



Memo to: Councillor King

Copy to: Mayor Watton, all Councillors, General Manager, Directors, Senior Leadership Group and Communications & Engagement Team

From: Sue Page, Acting Director Planning and Environment

Subject: Flying-fox camp at East Cessnock

Date: 5 February 2026

Reference: CRM 2214/2026 - DOC2026/016920

Dear Councillor King

I refer to your request for information in relation to the Flying-fox camp at East Cessnock dated 29 January 2026 as follows;

'I am writing to request an update on the current status of the flying fox colony located in East Cessnock, particularly in relation to Council's role and any actions currently underway or planned.

As you would be aware, this colony has been the subject of community concern for a considerable period of time. Residents and the nearby school community continue to raise questions about impacts on amenity, health, and the use of surrounding land.

To assist in responding to community enquiries, I would appreciate advice on:

- 1. Council's current position in relation to the East Cessnock flying fox colony;*
- 2. Any management plans, mitigation measures or monitoring activities currently in place;*
- 3. Council's role and responsibilities compared with those of State agencies, given the site's location on Crown land; and*
- 4. Any recent correspondence, funding commitments, or proposed actions relevant to this matter.*

Any information on anticipated next steps or timeframes would also be appreciated'

In response, the following information is provided

1. Flying-foxes are a protected species under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Three species of flying-fox are known to inhabit the camp at East Cessnock at various times, with the most common species being the Grey-headed Flying-fox, which is listed as threatened or vulnerable under both the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and the Federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Council's position is guided by these legislative acts.

2. The Cessnock Flying-fox Camp Management Plan (March 2020) provides information and guidance regarding actions for management of the flying-fox camp. Table 12 of the plan provides management actions for the camp, but are subject to available funding. Monitoring of flying-fox numbers at the camp are undertaken quarterly by council as part of a wider flying-fox survey program in partnership with Government and other non-government organisations. Details of the monitoring can be found at the [Australian Flying-Fox Monitor](#).
3. Flying-foxes are generally migratory in their movements and camps can be located on a variety of land tenures. As a native species, flying-foxes are protected under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, and it is a shared responsibility amongst landowners to manage these species within the legislative obligations. The camp at East Cessnock is currently located across multiple land tenures, but the Cessnock Flying-fox Camp Management Plan is a collaborative document with responsibilities for actions outlined.
4. The majority of the actions within the Cessnock Flying-fox Camp Management Plan have been completed, and Council has continued to undertake monitoring of the camp. Additional actions have not been identified and are not currently budgeted for within Council's Delivery and Operations Plan. Dedicated grant funding programs for flying-foxes from the NSW Government administered through Local Government NSW have been discontinued so further actions would need to be fully funded by Council

Please note a copy of this memo will be uploaded to Council's website.