rapid road to extinction.</li> <li>- Whining residents who complain about "noisy" and "smelly" and "destructive" flying foxes, cockatoos, possums, owls et al are living in the wrong place and should be encouraged to leave the area, and I speak as someone who is visited by these fabulous animals every day and night. They should move to Summer Hill or Newtown (where I used to live 25 years ago before moving to Avalon), where there are lots of restaurants and concrete and no trees or animals to worry about except tom cats and feral cars</li> </ul>
8	I think this Camp Management Plan is good in supporting and caring for the Flying-fox colonies as well as supporting the affected residents. Hopefully with a big enough effort Level 3 would not need to be implemented, which doesn't sound effective at all with a 90% recolonising rate.
9	Bats are flying rats. They should be wiped out not protected.

\*Personal details and inappropriate language have been redacted where possible. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.

<sup>3</sup> Some people only answered the sentiment question in the online submission form and did not provide further comments.

10	<p>In regards to the Balgowlah Road camp. It seems that a lot of trees in that wooded area have died or been destroyed and the bats are closer to the road, and in the trees at the roadside. This does not make a very safe area to walk through on the footpath, or indeed on the foot path that runs through the area. There are so many bats on the trees. I cannot see how these are protected as there are so many of them and the smell in the area is disgusting especially when it rains.</p>
11	<p>The Draft NB Flying-Fox Camp Management Plan was an interesting and informative read - thank you - I learnt a lot about these interesting creatures.</p> <p>It's really important that the colonies/camps be managed sustainably and with zero harm to the flying foxes so that residents can co-exist with these incredible little creatures. We are so lucky to have these super-pollinators in our urban environment and when they visit to feed on and near my property on the NB- it is a wonderful experience to observe. Whilst I understand and empathise with residents who may live nearby these camps and experience inconvenience, education should be an absolute No. 1 priority - not only for these residents, but for the rest of the community. I am fully supportive of Council assisting affected residents with modifications to their properties. For residents - and hopefully there are not many - who are against any interventions and just want the flying foxes gone with any means whatsoever - perhaps encourage the residents to move to an area where there is no wildlife to bother them. I would also consider supporting Council to purchase the most extremely/detrimentally affected properties if owners who lived in the property well before the colony was established can't find positive ways to co-exist. Any landowner who has purchased a property in the affected areas since the establishment of a colony should not be compensated, other than with reasonable modifications.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p>
12	<p>I support most of these ideas EXCEPT the maintenance of current BUFFERS between the residents and bats.</p> <p>I live in [address removed] Balgowlah Road, I am of the opinion the Bats roosting trees need to be pushed/cut back to move them more IN TO the creek area and perhaps a tiny bit away from the foot path areas more(you have previously done little removing, but more could be done)</p> <p>The sound from the Bats during the breeding season can get somewhat loud from them "NATTERING" loudly at night time.</p> <p>If the trees are moved, they MOVE, simple plan and logic to manage them better. Yes it may temporarily disturb them, but they would adjust to such changes. You don't live in close proximity to these Bats, some people do.</p> <p>Imagine how Bad it is for unit block 84 Balgowlah Road which is EVEN closer to the Bats. Just something for you all to consider in regards to management of the Bats.</p>
13	<p>I'd just like to draw Council's attention to the fact that the proposed Beaches Link tunnel stands to have a devastating effect on the flying fox population in Balgowlah.</p> <p>I strongly believe it is our responsibility to maintain and preserve the natural environment for successive generations, including protecting endangered species. The Beaches Link Tunnel construction and operation will endanger the protected grey-headed flying foxes at Burnt Bridge Creek.</p> <p>The EIS prepared for the Beaches Link tunnel stated that 'substantial base flow impacts at Burnt Bridge Creek are also expected during the operational phase with up to a 96 per cent reduction being modelled.' (EIS, Appendix O, page xi). It then goes on to admit that 'this could impact ecosystems reliant on the water within these creeks.' (EIS, Appendix N, page x). One example (and there are many) of the native fauna reliant on that water is the Burnt Bridge Creek grey-headed flying fox camp.</p> <p>The grey-headed flying fox (<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>) is a threatened species, classified as</p>

	<p>vulnerable, and subject to protection both at a state and national level. Grey-headed flying foxes are classified as a 'landscape-managed species' and a targeted strategy for managing their survival has been developed under the NSW Office of Environment &amp; Heritage's Save Our Species program. The program recognises that landscape-managed species such as the grey-headed flying fox are 'subject to threatening processes that generally act at the landscape scale (e.g., habitat loss or degradation)'. I would suggest that the Beaches Link Tunnel construction site at Balgowlah Golf Course constitutes a 'threatening process at a landscape scale' in this context.</p> <p>Looking specifically at the impact the tunnel construction will have on the water in Burnt Bridge Creek (which is a 79 per cent reduction in baseflow at the end of construction (EIS, chapter 17, p49) and a 96 per cent reduction in flow after 100 years of operation (EIS, chapter 17, p57)), note that 'alteration to the natural flow regimes of rivers and streams and their floodplains and wetlands' was listed as a 'key threatening process' on Schedule 3 of the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995. The impact that the tunnel project will have on Burnt Bridge Creek, as it is described in the EIS, would clearly be described as 'altering its natural flow regime', therefore presenting a 'key threat' to Balgowlah's vulnerable grey-headed flying fox population. Therefore, I would suggest that the tunnel contravenes the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.</p> <p>It is up to us to preserve and protect this threatened species. We cannot let the Beaches Link tunnel proceed.</p>
14	<p>I have had a read of the draft plan. Our family has lived in close proximity to Gunyah Reserve for 12 years now. The draft plan looks the same as what has already been done for the last 12 years with not a lot of relief for the residents surrounding the reserve. The numbers of the Flying fox appear to be unchanged. The noise levels are unchanged, the smell is unchanged, the disrupted sleep is unchanged. We were told by the animal welfare organisation leaders at the last and only dispersal that we should move if the flying fox colony is such a problem, it's not as simple as just being able to move, enormous costs come with moving. Level 3 is what the council should be looking at actioning, as far as our family is concerned Level 1 and 2 have already been actioned with little success. We have an air conditioning unit that was installed last year and received funds towards that, but that still was money out of our pocket \$3000 plus ongoing costs. We have also watched the littoral forest that we loved, continue to die as the flying foxes kill the trees. Whilst we understand the flying foxes serve a purpose for colonisation of plants and more, in previous meetings we had been advised that the colony was too big for the littoral rainforest that is Gunyah reserve and we are witness to that. Trees that were large and thriving and now non-existent or only sticks that are no longer alive. Thank you for your consideration to do more and to assist the residents as well and the rain forest.</p>
15	<p>I didn't read it. You need to allow the bats to live in the wetlands at Warriewood as so much of their habitat on the Northern Beaches has been cleared for housing. You need to support the residents that live near the bats residence and inform potential residents (ie house buyers and renters in the area) that they will choose to live near a wildlife sanctuary where the wildlife has priority so that new residents don't have any reason to complain about the wildlife that lives in the wetlands at Warriewood.</p>
16	<p>Just leave the Flying Foxes alone instead of being pro development &amp; cramming as many people into the Northern Beaches as possible &amp; destroying &amp; harassing the wildlife!!</p>
17	<p>I understand the implications of flying fox camps near residential areas, however, as humans are pushing all wildlife further away from their natural habits into extinctions Council MUST be totally mindful when undertaking the management of Flying Fox camps and comply with ALL threatened species conditions.</p>

