

SPRING 2026 EDITION

Forster Tuncurry

Market Direction and Sentiment **2026**

Prices, sales volumes, days on market, prestige, rental and supply

OPTEON

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WELCOME

Where the market is heading, and how buyers feel about it

Spring 2026 edition. Sales data to September 2026. Follows our H1 2026 Market Review.

Welcome to the Forster Tuncurry residential property market trends for 2026.

For residential valuers, **market direction** (where the market is moving) and **market sentiment** (how buyers and sellers feel about the market) are typically assessed using a combination of hard transaction data and softer behavioural indicators.

When valuing property, understanding what the market is doing today is just as important as understanding what comparable properties have sold for in the past. While recent sales evidence forms the foundation of any assessment, valuers must also determine whether the market is rising, falling, stable, or changing direction.

FORSTER-TUNCURRY 2026 AT A GLANCE

MARKET DIRECTION

Stable to moderately strengthening

Valuer's assessment

MARKET SENTIMENT

Cautiously positive

Valuer's assessment

DAYS ON MARKET

23 days

Forster median for houses in September, down from 79 in January

RENTAL VACANCY

~0.8%

Forster-Tuncurry vacancy rate during 2026

FORSTER HOUSE MEDIANS

$764.5k to $1.07m

Range of monthly median house prices in 2026

PRESTIGE SALES

$2m+

Several sales above $2 million, numerous above $1.5 million

DISCOUNTING

No widespread discounting

No evidence of forced selling



YOUR LOCAL VALUER

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FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS

Certified Practising Valuer

Associate Member of the Australian Property Institute (API Member No. 68741)

Graduate Diploma in Land Economy, University of Western Sydney

Assoc Diploma in Business (Valuation), Sydney Institute of Technology

Damian joined Opteon in February 2025, bringing with him a wealth of experience from a valuation career that began in 1998. Initially based in Penrith, in Sydney's western suburbs, Damian relocated to Forster on the New South Wales Mid North Coast in March 2001. Since then, he has been actively involved in the MidCoast Local Government Area, gaining extensive experience in all facets of valuation work, including mortgage, acquisition, rating and taxing, and legal valuations. With over 25 years in the valuation industry, Damian's comprehensive expertise and long-standing commitment reflect his dedication to the field.

Damian specialises in and services the Forster Tuncurry and surrounding property market, providing advice on a variety of asset classes and service types.

PART 1: HOW VALUERS READ THE MARKET

Direction and sentiment

The indicators behind a valuer's view of the market



This process relies on analysing both market direction and market sentiment indicators. Together, these indicators help valuers assess risk and determine whether recent sales evidence reflects current market conditions.

MARKET DIRECTION

Where the market is moving

The measurable movement in property values and activity levels over time.

Recent sale prices

The most important data point for any valuer remains recent settled sales. Valuers analyse:

- Median sale price trends
- Changes in average sale prices
- Repeat sales of the same property
- Price movements within specific market segments

A consistent increase in sale prices over several quarters generally indicates an upward market trend. Conversely, declining sale prices may signal weakening demand or increased supply.

WHY MEDIANS MISLEAD

Valuers rarely rely solely on median prices as these can be distorted by changes in the mix of properties sold. For example, an increase in prestige home sales may artificially inflate a suburb's median price without reflecting broader market growth.

MARKET SENTIMENT

How buyers and sellers feel

The confidence, behaviour and motivations of buyers and sellers within the market.

Sales volume

Transaction volumes often provide an early indication of changes in market conditions.

Increasing volumes typically indicate

- Strong buyer confidence
- Increased market participation
- Improved liquidity

Falling volumes may suggest

- Reduced buyer confidence
- Affordability constraints
- Increased purchaser caution

LEADING INDICATOR

Importantly, sales volumes often change before prices move. As a result, many valuers treat volume trends as a leading indicator of future market direction.

Days on market

Days on Market (DOM) measures how long properties take to sell after being listed. This is one of the most reliable indicators of market sentiment.

Shortening marketing periods usually indicate increased buyer urgency and stronger competition, while extended selling periods often suggest greater negotiation power for purchasers.

General benchmarks

Median days on market and what it means

Strong demand	Balanced market	Moderately soft	Weak demand
Under 30 days	30 to 60 days	60 to 90 days	Over 90 days

Discounting, supply and the softer signals

Vendor discounting

Vendor discounting measures the difference between the original asking price and the eventual sale price.

