

# CABBAGE TREE BAY

The proposed Cabbage Tree Bay site is south of Manly Beach. It is dominated by rocky shores and subtidal reefs. Shelly Beach, at the eastern end of Cabbage Tree Bay, is a key feature of the area.

The proposed site extends the current Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve (Figure 16) to Blue Fish Point. The protected area would include a 52 hectare sanctuary zone that extends the current reserve from Shelly Beach Headland to 250 metres north-west of Blue Fish Point (Figure 17) and a seven hectare special purpose zone at Blue Fish Point.

## CURRENT MANAGEMENT

Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve was established in 2002. It covers 18 hectares and extends from the southern end of Manly Beach at South Steyne to the northern end of Shelly Beach, encompassing all of Cabbage Tree Bay (Figure 16). Collecting, destroying or interfering with all forms of marine life, whether dead or alive, is prohibited. Shelly Beach Headland Intertidal Protected Area (IPA) adjoins the aquatic reserve and protects a small intertidal area by way of a regulation under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

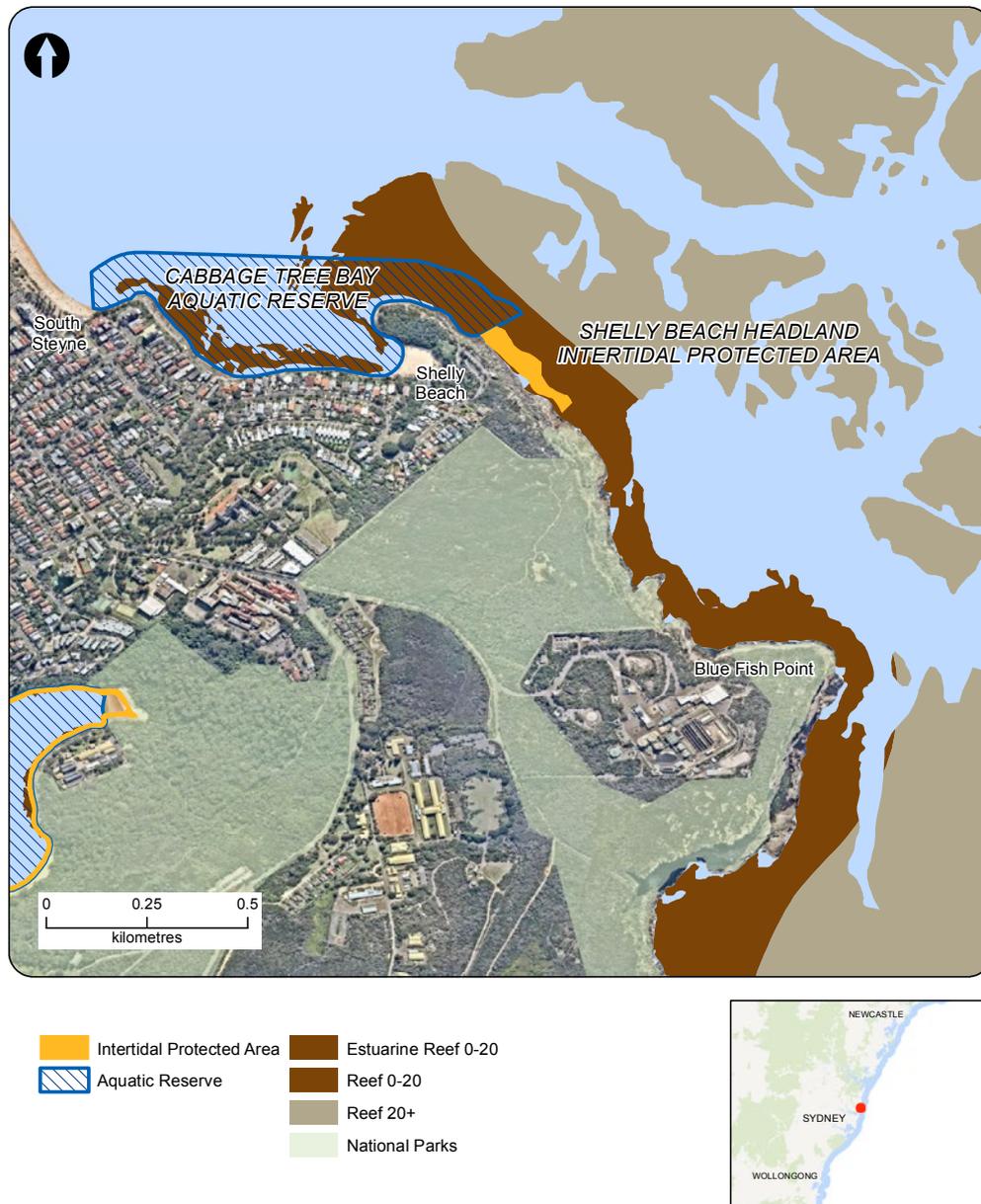


Figure 16. Current Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve

## SITE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives for the proposed Cabbage Tree Bay site are to:

- enhance the conservation of marine biodiversity
- reduce risks to identified habitats of the bioregion
- promote marine ecotourism in the bioregion
- enhance the intrinsic benefits derived by the community from the marine estate
- enhance bequest values for current and future generations
- reduce conflicts between users of the marine estate
- provide enhanced recreational experiences for particular user groups
- enhance opportunities for scientific research, education and learning
- provide baseline monitoring areas (scientific reference sites)
- promote stewardship of the marine estate.

The secondary objectives that apply to this site are listed in Table 5.

## ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES

Cabbage Tree Bay is a very popular area for a wide variety of user groups, including scuba divers, swimmers, snorkellers and surfers. The existing aquatic reserve removed some previous sources of conflict – such as conflict between spearfishers and swimmers.

There is *Zostera* and *Halophila* spp. seagrass in the bay, primarily along the southern side, although this is currently unmapped. Anchoring in this area is currently not permitted, although this is not well publicised, and vessels may be unaware they are anchoring in a seagrass area. Boating activity in the bay is significant during peak-use times, and user conflict between vessels and swimmers is not uncommon despite the small boating closure around Shelly Beach. The Bay provides safe haven for boats during strong southerly weather.