18	<p>I live adjacent to the Balgowlah colony. I love the bats and I support this management plan. Personally, the only challenge I face is the noise, so I would welcome any strategy that assists in that regard, provided the colony is not displaced. For many years I have wanted to upgrade my windows with double-glazing as this has been recommended as the best source of noise mitigation. I was encouraged by the following Appendices reference to the positive response to double-glazing...</p> <p>"When offered, double-glazing windows was popular amongst residents and was able to achieve a 65% reduction in flying-fox noise (Mo &amp; Roache 2020). Furthermore, in a study by Pearson and Cheng (2018), it was found using infrastructure such as double-glazing windows significantly reduced the external noise level measured inside a house adjacent to a camp. This finding was supported by post-subsidy surveys undertaken by Port Macquarie Hastings Council that showed that double-glazed windows were rated as being more effective in mitigating impacts than any other subsidised option (e.g. high pressure cleaners, clothesline covers, shade cloths etc.) (Reynolds 2021)."</p> <p>..so I believe this is something that would make a significant difference given the close proximity of the colony to the residence.</p>
19	<p>The Management Plan is flawed because it only studies the flying foxes and not their health impacts on Residents. Without research on transmission of viruses, infection, disease, psychological impacts etc, on residents, Council has ignored its duty of care and leaves itself open to future legal action. The risk of health impacts of the flying foxes on residents is such that relocation or dispersal measures must be implemented now.</p>
20	<p>I know as a resident of [address removed] -I can tell you the influx of bats was already an issue before 2004 that we residents were addressing. There was a small colony of 7 male bats and locals were trying to disperse them due to the noise. We had kept this colony for many years from increasing and unfortunately we were made to stop. The camp exploded and suddenly we've found over the years that the numbers continue to increase and continue to cause us stress. These bats are not as nomadic as one thinks. Cannes Drive is a paradise for these species - protected from the wind, lush vegetation and an abundance of food nearby. Noise, odour, faecal droppings, damage to vegetation, reduction of other species, health risks, sleep deprivation, anxiety and stress. The mating season in march is horrendous, followed by the birth of the pups in Oct/Nov. We have a nursery outside our bedroom window and the scent left by the females is revolting. They leave their babies in the Cocos Palms which grew from earlier seed dispersion thanks to the bats. Whose responsible for the removal of these palms. We certainly didn't plant them! After it rains the smell is disgusting and this recent increase in rainfall has taken it to a whole new level. Any visitor into the reserve e.g council members, bush regenerators must be vaccinated for ABLV, HeV - yet we residents who live with these creatures in close proximity everyday have never been offered vaccinations. We are just told how to deal with them using own protective attire. Noise levels reach from 89-91 decibels at times based on a private study I had organised and presented to council. Similar noise levels shut down a building site yet nothing can be done to support us except to wear hearing aids. A kindergarten nearby to Gunyah Park many years ago had to be shut down due to the closeness of the bats and you don't see many children playing there now. My kids are now 30 and 28 and we used to play down there on a regular basis when they were small. It used to be full of the local kids and was a valuable asset to many homeowners. It's so sad to see it unoccupied. When we first moved into our property in 1988 it was full of a diverse number of species. Our friends from overseas could watch the Sugar Gliders at night and embraced the beautiful birds which roosted nearby. Now our backyard is covered in weeds that return quickly no matter how well maintained. The cabbage tree palms which we love are full of bats and 'pine-applying' them hasn't really worked. We are renting our property at the moment and I know our tenants are at times overwhelmed by the noise and smell. Rental prices need to accomodate these issues as well. One bonus is that we have been travelling and we don't have to deal with the noise and smell at the moment; however, we are coming back and I am hoping that finally after 25 years of unsuccessful results in reducing the bats impact on residents your CMP Level 1-3 (especially 3) might prove successful. We were offered a \$500 'gift voucher' while we were away that we couldn't utilise. I do NOT believe that this gesture compensates us adequately. It's actually rather embarrassing considering how much we have suffered. I'm looking forward to hearing more about how this CMP will prove more successful than everything else that has been suggested in the past.</p>

12 November 2022

**Northern Beaches Flying Fox Camp Management Plan 2022 - Community Feedback**

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are the owners of a block of [REDACTED] Balgowlah which is adjacent to Burnt Bridge Creek Reserve and are directly impacted by the Balgowlah Flying Fox Camp.

