

# Nerang Area

Incorporates: Nerang National Park, Nerang Conservation Park and Nerang State Forest



## Draft Visitor Strategy 2023

Not Government Policy

Prepared by: **Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of Environment and Science**

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Front cover photo: Bushwalking through Nerang National Park. © 2022, Queensland Government.

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# 1. Introduction

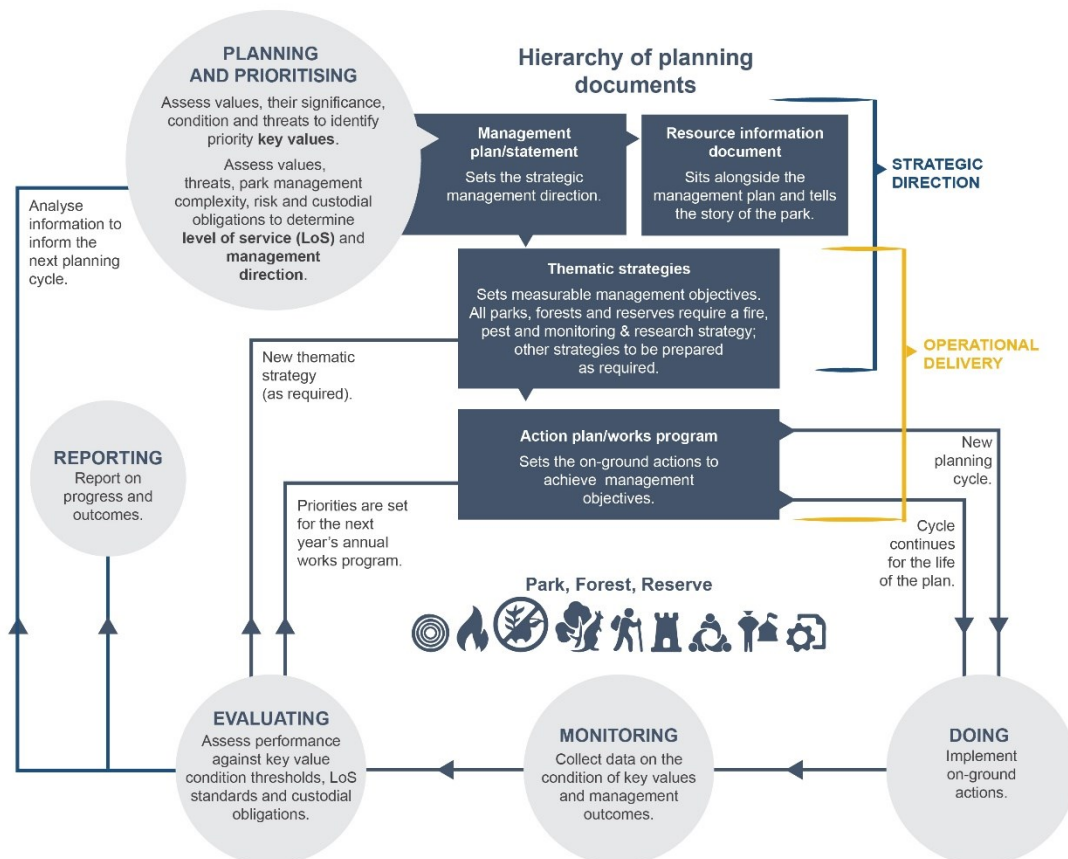
Queensland’s parks, forests and reserves provide local communities and visitors from around the world the opportunity to experience our rich natural and cultural heritage. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) strives to achieve a responsible balance between visitor needs and sensitive park resources in accordance with the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NCA) and other legislative obligations (e.g. *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*).

Management planning process aligns with the Values-Based Management Framework (VBMF), an adaptive management cycle that incorporates planning, prioritising, doing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting into all areas of our business (Figure 1). Management plans and statements set the strategic management direction, guiding the next tier of planning and the development of thematic strategies which in turn inform and prioritise our on-ground operations. A glossary of the VBMF’s key concepts is available in Appendix 3.

This visitor strategy details management objectives for visitor management (Section 2) and the desired management outcomes for visitor sites through zoning (Section 3). Zoning and visitor site management objectives consider the physical, social and managerial impacts to the visitor experiences, as well as sustainability of the sites, therefore visitor strategies clearly state the desired site capacity to achieve a diversity of experiences for visitors and site sustainability.

Information about the VBMF is available on the DES website at [www.des.qld.gov.au](http://www.des.qld.gov.au).

Figure 1. Phases of the VBMF cycle for planning and the hierarchy of planning documents



## 2. Visitor management

Nerang Area is a local community and regional tourism destination for nature-based recreation, including mountain biking, bushwalking and wildlife viewing.

**The visitor management aspirations for Nerang Area are to:**

- protect key natural, cultural and social values of Nerang National Park – particularly the ecological key values
- provide a spectrum of recreational opportunities for visitors (e.g. mountain biking, walking, birdwatching) that balances recreation and conservation, minimises visitor impacts on other values and prevents user conflicts
- focus recreation on activities that are nature-based and ecologically sustainable
- provide regionally significant, high-quality and safe mountain biking experience, consistent with the QPWS cycling policy (a focus on cross-country tracks)
- promote a cross-tenure approach to mountain biking provision such as supporting the growth of privately owned alternative venues for mountain biking in collaboration with Gold Coast City Council
- ensure planning facilitates ease of visitor compliance management, particularly regarding illegal track building and use
- ensure extent of approved network is maintainable within QPWS and community resources.

The *Nerang Area Management Plan* sets the strategic management direction for visitor management. The visitor strategy details management objectives and provides the link between the high-level strategies of the plan and the on-ground operations in action plans and work programs.

