

Community Questions & Answers Sheet

Why is Council carrying out a Deer culling project?

A: Deer are a **declared pest species** that cause significant ecological and agricultural harm. Populations of feral deer have increased in parts of the Barcaldine region, causing damage to vegetation, agricultural land and local ecosystems. This project aims to reduce the environmental impact and protect biodiversity, livestock health and community safety.

Is this program part of a long-term wildlife management strategy?

A: Yes. The culling project is one component of a broader biosecurity and pest-management strategy aimed at long-term environmental protection and responsible land stewardship within the region. Population reduction is an ongoing process. Currently, there are no measures in place to ensure the animals' welfare and to manage populations in times of drought, flood or fire. The goal is to significantly lower numbers and prevent rapid rebound by combining culling with monitoring, landholder coordination and long-term management strategies. Biosecurity risks around the potential spread of cattle tick and other diseases, e.g. leptospirosis, are a growing concern.

Why can't Council use non-lethal methods instead of culling?

A: Council has assessed non-lethal options such as relocation, exclusion fencing and fertility control. However, these methods are either **impractical**, **cost-prohibitive**, or **ineffective** for large, mobile feral deer populations. Culling remains the most humane and effective way to reduce numbers and limit ongoing damage quickly.

How can the community be sure the culling is humane?

A: All culling activities are carried out by **licensed, highly trained professionals** following nationally recognised **animal welfare standards**. The program is monitored to ensure best-practice methods that minimise stress and ensure the most humane outcomes possible.

Will culling make local roads and our communities safer?

A: Yes. Reducing deer numbers lowers the risk of vehicle collisions, particularly at dawn and dusk. This enhances road safety for residents, visitors and transport operators. Limiting interactions with humans and dogs also supports fewer injuries or incidents.

Will the culling happen near homes or public areas?

A: Majority of operations will be carried out in designated areas away from towns, residences and public spaces. Strict safety zones, access controls and operational protocols will be in place to protect community members.

How will culling benefit the local environment?

A: Feral deer compete with native species and livestock for food and water, damage vegetation, erode soil, spread weeds such as woody weeds, invasive grasses and cacti and degrade

waterways. Reducing the population helps restore natural habitats and supports native wildlife recovery and decreases competition between grazing livestock and deer.

Will other wildlife be affected by the culling operations?

A: No. The program only targets only feral deer. Shooters are trained to identify and target only the intended species accurately. Operations are planned to minimise disturbance to other wildlife.

Are local landholders involved in the project?

A: Yes. Council has been collaborating with landholders, who provide on-ground knowledge, access to affected areas and ongoing feedback. Their involvement ensures the program focus on the areas of greatest need.

Will there be noise or disruption from helicopter or ground-based operations?

A: Any operational noise will be temporary and scheduled to minimise inconvenience. Council provides advance notice when possible and activities are conducted efficiently to reduce disruption.

Is my property at risk during aerial culling?

A: No. Strict safety protocols ensure that all aerial operations are conducted away from private property unless explicit permission is granted by the landholder. Pilots and marksmen are specialists trained for precision and safety.

How much is this costing ratepayers?

A: The program is funded through Council's biosecurity budget and supported by State pest-management initiatives. Controlling pests early prevents far greater long-term costs to agriculture, infrastructure and the environment.

Will the community be updated on progress?

A: Yes. Council will provide periodic updates through public notices, website posts, and community meetings to ensure residents remain informed about the outcomes and next steps.

How does Council measure the success of the project?

A: Success is measured through population monitoring, landholder feedback, vegetation assessments and reduced reports of deer-related damage or road incidents.

Will Council continue monitoring deer numbers after the cull?

A: Yes. Ongoing monitoring is essential to ensure deer numbers remain at manageable levels and to inform any future control measures.

Is this a one-time cull or will it continue every year?

A: Deer management remains an ongoing responsibility. While the frequency of future culls depends on population trends, the goal is to minimise the need for repeated operations through long-term population control.

Can the meat or carcasses be used in any way?

A: In some cases, carcasses may be processed or repurposed were permitted and safe. However, this depends on logistics, location and biosecurity requirements.

References:

[Biosecurity Act 2014 | Department of Primary Industries, Queensland](#)

[CISS-Glovebox-Guide-Feral-Deer-final.pdf](#)

[NATSOP-DEER001 National Standard Operating Procedure: Aerial shooting of feral and wild deer - PestSmart](#)

[Central-West-Regional-Biosecurity-Strategy-2024-2029.pdf](#)

[National-Feral-Deer-Action-Plan-2023-28.pdf](#)

[Queensland feral deer management strategy 2022–27 - Invasive animal management - Publications | Queensland Government](#)