As previously noted with council, a 50m buffer (as a minimum) in urban settlements should be implemented, so we would like for this to be achieved. Currently, Planning Industry & Environment has allowed a 30m buffer between the camp and [REDACTED]. The usefulness of a buffer to mitigate odour and noise impacts generally declines if the camp is within 50 metres of human habitation (SEQ Catchments 2012). Planning Industry & Environment **MUST** consider extending this buffer even further. Research has already been undertaken and the results were published in SEQ Catchments 2012. There is still an additional 20 meters of buffer to be achieved to reach this 50m buffer target (as a minimum). There are approximately 30 tenants living in [REDACTED] block and approximately another [REDACTED] therefore 50 tenants just on that side of the reserve.

It is noted on page 10 of the Northern Beaches Flying-Fox Camp Management Plan DRAFT R2 JULY 2022 that the Balgowlah Camp has 45 residential dwellings (including unit blocks) within 50m of the camp area. That would mean that there are hundreds of residents here that are impacted by this colony and thus strong reason to create this 50m buffer (as a minimum). The maximum camp extent on page 11 (Figure 3) is still too close to resident's properties.

A great concern is that on page 13 it states that this camp should be treated as a Nationally Important Camp. If this occurs then Manly Council/Northern Beaches Council will be held accountable for this as it let the issue and mismanagement of Burnt Bridge Creek Reserve Flying Fox numbers get out of control. It has been over a decade since the Flying Foxes made themselves present, and the owners of [REDACTED] have made many attempts along with neighbouring residents to council to address this serious issue, which ultimately fell on deaf ears. The number of Flying Foxes in the area was more manageable to reduce when council was first notified of them in the area, however no practical measures were undertaken by council to create a buffer and address resident's issues. If the site was to become a Nationally Important Camp, then it would be construed that Northern Beaches Council will become weakened in power and ultimately the site deteriorating with the potential of large influxes of Flying Foxes Roosting in the area, thus destabilising the peace and enjoyment of the local residents. Council should be strongly opposing this suggestion of Nationally Important Camp due to its legal exposure it could face.

It was not until recent years that Ms Kristie King (Biodiversity Officer Northern Beaches Council) has made a significant impact by addressing the issue within Council and the State Government. She also assisted with obtaining Licensing to create a buffer (which has notably assisted with mitigating odour and noise impacts), and reaching out for Funding Agreements. We gratefully thank her for her assistance in the past few years, however, more ongoing maintenance and pragmatic solutions to reduce the number of Flying Foxes still needs to be achieved by council on this site.



Doing a comparison of Historical Flying Fox Camp counts at Balgowlah Vs Avalon indicate that the Balgowlah site requires more attention in reducing the numbers as compared to Avalon. Recent figures show that Balgowlah is still in the thousands whilst Avalon is under a thousand.

It must be noted in Avalon that Flying Fox numbers peaked at 3500 in 2014 (page 25) and a Flying Fox Dispersal was done by Pittwater Council in 2015. Although the colony was not completely eradicated from the area, the figures significantly reduced to close to 500 that same year and from 2015 to 2021 the numbers have been consistently less than 1000. Considering we have the facts, and that they were monitored by The National Flying Fox Monitoring Program and Council, that we can conclude that Dispersal was **SUCCESSFUL** in reducing the numbers of that colony. At least Pittwater Council undertook measures at the time and were pragmatic in finding solutions. This should be treated as a win for Avalon residents. The same cannot be said for Manly Council at the time. No measures were undertaken by them to help reduce the numbers, and numbers peaked in 2015 to close to 10,000 Flying Foxes (page 17). This was also prior to Avalon's dispersal. Given that the number of Flying Foxes is still in the thousands, we believe that Level 3 actions of a Disturbance or Dispersal program should be implemented as a matter of urgency at the Balgowlah Camp.

People's perception of a disturbance or dispersal may be construed to 100% eradication. This is not the case. As proven in Avalon, the Flying Foxes dispersed and have been less than a 1000 for over 6 years. Hopefully the so-called academics view these factual results at Avalon and stop making assumptions that studies show that cases of dispersals did not reduce the number of flying foxes from the local area.

Clearly Pittwater council took action and there were only 12 residential properties in the area (no unit blocks). Balgowlah Camp has 45 surrounding residential dwellings; however, these include large unit blocks. What action did Manly council take at the time – Nothing.

Noting the closest residential properties are over 200m away from the Warriewood camp would indicate a suitable area for the Flying Foxes to migrate to with Level 3 Disturbance or Dispersal action taken at Balgowlah camp. Recent figures at Warriewood indicate the Flying Foxes prefer to stay at that colony (page 33).

In conclusion, it has been proven that Level 3 measures undertaken at Avalon were a success in reducing the numbers of the colony and have been consistently lower than a 1000 for over 6 years. We ask that Northern Beaches Council prioritises the Balgowlah camp so it does not become a suggested Nationally Important camp and focus its attention on Level 3 actions of Disturbance or Dispersal. Page 80-83 of the Management Plan illustrates different options that can be utilised by council with the aim of drastically reducing the Balgowlah Camp numbers. We note that Council's management plan is for the next 5 years, however, we will not be waiting for another 5 years to experiment with Flying Fox Numbers and ideologies and insist that Level 3 actions are implemented immediately otherwise legal action will be pursued.

