



Sydney Harbour Federation Trust
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HEADLAND PARK, MOSMAN: INTERPRETATION PLAN

As a member of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) I had the privilege of attending the Stakeholders' Consultation on 19th June.

I now write as President of The Mosman Parks & Bushland Association Inc. to congratulate the Harbour Trust on its decision to prepare an Interpretation Plan and to make our comments.

The Mosman Parks & Bushland Association was founded in 1964 to protect and preserve the parks, bushland and open space of Mosman.

Middle Head and Georges Heights is a spectacular headland right in the middle of Mosman and with a significance that is truly national. Its history is a microcosm of the history of Australia and its interpretation will have a national benefit.

A whole of headland approach and collaboration with NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS): In 2016, when the NPWS and the Harbour Trust were developing their plans - Harbour Trust: Middle Head Management Plan (Amendment 2) and NPWS: Draft Middle Head & Georges Head Masterplan - a whole headland approach was envisaged for interpreting the headland's heritage. It is greatly to be hoped that in developing the Interpretation Plan for the Headland Park, that vision will continue.

The "stories" of the headland

- They begin with its geological formation.
- They continue with the development of its natural history and
- Aboriginal history.
- Early Aboriginal encounters with Europeans on this headland and the story of Bungaree's Farm make an interesting basis for reconciliation.
- Then comes the story of the defence of Sydney Harbour and Australia.
- The convict built 1801 fort (on NPWS land) is the earliest of the headland's forts and was to protect us from the French. Later forts are at vantage points at Middle Head and Georges Heights and along Chowder Bay Road
- At Chowder Bay the Submariners Mining Base protected Sydney from the approach of enemy ships
- From the WWI period there is the WWI hospital

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- The Headland was used extensively during WW2 and during the Vietnam War tunnels on Middle Head were used for training
- The ASOPA buildings, so well restored by the Harbour Trust, are a reminder of the post war period of PNG's administration by Australia and its achievement of independence.
- And finally, after the departure of the Defence Forces from the Headland and other sites around Sydney Harbour, a vigorous community campaign resulted in the creation of the Harbour Trust.

Telling the "stories"

Illustrated Signs at appropriate places along walk ways and near interesting buildings are already conveying some of the history of this interesting area. These are effective and are appreciated by casual and English speaking visitors.

An Interpretative and Educational/Field Studies Centre

Mosman Parks & Bushland has for long been an advocate for an Interpretation Centre with educational facilities. Ten Terminal seemed an obvious choice, being close to significant heritage features on the NPWS tenure. We are aware that Harbour Trust has not expressed huge enthusiasm for such a centre. Reasons given are:

- There are more modern ways of conveying information to visitors.
- The information can be found on the www.
- Apps are a newer way and they would have greater appeal to younger visitors.
- The many entry routes to the Headland Park make the choice of a site for a centre difficult.
- The creation and subsequent administration and supervision of a centre would require significant funding and is likely to remain beyond the Trust's financial resources.

A possible solution for the site (suggested at the Stakeholders' Consultation meeting) would be to use part of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Offices as a venue for showing a film or films about the Headland. One advantage would be that supervision could be provided by staff who are already on site.

A possible solution for the means of conveying the stories

If apps are to be developed for explaining the various sites, their value would be enhanced by a prior or subsequent viewing of a more detailed and explanatory film (or films) with subtitles or dubbing for an anticipated increase in visitors from abroad.

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Finally a possible solution for the funding

At the most recent meeting of the Harbour Trust Board in public, those present were pleased to hear CEO, Mary Darwell's interest in reviving the Trust's Foundation or Conservancy. The creation of apps and films would be a worthy and possibly very appealing first project.

The Mosman Parks & Bushland Association is looking forward to the production of the Interpretation Plan for the Headland and eager for its results.

An MPBA member has commented that the tight time frame for response to the consultation, especially given the coincidence of school holidays falling within the period, is not conducive to good community response. Opportunities for further community comment as the plan develops would be appreciated.



Kate Eccles,
President
7th July, 2017