Low discounting generally reflects

- Strong buyer competition
- Realistic pricing
- Positive sentiment

Higher discounting may indicate

- Reduced demand
- Overpriced listings
- Increasing buyer caution

Many valuers monitor discounting trends closely because increasing discounts frequently precede broader price declines.

Listing volumes and stock levels

Supply plays a significant role in determining market direction. Valuers assess the number of new listings, total active listings and months of available stock.

A market with declining stock levels and increasing demand typically experiences upward pressure on prices. Conversely, rising stock levels coupled with weakening demand can place downward pressure on values.

Months of inventory

A commonly used measure of supply

FORMULA

Current listings ÷ Average monthly sales

As a broad guide



Buyer enquiry and competition

Valuers often supplement transaction data with discussions with local agents. Useful information includes:

Number of inspections, Offers received, Contract requests, Interstate buyers, Cash purchaser activity

This qualitative information provides valuable insight into market sentiment, particularly in smaller regional or prestige markets where transaction volumes may be limited.

Rental market performance

Rental market conditions can provide important signals regarding future housing demand. Valuers monitor:

Vacancy rates, Rental growth, Leasing periods, Gross rental yields

Strong rental markets are characterised by

Vacancy rates below 1%, Consistent rental growth, Limited rental supply

Tight rental conditions often support both owner-occupier and investor demand, providing a foundation for value growth.

What valuers weigh most

Prestige market indicators

In premium coastal markets, valuers frequently analyse additional data points. These may include:

Sales above key price thresholds, Record sale activity, Waterfront and prestige sales volumes, Interstate migration levels, Enquiry from metropolitan buyers

For markets such as Forster, Boomerang Beach, Blueys Beach and nearby coastal locations, prestige sales frequently provide a useful indication of broader buyer confidence and discretionary spending behaviour.

Interest rates and economic conditions

Property markets do not operate in isolation. Valuers regularly consider:

Reserve Bank cash rate movements, Mortgage lending conditions, Employment levels, Population growth, Consumer confidence

Changes in borrowing costs often have a direct impact on buyer capacity and, ultimately, housing demand.

What matters most?

While many indicators are monitored, experienced valuers generally place the greatest emphasis on the following:

1. **Recent settled sales evidence**
2. **Days on market**
3. **Sales volumes**
4. **Stock levels and listing volumes**
5. **Vendor discounting**
6. **Rental market conditions**
7. **Buyer enquiry levels**
8. **Broader economic drivers**

No single indicator determines market direction. Instead, valuers assess all available evidence collectively to form a balanced view of current conditions.

Market direction and market sentiment are essential components of professional valuation practice. By analysing pricing trends, transaction volumes, marketing periods, supply levels and buyer behaviour, valuers can identify whether a market is strengthening, stabilising or weakening.

The most reliable market assessments are rarely based on a single statistic. Rather, they result from combining measurable sales evidence with broader indicators of confidence and demand, allowing valuers to determine not only what properties have sold for, but also where the market is likely to be heading.

PART 2: FORSTER-TUNCURRY IN 2026

Applying the indicators locally

Resilient, but more balanced and selective



Applying those principles to the Forster-Tuncurry residential market provides an interesting insight into how the market is performing in 2026 and whether conditions favour buyers or sellers.

While median prices alone can provide some indication of movement, a comprehensive assessment also considers sales volumes, days on market, the performance of different market sectors and the level of activity occurring within premium price brackets. Viewed collectively, these indicators suggest the Forster-Tuncurry market remains fundamentally resilient, although conditions have become more balanced and selective than the highly competitive environment experienced during the post-pandemic boom.

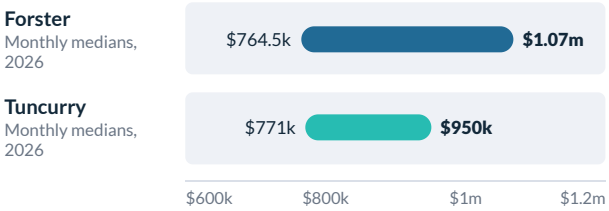
House market performance

The housing markets of both Forster and Tuncurry have demonstrated overall stability throughout 2026, notwithstanding normal month-to-month fluctuations in median sale prices resulting from relatively low transaction volumes.

In Forster, the median house sale price fluctuated between approximately $764,500 and $1,067,500 during the year, reflecting changes in the composition of sales from month to month, with the strongest median recorded in February and generally softer outcomes evident during winter months. The September figures are encouraging and may indicate improving momentum following softer winter conditions, although additional data will be required to confirm whether this trend is sustained.