Yours Faithfully,

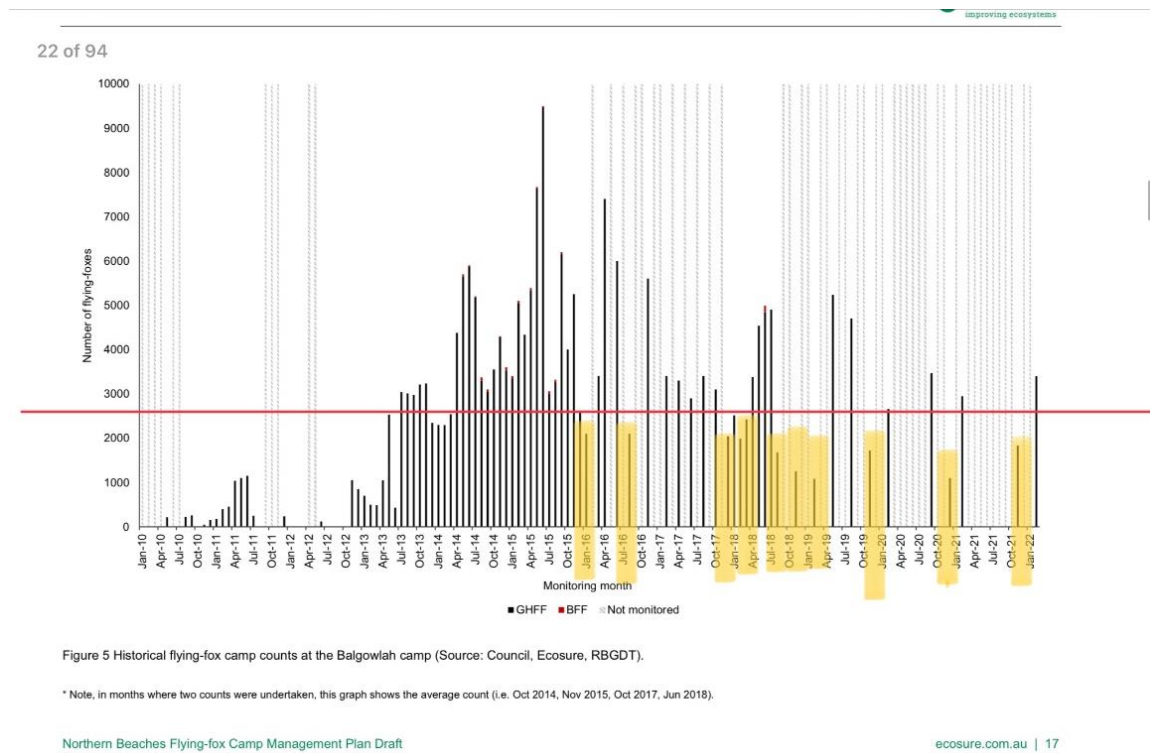


22

“The Balgowlah flying-fox camp is not currently listed as a nationally important flying-fox camp (see definition in Appendix 2). However, the camp has been seasonally occupied by 2,500 or more GHFF each consecutive year since 2013. Given that 2022 is the tenth year of this occupation, this camp should be treated as a nationally important camp.”

Data shows over ten (10) occasions of less than 2,500 GHFF. I disagree with the recommendation that the camp should be treated as a nationally important camp. This is an incorrect assessment and recommendation and MUST be removed.

First data points above 2,500 are in July 2013, data points below 2,500 are Jan 2016, Jul 2016, Dec 2017 to Mar 2018, Jul 2018 to Mar 2019, Oct 2019, Oct 2020 & Oct 2021.



23

Thank you for preparing the Draft Flying Fox Camp Management Pan and the opportunity to respond to it. I have attached further comments.

**I support the Draft Northern Beaches Flying-fox Camp Management Plan.**

I support the preservation of the GHFF and their chosen habitats where they are supported by carefully thought out and researched bush regeneration, education and resident support. The draft plan seeks to find balance in these objectives. Further more:

**Bush regeneration**

Restoration of each of the sites and the adjacent areas is important. The recent establishment of the sites indicates that site locations change from time to time. Methods developed from continual research in managing sites should aim to be transferrable.

Ongoing bush regeneration (at appropriate times of the season) by dedicated teams will improve the habitat thus supporting the GHFF and other threatened species.

Foraging support in other areas of the LGA is welcomed to help offset the effects of drought and flood. Research will have identified the areas that would provide optimum support when rehabilitated.

	<p><b>GHFF research</b> Ongoing support to GHFF research will help to continually improve the ways that council engages with residents and the ways it can support the GHFF.</p> <p>Nudging is not supported. Humans should adapt to the sites that GHFF choose. This is particularly important since the evidence shows that GHFF numbers are in decline. GHFF movement into urban areas has been linked to declining food availability elsewhere. Regardless of the causes, GHFF support within urban areas has become paramount. This extends to habitat restoration in less populated areas outside the three sites.</p> <p><b>Education</b> Interpretative signage should highlight the important ecological role that GHFF play in long-distance seed dispersal. It should also express the reasons behind the increased urbanization.</p> <p><b>Residential support</b> Buffers are an important way to support residents. Tree trimming (carefully and over time) adjacent to residents is supported. Planting appropriate species at the sites in areas to encourage roosting away from residents is supported. Fragrant native species planting is supported. Sprinkler installation is not supported without evidence (trial) and because of ongoing maintenance requirements. Bush regeneration should extend to areas adjacent to each of the sites to encourage spread/thinning at each of the colony sites.</p> <p>I am happy to speak to these comments. My name is [name removed] and I can be contacted by email at [email removed] Thank you.</p>
24	<p>This plan appears to have been updated since it was first written by the consultants for the Former Manly Council. However whilst the recommendations or actions may apply to the current situation it does not address future affects of the climate changing.</p> <p>There is no mention of habitat competition. Since the first plan was written Ibises have moved into the area and started nesting in tree in the centre of the camp at Balgowlah, forcing the flying foxes to the periphery of the area, in some cases over the footpath. Habitat competition is very real in this urban area and increasing development destroys wildlife corridors.</p> <p>There is no actions outlined in this plan to deal with the population when the weather dries out and heat becomes an issue for the flying foxes.</p>





NSW WILDLIFE  
INFORMATION  
RESCUE AND  
EDUCATION  
SERVICE Inc.

ATTN: Northern Beaches Council

After reviewing the flying-fox management plan, WIRES would like to submit the following comments in response.

After reviewing the Northern beaches camp management plan, WIRES recognised that due consideration has been paid to the ecological value and the value of educating the public and utilising methods wherever possible to mitigate human / flying-fox conflict with minimal flying-fox disturbance as per the latest peer reviewed flying-fox management recommendations. (Mo et al 2020, Roberts et al 2021).

Due attention was also paid to the preservation as well as establishment of midstory for protection of flying-fox camps against heat stress events even where some weed clearing / buffers were recommended.

