

Dawes National Park

Management Statement

2026



Queensland
Government

This management statement has not been co-designed with First Nations partners. This document has been prepared by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation to provide management guidance and adaptive management until such a time as the department can engage with First Nations partners in the co-design of a management instrument.

Management statements are prepared under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. These documents may also include management direction for other State tenure for which QPWS has management responsibility.

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1. Introduction

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), within the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI), applies a contemporary management process that is based on international best practice and targets management towards the most important features of each park: their 'key values'.

The Values-Based Management Framework (VBMF) is an adaptive management cycle that incorporates planning, prioritising, doing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting into all areas of our business. This enables the agency to be more flexible and proactive and to improve management effectiveness over time. A glossary of VBMF terms and concepts used within this document is provided at the end of this document (Section 5 – Glossary).

As a land manager, QPWS has a custodial obligation to ensure our estate is managed to provide appropriate and safe access, protect life and property, be a good neighbour and work cooperatively with partners across the landscape. The agency does this as part of setting the 'levels of service' for each park. Levels of service is a management standard that considers an area's values, threatening processes, custodial obligations, risks and overall management complexity.

This management statement has been prepared by QPWS to provide management guidance and adaptive management until such a time as the department can engage with First Nations partners in co-design of a management instrument.

2. Park overview

The following figure and table (Figure 1, Table 1) provide an overview of information relating to the park including locality, legislative framework and applicable plans/agreements.