### 2.1 Yugambeh (Kombumerri) cultural landscape and elements

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Minimise visitor impacts, including prevention of illegal works or activities, that may disturb or destroy Yugambeh cultural artefacts, places and totems (culturally significant species)	No reports of illegal works or activities occur across the park that disturb or destroy cultural artefacts, places and totems by 2027. Kombumerri rangers are provided QPWS Health Check training for the implementation of health check assessments on cultural values by 2024.	1 2024
Increase visitor awareness of Yugambeh cultural protocols regarding discovery of cultural sites and artefacts	Visitor interpretation materials are developed that include protocols on the discovery of cultural sites and artefacts by 2024.	1 2024
Improve knowledge of Yugambeh culture by incorporating language into culturally relevant visitor interpretation materials and the development of a culturally significant species list	Visitor interpretation is developed for the Nerang Area that includes Yugambeh language and cultural information by 2027. A culturally significant species list is developed to inform QPWS staff and visitors by 2025.	2 2027

\*KEY: Priority ratings: Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

## 2.2 Key values

### Lowland rainforest

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Prevent illegal track construction within the lowland rainforest community through compliance, community education and communication	No reports are received of illegal trail construction in the lowland rainforest key value by 2024. A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>- includes community education and engagement</li> <li>- includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul> A cycling code of conduct is developed and promoted to facilitate responsible riding practices by 2024.	<b>1 2025</b>
	The vehicle impact indicator (which includes mountain bike impacts) of health checks in lowland rainforest improve to <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2025</b>
Restore lowland rainforest community impacted by clearing through decommissioning of recreational trails and restricting future recreational access by working with conservation groups to facilitate natural regeneration	All trails are decommissioned in the lowland rainforest key value by 2023. Friends of Nerang National Park are engaged in restoration works and continue to assist and maintain regeneration of the lowland rainforest by 2027.	<b>1 2027</b>
	The overall condition of lowland rainforest improves to <i>Good</i> by 2024 and remains stable in trend by 2027. The trampling indicator of lowland rainforest health check sites is recorded as <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2027</b>

### Nationally significant wetland – Coombabah Lake wetland area

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Prevent illegal track construction within the wetland areas through compliance, community education and communication	No reports of illegal trail construction in the Coombabah Lake wetland area key value are reported by 2024. A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>- includes community education and engagement</li> <li>- includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul> A cycling code of conduct is developed and promoted to facilitate responsible riding practices by 2024.	<b>1 2024</b>
	The vehicle impact indicator of Coombabah Lake wetland area key value health check sites improve to <i>Good</i> by 2025. The impact on wetland indicator of Coombabah Lake wetland area key value health check sites improve to <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2025</b>
Restore wetland community impacted by clearing through decommissioning of recreational trails and restricting future recreational access by working with conservation groups to facilitate natural regeneration	All trails are decommissioned in the Coombabah Lake wetland area key value by 2023. Friends of Nerang National Park are engaged in restoration works and continue to assist and maintain regeneration of the Coombabah Lake wetland area by 2027.	<b>1 2027</b>
	The overall condition of the Coombabah Lake wetland area improves to <i>Good</i> by 2024 and continues on a stable trend by 2027. The trampling indicator of Coombabah Lake wetland area health check sites is recorded as <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2027</b>

\*KEY: Priority ratings: Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

### Open forests and woodlands

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Prevent illegal trail construction throughout open forests and woodlands through compliance, community education and communication	No reports of illegal trail construction in the open forests and woodlands key value are reported by 2024. A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>- includes community education and engagement</li> <li>- includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul> A cycling code of conduct is developed and promoted to facilitate responsible riding practices by 2024.	<b>1 2024</b>
	The vehicle impact indicator (which includes mountain bike impacts) of open forest and woodlands health check sites are recorded as <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2025</b>
Minimise visitor impacts throughout open forests and woodlands in Zone 3, 4 and 5, associated with recreational access such as mountain biking	The likelihood of illegal trail construction and authorised trail braiding is reduced through ongoing maintenance regimes that support trail sustainability and rideability by 2027. Volunteer groups are engaged in ongoing maintenance of the trails to minimise visitor impacts along the trails. A cycling code of conduct is developed and promoted to facilitate responsible riding practices by 2024.	<b>1 2027</b>
	The ground surface damage or modification, widening of footprint and trampling indicators of visitor health check sites with open forest and woodlands surrounding improve to <i>Good</i> by 2027.	<b>1 2027</b>
Minimise visitor impacts, including vegetation clearing and damage, associated with illegal motorised access	The Memorandum of Understanding with Toyota Landcruiser Queensland four-wheel driving group is maintained by 2027. A compliance action plan is resourced and implemented for the surveillance and prevention of illegal motorised access that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- remote cameras</li> <li>- surveillance efforts</li> <li>- maintenance of vehicle barrier fencing.</li> </ul>	<b>2 2025</b>
	The vehicle impact indicator of open forest and woodlands health check sites are recorded as <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2025</b>
Restore open forests and woodlands in Zone 2 impacted by clearing by decommissioning mountain bike tracks, including working with conservation groups to facilitate natural regeneration	All trails are decommissioned in the open forests and woodlands of Zone 2 by 2024. Friends of Nerang National Park are engaged in restoration works and continue to assist and maintain regeneration of the open forests and woodlands by 2027.	<b>1 2027</b>
	The trampling indicator of open forests and woodlands health check sites in Zone 2 are measuring as <i>Good</i> by 2025.	<b>1 2025</b>
Prevent illegal domestic dog walking throughout the open forests and woodlands through community education and maintaining interpretation	A decline in observed and reported illegal domestic dog walking throughout Nerang National Park is achieved by 2025.	<b>4 2025</b>