Monthly median house prices

Lowest to highest monthly median, 2026



Sales data supplied by RP Data® (Cotality). Monthly medians move with the mix of properties sold and are a trend indicator, not evidence of market value.

In Tuncurry, median house prices ranged between approximately $771,000 and $950,000 throughout the year. Following a strong uplift during April and May, values have generally held within the high-$700,000 to high-$800,000 range. While monthly medians have been influenced by relatively low transaction volumes, the broader trend indicates a market that remains stable with no evidence of widespread value declines.

Importantly, both markets continue to record a consistent number of transactions above the $1 million threshold, including a number of prestige and waterfront sales significantly exceeding local median values. This suggests buyer confidence remains particularly strong within premium lifestyle sectors of the market.

Units hold firm as activity eases from the peak

Unit market strength

One of the strongest trends evident throughout 2026 has been the resilience of the unit market across both centres.

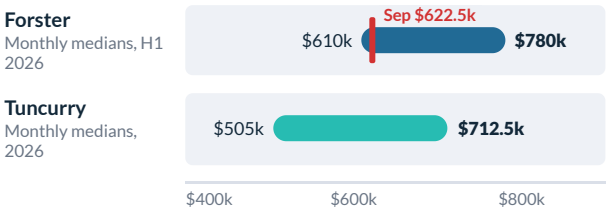
Forster's median unit sale price remained generally between $610,000 and $780,000 during the first half of the year before easing to $622,500 in September. Despite this moderation, numerous premium apartment sales continue to occur, including transactions exceeding $1 million and several sales above $2 million within waterfront apartment developments.

Tuncurry's unit market has also performed well, with median sale prices ranging between approximately $505,000 and $712,500 during 2026. Monthly fluctuations largely reflect the smaller number of transactions rather than significant changes in underlying demand.

The continued appeal of low-maintenance accommodation to downsizers, retirees and lifestyle purchasers remains an important demand driver, particularly given the ageing demographic profile of the Mid North Coast region.

Monthly median unit prices

Lowest to highest monthly median



Sales data supplied by RP Data® (Cotality).

Sales activity and transaction volumes

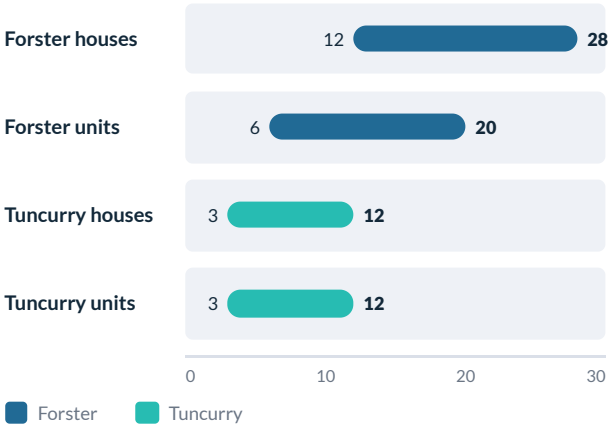
Sales volume is often regarded by valuers as a leading indicator of market direction because changes in activity levels typically occur before price movements.

Forster recorded between 12 and 28 house sales per month throughout 2026, while unit sales ranged from 6 to 20 transactions per month. The strongest levels of activity occurred during the first quarter of the year, with some moderation evident during winter and early spring.

Tuncurry experienced lower overall transaction volumes, reflecting the smaller size of the market, with house sales generally ranging from three to twelve transactions per month and unit sales ranging from three to twelve sales monthly.

Sales per month, 2026

Quietest to busiest month



While transaction volumes have eased slightly from the exceptionally active conditions experienced in recent years, they remain consistent with a healthy and functioning market. Importantly, there has been no significant reduction in buyer participation which would typically signal weakening sentiment.

Buyers are committing faster

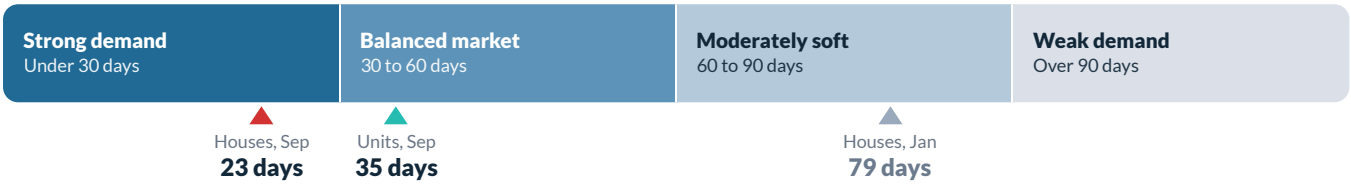
Days on market and buyer behaviour

Days on market is one of the most useful indicators of market sentiment because it reflects the willingness of buyers to commit to a purchase.

