

Keppel Sands Conservation 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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Contents

- 1. Introduction.....3
- 2. Park overview4
- 3. Park values.....5
- 4. Management direction6
 - 4.1 Management directions 7
- 5. Glossary9

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 related to the Keppel Sands Conservation Park included in this management statement, including its locality, legislative framework and applicable plans/agreements.

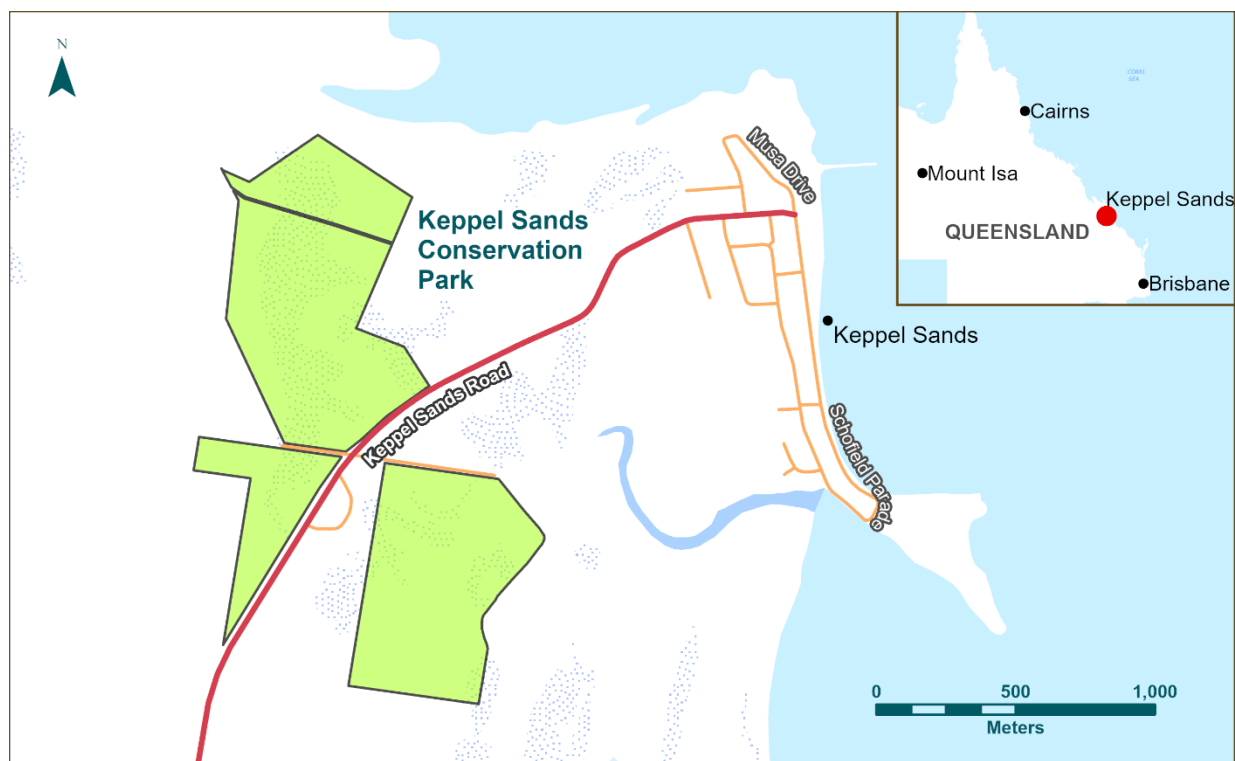


Figure 1. Locality of Keppel Sands Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of Locality of Keppel Sands Conservation Park

Park size	Locality of Keppel Sands Conservation Park	98.4 ha
Bioregion	Brigalow Belt North	
QPWS region	Central	
Local government area	Livingstone Shire	
State electorate	Keppel	
Relevant legislation	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	
	<i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i>	
	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>	
	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>	
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	
Plans and agreements	<i>A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia</i>	

3. Park values

All parks, forests and reserves contain a range of natural, cultural, social and economic values that contribute to Queensland's protected area and forest estate. The VBMF provides a framework for identifying and protecting the most important of these—referred to as *key values*.

