

NIELSEN PARK

Nielsen Park is in Vaucluse, in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

A 17 hectare site is proposed extending north from Steele Point, including Shark Beach, and Bottle and Glass Point (Figure 22).

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

The shoreline of the proposed area is already in the Sydney Harbour IPA, which covers the area from the mean high water mark to 10 metres seaward from the mean low water mark. Fishing is allowed. All taking, gathering and collecting of all invertebrates and other seashore animals is prohibited, including crabs, snails, worms, octopus, sea urchins, anemones, pipis, cockles, mussels, oysters, saltwater nippers and cunjevoi.

The site is adjacent to Sydney Harbour National Park.

SITE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives for the proposed Nielsen Park 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
- to reduce conflicts between users of the marine estate
- to provide enhanced recreational experiences for particular user groups

Table 35. Threats and expected benefits

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

- provide baseline monitoring areas (scientific reference sites)
- ensure appropriate mechanisms exist for community involvement in the management of the marine estate
- 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

The site contains rocky shores, sandy beaches, shallow estuarine reef and some of the endangered Sydney Harbour population of *Posidonia australis* seagrass.

Snorkelling, swimming, and scuba diving are very popular in the area and the beach is one of Sydney Harbour's most popular. The beach has a barrier shark net in place from October to April. This net is a well-known habitat for White's seahorse (*Hippocampus whitei*).

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

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 35.

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PROPOSED MANAGEMENT RULES

In the proposed sanctuary zone, the removal or harm of marine biodiversity would be prohibited, including fishing by any method, hand gathering or collecting marine organisms (whether dead or alive). Permissible activities would include those that are minimal–low risk, such as swimming, snorkelling, scuba diving and Aboriginal cultural use.

Recreational boating would be permitted, but anchoring in seagrass areas would be prohibited (Table 36).

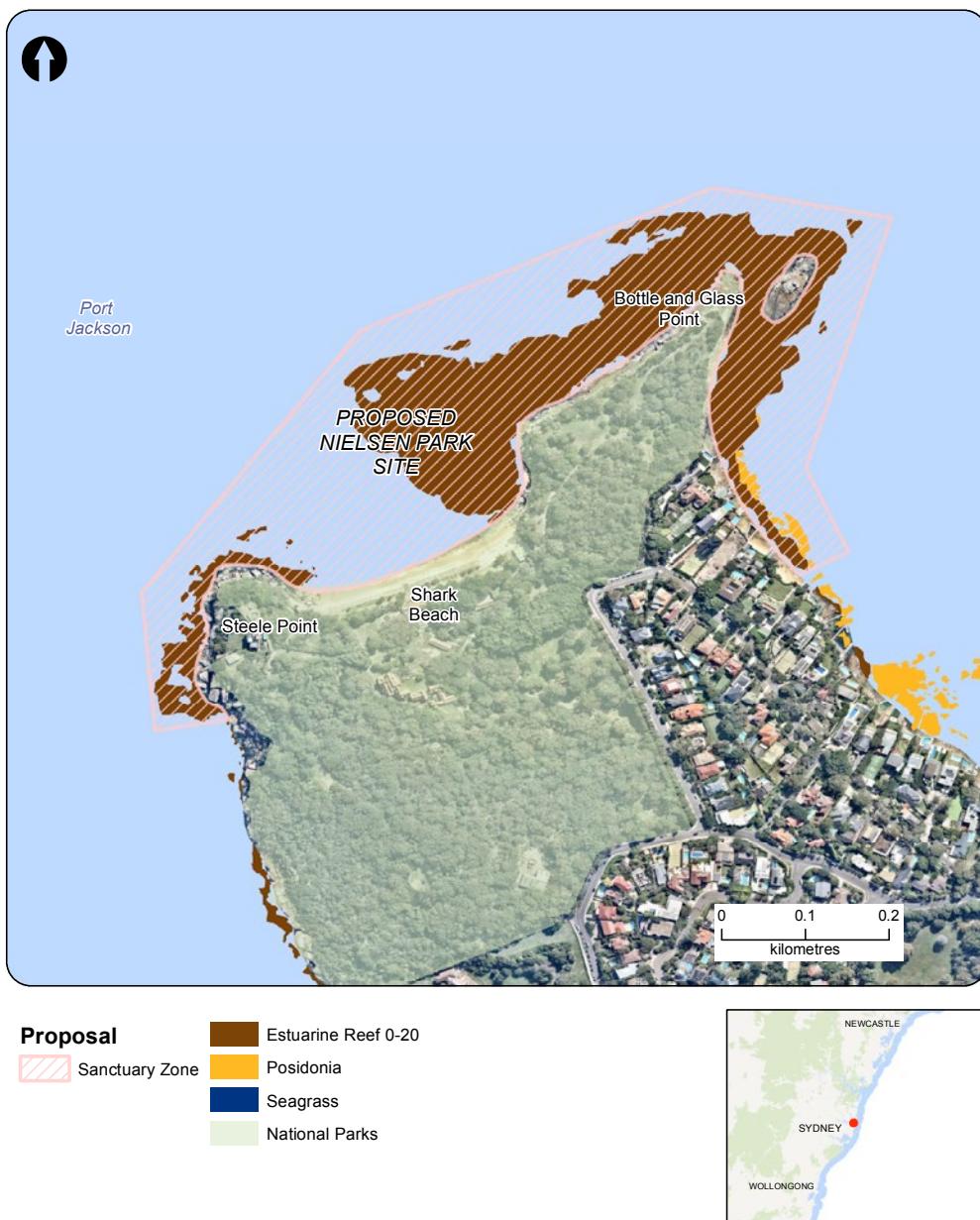


Figure 22. Proposed Nielsen Park site

Table 36. Current activities and suggested permissible activities in the proposed Nielsen Park site

Nielsen 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	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗ ²	✓	✗	✓
Proposed sanctuary zone	✓	✓ ¹	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓

1 Not in seagrass areas

2 Intertidal area currently protected as part of Sydney Harbour IPA

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community consultation identified Nielsen Park for its high social value as a site for passive recreation and high environmental value. Conflict between fishers and beach users was reported. There was support for a no-take area in Sydney Harbour including a Sydney Harbour Marine Park.

The Recreational Fishing Alliance, Australian National Sportfishing Association and other submissions proposed that Sydney Harbour be declared a recreational fishing haven.