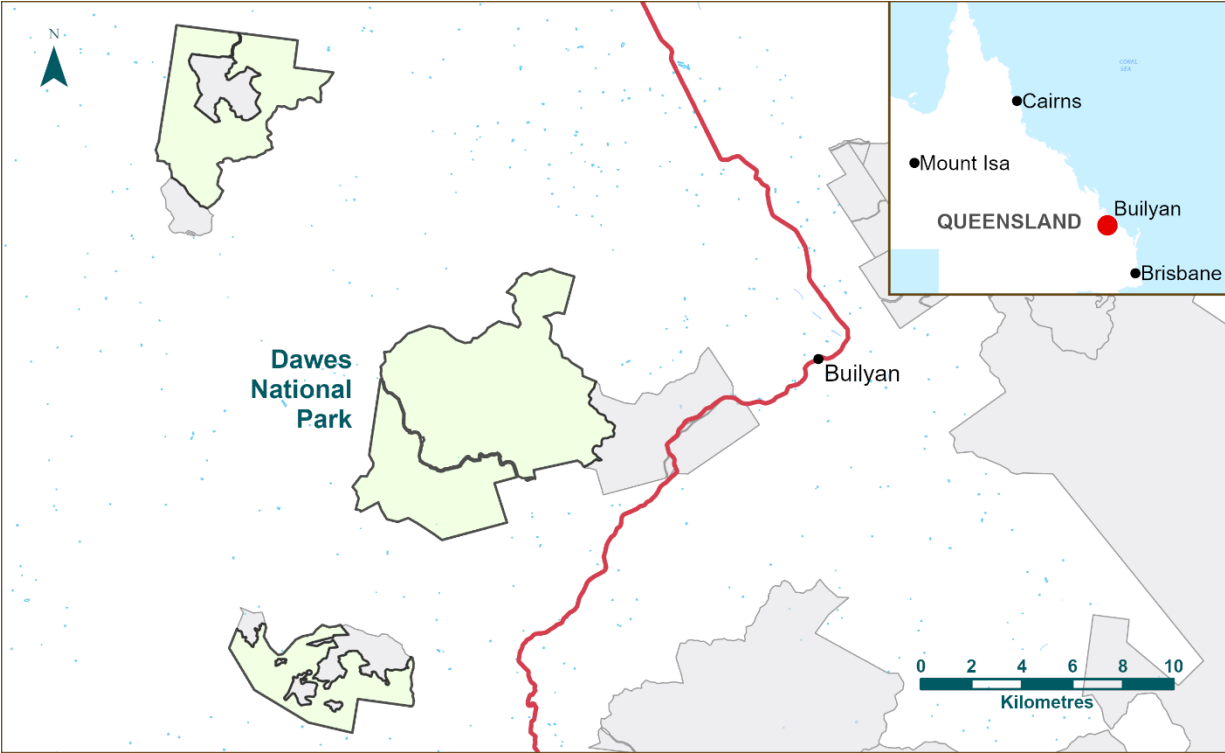


Figure 1. Locality of Dawes National Park

Table 1. Overview of Dawes National Park

Park size	Dawes National Park	8910 ha
Bioregion	South Eastern Queensland (92.9%)	
	Brigalow Belt South (7.1%)	
QPWS region	South East Queensland	
Local government area	Gladstone Regional	
	North Burnett Regional	
State electorate	Callide	
Relevant legislation	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	
	<i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i>	
	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwlth)	
	<i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cwlth)	
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	
	<i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i>	
Plans and agreements	<i>Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals</i>	
	<i>China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i>	
	<i>Japan Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i>	
	<i>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora</i>	
	<i>National Recovery Plan for the Grey-headed Flying-fox 'Pteropus poliocephalus'</i>	
	<i>National Multi-species Recovery Plan for the cycads, Cycas megacarpa, Cycas ophiolitica, Macrozamia cranei, Macrozamia lomandroides, Macrozamia pauli-guilielmi and Macrozamia platyrhachis</i>	
	<i>National Recovery Plan for the Koala Phascolarctos cinereus (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory)</i>	
	<i>National Recovery Plan for Black-breasted Button-quail (Turnix melanogaster)</i>	

3. Key values

All parks, forests and reserves contain a range of natural, cultural, social and economic values that contribute to the state's comprehensive and representative protected area and forest estate. The VBMF provides a framework for identifying and protecting the most important of these—referred to as *key values*—which in turn guides the allocation of management resources.

The location of each key value is shown in Figure 2. An assessment of each key value—including its current and desired condition, trend, and the confidence level of the assessment—is presented in the following tables and can be interpreted using Table 2. The assessment also outlines the main threats to each key value and provides broad strategic management direction to address these threats and achieve desired outcomes over time.

Table 2. Description of condition and trend icons used in the key values assessment

Condition of key value	Good  The value is in good condition and is likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current measures are maintained	Good with some concern  The value is likely to be maintained over the long term with minor additional conservation measures to address existing concerns	Significant concern  The value is threatened by a number of current or potential threats. Significant additional conservation measures are required to preserve the value over the medium to long term	Critical  The value is severely threatened. Urgent additional large-scale conservation measures are required or the value may be lost
Trend of key value condition	Improving 	Stable 	Deteriorating 	No consistent trend 
Assessment confidence	Inferred 	Limited 	Adequate 	