Based on an evaluation, the values on Keppel Sands Conservation Park do not reach the thresholds required to be considered key values. The park, however, continues to contribute to the state's comprehensive and representative reserve system, providing protection for biodiversity, ecosystem services and connectivity within the landscape.

Park management will focus on conserving the natural, cultural and social values that support its importance as a protected area, ensuring that management aligns with the legislative and custodial obligations in relation to these values.

Threats to values will primarily be managed through fire and pest management. Key actions will include:

- protecting life and property within and adjacent to the park
- managing fire to conserve and maintain regional ecosystems in line with the planned burn guidelines
- reducing the impacts of existing pest species on neighbouring land uses
- managing pest threats to preserve regional ecosystems and species of conservation significance.

4. Management direction

QPWS manages protected areas and forests to protect their values and deliver our custodial obligations as a land manager. A level 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 2.

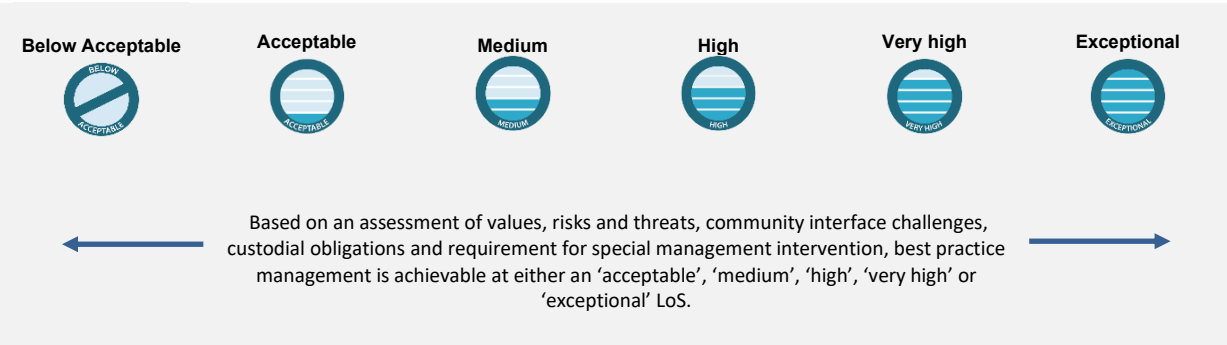


Figure 2. Description of LoS icons

4.1 Management directions

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Fire management			Maintain current approach to fire management based on broad regional ecosystems mapping, guided by the planned burn guidelines.	4
			Maintain existing collaboration through Bushfire Management Groups, infrastructure owners and neighbours to support a shared responsibility approach to fire management.	4
			Improve fire management through preparation of a fire strategy.	4
Pest management			Maintain contemporary knowledge of pest species that might threaten key values	4
			Maintain the current priority for pest management to protect life and property and park values.	4
Natural values management			Maintain contemporary knowledge of natural values and their management requirements.	4
			Improve knowledge of shorebirds in the park through targeted surveys or monitoring programs.	5
			Establish a relationship with Birdlife Capricornia to improve knowledge of shorebirds in the park.	5
Post-contact cultural heritage management			Maintain a contemporary knowledge of the park's post-contact cultural heritage and management requirements.	4
Visitor management			Maintain current level of knowledge of visitor activity, including unauthorised access and use.	4
			Maintain current approach to visitor management, including maintenance of signs and fencing to prevent vehicles accessing the intertidal wetlands.	3
			Improve visitor management by investigating ways to deter unauthorised vehicle access and use of the park in collaboration with Livingstone Shire Council.	4
Community, partnerships and other interests			Maintain contemporary knowledge of all stakeholders and management requirements.	4
			Enhance the relationship with Darumbal People by extending communication for on ground park management to Keppel Sands Conservation Park.	4
Field management capability			Maintain a contemporary knowledge base to deliver required management.	4
			Maintain current levels consultation with regional support units regarding field management capacity.	4
			Maintain current site inspection regime.	4
			Improve current field management capacity to manage unauthorised use of the park and prevent further damage to intertidal wetlands.	5
			Maintain knowledge of available operational planning and management support within the region to guide and support park management operations.	4

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Operational planning and management support			Maintain relationships with regional and centric support units.	4
			Increase operational planning for key management priorities including fire, pest, visitor management and threatened species.	5

*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 Section 5)

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.
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.
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.
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.
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	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).