\*KEY: Priority ratings: Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

### Mountain bike riding experience

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Enhance the mountain biking experience by exploring a range of opportunities within Zone 4 and 5, including improving track design, alignment, flow patterns and orientation of approved tracks	<p>A holistic trail network master plan is developed for the mountain bike riding experience by 2024.</p> <p>The general consensus of visitor use surveys (including review of external online platforms, e.g. TrailForks) is that Nerang Area is sustained as a regionally significant mountain biking destination by 2027.</p> <p>Consistent directional signage is maintained throughout the mountain bike riding experience to ensure visitor safety by 2027.</p>	<b>2 2027</b>
Enhance the visitor experience in the mountain biking precinct by working with Gold Coast City Council to improve entry, orientation and trail head facilities in Zone 5.	A collaborative plan for establishing a clear entry and trail head facilities is established with Gold Coast City Council, in association with the Velodrome Master Plan, by 2023.	<b>2</b>
Enhance the visitor safety of the mountain biking experience by decommissioning tracks, trails and bridges that are not part of the approved track network	<p>All unauthorised trails in Zone 2 are decommissioned by 2023.</p> <p>All unauthorised trails in Zone 3, 4 and 5 are decommissioned by 2024.</p> <p>All trail features on authorised trails in Zone 3, 4 and 5 meet international standards by 2023 and are maintained.</p> <p>A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>- includes community education and engagement</li> <li>- includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul> <p>A cycling code of conduct is developed and promoted to facilitate responsible riding practices by 2024.</p>	<b>2 2024</b>
Maintain the mountain bike trails throughout Zone 3, 4 and 5 through appropriate management and resourcing	<p>All mountain bike trails are allocated a maintenance regime in QPWS asset management system (e.g. Loc8) by 2023.</p> <p>The likelihood of illegal trail construction and authorised trail braiding is reduced through ongoing maintenance regimes that support trail sustainability and rideability by 2027.</p> <p>Volunteer groups are engaged in ongoing maintenance of the trails to maintain the trail network as a regionally significant mountain biking destination by 2027.</p>	<b>2 2027</b>
	Overall condition of mountain bike riding experience key value is measuring as <i>Good</i> by 2027.	<b>2 2027</b>
Minimise social impacts on the mountain bike riding experience associated with unauthorised horseriding along the single use mountain bike trails in Zone 3, 4 and 5	<p>A decline in reports or evidence of unauthorised horseriding along single use mountain bike trails is achieved by 2027.</p> <p>A trigger process is initiated by 2023 whereby reports of unauthorised horseriding on single use mountain bike trails result in temporary signage installation to promote community education and reduce user conflicts.</p>	<b>3 2027</b>

\*KEY: Priority ratings: Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)



## 2.3 Other values

These are recreational activities and experiences that are currently available at Nerang National Park. The strategic management direction is in addition to those identified in the Nerang Area Management Statement.

### Bushwalking

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Maintain the bushwalking experience at Nerang Area through maintenance of trails and promotion of shared trails	Promotion of the bushwalking experience at Nerang National Park is enhanced through DES social media channels by 2025. Specific bushwalking circuits, including elevations and distances, are highlighted on entrance signage to promote the bushwalking experience on shared management trails by 2025.	<b>3</b> <b>2025</b>

### Organised competitive events

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Maintain the current organised competitive events throughout Nerang Area	Organised competitive events continue to be supported within the Nerang Area in accordance with the SEQR Organised Event Guidelines – ongoing. Frequencies, capacities and monitoring requirements are set for organised competitive events in the Nerang Area by 2025.	<b>3</b> <b>2025</b>




### Horseriding

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Maintain the horseriding experience across the shared trail network in Nerang Area	SEQR horse trail network monitoring does not show an average decline in BioCondition scores across the four sites by 2027.	<b>3</b> <b>2027</b>

\*KEY: Priority ratings: Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

## 2.4 Management direction

Nerang National Park’s management direction for visitor management is to increase/maintain/moderate its level of service to *High* to meet the park’s visitor management needs and to conserve the park’s natural and cultural values. QPWS seeks a responsible balance between the conservation for natural and cultural values and providing sustainable nature-based experiences in accordance with the NCA, other legislation, and government policies and procedures. Permitted commercial tour activities, agreements and events are administered in accordance with the NCA and other relevant legislation. QPWS will identify, assess and manage hazards to visitor safety in accordance with relevant safety obligations.

<p>Nerang Area will be managed at a <i>Very high</i> LoS for visitor management by maintaining knowledge of visitor usage, relationships with commercial operators and frequency of compliance patrols.</p>	Current LoS	Change in management direction	Desired LoS
			

### Level of knowledge

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Improve current knowledge of visitor use impacts by monitoring visitor numbers and regular assessments of the track network	<p>A formal process for analysing visitor use patterns against trail conditions through available online platforms (e.g. Strava and TrailForks) is established by 2024.</p> <p>The visitor counter and camera monitoring network is maintained across the park by 2027.</p> <p>Engagement with users of the park, neighbours and commercial operators is maintained to improve knowledge of visitor use, including illegal activities, by 2026.</p>	<b>3 2027</b>
Increase knowledge of other visitor user groups accessing the park for organised events (particularly running events) that might be resulting in user conflicts	<p>Sustainable event capacities, including annual frequency schedules, are set across the Nerang Area by 2024.</p> <p>A calendar booking system for the management of events, ensuring windows for planned burns are identified, will be implemented by 2025.</p>	<b>3 2025</b>
Monitor the condition of visitor key values through health check monitoring	Visitor values are monitored and analysed to inform best practice management on an annual basis.	<b>1 2027</b>