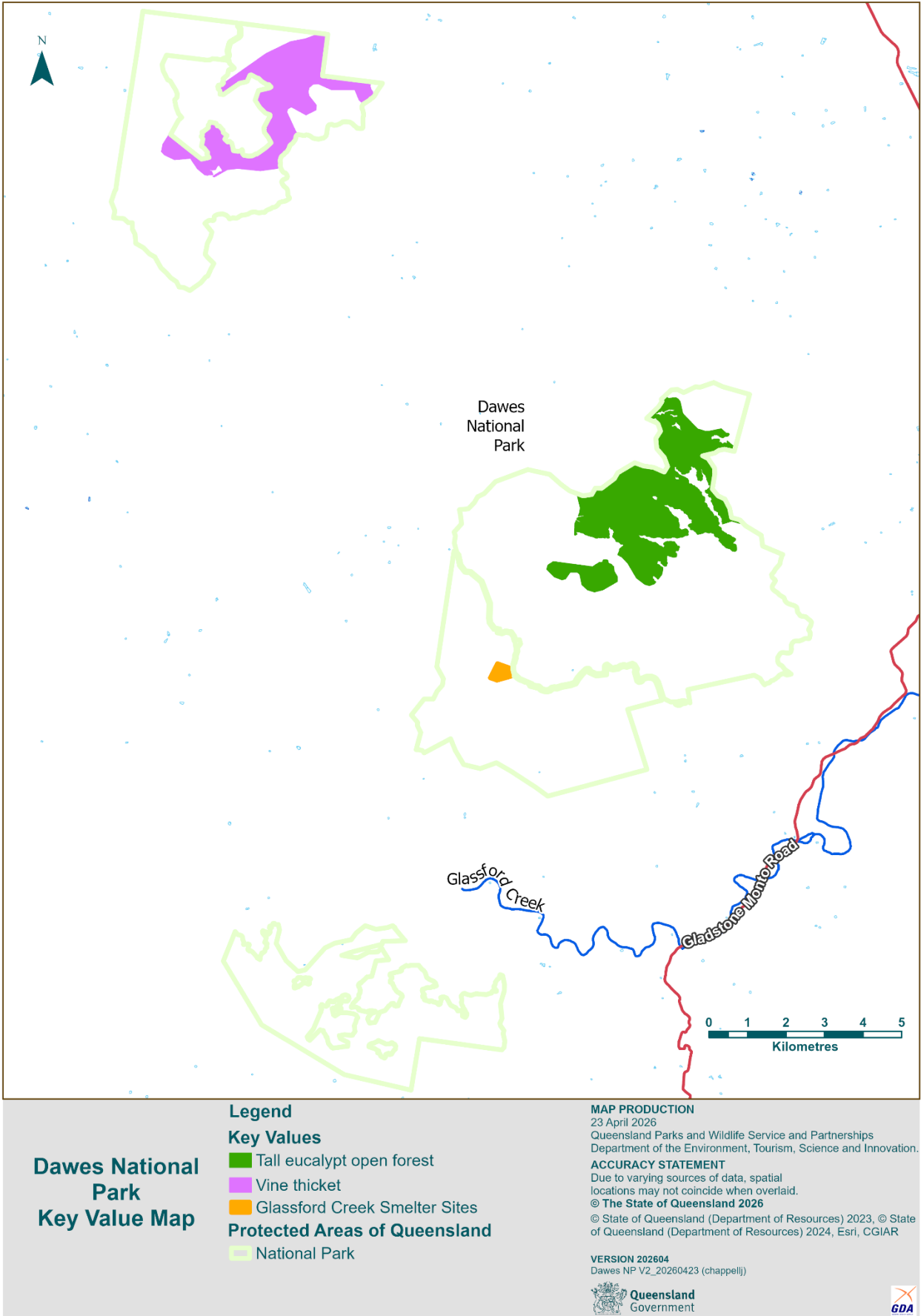


Figure 2. Dawes National Park key values

3.1 Tall eucalypt open forest

Key value category	Key value description	Current condition	Assessment confidence	Current trend	Assessment confidence	Desired condition (short term)	Desired condition (long term)
Natural ecosystem	The two regional ecosystems within this tall eucalypt forest are dominated by blue gum <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i> (12.12.20) and blackbutt <i>E. montivaga</i> (12.12.6). These forests grow to over 30 metres in height and rely on fire to stay healthy. They both have of concern biodiversity status and collectively cover 10.15 per cent of the park. Blackbutt <i>E. montivaga</i> is predominantly found on mountains at altitudes above 500 metres. Blue gums are a known sap tree for endangered southern great gliders which have been recorded from the park. Regional ecosystem 12.12.20: <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i> tall open forest on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks covers 806.28 hectares (9.05 per cent) of the park — this is 14.28 per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 17.3 per cent of that within the protected area estate. There are only two protected areas in Queensland that have regional ecosystem 12.12.20 and the 806.28 hectares within this park is the second highest representation after Krombit Tops National Park. Regional ecosystem 12.12.6: <i>Eucalyptus montivaga</i> open forest on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks covers 98.38 hectares (1.10 per cent) of the park — this is 13.26 per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 15.08 per cent of that within the protected area estate. There are just seven protected areas in Queensland where this regional ecosystem is present, and this is the third highest representation. This regional ecosystem is known to be provide suitable habitat for koalas <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> which have been recorded from the park.	Good with some concern 	Inferred 	Stable 	Inferred 	Good with some concern 	Good 
Desired outcome The tall eucalypt open forest is healthy, resilient, protected and effectively managed, supporting thriving biodiversity, sustaining natural processes, and providing long-term viable habitats for fauna species like the endangered southern greater glider and endangered koala.							