Our concerns / questions with respect to the plan are as follows:

- We assume that any works carried out / trimming of trees etc within camps should only occur during low-risk times i.e when there were no pregnant / lactating females present, as per the Code of Practice.
- Where buffering planned involving vegetation removal, two of the camps are very narrow. Our concerns are that surveys prior to commencement of buffering should be carried out to ensure that narrowing of the camp does not result in fissuring / fracturing of camps, potentially spreading / escalating human / flying-fox conflict.
- North Balgowlah camp – This is also a very narrow camp with significant roadwork planned. We are concerned as above that any buffering may result in splintering of this camp. The roadworks planned are concerning as, being a tunnel, this will potentially significantly impact this camp from a stress perspective due to above and below ground disturbances involved in this level of development. This also has the potential to result in detrimental effects to a nationally significant camp as well as potentially splintering and fissuring the camp.
- Considering that this is considered a nationally significant camp, an EPBC referral for management of this camp may offer additional levels of protection for this camp considering the EPBC status of grey-headed flying-foxes and the future plans surrounding this camp.

Beyond these few concerns overall the plan shows a good balance between the utilisation of the latest methods to mitigate human / flying-fox conflict with minimal flying-fox disturbance and recommendations for assisting people to live with flying-foxes, whilst improving and strengthening camp resilience to heat events, which is to be commended.

Kind regards,

WIRES Training Team, WIRES Wildlife Veterinarian Dr [REDACTED] and WIRES Bat Management Team



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26

Thank you to Kristie King and Jess Bracks for their informative webinar on 10 November. My submission, on behalf of the Warriewood Residents Association is attached. The draft plan of management is compliant with legislation and very comprehensive, however we have some concerns about maintenance at the Warriewood Wetlands which would prevent the Grey Headed Flying Fox Camp having access to clean water and the downstream effects of polluted water flushing to Narrabeen Lagoon after heavy rain. Many thanks for the opportunity to make our observations. Kind regards, [name removed] Warriewood Residents Association

#### *Human and Animal Health*

##### *2.2.4*

#### *Water Quality Concerns*

*There have also been concerns about water quality in artificial or natural waterbodies near a flying-fox camp. In stagnant waterbodies there may be an increase in bacteria and nutrients associated with many animals, including flying-foxes and/or native birds. Water quality monitoring should be considered if this is of concern.*

#### *3.3 Warriewood camp*

##### *3.3.1 Camp description*

*The Warriewood camp is located in the eastern extent of the Warriewood Wetlands (Figure 11). The camp is adjacent to the north-west of Warriewood Square, along Angus Gordon Walkway. The closest residential properties to this camp are more than 200 m away.*

**I have personally witnessed a camp on the south western corner of Warriewood Square close to Jacksons Road though it was a few years ago. I wonder whether the map should show that area as well.**

#### **5 Planned management actions**

*Create an interpretive walk along the existing walkway through the Warriewood camp for the community to observe and learn about flying-foxes in an engaging and informative way. QR codes may be provided along the walkway to engage the community and provide key flying-fox information. A viewing platform overlooking the main waterbody below the camp may be built and incorporated into the walk as a way to showcase the flying-fox camp. Platform construction should be timed in winter when the camp is naturally empty.*

#### **Warriewood Camp**

*Development approvals may be required for platform construction*

*Community able to engage with the flying-fox camp in a positive manner, while also being provided with up-to- date information*

**Although signage would be beneficial, a viewing platform would not. The walkways through the wetlands are often occupied by bored young people being creative in their mischief. I would recommend limiting the amount of time they can spend annoying the wildlife.**

#### **Maintain water flow and quality**

*Maintain water flow below the camp to allow flying-foxes access to pool areas when rainfall is sufficient to belly-dip during hot weather. Water flow will be maintained by regularly monitoring and removing obstructions, when necessary (e.g. fallen branches and debris following storms), regularly cleaning gross pollutant traps (GPTs) (e.g. at Balgowlah camp), and removing dense wetland weeds (e.g. Salvinia at Warriewood camp).*

**The Warriewood Wetlands are neglected and fallen branches/trees as well as aquatic weeds and rubbish are not cleared. As a result, water quality is not maintained. Extensive maintenance of the wetlands must be undertaken regularly. There will obviously be a cost involved and I doubt the current budget will accommodate this expense. What strategies are in place to sustain the water quality/flow?**

27

Submission to Northern Beaches Council in regards to:

1. **Draft Northern Beaches Flying-fox Camp Management Plan**

My principal concern is the welfare of the fruit bats, particularly as they are a protected species. I do not live near any of the identified camps, but I have lived many years under the flight lanes between Gordon and Balgowlah and enjoyed seeing them fly down my valley at night. There must have been another camp down in that area before 2010, as I've seen them flying down there for 30 years.

However, I am cognisant of the concerns of residents closer to the camps, particularly any health issues concerning children. However, I believe that moderate action can address the most serious impacts. Colonies will move, so solving one set of resident's issues may just move the problem.

I have one principle change I propose, and one concern.

**Proposed Change**

The change I propose is:

**Level 3 action of Dispersal (Chapter 5) have Council-in-session added to Approvals required.**

I've used the term "Council-in-session" to mean the official council meetings of Mayor and Councillor, as opposed to the council administration. Please use whatever is the correct term.

Dispersal of a camp is an extreme action which should not only be reported after the fact (Chapter 6). It needs community discussion and support to prevent such action creating reputational damage to the Council. The State legislation for approval may not require sufficient community oversight. I am hoping that the Mayor would take any such decision back to the community for discussion before action. The Council administration should not have to power to act on this without approval.

**Concern**

The concern I have in Section 6.2 Monitoring.

In chapter 1, seven management plan objectives are given. Section 6.2 notes that Council will report on the **effectiveness** of each management **action**. But there are no key performance indicators against the PLAN objectives, or any monitoring and reporting against these.

However, I have concerns on reporting against each action (which are only

For example - Improve community understanding and appreciation of flying-foxes including their ecological role. An associated action is "Provide in-situ flying-fox information at camps". But the "measure" against this action is "Flying-fox information available for community in-situ" which is just a re-statement of the action.

What is required is a measure (as in measurement) of how much improvement there has been in community understanding and appreciation of flying-foxes including their ecological role. Typically this could be by questionnaires or surveys.

If we take another action - Emergency tree removal. How will its **effectiveness** be measured? By the number of trees removed? That doesn't reflect its effectiveness against the plan objectives.