### Level of engagement required for commercial operators and competitive events

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Improve relationship with volunteer groups to ensure track maintenance is consistent with the strategic direction for visitor management at Nerang National Park	<p>Relationships with volunteer groups that support trail management are fostered and invested in, with particular reference to previous co-design processes, on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>A holistic trail master plan to improve track design, flow and user safety is developed in collaboration with volunteer groups by 2024.</p>	<b>1 2024</b>
Maintain current relationship with commercial tour operators as required	<p>Commercial operators within the Nerang Area continue to be engaged on relevant park management matters by 2027.</p> <p>The approach to commercial operator management in Nerang Area feeds into the region-wide improvement on engagement and oversight of commercial operators by 2024.</p>	<b>3 2027</b>
Improve the relationship between QPWS and AusCycling to assist with the management of mountain bike recreation at Nerang National Park	<p>AusCycling continues to be engaged as a key stakeholder in the management of the regionally significant mountain bike riding experience in the Nerang Area by 2027.</p> <p>AusCycling promotes key QPWS messaging within its organisation and contributes to the sustainable use of mountain bike trails by 2027.</p> <p>A collaborative agreement is established with AusCycling by 2025.</p>	<b>2 2027</b>
Maintain current relationships with competitive event organisers as required	<p>Develop a pre-lodgement pack for commercial activity and organised event applicants by 2023.</p> <p>This pre-lodgement pack will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information highlighting QPWS’s priority for the protection of life and property through the planned burn program, and that any events will need contingency plans if QPWS decides to undertake planned burning during the planned dates for the event</li> <li>- the necessity for event managers to have adequate emergency response procedures for event participants (including wildfire contingency plans)</li> <li>- adequate pre-lodgement information about the park to help streamline applications and processes.</li> </ul>	<b>4 2023</b>

### Overall approach to visitor management

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Maintain approach to facilities management through sustainable and contemporary track design for mountain bike trails	A holistic trail network master plan is developed for the mountain bike riding experience by 2024.	<b>2</b> <b>2027</b>
Improve the approach to infrastructure management by rationalising the track network and ensuring approved tracks are within QPWS asset management system (Loc8) to generate maintenance funding	All unauthorised trails are decommissioned by 2024. All authorised mountain bike trails receive a maintenance regime in Loc8 by 2023. A holistic trail network master plan is developed for the mountain bike riding experience by 2024.	<b>2</b> <b>2024</b>
Improve current approach to visitor management, including frequency of patrols to discourage unauthorised trail building and use and to prevent impacts on key values	A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>- includes community education and engagement</li> <li>- includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>- details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul>	<b>4</b> <b>2023</b>
Maintain relationship with Queensland Police Service (QPS) to undertake compliance activities targeting illegal track building through Nerang National Park	QPS continue to be engaged in relevant park compliance efforts to ensure safety of rangers, and a cultural shift away from illegal trail construction is observed by 2027.	<b>1</b> <b>2027</b>
Support the development of a cycling code of conduct to encourage responsible riding practices	In conjunction with the future QPWS policy, <i>Cycling in QPWS managed areas</i> , a cycling code of conduct is developed and adopted for implementation by mountain bike users across Nerang National Park by 2024.	<b>2</b> <b>2024</b>

### Visitor safety

Strategic management direction	Management objective	Priority*
Maintain visitor safety on the mountain bike trails through sustaining relationships with track maintenance groups and volunteers	Relationships with volunteer groups that support trail management are fostered and invested in, with particular reference to previous co-design processes, on an ongoing basis. A holistic trail master plan to improve track design, flow and user safety is developed in collaboration with volunteer groups by 2024.	<b>2</b> <b>2024</b>

\*Priority ratings: **M** – maintain current priorities; Scale **1** (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to **5** (optional and not urgent)

### 3. Zones and site management

#### 3.1 Visitor management zones and sites





This section identifies visitor management zones and sites for Nerang National Park. Zoning, and visitor site management objectives consider the physical, social and managerial impacts of the visitor experiences and sustainability of the sites; visitor strategies clearly state the desired site capacity to provide a diversity of experiences for visitors and achieve site sustainability. The strategy also explores visitor opportunities that complement other experiences in the landscape and region.



The visitor management zones provide guidance for managing the acceptable level of development, the acceptable range of persons at one time (PAOT), group sizes, visitor site standards, and visitor experience and expectations. Visitor management zone definitions are provided in Appendix 1 and the zones are shown on Map 1. Definitions for shared-trail level of service for maintenance, and walking track classification, are provided in Appendix 2.

The condition of visitor sites and visitor satisfaction with park experiences will be monitored through the implementation of the *Nerang Area Monitoring and Research Strategy*.