Threats to key value

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Bushfire	Natural system modifications	The park has a long history of high intensity bushfires carrying through from the northeast. There are few firebreaks in the park and so if fires burn into the park they typically burn across that whole section. Many of these bushfires are deliberately started on neighbouring properties and then burn into the park. Notification is often not received until the fire is too advanced, or not at all. QPWS is working with Rural Fire Service Queensland to improve fire management on properties where most bushfires originate from. Bushfires rarely deliver the fire regimes needed by vegetation communities, they are often too frequent, too hot and do not result in a suitable mosaic of burnt and unburnt areas. The regional ecosystem description database fire management guidelines for the two regional ecosystems recommend longer fire intervals of 8-20 years and 7-25 years. The current frequency of bushfires is more frequent than this and may be impacting the forest's age class variation.	Primary	Medium

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Changed fire frequency of intensity	Natural system modifications	Burns are being planned, however, bushfires often burn through the area before planned burns are undertaken. Resourcing, competing priorities, and neighbour relationships are impacting delivery of the planned burn program. Improved relationships with neighbours and increasing the priority and resourcing to deliver planned burns will transition fire management.	Secondary	Medium
Introduced weeds	Invasive and other problematic species, genes and diseases	Giant rats tail grass is a recent incursion into the Glassford (central) section of the park. It is currently confined to Childs Road and is spread predominantly by vehicles. It is an invasive grass with the potential to spread and change the understorey within the eucalypt forest. Giant rats tail grass is also present in the adjoining state forest which was historically cleared for a hardwood timber plantation but was only partially planted and then abandoned, creating ideal conditions for growth of this weed.	Secondary	Low

Strategic management directions

Strategic management direction	Priority*
Protect the tall eucalypt open forest through the targeted use of the fire within the ecological regime for the vegetation community to mitigate spread and impacts of bushfire.	3
Maintain structural elements and age class variation in the tall eucalypt open forest through the targeted application of fire.	3
Contain giant rats tail grass to the roadside along Childs Road.	3

Key value priority: 1 – Critical, 2 – Very high, 3 – High, 4 – Moderate, 5 – Desirable (see Appendix 1)

3.2 Vine thicket

Key value category	Key value description	Current condition	Assessment confidence	Current trend	Assessment confidence	Desired condition (short term)	Desired condition (long term)
Natural ecosystem	The semi-evergreen vine thicket on metamorphic rock is comprised of low dense forests with many vines. The plant species that occur within vine thickets can vary, in those overlaying metamorphic rocks plants like brown myrtle, Burdekin plum, native gardenia, scrub ironbark, and native terminalia are typically found. Regional ecosystem 12.11.4: Semi-evergreen vine thicket on metamorphics covers 479.22 hectares (5.38 per cent) of the park and has of concern biodiversity status — this is 15.67 per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 30.57 per cent of that within the protected area estate. There are just six protected areas in Queensland where this regional ecosystem is present, and this is the second highest representation after Dan Dan National Park. The critically endangered plant <i>Rhodamnia glabrescens</i> and vulnerable plant <i>Fontainea venosa</i> have been recorded from the park, they are typically found in vine forests and thickets.	Good with some concern 	Inferred 	Stable 	Inferred 	Good with some concern 	Good 
Desired outcome The vine thicket is healthy, resilient, protected and effectively managed, supporting thriving biodiversity, sustaining natural processes, and providing long-term viable habitats for flora and fauna, including critically endangered <i>Rhodamnia glabrescens</i> and vulnerable <i>Fontainea venosa</i> .							

