

ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

The proposed Royal National Park site is located south of Port Hacking, adjacent to the Royal National Park.

An 85 hectare conservation zone is proposed for the area from Martin Head southwards to the northern end of Garie Beach, including Wattamolla Beach and Wattamolla Lagoon, and 100 metres seaward from the mean high water mark (Figure 33).

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

There are no current spatial management restrictions for this area.

SITE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives for the proposed Royal National Park site are to:

- enhance the conservation of marine biodiversity
- continue to provide for marine economic opportunities that are consistent with ecologically sustainable development
- maintain and support Aboriginal cultural use of 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.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES

The proposed reserve is in the waters offshore from Australia’s oldest national park. The area is, therefore, afforded some protection through management of the catchments as natural areas and by virtue of some of the remoteness and limited vehicle access to the coastal areas.

Features of the proposed area include rock platforms, cliffs, beaches and small lagoons. The fringing rocky reef along this coast is fairly narrow. The seabed is mostly sandy beyond this. The area is popular with bushwalkers, and passive recreation such as swimming, snorkelling, and scuba diving is popular at Wattamolla. There is vehicle access and limited parking at Wattamolla Beach. There is some shore-based and boat-based fishing in the area.

The area has significance to the local Aboriginal communities. Spiritual sites and evidence of past cultural use, including shell middens, have been recorded.

Lobster, Ocean Trap and Line and Sea Urchin and Turban Shell commercial fishing takes place in the area.

PRIORITY THREATS TARGETED TO ENHANCE BENEFITS AT THIS SITE

The threats that will be addressed at this site and expected benefits to be enhanced are listed in Table 51.

Table 51. Threats and expected benefits

	Environmental			Social, cultural, economic			
Threats	 Commercial fishing	 Recreational fishing		 Conflict	 Habitat disturbance	 Reduction in species	
Benefits	 Rocky shores	 Shallow reefs	 Fish assemblages	 Aboriginal cultural heritage and use	 Intrinsic & bequest	 Viability of businesses	 Participation (wellbeing)
	 Species protected under FMA	 Species protected under BCA	 Biodiversity	 Participation (socialising)	 Enjoyment (biodiversity & beauty)	 Individual enjoyment	

ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

PROPOSED MANAGEMENT RULES

In this zone, moderate–high risk activities are prohibited because of impacts on marine biodiversity, such as habitats, fish assemblages, and threatened and protected species (Table 52). These activities include recreational shore and boat-based line and trap fishing, hand gathering, collecting marine vegetation and commercial fishing from the Ocean Trap and Line and Sea Urchin and Turban Shell fisheries. Spearfishing would be prohibited to address user conflict between spearfishers and swimmers.

Activities that can continue in this zone present a minimal–low risk to fish assemblages and threatened and protected marine species listed under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* or *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Examples of these activities include snorkelling, scuba diving, recreational boating, Aboriginal cultural use and lobster and abalone fishing.

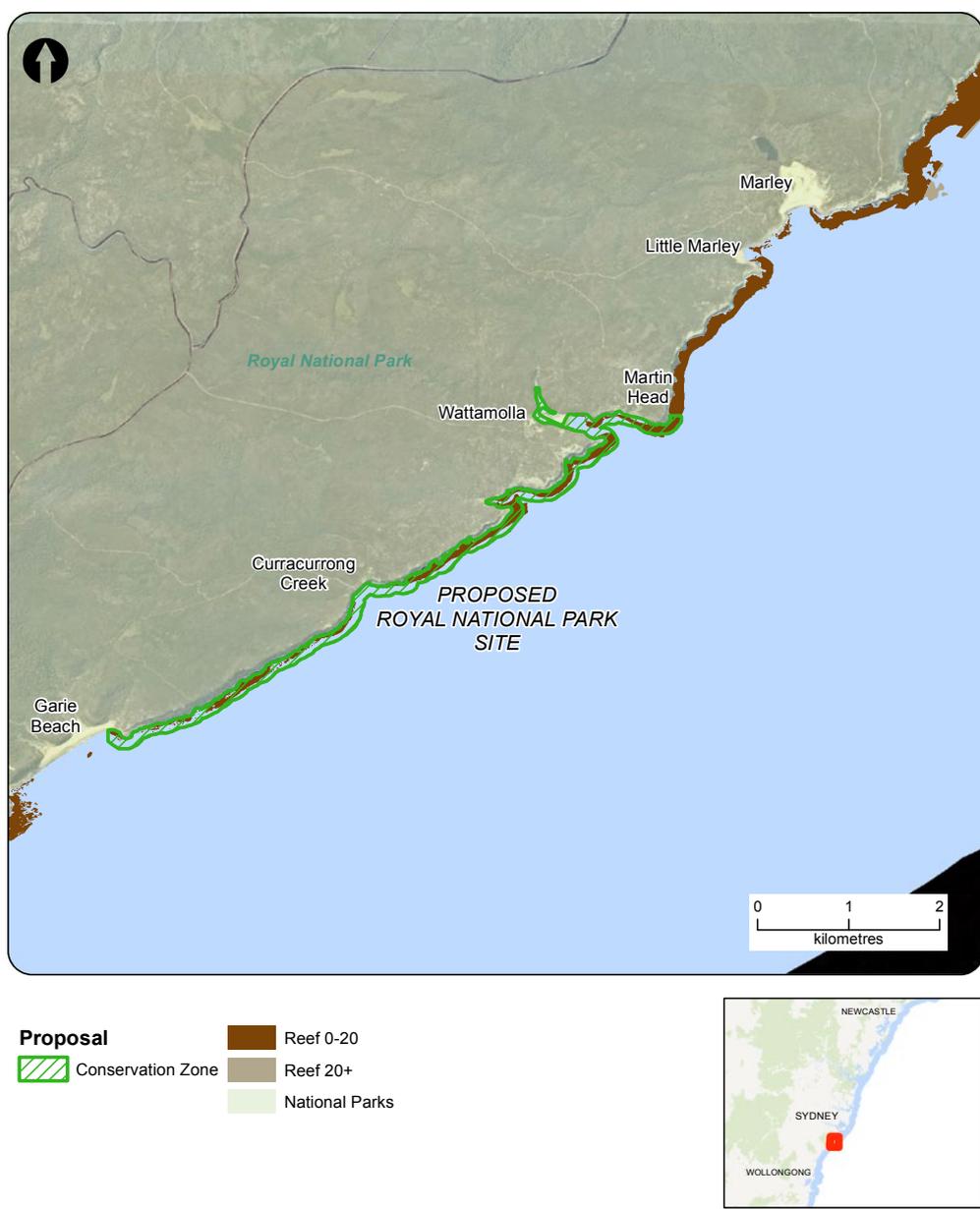


Figure 33. Proposed Royal National Park site

Table 52. Current activities and suggested permissible activities in the proposed Royal National Park site

Royal National Park	 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	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓
Proposed conservation zone	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗ ²	✓

1 Subject to existing NSW commercial fishing rules and regulations

2 Except for lobster and abalone fishing

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Royal National Park coastline and Wattamolla were included in this proposal as a result of community submissions. Wattamolla is perceived by community members as being relatively pristine due to its position in the Royal National Park, and submissions identified its importance as a popular snorkelling and diving location. In their submission, the National Parks Association of NSW (Southern Sydney Branch) proposed a marine park to adjoin the Royal National Park.

A number of submissions from recreational fishers, including the Recreational Fishing Alliance, raised concerns about a loss of spearfishing sites, especially safe and accessible ones along the coastline of the Royal National Park.