Cabbage Tree Bay is a west-facing embayment that provides protection from dominant south-easterly swells. This results in areas of sheltered beach and areas for seagrass to grow, which is uncommon on the NSW coast. There are areas of both intertidal and shallow rocky reef that vary in exposure, with those on the eastern side of the headland most exposed. A number of threatened and protected species are known to frequent the area, including blue groper, green turtles, black rockcod and weedy seadragon.

Table 27. Threats and expected benefits

	Environmental				Social, cultural, economic				
Threats	 Climate change	 Commercial fishing	 Recreational fishing		 Reductions in species	 Habitat disturbance	 Lack of awareness	 Conflict	
Benefits	 Seagrass	 Rocky shores	 Shallow reefs	 Deep reefs	 Scientific reference sites	 Viability of businesses	 Education & learning	 Individual enjoyment	 Intrinsic & bequest
	 Fish assemblages	 Species protected under FMA	 Species protected under BCA	 Biodiversity	 Participation (wellbeing)	 Participation (socialising)	 Enjoyment (biodiversity & beauty)	 Aboriginal cultural heritage & use	

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**Table 28. Current activities and suggested permissible activities in the proposed Cabbage Tree Bay site**

Cabbage Tree Bay	 Boating	 Anchoring	 Line fishing	 Spear fishing	 Lobster fishing	 Abalone fishing	 Scuba diving /snorkelling	 Hand gathering	 Collecting marine vegetation	 Commercial fishing	 Aboriginal cultural heritage & use
Current aquatic reserve	✓ <sup>1</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓
Current IPA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓
Proposed special purpose zone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓
Proposed sanctuary zone	✓ <sup>1</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓

- 1 Boating exclusion zone applies at Shelly Beach
- 2 Not in seagrass areas
- 3 Subject to existing NSW commercial fishing rules and regulations

Cabbage Tree Bay is part of the traditional lands of the Guringai (or Ku-ring-gai) people, and it is part of the Manly-Freshwater National Surfing Reserve. It is an area that has been regularly used for scientific research on rocky reef habitats.

Blue Fish Point is popular for recreational shore and boat-based fishing and for scuba diving. The location is considered hazardous in some swell conditions, and rock fishing fatalities have been reported here.

Some Ocean Trap and Line commercial fishing takes place in the area.