Threats to key value

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Bushfire	Natural system modifications	The vine thicket is not fire-adapted and requires protection from fire. Burns are being planned to protect the vine thicket, however, bushfires often burn through the park before planned burns are undertaken. Bushfires can start from lightning strikes or escaped burns that enter the park from neighbouring properties. Bushfires are often at higher intensities which increases how far they can penetrate the vine thicket.	Primary	Medium
Introduced weeds	Invasive and other problematic species, genes and diseases	<i>Lantana camara</i> has a long history in the park, it was first recorded in 1930 and has progressively infested large areas in all three sections of the park and in the adjoining state forests. It is enabling fire to spread into fire-sensitive vine thickets. Control activities are ongoing. The adjoining state forest was historically cleared for a hardwood timber plantation but was only partially planted and then abandoned, creating ideal conditions for lantana to grow and extend its distribution.	Secondary	Low

Strategic management directions

Strategic management direction	Priority*
Protect the vine thicket through targeted use of fire in the surrounding vegetation communities within their ecological regime to mitigate the spread and impacts of bushfire.	3
Reduce the impact of lantana on vine thickets.	3

Key value priority: 1 – Critical, 2 – Very high, 3 – High, 4 – Moderate, 5 – Desirable (see Appendix 1)

3.3 Glassford Creek Smelter Sites

Key value category	Key value description	Current condition	Assessment confidence	Current trend	Assessment confidence	Desired condition (short term)	Desired condition (long term)
Historic value	The historic smelter sites represent a significant part of early-European settlement in the Boyne Valley. They provide physical evidence of mining in the Glassford area, which operated from the 1890s through to 1921. Mining was originally for silver, then shifted to gold and finally to copper. The sites are listed on the State Heritage Register (ID 602389) and are well preserved for their age. There are mining remnants such as chimneys, retaining walls, hooper bins, furnace remains, engine footings, boilers, mining pits, building remains and mining shafts. Caution is necessary as there are unmarked mine shafts in the park. While the historic sites can be viewed, access around the historic structures is restricted for public safety. Some structures are unstable and may fall. There are six species of bat found in the park and some roost in the mine shafts. The bat guano in mines can contain fungal spores that if inhaled may cause lung disease. There are regulatory signs in the park that identify where entry is prohibited and danger signs that identify where caution is encouraged.	Significant concern 	Limited 	Stable 	Limited 	Significant concern 	Good with some concern 
Desired outcome The Glassford Creek Smelter Sites are managed to protect their historical and cultural significance, ensuring authenticity, safety, sustainability, and community engagement for future generations.							

Threats to key value

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Storms	Climate change and severe weather	Weather events and the associated wind and flooding are a threat to the site. Wind is the greater threat as flooding has not previously impacted the site. Wind from storms has previously resulted in falling trees which did land on a smaller chimney and demolish it. Hazardous tree assessments are undertaken and trees or branches that pose a risk are removed. , .	Primary	Verh high
Theft (plant, animal or other)	Human intrusions and disturbance	While the number of visitors to the heritage site is unknown, anecdotally it is thought to be multiple visits each week. While much of the remaining material on the site is heavy, there is still the risk of theft. Signs are in place prohibiting access close to the heritage sites and there is some fencing in place to restrict access. There is currently no graffiti, and the gravesite has not been disturbed. The site is naturally difficult to get to. There have been community requests for interpretative signs in the park which would educate people about the smelter sites, threats to the key value, and encourage responsible behaviour.	Secondary	Low

Strategic management directions

Strategic management direction	Priority*
Maintain the Glassford Creek Smelter Sites by minimising visitor impacts.	3
Tell the story of the Glassford Creek Smelter Sites.	3
Maintain the Glassford Creek Smelter Sites by minimising the risk of falling trees and branches.	2

Key value priority: 1 – Critical, 2 – Very high, 3 – High, 4 – Moderate, 5 – Desirable (see Appendix 1)

4. Management direction

QPWS manages protected areas and forests to protect their values and deliver our custodial obligations as a land manager. A levels of service (LoS) assessment allows QPWS to consider the management of each park in a state-wide context and determine desired levels of management effort for each park in a consistent and equitable way. An LoS assessment lets QPWS staff and the public know what level of management activity to expect on each park, forest or reserve. There are six LoS ratings ranging from 'below acceptable' to 'exceptional', and an 'acceptable' rating is the minimum standard required to deliver good management and meet our legislative and custodial obligations.