Removing specific trees may "minimise community impacts and avoid community conflict" (but again by what metric, and demonstrated by what evidence), but it works against "conserve flying-foxes and their habitat" as you are removing part of their habitat (hopefully only a small part). How do you quantify the gain in one against the loss of another? How do we judge

	<p>removing 5 trees is OK, but removing 45 is not? Or removing 12 on the boundary is better than removing 5 in the core of the colony.</p> <p><b>Overall</b></p> <p>I support the Management Plan as a whole and commend the council on their work in bringing it together. If these two items are addressed, I would support the Draft Northern Beaches Flying-fox Management Plan.</p> <p>[Name removed] 18 Nov 2022</p>
28	<p>The flying foxes are a vital part of the environment and ecosystem and trying to move them will cause stress and harm to the animals and will damage the ecosystem if they are not around. People have chosen to live near them knowing that they are loud and can smell so just because they made a wrong choice if living near bats should mean that the people move not the bats. We have made homes in their environment so we are the intruders not the bats. Please keep the bats and dont move them on.</p>
29	<p>Flying Foxes – Balgowlah</p> <p>We have resided in Lodge Street, Balgowlah for more than 40 years. The flying fox population was minimal when we first arrived.</p> <p>Why have they been allowed to multiply to the extent that they are now a major problem? Where did they come from? – some say botanical gardens...some say Avalon.....? or perhaps natural increase?</p> <p>Melbourne University did research on the Balgowlah flying fox population. We would like to know the findings of this research and whether the council has done anything in response to the research.</p> <p>We in this household object to the noise, the unique, unpleasant smell and the major risk to other wildlife in the Burnt Bridge Creek waterway. The pleasant walk/cycle way through to Seaforth used to include many duck and bird species...these no longer exist and I believe this to be caused by the FF pollution.</p> <p>We believe that Balgowlah's minimal flora needs to be protected from the FF population. We are also aware that some of our neighbours have taken out fruit trees to minimise the intrusion of the FF.</p> <p>The Council's draft plan talks of the flying foxes being an endangered species? We question this assumption as we have seen huge numbers of flying foxes at Tamworth, for example...many times the number of FF at Balgowlah.</p> <p>Regional areas are best locations for FF – there are plenty of gum trees etc with capacity to regenerate when they are denuded by FF. Like all species, it is the survival of the fittest – and who are their predators in Balgowlah? - none I expect...</p> <p>[Address removed]</p>
30	<p>I would really like to see dispersal removed from the plan - it always results in bats dying and somehow it always seems to happen during baby season (resulting in babies dying). Considering the flying foxes are already a threatened species in Australia, one would think more deaths should not really be something councils contemplate. Moreover, dispersals are rarely of any use, colonies just move really close nearby.</p>
31	<p>See attached document.</p>

[REDACTED]  
Killamey Heights, 2087

Northern Beaches Council  
[council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au)  
20 November 2022

RE: Northern Beaches Council Proposed Flying Fox Management Plan

I have read the Draft Flying Fox Camp Management Plan that is currently open for comments within Northern Beaches Council.

Whilst I understand the difficult balance between Flying Foxes and people and I believe that, on the whole, the proposed plan offers due consideration to all key issues, I would like to raise a few areas of concern relating to the proposed management plan.

My key concerns relate to the proposals around buffering the existing camps. It is my understanding, that when buffering occurs, it significantly increases the risk of Flying Fox camps splintering or fracturing. As a current resident in the Northern Beaches, I am worried that the well contained camps we currently have may move as a result of any buffering that occurs. If this occurs, we will be left with many smaller camps, and therefore a larger impact of the camps throughout the LGA, increasing the conflict between humans and flying foxes. I would be very concerned of the impact of any potential splintering of the existing camps. I would like to propose that Northern Beaches Council ensures that some criteria be put in place prior to any buffering, particularly to minimise the impact on the colonies, such as during limiting disturbance during birthing season, and also considers monitoring and controls through the process, to ensure that no fracturing of the camps occur.

In addition, the impact of potential roadworks, particularly the proposed tunnel near the existing Balgowlah Camp, is of great concern. As disturbance from this activity could have considerable impacts. The camp, itself considered a nationally significant camp, may be significantly disturbed, and again may impact more residents as a result. I am concerned that Flying Foxes will become distressed and therefore move around into even less suitable locations such as closer to backyard therefore potentially allowing for contact with the community. I would like to see the addition of additional controls around the potential effects of this roadworks, particularly if combined with other mitigation methods such as buffering.

Finally, it is my understanding that camp dispersals have been generally unsuccessful, as well as extremely costly, and I would like to see no mention of dispersals included in the management plan, even as a potential last resort. Dispersals have caused significant stress to these threatened species, but also would pose significant risk to the local community as the Flying Foxes when dispersed are often found in unsuitable locations nearby to existing camps.

Kind regards  
[REDACTED]





## Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society Inc.

Post Office Box 607, Gordon NSW 2072 Australia

### Northern Beaches Flying-fox Camp Management Draft Plan

Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society Inc. (KBCS) thanks Council for the opportunity to review the Draft Northern Beaches Flying-fox Camp Management Plan ("The Plan").

KBCS contributed to the development of flying-fox conservation policies and the management of flying-fox camps by representing the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC) on the NSW Flying-fox Consultative Committee.

On reviewing the plan, KBCS acknowledges that appropriate emphasis has been placed on the ecological importance of the animals, the value of educating the public, and wherever possible minimising human / flying-fox conflict. The most recent peer-reviewed literature confirms that dispersal / nudging of the animals is ineffective (Roberts *et al.* 2021) and the plan supports this view. Management of flying-fox camps *in-situ* is therefore the appropriate action (Mo *et al.* 2022; Mo *et al.* 2020a; Mo *et al.* 2020b).

Conservation of the grey-headed flying-fox species depends on sufficient foraging habitat, and associated camps to enable the animals to access their food. When flying-fox camps form in urban areas it is necessary for them to be protected and well managed. The plan acknowledges that preservation as well as restoration of mid- and under-story growth in flying-fox camps is essential even when weed clearing and buffers are recommended.