The Forster market provides a particularly useful data set. Median house selling periods reduced substantially throughout the year, declining from 79 days in January to just 23 days in September. Unit selling periods remained even shorter, recording a median of 35 days during September.

Forster median days on market, 2026

Plotted against the general benchmarks on page 3



These results indicate that buyers continue to actively pursue appropriately priced stock. While some properties experienced lengthy marketing campaigns, shorter exposure periods among the majority of recent transactions suggest demand remains healthy for well-presented and realistically priced dwellings.

From a valuation perspective, a decline in days on market generally points towards improving buyer confidence and strengthening market sentiment. The September figures are particularly encouraging as they indicate renewed momentum following softer winter conditions.

Prestige market performance

The prestige residential sector remains an important component of the Forster-Tuncurry market and often acts as a useful indicator of discretionary spending and buyer confidence.

Throughout 2026, the market recorded numerous sales above $1.5 million together with several transactions exceeding $2 million.

The ability of the market to continue absorbing high-value stock despite higher interest rates and broader economic uncertainty suggests that lifestyle and retiree migration trends remain significant demand drivers. Many prestige purchasers continue to originate from metropolitan markets where local values remain comparatively attractive when viewed against major coastal locations in Sydney and South-East Queensland. This ongoing demand provides confidence in the long-term outlook for the upper end of the market.

WHERE PRESTIGE IS SELLING

Notable waterfront and premium lifestyle sales continue to occur across areas such as:

One Mile Beach, Bennetts Head, Cape Hawke, Canal-front precincts, Beachfront apartments

ABOVE $1.5M

Numerous

sales in 2026

ABOVE $2M

Several

sales in 2026

Who is buying, and renting

Equity-rich lifestyle buyers and a tight rental market



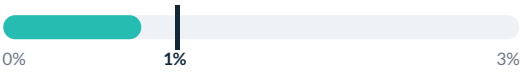
Rental market conditions

The local rental market remains relatively tight, with limited rental supply and continuing demand from both permanent residents and incoming households relocating to the region. While conditions have moderated from the extreme shortages experienced following the pandemic, vacancy rates remain comparatively low by historical standards. The ongoing strength of the rental market continues to support both investor interest and broader housing demand.

Rental market conditions remain tight, with the Forster-Tuncurry vacancy rate sitting at approximately 0.8% during 2026. Such low vacancy levels indicate continuing demand for rental accommodation and limited available supply.

RENTAL VACANCY, 2026

~0.8%



Below the 1% vacancy level that characterises a strong rental market (page 4).

Demographic drivers of demand

One of the defining characteristics of the Forster-Tuncurry residential market is the significant proportion of purchasers originating from metropolitan areas such as Sydney and Newcastle. Purchasers also continue to originate from South East Queensland and the Central Coast, with lifestyle migration remaining an important source of demand. Many buyers are retirees, downsizers or lifestyle-driven purchasers who are selling higher-value properties in larger metropolitan markets and relocating to the Mid North Coast.

As a result, a substantial segment of local demand is generated by equity-rich purchasers who are less reliant on high levels of borrowings than traditional owner-occupier buyers. This has helped insulate portions of the market from the full impact of recent interest rate increases and tighter lending conditions.

WHERE BUYERS COME FROM

Sydney, Newcastle, South East Queensland, Central Coast

The ongoing expansion of health, medical and aged-care services across the region further supports its attractiveness to retirees and older owner-occupiers seeking long-term accommodation solutions.

The continued migration of older owner-occupiers seeking a coastal lifestyle, combined with the relative affordability of Forster-Tuncurry when compared with many Sydney waterfront and lifestyle locations, remains an important driver of demand. This trend is particularly evident within the premium housing and waterfront apartment sectors, where buyers are often motivated by lifestyle considerations rather than purely investment returns or borrowing capacity.

PART 2: FORSTER-TUNCURRY IN 2026

Supply and housing choice

Geography limits Forster, while Tuncurry has room to grow



Supply constraints and geographic influences

Another important factor influencing the long-term performance of the Forster-Tuncurry property market is the differing capacity for future residential expansion.