##### Nerang Area visitor sites by zone

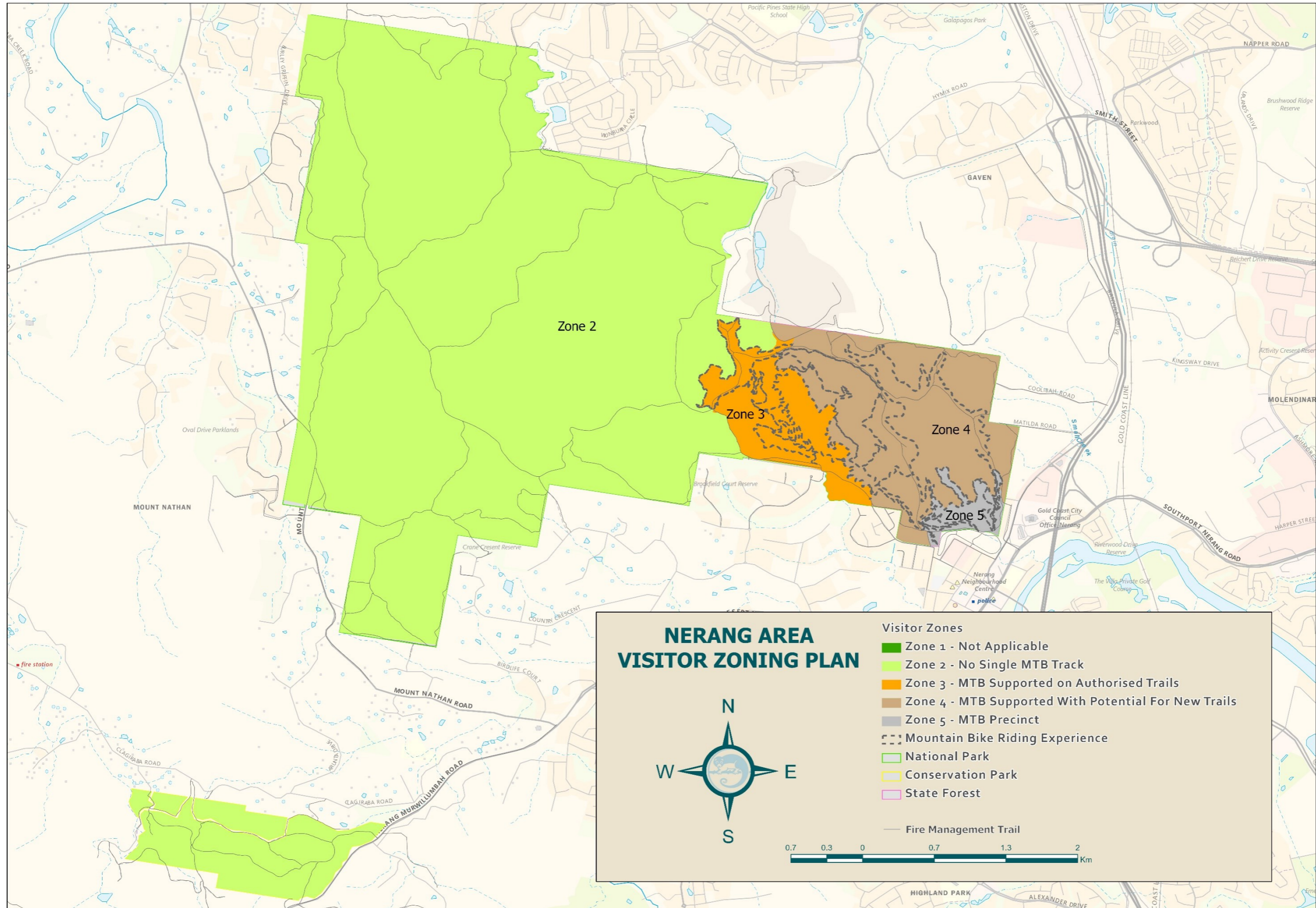
Zone	Zone description	Site name	Associated key value	Existing LoS and LCS	Desired LoS and LCS	PAOT & max group size	Current site use	Issues	Threat	Objective category	Site management objectives	Action type	Site management actions
Zone 2	<p><b>Natural values protection (passive recreation only)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPBC listed lowland subtropical rainforest (RE 12.11.10) and nationally listed important wetlands of Coombabah Creek. Both of these have been identified as key values for Nerang National Park.</li> <li>Ecological surveys indicate greatest importance to protect and ensure remains undisturbed and in a healthy condition (minimal pest impacts, good canopy recruitment). Lower boundary to core ratio so less edge effects and greater buffer to core.</li> <li>Cultural heritage report suggests this zone more likely to hold cultural heritage sites and artefacts due to the generally high vegetation cover. Cultural heritage sites can be safely managed in situ.</li> <li>Danggan Balun and Ngarang-Wal have flagged ongoing concerns about development of this zone for mountain biking.</li> <li>Reduced conflict by reserving this zone for passive use, such as walking and birdwatching. Horseriding will still be allowed only on shared fire management trails.</li> <li>Further protection of this zone could be achieved by temporary regulations to prevent unauthorised vehicle access (including mountain biking).</li> </ul>	<b>Natural values protection (passive recreation only)</b>	<p><b>Lowland rainforest</b></p> <p><b>Coombabah Lake wetland area</b></p> <p><b>Open forests and woodlands</b></p>	NA	NA	NA	<p>Key natural values area, no single use trails.</p> <p>Nerang National Park and Conservation Park.</p>	Illegal trail construction.	Recreation, work or other activities	Non asset based: maintain	Key values are protected from illegal trail construction and reopening of decommissioned trails through ongoing compliance by 2025.	<p>Operations</p> <p>Compliance</p>	<p>Compliance action plan is implemented.</p> <p>Annual natural value health checks are completed.</p>
		<b>Shared fire management trails</b>	<p><b>Lowland rainforest</b></p> <p><b>Coombabah Lake wetland area</b></p> <p><b>Open forests and woodlands</b></p>			PAOT 21-50	<p>Passive use, such as walking and birdwatching. Horseriding allowed on shared fire management trails.</p> <p>Organised competitive running events supported along the network.</p> <p>Four-wheel drive clubs traversing under Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).</p>	Drainage, ground surface modifications.	Inappropriate facilities	Asset based: upgrade	Shared fire management trails are upgraded to improve drainage and minimise impacts on nearby key natural values by 2025.	<p>Asset: capital works</p> <p>Maintenance</p>	<p>Upgrade trails and drainage.</p> <p>Maintain MoU with four-wheel drive clubs.</p> <p>Sustainable event capacities and frequencies are established.</p>
		<b>Unauthorised trail network</b>	Nil	NA	NA	NA	Unauthorised mountain bike trail.	Destruction of intersecting key values, illegal works, braiding of trails, unsafe structures.	Works or other activities	Asset based: decommission	<p>Unauthorised and unsustainable trail network is decommissioned by 2023.</p> <p>Key values are protected from illegal trail construction and reopening of decommissioned trails through ongoing compliance by 2025.</p>	<p>Asset: capital works</p> <p>Compliance</p> <p>Operations</p>	<p>Decommission trails by 2023.</p> <p>Compliance action plan is implemented.</p>

