



Plan of Management



Tinkrameanah National Park

Tinkrameanah Community Conservation Area Zone 1

TINKRAMEANAH NATIONAL PARK

Community Conservation Area Zone 1

PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

October 2012

This plan of management was adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 3rd October 2012.

Acknowledgements

This plan of management is based on a draft plan prepared by staff of the Northern Plains Region of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), part of the Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet, with input from members of the Namoi Community Conservation Advisory Committee.

The NPWS acknowledges that this park is in the traditional country of the Gamilaraay people.

Cover photo: Tinkrameanah National Park by Rebecca Cass, NPWS.

For additional information or any inquiries about this park or this plan of management, contact the NPWS Coonabarabran Area Office, 30 Timor St, Coonabarabran or by telephone on (02) 68421311.

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FOREWORD

Tinkrameanah National Park covers 969 hectares and is located south-east of Coonabarabran in the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. It was reserved as a national park (Community Conservation Area Zone 1) on 1st December 2005.

Tinkrameanah National Park forms part of a chain of reserves stretching the length of the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. It contains 72 fauna species, including five threatened species, and 266 species of plants. Tinkrameanah National Park is also rich in Aboriginal heritage, with a wide range of traditional food sources and a number of artifact sites, and provides views of the surrounding ranges out to the edge of the Liverpool Plains from its rocky outcrops.

The New South Wales *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* requires that a plan of management be prepared for each national park. A draft plan of management for Tinkrameanah National Park was placed on public exhibition from 13 May to 29 August 2011. The submissions received were considered by the Community Conservation Area Committee and the National Parks and Wildlife Council, and their recommendations considered, before adopting this plan.

The plan contains a number of actions to achieve the NSW 2021 goal to protect our natural environment, including baseline fauna and flora surveys, the implementation of actions to assist the recovery of threatened species, and control of introduced plants and animals. The plan also provides for bushwalking, a loop road for scenic driving, and for cycling and horse riding on roads and management trails within the park.

This plan of management establishes the scheme of operations for Tinkrameanah National Park. In accordance with section 73B of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, this plan of management is hereby adopted.

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Robyn Parker MP Minister for the Environment



1. LOCATION, GAZETTAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Tinkrameanah National Park is approximately 40 kilometres south-east of the township of Coonabarabran and 10 kilometres west of Tambar Springs. The park is 969 hectares in size, with a boundary of 18 kilometres. It lies in the Pilliga sub-region of the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. Prior to being gazetted as a national park in December 2005 the land was Tinkrameanah State Forest No 915, managed by Forests NSW.

Tinkrameanah National Park falls within the Warrumbungle Local Government Area and the Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). It is part of the traditional lands of the Gamilaraay Aboriginal people. It is zoned 8 (a) (National Parks) in the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990, and falls within the boundaries of the Namoi Catchment Management Authority.

Tinkrameanah is one of the reserves established under the *Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Areas Act 2005* (BNCCA Act) and as such forms part of a chain of reserves stretching the length of the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. Although Tinkrameanah National Park is surrounded by private properties used for grazing and cropping, the majority of the park is surrounded by at least a one kilometre buffer of forested grazing land, with some cleared land adjoining the park boundary in the northeast corner.

Tinkrameanah National Park has a road reserve (the Old Mail Road) running through the centre of the park. This road is not required by any landholder to access private property and is rarely used by anyone other than NPWS staff. NPWS maintain the road as part of the park's road and trail network.

2. MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

2.1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The management of community conservation areas in NSW is in the context of the legislative and policy framework, primarily the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act) and Regulations, the BNCCA Act and associated Community Conservation Agreement, the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act), and the policies of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

Other legislation, international agreements and charters may also apply to management of the area. In particular, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EPA Act) may require the assessment and mitigation of the environmental impacts of works proposed in this plan. The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) also applies in relation to actions that may impact on threatened species listed under that Act.