## PROPOSED MANAGEMENT RULES

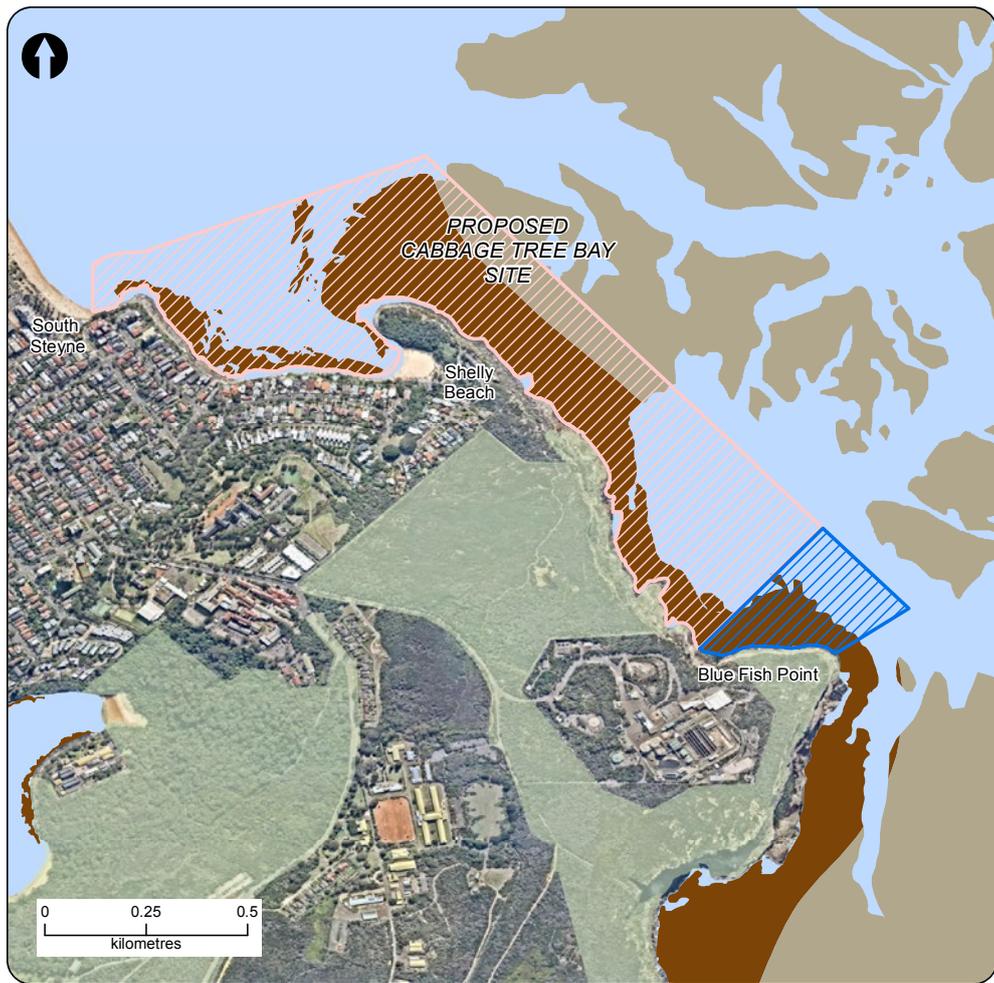
The proposal to extend the current reserve to 250 metres north-west of Blue Fish Point would prohibit all extractive activities in this zone except for Aboriginal cultural use (Table 28). This zone would also replace the existing Shelly Beach Headland IPA, which would increase protection of marine life and reduce the complexity of regulations.

Anchoring in seagrass habitat in Cabbage Tree Bay would also be restricted. Seagrass generally occurs at depths of eight metres or shallower, so anchoring inside much of Cabbage Tree Bay itself would be prohibited. Courtesy moorings (including environmentally friendly moorings) or a designated anchoring area could be considered to manage boating access and use.

The proposed seven hectare special purpose zone at Blue Fish Point would prohibit hand gathering of marine invertebrates, except for lobster and abalone.

## FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The high environmental value of Cabbage Tree Bay was identified by peak conservation stakeholders – the National Parks Association of NSW and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. The value of the existing Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve was described several submissions, including from Manly Council, as was a proposal to extend the current boundaries of the reserve, typically to Blue Fish Point. This reserve was often cited as a model for marine management in the bioregion that should be replicated. Safety concerns about potential conflict between boats and passive water users were also raised.



Proposal	
	Sanctuary Zone
	Special Purpose Zone
	Estuarine Reef 0-20
	Reef 0-20
	Reef 20+
	National Parks



Figure 17. Proposed Cabbage Tree Bay site