Zone	Zone description	Site name	Associated key value	Existing LoS and LCS	Desired LoS and LCS	PAOT & max group size	Current site use	Issues	Threat	Objective category	Site management objectives	Action type	Site management actions
Zone 3	<p><b>Lower intensity recreation (e.g. cross-country trails)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a buffer between the more intense use within Zones 4 &amp; 5 and the passive recreational use of Zone 2 – marking a transition in visitor use from intense mountain bike use to cross-country shared trail use.</li> <li>This zone includes some of the park's key values (open forests and woodlands) but doesn't impact the EPBC listed lowland subtropical rainforest (RE 12.11.10) nor nationally listed important wetlands of Coombabah Creek.</li> <li>Sustainably designed 'cross-country' trails or walking tracks at current densities are unlikely to impact the forests/woodlands.</li> <li>This zone provides recreational mountain biking opportunities for beginners and families with fewer technical design features of trails.</li> </ul>	Authorised trail network	Mountain bike riding experience	 LCS 5	 LCS 5	PAOT 21–50	<p>Includes trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Happy Valley</li> <li>Goanna</li> <li>Goanna Loop</li> <li>Explosions</li> <li>Elevator</li> <li>BBs</li> <li>Bailey's.</li> </ul> <p>Mountain bike competitive events allowed.</p> <p>Organised competitive running events not supported on single use mountain bike trail network.</p>	<p>Culverts washing out after significant weather events, user conflicts with horseriders, footprint widening (particularly braiding), trail duplication, poor drainage design, poor trail network design.</p>	Inappropriate facilities	Asset based: enhance	<p>Undertake a holistic trail master plan to improve track design, flow and user safety by 2024.</p> <p>A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>includes community education and engagement</li> <li>includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul>	Asset: capital works	<p>Develop a collaborative and holistic trail master plan.</p> <p>Upgrade trails to address management issues.</p> <p>All trails within Zone 3 have a maintenance regime assigned in Loc8.</p> <p>Implement maintenance regimes.</p> <p>Compliance action plan is implemented.</p> <p>Sustainable event capacities and frequencies are established.</p>
Zone 4	<p><b>Mountain biking precinct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides for range of different mountain bike users, i.e. beginners, intermediate and advanced riders.</li> <li>Part of main mountain bike use area, including potential for new tracks.</li> <li>Waterways in this area flow to heavily urbanised areas, higher boundary to core ratio (greater edge effects, less buffer to internal core), more impacted by urban development, arterial road and quarry.</li> <li>While ecological surveys identified habitat for threatened species (e.g. greater glider), they concluded that if habitat areas remain undisturbed elsewhere in the park (i.e. other zones), more intense use throughout this zone would be acceptable.</li> </ul>	Authorised trail network	Mountain bike riding experience	 LCS 6	 LCS 6	PAOT 51–150	<p>Includes trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pete's Trail</li> <li>Training Wheels</li> <li>Rocky Horror</li> <li>Three Hills</li> <li>Goanna</li> <li>Barney's</li> <li>Exit</li> <li>Wombats</li> <li>Wombats connection</li> <li>Rocky Horror link</li> <li>Taipan.</li> </ul> <p>Mountain bike competitive events allowed.</p> <p>Organised competitive running events not supported on single use mountain bike trail network.</p>	<p>Culverts washing out after significant weather events, user conflicts with horseriders, footprint widening (particularly braiding), trail duplication, poor drainage design, poor trail network design, domestic dog walking.</p>	Inappropriate facilities	Asset based: enhance	<p>Undertake a holistic trail master plan to improve track design, flow and user safety by 2024.</p> <p>A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>includes community education and engagement</li> <li>includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul>	Asset: capital works	<p>Develop a collaborative and holistic trail master plan.</p> <p>Upgrade trails to address management issues.</p> <p>All trails within Zone 4 have a maintenance regime assigned in Loc8.</p> <p>Implement maintenance regimes.</p> <p>Compliance action plan is implemented.</p> <p>Sustainable event capacities and frequencies are established.</p>

Zone	Zone description	Site name	Associated key value	Existing LoS and LCS	Desired LoS and LCS	PAOT & max group size	Current site use	Issues	Threat	Objective category	Site management objectives	Action type	Site management actions
Zone 5	<p><b>Mountain biking precinct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of area developed for Commonwealth Games 2018.</li> <li>Supports the Gold Coast City Council's vision to redevelop the Nerang Cycle Centre to include a mountain bike trailhead and facilities.</li> <li>This zoning reflects the close proximity to urbanisation and potential for future development in the area.</li> <li>The trails included in this area are technical trails for intermediate to advanced riders.</li> </ul>	<b>Authorised trail network</b>	<b>Mountain bike riding experience</b>	 LCS 7	 LCS 7	PAOT >150	<p>Trail links to Velodrome precinct. Includes trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC2018 Loop 1</li> <li>GC2018 Loop 2</li> <li>GC2018 Loop 3</li> <li>Training Wheels</li> <li>Casuarina Grove circuit and loop</li> </ul> <p>Mountain bike competitive events allowed.</p> <p>Organised competitive running events supported on Casuarina Grove circuit and loop only.</p>	<p>Culverts washing out after significant weather events, user conflicts with horseriders, footprint widening (particularly braiding), trail duplication, poor drainage design, poor trail network design, aging infrastructure, domestic dog walking.</p>	Inappropriate facilities	Asset based: maintain	<p>Maintain the authorised trail network throughout Zone 5 by 2027.</p> <p>A compliance action plan is developed, resourced and implemented for Nerang by 2023 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>targets illegal mountain bike trail construction</li> <li>includes community education and engagement</li> <li>includes a surveillance regime</li> <li>details a hierarchy of compliance actions</li> <li>details a hierarchy of enforcement actions.</li> </ul>	Operations	<p>Collaborate with Gold Coast City Council to ensure Velodrome master planning aligns with the authorised trail network of Zone 5.</p> <p>All trails within Zone 5 have a maintenance regime assigned in Loc8.</p> <p>Undertake a condition assessment of aging trail infrastructure on Casuarina Grove trail.</p> <p>Sustainable event capacities and frequencies are established.</p>

