This walk starts from the Watagan Forestry HQ campsite and follows the Great North Walk through the Watagan State Forest. The walk then heads out to Heaton lookout and down the long descent into Heaton Gap, passing several more fantastic lookouts and picnic areas on the way. The walk finishes at Heaton Gap on Freemans drive, just opposite the Watagan Forest Motel.
Watagan Headquarters

Watagan Headquarters campsite (aka Forestry HQ) is located in the Heaton State Forest, beside Bakers Rd, near Heaton Rd. This campsite has wood fired barbecues, picnic tables and a garbage bin. The large, flat, cleared area allows plenty of room to pitch a tent. In 2010, a series of vandalism attacks occurred on the water tank, so there is no longer water available.

Hunter Lookout

Hunter Lookout can be found on Bakers Road, along the Great North Walk. This fenced lookout has everything you will need snack-stop, including toilets, picnic tables, chairs and wood-fired barbecues. This lookout has fantastic views over much of the Hunter region. In 2010, a series of vandalism attacks occurred on the water tank, so water is no longer available at Hunter Lookout.

Mcleans Lookout

Mcleans Lookout offers magnificent views of the valleys in Heaton State Forest. Located on Bakers Road, this fenced lookout also has picnic facilities including tables with seats and open grassy areas.

Heaton Lookout

Heaton Lookout is one of the larger lookouts located on Heaton Road. This fenced lookout faces south-east. There are wood fired barbecues, picnic tables and a pit toilet. Heaton Lookout is a great place to stop for a snack, and the amazing view feels like a bonus. This lookout was named after Richard Heaton, a timber cutter who came to Australia as a convict. There is a water tank here, due to vandalism in the area this is not a reliable water source.

Heaton Gap Lookout

Heaton Gap lookout is a fantastic spot to stop and catch your breath in Heaton State Forest. This unfenced lookout offers exhilarating views over the valleys towards Tuggerah Lake and Lake Macquarie. This unsignposted view, as with many features in the area, was named after Richard Heaton, a timber cutter who came to Australia as a convict. More info.

Before You walk

Bushwalking is fun and a wonderful way to enjoy our natural places. Sometimes things go bad, with a bit of planning you can increase your chance of having an enjoyable and safer walk. Before setting off on your walk check

1) Weather Forecast (BOM Hunter District)
2) Fire Dangers (Greater Hunter)
3) Park Alerts (Watagans National Park)
4) Research the walk to check your party has the skills, fitness and equipment required
5) Agree to stay as a group and not leave anyone to walk solo

Think before you TREK

The ‘Think before you TREK’ program developed by NSW Police & NPWS promotes the benefits of planning ahead for your bushwalking trip by using an easy to remember acronym:

T Take adequate supplies of food, water, navigation and first aid equipment.
R Register your planned route and tell friends and family when you expect to return.
E Emergency beacon (PLB’s) should be carried on walks with significant gaps in mobile coverage (check terrain profile).
K Keep to your planned route and follow the map and walking trails.

Topo Maps

The maps provided on wildwalks are helpful, but there are times where you may need maps covering a broader area. Maps that cover this walk include:

1:25 000 Map Series: 91322S QUORROBOLONG
1:50 000 Map Series: 91322 CESSNOCK
1:100 000 Map Series: 9132 CESSNOCK

Grade

This walk has been graded using the AS 2156.1-2001. The overall grade of the walk is determined by the highest classification along the whole track.

Grade 4/6
Hard track

Length 12.5 km One way
Time 6 hrs
Quality of track Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely (4/6)
Signs Minimal directional signs (4/6)
Experience Required Moderate level of bushwalking experience recommended (4/6)
Weather Storms may impact on navigation and safety (3/6)
Infrastructure Limited facilities (such as cliffs not fenced, significant creeks not bridged) (4/6)

Grade

4
Hard track

Mobile phone coverage depends on many factors, this graph displays the probability of mobile coverage along this walk. Although hopefully correct, actual coverage will vary from what is shown here. Please always carry a PLB in remote areas.
From the intersection (Forestry H.Q. campsite), this walk continues straight: From the picnic area, this walk heads downhill, while keeping 'Heaton Lookout' sign on your left. The walk continues for about 80m until coming to a three-way intersection with a wide track and GNW arrow marker (on the left).

Turn left: From 'Heaton Lookout', this walk follows the track generally downhill, while keeping Macleans Lookout behind you on your left. The walk continues for about 150m, until coming to a three-way intersection, Glen Road.

Traveling by car is the only practical way to get to Forestry Headquarters campsite (aka Forestry HQ) is located in the Heaton State Forest, beside Bakers Rd, near Heaton Rd. This campsite has wood fired barbecues, picnic tables and a garbage bin. The large, flat, cleared area provides plenty of room to pitch a tent. In 2010, a series of vandalism attacks occurred on the water tank, so there is no longer water available.

Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads off the road and up the hill following the Hunter Lookout picnic area sign, past the wooden gate and the public toilet, to the picnic area and the lookout.