A plan of management is a statutory document under the NPW Act. Once the Minister has adopted a plan, no operations may be undertaken within Tinkrameanah National Park except in accordance with this plan. This plan will also apply to any future additions to Tinkrameanah National Park. Should management strategies or works be proposed for the park or any additions that are not consistent with this plan, an amendment to this plan or a new plan will be prepared and exhibited for public comment.

2.2 MANAGEMENT PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

National parks are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding or representative ecosystems, natural or cultural features or landscapes or phenomena that provide opportunities for public appreciation and inspiration and sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment.

Under the Act (section 30E), national parks are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, protect geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena and maintain natural landscapes;
- conserve places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value;
- protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations;
- promote public appreciation and understanding of the park's natural and cultural values;
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of natural and cultural values;
- provide for sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to conservation of natural and cultural values; and
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

2.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tinkrameanah National Park is considered to be of significance for:

- <u>Biological Values</u>: The park contains 72 fauna species and 266 species of plants. This includes three species of birds and two species of mammals listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act.
- <u>Aboriginal Heritage values</u>: Tinkrameanah National Park is rich in Aboriginal heritage, with a wide range of traditional food sources and a number of artifact sites.
- <u>Aesthetic values</u>: The park contains some fine examples of well vegetated rocky outcrops, including overhanging caves and scenic views of the surrounding ranges out to the edge of the Liverpool Plains.

2.4 SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT DIRECTIONS

Management of the park will focus on the protection of the significant vegetation communities, the maintenance of healthy ecosystems and species, the protection of Aboriginal heritage, and encouragement of educational and passive recreation use of the park.

Major strategies to achieve these objectives are:

- Restrict public vehicle access to roads and trails in the western section of the park, and encourage pedestrian use of the park
- Involvement of the local Aboriginal community in cultural site identification and management
- Ongoing pest and weed control to protect park values
- Allow the park to recover naturally from a major bushfire event which occurred in 2006.

3. VALUES

The location, landforms and plant and animal communities of an area have determined how it has been used and valued. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people place values on natural areas, including aesthetic, social, spiritual and recreational values. These values may be attached to the landscape as a whole or to individual components, for example to plant and animal species used by Aboriginal people. This plan of management aims to conserve both natural and cultural values. For reasons of clarity and ease of use of the document, various aspects of natural heritage, cultural heritage, threats and on-going use are dealt with individually, but their inter-relationships are recognised.

3.1 GEOLOGY, LANDSCAPE AND HYDROLOGY

The geology is predominantly Jurassic coarse-grained sediments of the Great Artesian Basin – Surat Basin comprising of quartz sandstone, conglomerate and claystone (Hunter, 2008). The soils are predominantly massive red and yellow earths.

Tinkrameanah National Park is made up of rocky sandstone outcrops up to 600 metres above sea level. Drainage of the park is via two small creeks that form the headwaters of Mitchells Creek, which flow north east to the Namoi River. The park is within the Garrawilla sub-catchment, at the southern end of the Namoi River catchment.

3.2 NATIVE PLANTS

In a comprehensive study by Hunter in 2008, a total of 166 vascular plant taxa were found from 47 families and 122 genera, with 10% of the taxa being exotic. Only one species, Geebung (*Persoonia cuspidifera*), was found to be of conservation concern. This species was found to be common throughout the park. It is also considered

common and well reserved in a number of other reserves locally, and therefore no direct management considerations are necessary at present (Hunter 2008).

Much of the park is characterised by White Bloodwood (*Corymbia trachyphloia*), White Pine (*Callitris endlicheri*) and Red Ironbark (*Eucalyptus fibrosa*) with an understorey of shrubs including *Macrozamia heteromera*, *Acacia buxifolia*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, *Leucopogon muticus* and *Melichrus urceolatus* and a ground layer of *Lomandra filiformis*, *Pomax umbellata*, *Digitaria breviglumis*, *Lepidosperma laterale* and *Joycea pallida*.

