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Footbridge arrives at Woolwich Dock

A former Olympic footbridge will arrive tomorrow at Woolwich Dock by barge, to be erected over the dry dock. This marks stage one of the process to create a walking track that will allow visitors to pass through one of Sydney Harbour's richest historical sites.

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, which manages Woolwich Dock, is constructing a track that will link the site with the adjoining parklands.

The track will begin at the Goat Paddock, below the Woolwich Pier Hotel, and descend to the dock, with magnificent views of Sydney Harbour. The track will cross over the dock via the temporary bridge and continue along the waterfront, to link up with the Clarkes Point Reserve. It will offer visitors a unique opportunity to visit an area of great historic and maritime interest, which to date has been closed to the public. It will also provide a missing link to the current walking trails, which follow Sydney's, foreshore.

It is anticipated that the walking track will be open to the public by the middle of the year.

History of the Site

Cut into the hillside creating a massive sandstone cliff face, Woolwich Dock extends for nearly 300 metres. The area has a long history of maritime industrial use dating back to the mid-1880s and, more recently, by the Army for its water-based operations.

The dock was officially opened on 4 December 1901 and used for the repair and fitting-out of ships until 1958, when it was abandoned. The Army purchased the dock in 1963 for its water-based transport operations. The site has not been operational since 1998.

Harbour Trust

All the Harbour Trust sites – including North Head Artillery School, Middle Head and Georges Heights, Cockatoo Island, Snapper Island, the Marine Biological Station and the Macquarie Lightstation at South Head – have extensive maritime, military and industrial history and have been closed off to the public for much of Australia's European settlement.

The Harbour Trust is seeking input on plans for the future of all the sites – plans that will conserve the cultural heritage, protect the environment and provide maximum public access.

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