

FORRESTERS

The proposed Forresters site is on the Central Coast, between Bateau Bay and Wamberal Lagoon. It includes Crackneck Point, the rocky shores adjacent to Wyrabalong Nature Reserve, Forresters Beach and Wamberal Beach, and it extends seaward to the three-nautical-mile limit of state waters.

A large site is proposed, covering a total of 3430 hectares. This consists of a 586 hectare sanctuary zone along the shoreline, from the southern end of Bateau Bay south to the entrance to Wamberal Lagoon (and the lagoon itself), and seaward to the 20 metre depth contour (Figure 5). Seaward of this, it is proposed to establish a 2844 hectare conservation zone, extending from the 20 metre depth contour out to three nautical miles (Figure 5).

SITE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives for the proposed Forresters site are to:

- enhance the conservation of marine biodiversity
- 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 baseline monitoring areas (scientific reference sites).

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

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES

The proposed area at Forresters includes a wide diversity of connected habitats from a coastal lagoon and beach through to a complex network of sand, shallow and deep reefs. The coastal shoreline boundary is adjacent to Wyrabalong National Park and the Wamberal Lagoon Nature Reserve.

Wamberal Lagoon and adjacent beach are important habitats for threatened and protected waterbirds and shorebirds. The area is also popular for swimming and passive sports such as kayaking and paddle boarding.

The rock platforms in this area are popular for walking, particularly at Wamberal and in the Bateau Bay area, which has natural freshwater springs and, at Crackneck Point, the only coastal rock platform stand of mangroves in the bioregion. Wyrabalong Coastal Walk, Indian Head (Forresters Beach) and Crackneck Point are popular sightseeing and whale watching locations. Forresters Beach to Crackneck includes some popular surf breaks. The area is also used by recreational fishers and spearfishers.

The area has significance to the local Aboriginal communities. Spiritual sites and evidence of past cultural use, such as artefacts and use as a burial site, have been recorded in the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System and in the Wamberal Lagoon Nature Reserve Plan of Management.

Lobster, Ocean Trap and Line and Ocean Trawl 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 13.

Table 13. Threats and expected benefits

	Environmental				Social, cultural, economic		
Threats	Climate change	Commercial fishing	Recreational fishing		Reduction in species	Habitat disturbance	Conflict
Benefits	Deep soft sediment	Rocky shores	Shallow reefs	Deep reefs	Scientific reference sites	Aboriginal cultural heritage & use	Intrinsic and bequest
	Fish assemblages	Species protected under FMA	Species protected under BCA	Biodiversity	Participation (wellbeing)	Participation (socialising)	Enjoyment (biodiversity & beauty)

- 1 Subject to existing NSW commercial fishing rules and regulations
- 2 Except for lobster and abalone fishing. Existing commercial fishing restrictions and closures would continue to apply where relevant

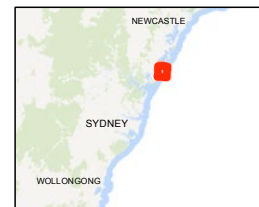
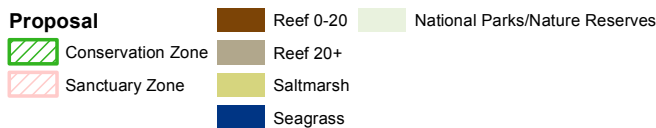
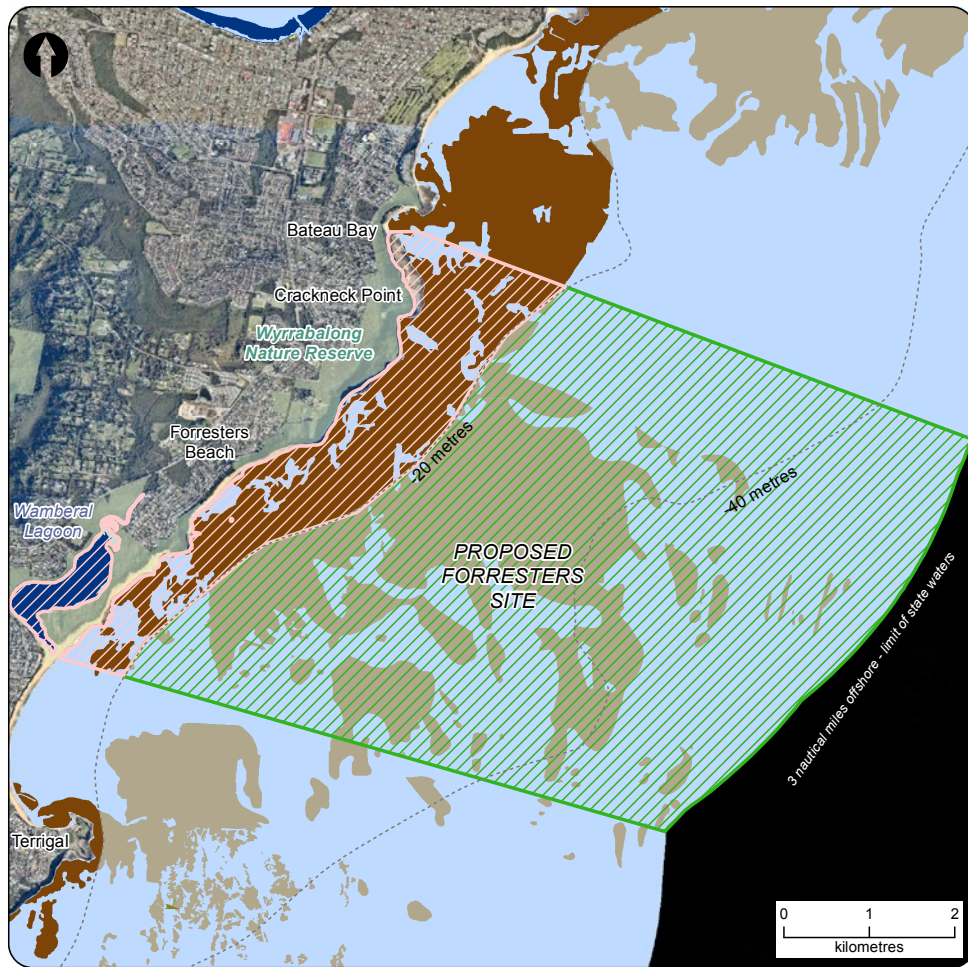













Figure 5. Proposed Forresters site

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Table 14. Current activities and suggested permissible activities in the proposed Forresters site

Forresters	 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	✓
Proposed sanctuary zone	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓

1 Subject to existing NSW commercial fishing rules and regulations

2 Except for lobster and abalone fishing. Existing commercial fishing restrictions and closures would continue to apply where relevant

PROPOSED MANAGEMENT RULES

All extractive activities would be prohibited in the proposed sanctuary zone except for research and Aboriginal cultural use (Table 14). In the proposed conservation zone, all fishing would be prohibited except for lobster and abalone fishing and Aboriginal cultural use.

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

During community engagement, many beaches and headlands of the Central Coast were identified as being of high conservation value, including Crackneck Point, Bateau Bay and Wamberal. Feedback also highlighted concerns about overharvesting from rock platforms on the Central Coast (and elsewhere); the perceived lack of policing of rules around collecting on rock platforms was of particular concern.