LCS – Landscape Classification Systems

Map 1. Nerang National Park visitor management zones



## 4. Appendices








### Appendix 1. Key to visitor management zone definitions

Zone	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5	Special management setting
<b>Zone description</b>	A totally, or almost totally, natural landscape, with minimal evidence of modern human activity. Usually large remote areas.	Predominantly natural landscape with only minor disturbance. Inconspicuous evidence of modern human activity in small limited areas.	Predominantly natural landscape with some disturbed areas; human activity apparent at small sites.	Mostly natural areas, but with disturbance and high levels of human activity apparent at some sites at some times.	Modified immediate environment but with rural, natural or semi-urban background. Human activity is primary intent of site.	Special management settings are applied to areas that have special values, opportunities or management issues to enhance visitor experience, ensure visitor safety or protect key values.
<b>General visitor experience</b>	Totally self-reliant visitor experience in wilderness setting. High degree of isolation and sense of solitude.  <b>Very high level of outdoor skills required.</b>	Highly self-reliant visitor experience in very natural area. Frequent opportunities for sense of solitude.  <b>High level of outdoor skills required.</b>	Degree of self-reliance required in predominantly natural setting. Sense of isolation and solitude moderate to low.  <b>Moderate level of outdoor skill required.</b>	Infrequent opportunities for solitude. Encounters with others frequent. Sites managed for visitor safety and comfort.  <b>Low level of outdoor skills required.</b>	Semi-urban recreation experience with no opportunity for solitude. Encounters with individuals and groups constant. Site may be crowded at peak times.  <b>No outdoor skills required.</b>	
<b>LCS* (upper limit)</b>	<b>LCS 3</b>	<b>LCS 4</b>	<b>LCS 5</b>	<b>LCS 6</b>	<b>LCS 7</b>	
<b>Suggested group sizes</b>	<b>LoS PAOT range</b> Very small  <b>Managed group size: &lt;6</b>	<b>LoS PAOT range</b> Very small to small  <b>Managed group size: &lt;25</b>	<b>LoS PAOT range</b> Very small to medium  <b>Managed group size: &lt;25</b>	<b>LoS PAOT range</b> Very small to large  <b>Managed group size: &lt;50</b>	<b>LoS PAOT range</b> Very small to very large  <b>Managed group size: &lt;75</b>	
<b>Site capacity class</b>	<b>Very small</b> 1–10 PAOT	<b>Small</b> 11–20 PAOT	<b>Medium</b> 21–50 PAOT	<b>Large</b> 51–150 PAOT	<b>Very large</b> >151 PAOT	

\* Notes the equivalent LCS represented in the visitor management zone.  
LoS – Level of service.



## Appendix 2. Key to shared-trail definitions

<p><b>Site level of service</b></p>	 <p><b>Bronze</b></p> <p>Relatively common opportunities in modest demand with limited associated experiences and few (if any) basic facilities (high self-sufficiency).</p>	 <p><b>Silver</b></p> <p>Regionally significant opportunities in popular demand, with some attractive associated experiences and modest facilities (may include vault, composting and hybrid toilets, water, picnic tables, basic interpretation).</p>	 <p><b>Gold</b></p> <p>High-quality opportunities in high demand, with many attractive associated experiences and developed facilities (may include vault, composting, hybrid and flush toilets, showers, BBQs, covered picnic areas, extensive interpretation).</p>	 <p><b>Platinum</b></p> <p>Exclusive (nationally unique) opportunities, with outstanding site quality associated opportunities and well-developed facilities (private composting, hybrid and flush toilets, hot showers, kitchen, personal interpretation). Often operated by private partners, market-based pricing.</p>		
<p><b>Shared-trail level of service for maintenance</b></p>	 <p><b>Bronze</b></p> <p>Maintenance intervention is minimal, of acceptable quality and enough to ensure tracks are safe and free of major foreseeable hazards and keep most tracks available for use in normal circumstances.</p> <p>Maintenance standards will be acceptable to client expectations.</p>	 <p><b>Silver</b></p> <p>Maintenance provides good quality presentation of park features through good visitor access, visitor facilities, vegetation and environmental management of the tracks. Maintenance intervention is routine, good quality and enough to ensure the site is safe and free of major foreseeable hazards and keep most tracks available for use in most circumstances.</p> <p>Maintenance standards will adequately meet client expectations.</p>	 <p><b>Gold</b></p> <p>Maintenance provides high-quality presentation of the park features through high level visitor access, visitor facilities and vegetation and environmental management of the tracks. Maintenance intervention is frequent, good quality and enough to ensure tracks are safe and free of most foreseeable hazards and keep all tracks available for use in most circumstances.</p> <p>Maintenance standards will easily meet client expectations.</p>	 <p><b>Platinum</b></p> <p>Maintenance provides outstanding and ageless presentation of the park features through unsurpassed visitor access, visitor facilities and vegetation and environmental management of the tracks. Maintenance is well planned and responsive, of high quality and aimed at ensuring the tracks are safe and free of all foreseeable hazards and all tracks are kept available in all but exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Maintenance standards will exceed client expectations.</p>		
<p><b>Walking track classification<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p><sup>^</sup> AUS Standards</p> <p>** Grades are in accordance with the AS1428 series for wheelchair access</p>	<p><b>Class 1**</b></p> <p>Opportunity for large numbers of visitors, including those with reduced mobility, to undertake walks that are provided with a high level of interpretation and facilities. Users can expect abundant opportunities to learn about the natural environment through interpretive signs or brochures. Users can expect frequent encounters with others.</p>	<p><b>Class 2</b></p> <p>Opportunity for large numbers of visitors to walk easily in natural environments that are provided with a moderate to high level of interpretation and facilities. Users can expect to learn about the natural environment with moderate to abundant opportunities to learn through interpretive signs or brochures. Users can expect frequent encounters with others.</p>	<p><b>Class 3</b></p> <p>Opportunity for visitors to walk in slightly modified natural environments requiring a moderate level of fitness and where the provision of interpretation and facilities is not common. Users can expect opportunities to observe and appreciate the natural environment with limited provision of interpretive signage. Users can expect occasional encounters with others.</p>	<p><b>Class 4</b></p> <p>Opportunity for visitors to explore and discover relatively undisturbed natural environments along defined and distinct tracks with minimal (if any) facilities. Users can expect opportunities to observe and appreciate the natural environment without provision of interpretive signage. Users can expect opportunities for solitude with few encounters with others.</p>	<p><b>Class 5</b></p> <p>Opportunity for visitors with advanced outdoor knowledge and skills to find their own way along often-indistinct tracks in remote locations. Users can expect frequent opportunities for solitude with few encounters with others.</p>	<p><b>Class 6</b></p> <p>Opportunity for highly experienced walkers to explore remote and challenging natural areas without reliance on managed tracks. Users can expect extended periods of solitude with few encounters with others.</p>