Hunter (2008) estimates that on average there are six hollow bearing trees per hectare at present, despite the intensity of selective logging that has occurred, and an intense wildfire in 2006. There are very few old trees remaining.

Since the majority of the park (and the surrounding forest) was burnt by a summer wildfire in late 2006 (see section 4.2), much of the vegetation will take time to regain its reproductive capacity. Hunter (2008) identified optimum fire intervals for species found in the park, and this information has informed the development of the Tinkrameanah National Park Fire Management Strategy. (see Section 4.2).

3.3 NATIVE ANIMALS

Faunal records for the park include over 70 native species, comprising 18 mammals, 13 reptiles and 41 species of birds.

Of these, the Little Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta pusilla*), Speckled Warbler (*Pyrrholaemus saggitatus*), Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*), Eastern Pygmy-possum (*Cercartetus nanus*) and Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) are all listed as Vulnerable under the Schedule 2 of the TSC Act.

Of significance is the fact that the records include five species of arboreal mammals (possums, etc) and five species of bats, the majority of which would use trees and tree hollows. Much of this habitat was destroyed by the high intensity wildfire in late 2006, which burnt approximately 85% of the forest within Tinkrameanah National Park and surrounding private property.

3.4 ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

Aboriginal communities have an association and connection to the land. The land and water within a landscape are central to Aboriginal spirituality and contribute to Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal communities associate natural resources with the use and enjoyment of foods and medicines, caring for the land, passing on cultural knowledge, kinship systems and strengthening social bonds. Aboriginal heritage and connection to nature are inseparable from each other and need to be managed in an integrated manner across the landscape. Tinkrameanah National Park falls within the administrative boundary of the Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and is within the traditional land of the Gamilaraay people (also spelt as Gamileroi, Gomeroi and Kamileroi).

Two cultural site surveys were conducted in 2004 and 2006 by NPWS staff and members of the Coonabarabran LALC. These surveys recorded 14 sites or artefacts of significance, and also noted the presence of a number of traditional food and medicine plants that occur quite commonly in the Pilliga sub-region of the Brigalow South Bioregion.

3.5 HISTORIC HERITAGE

The area that is now Tinkrameanah National Park was dedicated as Tinkrameanah State forest No. 915 in 1917. The Ironbark species within the forest were harvested by sleeper cutters in the 1950s, and later by a contractor cutting for fence posts (Geoff Read, pers.com.). The road reserve that bisects the park from north to south is believed to be part of an old mail route.

In August 2002, Tinkrameanah Forest was the focus of one of the first environmental protests by the Western Conservation Alliance. The main thrust of their media release announced that a sit-in was occurring to highlight that 'logging was a threat to the beautiful and high conservation value Tinkrameanah forest because contractors were not supervised, including the destroying of hundred-year-old grass trees'. This protest helped garner the political support needed to make the historic decision to gazette some 353,000 hectares of lands managed by Forests NSW as Community Conservation Areas managed by NPWS, through what became known as the 'Brigalow decision' in 2005.

3.6 VISITOR USE, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Tinkrameanah National Park is a small and isolated reserve and receives little public visitation. There is currently no infrastructure in the park.

The park has the potential to be promoted as a park for unstructured, low impact use in the form of bushwalking and low impact nature appreciation due to its relative isolation and scenery. The park has limited value as an educational resource due to its remote location, however it does provide an opportunity for scientific research. A biological survey similar to that conducted before the 2006 bushfire may provide information on species response to wildfire over time.

3.7 OTHER USES

The roads and management trails in the park were all heavily degraded during the 2006 bushfire operations and have since been rehabilitated, with the inclusion of drainage structures such as roll-overs and mitre drains. There are no dams or water supplies on the park.

The Old Mail road (see Map 1) is located within a road reserve that runs through the centre of the park. Whilst this has not created any management issues to date, due to its minimal usage by third parties, the NPWS will investigate options to have the lands covered by the road reserve included in the park.