The objectives of the Plan are appropriate. The plan acknowledges the impacts people experience living near camps and methods to ameliorate them as much as possible. KBCS congratulates Northern Beaches Council for having already assisted residents with property modification and service subsidies. [Table 5 page 35, page 73]

Education and awareness programs have assisted many communities to improve their understanding of flying-fox behaviours and most importantly the ecological significance of these large native bats. Their pollination and seed dispersal services are essential for the genetic health of forests, woodlands and heathlands over vast areas of eastern Australia. Providing educational material in various formats can help to remove fears of bats by providing up to date health information. This is a high priority part of the plan.

The background information such as maps of foraging habitat, monitoring of numbers of flying-foxes in camps and the ecology of each camp is informative for interested members of the community and for ongoing management purposes.

However, KBCS has some specific concerns with certain areas of the Plan. In particular, on page 44 of the plan the document notes that creating a buffer of up to 30m from the nearest occupied building is allowed under the COP. There are various caveats, including limiting roost destruction to 10% of the vegetated area historically occupied by flying-foxes. However, the suggestion is that creation of buffers is an appropriate management strategy for the camps in the Northern Beaches LGA.

None of the camps in the Northern Beaches LGA are large - a buffer created on such a basis in the Balgowlah camp could alienate almost all the vegetation west of the Balgowlah and West St intersection or could remove most of the roosting space adjacent 84 Balgowlah St and the property behind it.

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The whole of the Avalon camp falls within 30m of occupied buildings. There has been significant damage to Cannes Reserve previously in an attempt to disperse the bats from the area. Much of the area historically occupied by the bats was affected by this damage.

The Warriewood camp already has a close to 30m buffer between it and the adjacent shopping centre.

We recommend that there is no additional trimming of trees in any of the sites. The risks of additional work include rending the camps unsuitable, splintering the camp and sending animals to create new roost sites in the LGA.

In addition, Ecosure's camp management analysis does not recommend adopting property modification despite acknowledging it "is one of the most effective ways to reduce amenity impacts of a camp, promotes conservation of flying-foxes, is a long-term option, can be undertaken quickly, will not impact on the site and may add value to the property."

While window glazing, noise insulation and air conditioning are expensive items to support residents with, they have been demonstrated to be as or more effective than other measures (Pearson & Cheng, 2018, unpublished data).

We recommend that resident support via property modification be adopted and budgeted for as the primary mitigation measure.

KBCS agrees that land use planning could avoid additional future conflict by identifying buffer zones and habitat protection measures such as Biodiversity Agreements. [page 43]

Improving the ecological health of camp vegetation and regenerating additional habitat within the Northern Beaches Local Government Area is encouraged.

The appendices provide comprehensive and up to date information on flying-foxes and camp management. The draft plan provides valuable guidance for Council staff and the community.

In general, and with the mentioned caveats, the KBCS supports the adoption of the plan.

**Mo, M., Oliver, L., Coutts-McClelland, K., Jones, N., Gregory, J. 2022.** A management case study of a Grey-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus* camp on residential land. *Australian Zoologist*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7882/az.2022.006>

**Mo, M., Roache, M., et al. 2020a.** Congregations of a threatened species: mitigating impacts from Grey-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus* camps on the Batemans Bay community. *Australian Zoologist* **41**: 124-138. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7882/AZ.2020.021>

**Mo, M., Roache, M., Williams, R., Drinnan, I. N., Noël, B. 2020b.** From cleared buffers to camp dispersal: mitigating impacts of the Kareela flying-fox camp on adjacent residents and schools. *Australian Zoologist* **41**: 19-41. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7882/AZ.2020.002>

**Roberts, B. J., Mo, M., Roache, M., Eby, P. 2021.** Review of dispersal attempts at flying-fox camps in Australia. *Australian Journal of Zoology*: -. <http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1071/ZO20043>

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## B. Email/written submissions

1	<p>I am appalled by the misinformation that the Council is spreading about "management" of fruit bats. Management is code for reducing the wellbeing of the species. The council is seeking to justify the eventual extermination of these species. The motivation can only be assumed to be pressure from the real-estate industry and purveyors of ignorance. I do not doubt that some of the residents are speculating in real estate and hope to make huge windfall gains when the bats are exterminated and the value of their holdings increases. These are the people who are applying pressure to the council. The council has a responsibility to protect native species, and this means total protection, not "management"</p> <p>If you look at a map of the council area, the area occupied by fruit bats is almost invisible. There is so much hypocrisy in the statements about managing the areas occupied, when the council does not even follow its own regulations about managing council controlled land. In my area there is widespread occupation of council land by residents, and no attempt to control noxious weeds and feral animals. The council makes little attempt to manage their land, and it is only when they want to exterminate the bats that they want to take any management action on council land.</p> <p>The longterm management of Koalas by the council is a typical case. So now it is the turn of the bats to be legislated out of existence and exterminated by the method of a million cuts. The council should not accept that the numbers of bats can be "controlled", that is code for continual destruction of the population with an aim of total elimination. The Botanic Gardens has been waging a war against bats for many years, even though the bats are a keystone species for the environment that produced our native flora.</p>
2	<p>Thank you for sending through the information regarding the management plan subject to approval for the Northern Beaches Flying-Fox debate.</p> <p>I am a resident living on Balgowlah Road, my property situated at [address removed] which according to your 50m impact assessment falls outside of the allocated affected area. This may have been an oversight on the part of the assessors as vehicles and homes well outside that radius are impacted on a regular basis. As you are probably aware the excrement that bats produce is highly acidic and if left on vehicles for a time does irreversible damage to the paintwork. Meaning that residents living in areas subject to the evening migration can find their vehicles with poo on them daily. It gets very time-consuming and/or expensive to continue washing your car twice a week, sometimes more.</p> <p>I understand that boundaries need to be made when dealing with issues of this nature and you cannot please everyone, I do however, suggest that 50m is not sufficient a distance as residents living between 50-100m from the major colonies will consider the bats to be a significant issue. You only have to come down of an evening and watch the swirling migration patterns of bats to understand that the impact they have is not isolated to the immediate nesting ground. I look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter</p>
3	<p>Good morning, Unfortunately, I couldn't make any comments on line as the message above kept popping up. Im not risking any on line drama. It takes too long to fix if something goes wrong. Bottom line, anything you can do to reduce/remove the flying foxes, bush turkeys and ibis from the area will be a god send. The mess they make is ghastly. The smell from the area is horrendous. The animals were not always there. Certainly not when we bought into the area over 50 years ago. So, what has attracted them since? Something must have attracted them.</p>
4	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback on the above mentioned draft plan. It is reassuring that council, by means of its dedicated officers, such as you and Kristy King, are looking after this keystone species.</p> <p>I have not been able to read the draft plan in full but was very happy to listen to Kristy King and Jess Bracks" utube webinar on this topic. It was very informative and encouraging.</p> <p>I appreciate that council is aiming to stem encroachment where this would inconvenience people who walk along the Burnt Bridge pathway. Earlier in Autumn 2022, the bats were starting to encroach over the pathway. This ensures that locals, such as young boys become quite</p>