FORSTER

Geographically constrained

Forster is geographically constrained by the Pacific Ocean, Wallis Lake and surrounding environmental land, resulting in a relatively limited supply of developable residential land. Consequently, opportunities for significant greenfield expansion are more restricted than in many regional coastal markets.

TUNCURRY

Room to the north

Tuncurry has historically accommodated residential growth through expansion toward the north, where larger areas of developable land remain available. While future growth remains subject to planning controls and infrastructure provision, the broader northern corridor provides greater scope for additional housing supply over time.

The finite supply of waterfront and water-view properties surrounding Wallis Lake further contributes to scarcity, particularly within established residential precincts where opportunities for additional development remain limited.

From a valuation perspective, constrained land supply often supports long-term value growth by limiting the availability of competing stock. This is particularly relevant for established residential areas, waterfront properties and premium coastal locations within Forster, where scarcity remains an important contributor to buyer demand and value retention.

Alternative retirement and lifestyle accommodation

The Forster-Tuncurry region also benefits from a growing range of housing options tailored to older residents and retirees. In addition to traditional freehold housing, the market contains a number of over-55s communities, retirement villages and leasehold developments, including established projects such as Pacific Lakes Resort and Evermore Retirement Living.

These accommodation types provide alternatives for residents seeking lower-maintenance living arrangements, increased social connectivity and access to age-appropriate services and support. The availability of such housing options broadens the appeal of the area to retirees and downsizers relocating from metropolitan centres.

MARKET EFFECT

From a market perspective, retirement living and leasehold developments may also facilitate housing turnover, as long-term homeowners transition into more appropriate accommodation while remaining within the local area.

This can release established housing stock back into the broader residential market while supporting continued population growth among older age cohorts.

VALUER'S ASSESSMENT

A market on a sound and sustainable footing

MARKET DIRECTION

Stable to moderately strengthening

Weakening | Stable | Strengthening

Based on the available sales evidence, transaction activity and marketing periods.

MARKET SENTIMENT

Cautiously positive

Negative | Cautious | Positive

Buyers remain active and willing to transact, but are increasingly selective and value conscious.

Direction

Based on the available sales evidence, transaction activity and marketing periods, the Forster-Tuncurry residential market is best characterised as **stable to moderately strengthening**. Several factors support this conclusion:

- House values remain generally stable despite monthly fluctuations
- Unit markets continue to demonstrate resilience
- Prestige sales are occurring consistently
- Sales volumes remain healthy
- Days on market have improved throughout the year
- There is no evidence of widespread discounting or forced selling

While the extraordinary growth experienced during the immediate post-COVID period has moderated, the market has transitioned into a more sustainable phase characterised by balanced supply and demand conditions rather than a material downturn.

Sentiment

Current market sentiment across Forster and Tuncurry can best be described as **cautiously positive**.

Unlike many metropolitan markets that are heavily influenced by first-home buyers and debt-funded owner occupiers, a significant proportion of purchasers within the Forster-Tuncurry market are equity-backed retirees and downsizers.

Buyers remain active and willing to transact; however, they are increasingly selective and value conscious. Properties offering quality construction, desirable locations and realistic pricing continue to sell relatively quickly, while stock perceived as overpriced may experience longer marketing periods.

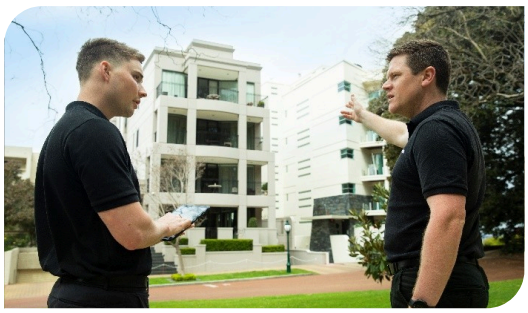
The continued presence of prestige purchasers, stable transaction volumes and improving days on market all indicate that buyer confidence remains intact. While purchasers are undertaking greater due diligence than during recent boom conditions, there remains sufficient demand to support current value levels.

Overall, the available evidence points to a market that has stabilised following a period of exceptional growth and is now operating from a sound and sustainable foundation, with sentiment remaining positive heading into the final quarter of 2026.

TALK TO US

Local insight for your next decision

For further property insights regarding Forster Tuncurry or a discussion about how Opteon can support you with our wide range of valuation and advisory services, please feel free to reach out.



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We provide a comprehensive range of property valuations and specialist advisory services for many purposes, including:

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