Most of the boundary fences are old or in disrepair, and whilst there are some fences programmed for replacement, others are in areas where there is currently little or no pressure from straying stock.

There are three commercial apiary sites located within the park that pre-date its gazettal. The European honeybee *Apis mellifera* can have adverse impacts on some native plants and animals (Paton 1996). NPWS policy on bee keeping allows existing sites to continue but does not allow for any new or additional sites. It may be necessary to relocate existing bee sites where apiary activities result in unacceptable environmental impacts, user conflicts or are inconsistent with park management. Access to apiary sites require the use of roads or management trails under license/consent.

4. ISSUES

4.1 WEEDS AND PEST ANIMALS

The Northern Plains Pest Management Strategy 2008-2011 (DECC 2007) lists several species of pest animals and identifies their respective populations in Tinkrameanah National Park. According to this plan rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), wild dogs (*Canis lupus*), cats (*Felis catus*) and feral pigs (*Sus scofra*) occur in isolated populations restricted to small areas, whilst foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) are widespread throughout the park. Cooperative pig trapping programs have been undertaken with neighbours. Fox baiting programs will be conducted as part of cooperative baiting programs with neighbours.

Common Prickly Pear (*Opuntia stricta*) has also been recorded in low densities and is treated as it is found, as part of routine pest operations.

The Regional Pest Management Strategy is currently being updated.

4.2 FIRE

The primary fire management objectives of the NPWS are to protect life and property and community assets from the adverse impacts of fire, whilst managing fire regimes to maintain and protect biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Fire is a natural feature of many environments and is essential for the survival of some plant communities. However, inappropriate fire regimes can lead to loss of particular plant and animal species and communities, and high frequency fires have been listed as a key threatening process under the TSC Act.

A map-based fire management strategy has been prepared for the park (DECC 2008). The fire management strategy outlines the recent fire history of the park, key assets within and adjoining the park including sites of natural and cultural heritage value. The strategy also identifies fire management zones which include land management zones, asset protection zones, and fire control advantages such as management trails and water supply points. Tinkrameanah National Park is located within the Castlereagh Bush Fire Management Committee zone.

Little is known of the long-term fire history of Tinkrameanah National Park however it is believed only one hazard reduction burn has ever been conducted within the park (Geoff Read pers comm.). That burn was undertaken in 1982, and covered most of the western half of the park (west of the Old Mail Road).

A major wildfire occurred in late 2006, and burnt a large part of the national park and surrounding privately-owned forest. As a result the majority of Tinkrameanah National Park is below its fire threshold, although small sections in southeast and northeast of the park that were not burnt in 2006 are considered above their optimum burn threshold.

4.3 ISOLATION AND FRAGMENTATION

The area surrounding Tinkrameanah National Park has been extensively cleared, which has resulted in a high loss of biodiversity and fragmentation of habitat in the region. Long term conservation of biodiversity depends upon the protection, enhancement and connection of remaining habitat across the landscape, incorporating vegetation remnants on both public and private lands. Nearby vegetated areas contribute to the habitat values of the park and provide ecological corridors to other vegetated areas. Maintaining the integrity of the remaining habitat within the park and, where possible, linking this to adjacent areas of vegetation to facilitate wildlife corridors is important in ensuring long term viability of the park's biological values.

4.4 CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change has been listed as a key threatening process under the TSC Act. Projections of future changes in climate for NSW include higher temperatures, increasing sea levels and water temperatures, elevated CO_2 , more intense but possibly reduced annual average rainfall, increased temperature extremes and higher evaporative demand. These changes are likely to lead to greater intensity and frequency of fires, more severe droughts, reduced river runoff and water availability, regional flooding and increased erosion.