This section provides a strategic management direction for each management theme, identifying its current LoS and desired LoS, which can be interpreted using Figure 3.

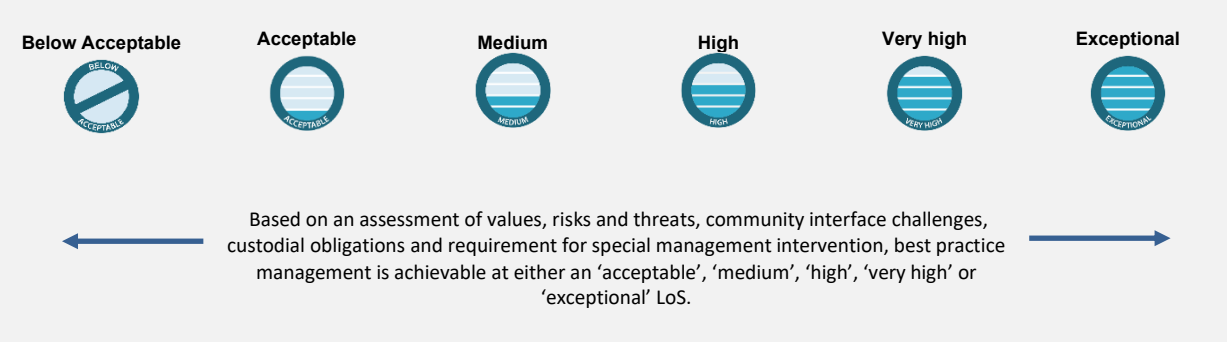


Figure 3. Description of LoS icons

4.1 Management directions

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Fire management			Maintain current knowledge and understanding of fire requirements based on broad regional ecosystems mapping, guided by the planned burn guidelines.	4
			Improve collaboration through increased engagement with Rural Fire Service Queensland, Bushfire Management Groups and neighbours to support a shared responsibility approach to fire management, including management of firebreaks, burn notifications and burn planning.	2
			Improve the current approach to fire management by increasing the priority to implement conservation planned burns for all key values.	2
			Improve fire management in the park through finalisation of the fire strategy.	2
Pest management			Maintain contemporary knowledge of pest species that might threaten key values and species of conservation significance.	4
			Maintain the current level of consultation with neighbours in developing the annual pest program, including maintenance of fencelines to contain cattle.	4
			Maintain the current priority for pest management to improve the condition of key values.	3
			Improve pest management in the park through preparation of a pest strategy.	2
Natural values management			Improve knowledge of species of conservation significance in the park through targeted surveys and monitoring programs.	4
			Improve knowledge of the condition of the vegetation communities through management of the health check program.	2
			Improve consultation with centric units, research institutions and local community natural resource groups to support natural values management, improve knowledge of species of conservation significance and develop monitoring programs for key values.	4
Post-contact cultural heritage management			Improve knowledge of historical sites in the park through the collation of information from QPWS Principal Heritage Officer, QPWS regional staff, local heritage groups, online data sources and relevant external heritage experts.	3
			Increase consultation with heritage groups and the QPWS Principal Heritage Officer to guide post-contact cultural heritage management.	5
			Improve management of post-contact cultural heritage in the park through finalisation of the historic cultural heritage strategy.	3
Visitor management			Improve knowledge of visitor numbers at the heritage sites.	2
			Improve knowledge of visitor safety in the park through an assessment of visitor risks at the heritage sites, including structural integrity.	2
			Improve visitor experience and responsible behaviour through installation of interpretative signs on site.	3

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Community, partnerships and other interests			Maintain contemporary knowledge of all stakeholders and management requirements.	3
			Maintain relationships and communication with the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda People RNTBC for on ground park management as required.	3
Field management capability			Maintain a contemporary knowledge base to deliver required management.	3
			Maintain current levels consultation with regional support units regarding field management capacity.	3
			Improve current field management capability and capacity by working with other regional and centric units to deliver work programs, prioritise fire management.	2
Operational planning and management support			Maintain knowledge of available operational planning and management support within the region to guide and support park management operations.	3
			Maintain relationships with regional and centric support units.	3
			Increase operational planning for key management priorities including fire, pest, visitor management, post-contact cultural heritage and threatened species.	2

*Level of Service priority: 1 – extremely urgent and extremely necessary, 2 – very necessary and very urgent, 3 – moderately necessary and moderately urgent, 4 – somewhat necessary and somewhat urgent, 5 – optional and not urgent (see Appendix 1)

5. Glossary

The following glossary contains VBMF terms and concepts used within this document.