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Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the track gently downhill, while keeping the 'Glen Rd' sign on your right. The walk continues through forest for about 120m, until coming to a three-way intersection with a track and GNW arrow marker (on the left).

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the track generally downhill, while keeping 'Watagan Lookout' sign on your left. The walk continues (descending moderately steeply into and out of a gulley) for about 150m, until coming to a three-way intersection, Glen Road.

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valleys towards Tuggerah Lake and Lake Macquarie. This unsignposted view, as with many features in the area, was named after Richard Heaton, a timber cutter who came to Australia as a convict. More info.

**11.33 | Heaton Gap Lookout**
(1.2 km 32 mins) Continue straight: From Heaton Gap Lookout, this walk follows the track east, moderately steeply downhill, initially keeping the view from Heaton Gap Lookout on your right. After about 60m, the track leads to a timber platform with more views, underneath the power lines. The walk continues past some handrailing for about 20m to come to the 'Great North Walk Walker Register' post. After noting your intentions, the walk continues steeply downhill with stone and timber steps and sections for handrail for about 200m, past the rock boulders and grass trees where the track widens into a narrow grassy trail. Here the walk follows this trail and the power lines downhill, steeply in places, for about 600m, until coming to a level unsignposted three-way intersection with the Freemans Drive trail (on the right).

Veer left: From the intersection, this walk follows the GNW arrow post and power lines steeply downhill along the trail. The walk continues for about 180m to find a three-way intersection, with a GNW arrow marker on the right (where the power line trail bends left). The walk turns right, leaving the power lines and following the GNW arrow marker steeply down a narrower forested trail. The track winds down some timber steps, towards the sound of traffic for about 160m then down a timber staircase to the edge of Freemans Drive. Here the walk crosses Freemans Drive (busy road, please be careful to look and listen for traffic) and comes to the Watagan Forest Motel, petrol station (on the left), picnic area and signposted 'Heaton Gap Track Head' (on the right).

**12.55 | Watagan Forest Motel**
Watagan Forest Motel is located on Branxton-Toronto Road. This retro-style motel is located right on the Great North Walk. The motel offers six rooms for around $99 per night - each with a double bed (four rooms also have twin singles), a television, bathroom with shower, air conditioning, and breakfast included. Room service is available. Adjoining the motel is a service station, which also offers dining room meals as well as a small grocery selection (bread, milk, bottled water, rice, pasta, etc), open until 8:30pm daily. A rest area is situated next to the motel, with covered picnic tables and garbage bins. For further information, phone (02)4938 0149.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>km</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>Up/Dwn</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Initial directions (Use full tracknotes and maps for more detail)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Forestry H.Q campsite</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>950 m</td>
<td>From the intersection (Forestry H.Q.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>Int of Bakers &amp; Rocky Creek Roads</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>670 m</td>
<td>Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows Bakers Road north and gently uphill, while keeping Rocky Creek Road (no signpost) on your right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>Hunter Lookout picnic area</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>700 m</td>
<td>Continue straight: From the picnic area, this walk heads north, past the metal gate to the intersection of Bakers Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>Maclean Lookout</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100 m</td>
<td>Veer right: From Mcleans Lookout, this walk follows Bakers Road gently downhill, while keeping Macleans Lookout behind you on your left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>Int of GNW track &amp; Bakers Road</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>570 m</td>
<td>Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the trail gently downhill, while keeping the 'Heaton Lookout' sign on your right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>Int of GNW track &amp; Glen Road</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>1.2 km</td>
<td>Turn left: From the intersection, this walk follows the track gently downhill, while keeping the 'Glenn Rd' sign on your right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>Int of GNW track and Fosters Road south</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>430 m</td>
<td>Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the GNW arrow post down along the wide old trail, passing the 'Fosters Road' sign on your left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>Int of GNW track and Hammonds Road</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1.4 km</td>
<td>Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Heaton Lookout' sign downhill along the road a few metres, then veers left to follow the GNW arrow down the old trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>Int of GNW track and Wallis Creek</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1 km</td>
<td>Continue straight: From here, the walk crosses Wallis Creek, and follows the GNW arrows south gently uphill along the track.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>Int of GNW track and Barniers Road</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.2 km</td>
<td>Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the GNW arrow east, directly away from the face of the 'Barniers Road' sign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>Heaton Lookout.</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>2.4 km</td>
<td>Turn left: From 'Heaton Lookout', this walk follows the 'Heaton Gap' sign gently uphill along the dirt Heaton Rd, past the toilet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.71</td>
<td>Heaton Communications Tower</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>620 m</td>
<td>Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the GNW arrow marker off the main road, heading east along the wide trail, initially keeping the fenced tower on your right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.33</td>
<td>Heaton Gap Lookout</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.2 km</td>
<td>Continue straight: From Heaton Gap Lookout, this walk follows the track east, moderately steeply downhill, initially keeping the view from Heaton Gap Lookout on your right.</td>
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