Climate change may significantly affect biodiversity by changing population size and distribution of species, modifying species composition, and altering the geographical extent of habitats and ecosystems. The potential impact of climate change is difficult to assess since it depends on the compounding effects of other pressures, particularly barriers to migration and pressure from feral animals. Species most at

risk are those unable to migrate or adapt, particularly those with small population sizes or with slow growth rates.

Programs to reduce the pressures arising from other threats, such as habitat fragmentation, invasive species, bushfires, pollution and urban expansion, will help reduce the severity of the effects of climate change.

5. REFERENCES

- DECC 2007 Northern Plains Pest Management Strategy 2008-2011
- DECC 2008 Tinkrameanah National Park-CCA Zone 1 Fire Management Strategy 2008-2013
- Hunter, J., 2008 Vegetation and Floristics of Tinkrameanah National Park. A Report to the NPWS
- Paton, D.C., 1996. Overview of Feral and Managed Honeybees in Australia: Distribution, Abundance, Extent of Interactions with Native Biota, Evidence of Impacts and Future Research, Australia Nature Conservation Agency, 71pp
- Read, Geoff Forests NSW Foreman, Gunnedah

Curront Situation	Decirod Outcomee	Manadamont Documen	Driority.*
6.1 On-Park Ecological Conservation			
There is potential to gain a fuller understanding of the fauna and flora values of the park.	Native plant and animal species and communities are conserved.	6.1.1 Undertake biological baseline surveys to establish species presence, and/ or changes in distribution.	High
Threatened species recorded in the park include the Little Lorikeet, Speckled Warbler, Diamond Firetail, Eastern Pygmy Possum and Squirrel Glider. The Threatened Species Priorities Action Statement (PAS) contains actions for the protection of threatened	Negative impacts on threatened taxa are stable or diminishing.	6.1.2 Implement relevant PAS actions, specifically those actions listed for the Speckled Warbler, Diamond Firetail, Eastern Pygmy Possum and Squirrel Glider.	Medium
Three apiary licenses exist on the park. Competition from feral honeybees was listed as a Key Threatening Process under the TSC Act in November 2002. Managed honeybees were not the subject of this determination.	Apiaries will be managed in accordance with NPWS Policy, and not impact on park	6.1.3 Investigate whether existing authorised apiary sites in the park need to be relocated due to unacceptable environmental impacts. Any relocation of existing apiary sites will be in accordance with the NPWS Policy on beekeeping and will be undertaken in consultation with the site licensee.	Medium
	Values.	6.1.4 Monitor use of apiary sites, and investigate whether any feral bee hives have established in the park.	Medium
Climate change has been identified as a key threatening process under the TSC Act.	The effects of climate change on natural systems are reduced.	6.1.5 Continue existing fire, pest and weed management programs to increase the parks ability to cope with future disturbances, including climate change (refer Sections 6.4 and 6.5).	Ongoing
The area surrounding the park has been extensively cleared, which has resulted in a high loss of biodiversity and fragmentation of habitat in the region.	Biodiversity condition improves on surrounding lands.	6.1.6 Work with neighbours and the Catchment Management Authority to encourage conservation of remnant native vegetation in the vicinity of the park.	Ongoing

6. IMPLEMENTATION

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	Desired Outcomes	Imanagement Kesponse	Priority"
6.3 Visitor Use and Services			
There is currently minimal visitor use of the park.	Visitor use is appropriate and ecologically	6.3.1 Allow public vehicle access on the Mitchells Creek Trail, Grass Tree Trail and Old Mail Road (refer to Map 1).	Medium
Visitation must be carefully managed since it is a relatively small and significant area of remnant vegetation.	sustainable.	6.3.2 Allow bushwalking throughout the park, and cycling and horse riding on all roads and management	Ongoing
Recreational use of the park will be restricted to what is appropriate to a natural setting where minimal disturbance is desirable.		impact of horse riding increase significantly, the approval for horse riding in Tinkrameaneh State Conservation Area will be reviewed.	
Promotion of visitor understanding and appreciation of the values of the park is important for minimising damaging activities	Visitor use encourages appreciation of the	6.3.3 No camping is permitted in the park.	Ongoing
and maximising visitor enjoyment.	Visitors are provided with minimal on-park facilities consistent	6.3.4 Investigate the option of installing permanent information signage on the park, highlighting the park's values and appropriate uses.	Medium
	with a natural setting	6.3.5 Install signs prohibiting motorised vehicle access at the start of Sleeper-cutters Trail where it intersects with the Old Mail Road and at the start of Southern Boundary Trail where it intersects with the Old Mail Road. Install gates if necessary.	Medium

