



MEDIA RELEASE

Federal Member for Warringah

Tony Abbott MHR

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A WALKING TRACK..... AT LAST

In just a few months time, it will be possible to walk from Chowder Bay to Balmoral along Sydney's most spectacular new bush track.

Minister for Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business and local federal member, Tony Abbott, said the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust was well advanced with work on creating a walking track that would be a tremendous asset for the residents of Mosman.

"The track will pass through bushland and give spectacular views over Sydney Harbour," Mr Abbott said.

"It provides the missing link to create a foreshore walk all the way from Taronga Zoo to North Head.

"This land that has been protected over the years because of its use by the military will soon be open for the public to discover and enjoy."

Mr Abbott said work on the first section of the track, from Chowder Bay to Middle Head Road, is progressing well with most of the track completed and regeneration work now underway to improve the bushland.

A significant part of this track already existed as the route taken for over 100 years by soldiers from the Submarine Mining Depot (later the Army Maritime School) to the barracks and officer's mess at Georges Head.

Work on the second part of the track, from Middle Head Road to Balmoral, commenced this week. The track runs along an existing fire-break at the back of HMAS Penguin through a relatively degraded area. As part of constructing the track, the Harbour Trust will be improving the bushland here.

President of the Headland Preservation Group, Mr Don Goodsir said he was extremely pleased there was finally action on the walking track after so many years of talking about it.

"The HPG has been advocating for this track for a number of years. At last the vision of our group is to be carried forward," Mr Goodsir said.

"The track will allow us to enjoy the magnificent bushland of Mosman that we have fought so hard to preserve."

Mr Abbott said the Harbour Trust had demonstrated that the walking track would not impact on the environment within the terms of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act nor adversely affect a heritage item on the Register of the National Estate.

Although State and Local Government planning legislation does not apply, the Harbour Trust's walking track compliments the objectives of SEPP 56 (Sydney Harbour Foreshore and Tributaries 1998), Sydney Regional Environment Plan 23 (Sydney and Middle Harbours 1990), Sydney Harbour Regional Action Plan, Sydney Harbour National Park Plan of Management, and Mosman Council Local Environment Plan.

Mr Abbott said the Harbour Trust would open the track to the public in October this year.

For more information call Simone Holzapfel on 0417 656 668.