	<p>antagonistic and, for example blow trumpets and blowers as they ride by the colony on their bikes.</p> <p>However I have noticed recently this Spring that most of the bats (apart from a few) are no longer over the walkway. This definitely is good for maintaining good relations for the bats with people!</p> <p>I am a resident of [address removed] which I think is less than 50 metres from the bat colony. I am very interested in the Flying Fox Residents Assistance Plan. We would be very interested in having assistance regarding double glazing of windows for our block. We are planning to instal double glazing of Windows for our block and would appreciate any information from council as to our eligibility for assistance for a double glazing program.</p> <p>I hope you will be able to consider my submission and appreciate a reply.</p>
5	<p><b>Submission 1</b></p> <p>We have resided in Lodge Street for five years. We have read the entire Bat Management Program and We do not understand how the bats have precedence over 100 residents, most of whom have lived in the area over 40 years, well before the bats moved in. It would make more sense to move them on as they did in the Botanical Gardens where there were no residences impacted by the vial smell and horrendous noise that we have to put up with on a daily basis. It can be done humanely with noise as they did in the Botanical Gardens, and more economical than continual management. We have noticed that the bats are moving much closer to our homes. They are now flying into pine trees of [address removed] every night. They are also roosting in trees over the pathway on Balgowlah Road, far too close to humans in my opinion. We are also getting more 'guano' on pathways and cars which is impossible to completely remove.</p> <p>The colony in Warriewood is the perfect place for them as there are no residences to worry. We feel the Balgowlah Colony is right in the middle of a residential area and should be relocated to rural location asap.</p> <p><b>Submission 2</b></p> <p>It is inconceivable with the proposed Northern Beaches Council flying fox management plan that the Council would knowingly discriminate in favour of flying foxes over the quiet contentment and living environment of over 100 local residents.</p> <p>The solution to accommodate both flying foxes and residents is available, proven by the scheme adopted by the Botanical Gardens authorities,</p> <p>The proposal of the NB Council is to leave the bat colony in situ and appease the residents affected by spending tens of thousands of dollars on double glazing, air conditioning units etc. This is an appalling and unnecessary waste of rate payers money.</p> <p>The flying foxes can be moved on, employing the method adopted by the Botanical Gardens. I am sure the local residents would accept the noise needed to disrupt the orientation of the flying foxes at dusk and dawn.</p> <p>Balgowlah Flying foxes are known to visit the Warriewood and Avalon Colonies, where the bat colonies are proven to have little impact. Unbiased and apolitical experts may think it reasonable to assume the bats will locate to that area. Bats from the Balgowlah colony are known to visit those two colonies.</p> <p>Is it not unreasonable to expect the Council, among other things to ensure the health, well being and quiet contentment of residents within its Shire?</p> <p>This proposed plan fails in that respect.</p> <p>Sadly should the NB management plan be accepted, many residents will feel they have been discriminated against in favour of a bat colony.</p>

	<p>Would Shire residents think that would be acceptable <i>in this case where there is a viable alternative</i> as I have put to you ?</p> <p>The management plan looked at one side of the argument.</p> <p>WHICH IS UNFAIR</p>
6	<p><b>Submission 1</b></p> <p>We have moved into our townhouse on Woodland Street five months ago.          We understand a bat colony lives at the end of the street.          We have read the Bat Management Program.          Please understand that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bats are noisy and dirty.</li> <li>• They also have a very distinct smell that makes it difficult to entertain outdoors on certain days.</li> <li>• They fly close to our home and drop their poo in our yard.</li> <li>• They are growing in numbers.</li> </ul> <p>I understand the bat colony at the Botanic Gardens was moved on and I respectfully request that the bat colony on Balgowlah is also moved on to a more suitable location. The colony in Balgowlah is too close to residents.          Thank you for this consideration.</p> <p><b>Submission 2</b></p> <p>We have moved into our townhouse at [address removed] Woodland Street five months ago.          We understand a bat colony lives at the end of the street.          We have read the Bat Management Program.          Please understand that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bats are noisy and dirty.</li> <li>• They also have a very distinct smell that makes it difficult to entertain outdoors on certain days.</li> <li>• They fly close to our home and drop their poo in our yard.</li> <li>• They are growing in numbers.</li> <li>• We do not have air conditioning and on warm nights require to sleep with the windows open and have difficulty sleeping with the noise.</li> </ul> <p>I understand the bat colony at the Botanic Gardens was moved on and I respectfully request that the bat colony on Balgowlah is also moved on to a more suitable location. The colony in Balgowlah is too close to residents. Thank you for this consideration.</p>
7	<p>I have read through most of the management plan. Apart from that there is really nothing new in there as far as I can tell 🙄</p> <p>Will you do the grant again? The windows do work well however then there is no air left in the rooms when they are shut. It's tricky. Noise and air flow or quiet and stuffy rooms.</p> <p>There is already a few bats back in the pineappled cabbage Palms. Think they left a bit too much behind this time. When they previously did that there was only very few palm fonts left.</p>

<b>Document administration</b>	
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Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.