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Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Kesponse	
6.4 Weeds and Pest Animals			
Pest control priorities on the park are low. Pest animal and weed works are programmed and on-going.	The impact of introduced species on native species and	6.4.1 Implement pest programs according to the Regional Pest Management Strategy and Pest Operations Plan.	Medium
	neignbouring lands is minimised.	6.4.2 Monitor the park for noxious and significant environmental weeds and treat any new outbreaks.	Ongoing
Fox balling programs are conducted to minimise impacts on native species and neighbouring lands.		6.4.3 Continue to conduct fox control programs when they are cooperative with neighbours and broad scale in scope.	Medium
		6.4.4 Continue to record pest species sightings, and update the Regional Pest Management Strategy.	Ongoing
6.5 Fire management			
A reserve fire management strategy has been prepared for the park.	Life, property and natural and cultural values are protected from bushfire.	6.5.1 Manage wildfires in accordance with the Tinkrameanah National Park Fire Management Strategy 2008-2013 (DECC 2008), and update this strategy as appropriate.	High
Fire intervals are below optimal for the majority of the park, as a result of the 2006 bushfire. There is a risk of summer wildfires occurring in the small area of the park unburnt in 2006.	Fire regimes are appropriate for conservation of plant and animal	6.5.2 Conduct prescribed burns as indicated by vegetation threshold information in the Tinkrameanah Fire Management Strategy 2008-2013 (DECCW 2008)	Low
Some, but not all, cultural heritage sites are identified and mapped.	communities.	6.5.3 Include all new cultural heritage assets identified into fire planning and the fire management strategy.	High
Regional staff have worked closely with neighbours and fire agencies to develop the Tinkrameanah Fire Management Strategy 2008-2013 (DECC 2008)	Stakeholders participate in fire management planning and operations.	6.5.4 Continue to participate in Castlereagh Bush Fire Management Committee. Maintain coordination and cooperation with Rural Fire Service brigades, Council fire control officers and neighbours with regard to fuel management and fire suppression.	Medium

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Prioritv *
6.6 Infrastructure and Maintenance			
Roads and management trails were upgraded following the 2006 fire and remain in	Management facilities and operations	6.6.1 Maintain the roads and management trails as shown on Map 1.	Medium
reasonable condition.	adequatery serve management needs and have minimal impact.	6.6.2 Erect signs, and gates if necessary, to restrict unauthorised vehicle access on the management trails in the eastern areas of the park (see Section 6.3).	Medium
Boundary fence integrity should be maintained, especially where stock incursions threaten park values	Domestic stock do not enter the reserve.	6.6.3 Encourage construction and maintenance of boundary fences to exclude stock from the park. Fencing assistance may be provided in accordance with NPWS policy.	Medium
		6.6.4. Investigate options to have the lands encompassed within the road reserve (Old Mail Road) included within the park.	Medium
* High priority activities are those imperative to achie future to avoid significant deterioration in natural, cul-	svement of the objectives a tural or management resou	nd desired outcomes. They must be undertaken in the near irces.	

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Medium priority activities are those that are necessary to achieve the objectives and desired outcomes but are not urgent.

Low priority activities are desirable to achieve management objectives and desired outcomes but can wait until resources become available.

Ongoing is for activities that are undertaken on an annual basis or statements of management intent that will direct the management response if an issue that arises.