## Appendix 3. Glossary

### Interpreting key VBMF concepts

<b>Adaptive management</b>	The process of adjusting and improving how we manage parks, forests and reserves after assessing the outcomes of previous strategies and on-ground actions.
<b>Condition and trend</b>	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 of key values is assessed with regular health checks, monitoring and scientific assessment.
<b>Custodial/management obligations</b>	The requirements in legislation and government policies that we, as the land management agency, have to ensure QPWS's parks, forests and reserves are lawfully managed and good neighbours. Management provides for the protection of life and property, biosecurity and positive relationships with adjacent communities and landholders, as well as enhancing and protecting our values.
<b>Desired outcome</b>	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.
<b>Health check</b>	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.
<b>Key value</b>	A natural, cultural or social value that is of most significance to that area. It is what makes the area special and if lost, would diminish what makes the area distinct from others.
<b>Key value statement</b>	A statement in the management plan/statement that is developed for each key value. It describes the key value, current condition, desired condition, current threats and threat ratings, strategic management direction and priorities for further thematic strategy planning and on-ground management action.
<b>Level of service (LoS)</b>	A planning tool used to identify the acceptable management standard, or level of resourcing that is required to maintain an area based on its values, threats and the complexity of management. There are five LoS ratings ranging from '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.
<b>Management direction</b>	How we manage each management theme to protect and enhance our key values and meet our custodial management obligations.
<b>Management direction statement</b>	A statement in the management plan/statement, developed for each management theme, that describes the current LoS, desired LoS, custodial obligations, strategic management direction and priorities for further thematic strategy planning and on-ground management action.
<b>Management instrument</b>	A management plan or management statement.
<b>Management theme</b>	QPWS has identified a number of management themes that are common to most of the parks, forests and reserves in our estate: fire management; pest management; natural values management; historic cultural heritage management; visitor management; community, partnerships and other interests; field management capability; operational planning and management support.
<b>Priority rating (key value SMDs)</b>	<p>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, social, economic and political factors.</p> <p>Critical (1) – Loss or very significant decline in the condition of key value/s is highly likely if action not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of key value/s is highly likely if action is taken.</p> <p>Very high (2) – Significant decline in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is taken.</p> <p>High (3) – Decline in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is not taken OR improvement in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is taken.</p> <p>Moderate (4) – Some decline in the condition of key value/s is possible if action is not taken OR some improvement in the condition of key value/s is possible if action is taken.</p> <p>Desirable (5) – While decline in the condition of key value/s is not likely in the short term, the action, if taken would help build long-term resilience of key value/s.</p>
<b>Priority rating (LoS SMDs)</b>	A rating given to an LoS or custodial obligation strategic management direction. A scale from 1 (extremely urgent) – 5 (not urgent or optional) is assigned, with consideration given to legislative obligations, cost, social, economic and political factors.
<b>Strategic management direction</b>	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.
<b>Threat or threatening process and threat rating</b>	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 etc.). Current 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.

## Visitor concepts

<b>Commercial tour operator (CTO)</b>	Means the companies or individuals approved by QPWS to conduct commercial tourism activities in a specified QPWS managed area.
<b>Group size</b>	Means the number of people arriving together in an organised manner, for example, a bus arriving with 50 people is a group size of 50.
<b>Persons at one time (PAOT)</b>	The measure of visitor load on a site at any one time, for example, the total number of visitors there at lunchtime. PAOT is usually a measure as the number of visitors in one hectare or at a site.
<b>Sustainable visitor capacity</b>	The type and level of use a site can support over a given time period without causing excessive damage to the site's physical environment and cultural values or diminishing the quality of the users' recreation experience.
<b>Visitor</b>	Anyone who visits a park, forest, reserve for recreational experience and educational purposes rather than enjoyment.
<b>Visitor impacts</b>	A measure of how a visitor changes the physical, biological, cultural, social and managerial characteristics of a site. Impacts include soil compaction, polluting water bodies, trampling vegetation and raising the noise level at a site. Managers determine what types of changes and how much change is acceptable, and what is unacceptable, and define indicators that will warn when the limits are being approached.
<b>Walking track class</b>	The class of a walking track as defined in AS 2156.1.