Term	Description
Adaptive management	The process of adjusting and improving how we manage parks, forests and reserves after assessing the outcomes of previous strategies and on-ground actions.
Condition and trend	The condition of a key value is assessed as either good, good with some concern, significant concern or critical. Trend describes what is happening to the condition: is it improving, stable or deteriorating? A key value's current condition is determined during the planning process. A desired condition is a realistic goal for the future condition of the key value. The ongoing condition and trend of key values is assessed with regular health checks, or monitoring and scientific assessment.
Custodial obligations	The legal and policy requirements QPWS has as a land manager to ensure that parks, forests and reserves are managed properly and lawfully. This includes protecting life and property, maintaining biosecurity, building positive relationships with adjacent communities and landholders, and safeguarding the values of the land.
Desired outcome	A statement in the key value and management direction statements about moving from the current status (condition or LoS) to a desired status. The goal for management.
Health check	Basic form of monitoring that uses indicators and visual assessments to regularly evaluate the condition of key values. Regular health checks ensure QPWS can respond quickly to adverse change and redirect management priorities.
Key value	A natural, cultural, social or economic value that is most important, significant, unique or irreplaceable and helps define the essence of the area. If lost, it would diminish what makes the area distinct from others.
Level of service (LoS)	Management standards for maintaining an area based on its values, threats and the complexity of management. There are six LoS ratings ranging from 'below acceptable' to 'exceptional', noting that an 'acceptable' rating is the minimum standard required to deliver good management and meet our custodial obligations under law as a land manager. A 'current' LoS rating is the level at the time of planning, the 'desired' LoS is where we want to be.
Management direction	An assessment of the current and desired LoS for each management theme, with prioritised strategic management directions.
Management instrument	A management plan or management statement.
Management theme	Common management themes across parks, forests and reserves, including fire management; pest management; natural values management; post-contact cultural heritage management; visitor management; community, partnerships and other interests; field management capability; operational planning and management support.
Strategic management direction	A broad strategy aimed at mitigating or removing a threat to a key value and maintaining or improving the condition of a park's value; or addressing the gap between the current LoS and desired LoS for a management theme.
Threat or threatening process and threat rating	Based on IUCN's classifications, QPWS has identified threatening processes that have the potential to affect Queensland's values (e.g. natural systems modifications, invasive species). Current and potential threats to key values are identified and given a threat rating based on a combination of the extent of the impact, the severity of the impact and the urgency of action.

Appendix 1

Term	Description
Priority rating (key value SMDs)	A rating given to a strategic management direction according to the need for action to prevent further decline, stabilise current condition, or restore and enhance values, with consideration given to legislative obligations, cost, and social, economic and political factors.
	Critical (1) – Loss or very significant decline in the condition of the key value is highly likely if action is not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of the key value is highly likely if action is taken.
	Very high (2) – Significant decline in the condition of the key value is likely if action is not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of the key value is likely if action is taken.
	High (3) – Decline in the condition of the key value is likely if action is not taken OR improvement in the condition of the key value is likely if action is taken.
	Moderate (4) – Some decline in the condition of the key value is possible if action is not taken OR some improvement in the condition of the key value is possible if action is taken.
	Desirable (5) – While decline in the condition of the key value is not likely in the short term, the action, if taken, would help build long-term resilience of the key value.
Priority rating (LoS SMDs)	A rating given to an LoS or custodial obligation strategic management direction. A scale from 1 (extremely urgent) to 5 (not urgent or optional) is assigned, with consideration given to legislative obligations, cost, and social, economic and political factors.