Spit Bridge to Manly (Manly Scenic Walkway)

The Spit to Manly walk is a classic bushwalk on Sydney's Northern Beaches. The walk follows a well-maintained track and provides beautiful views over Middle Harbour. This walk is great for those looking for exercise or just a stroll along the shoreline of Sydney Harbour. If you have time, the sidetrips down to Grotto Point and up to Arabanoo Lookout are definitely worth the effort. There are also a few places to get a bite to eat along the way.

Sydney Harbour National Park

Length:	9.1 km
Time:	3 hrs 45 mins
Climb:	349 m
Style:	One way
Rating:	Track: Moderate
Where:	3.8 km W of Manly
Transport:	ferry bus car

Visit www.wildwalks.com for more info

Side trips and Alternate routes mentioned in these notes are not included in the tracks overall rating, distance or time estimate. The notes only describe the side trips and Alternate routes in one direction. Allow extra time for resting and exploring areas of interest. Please ensure you and your group are well prepared and equipped for all possible hazards and delays. The authors, staff and owners of wildwalks take care in preparing these notes but will not accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury sustained by using these notes or maps. Please take care and share your experience through the website. GPS for start the start of this walk:-33.8004,151.2468 & for the end:-33.7996,151.2843

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Int. Battle Boulevard and Manly Rd to Int. Ellery's Punt Reserve Rd and Manly Scenic Walkway 0.2km 5 mins
(From S) From car park at the top of Battle Bvd, this walk follows Battle Bvd down the hill, towards the water, to the end of the road.
Continue straight: From the end of Battle Boulevard, this walk heads down the stairs following the sign 'To Manly'. The walk follows the stairs under the bridge then across the grass clearing to the 'Manly Scenic Walkway' map and info sign on the footpath, in Ellery's Punt Reserve.

Spit Bridge

The Spit Bridge was originally built in 1924 to replace the punt service. The current Spit Bridge was built during the 1950's. The bridge is a bascule bridge, as it's middle section can be raised to allow tall ships through. This ability of the bridge does, however, stop traffic on a major arterial road, which has caused the bridge to be the centre of some controversy. The Spit Bridge carries the Spit Rd and the Manly Scenic Walkway.

Ellery's Punt Reserve

Ellery's Punt Reserve is a very nice grassed area on the north eastern side of the Spit Bridge. The reserve has road access and parking, and seems to be a popular spot for fishing from the bank. There is also seating and shaded areas.

Int. Ellery's Punt Reserve Rd and Manly Scenic Walkway to Int. Sandy Bay Rd and Fairbairn Ave 1km 20 mins
(From 0.23 km) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the footpath, keeping the water on the right of the track as it passes a few information signs. The track soon becomes dirt as it winds around the cove into Fisher Bay. The walk heads down a series of steps and passes over some boardwalk bridges in Fisher Bay, to then climb up the hill on the other side, with a few more steps and staircases along the way. From here, the walk winds around the side of the hill up a few stairs, out to the point (between Fisher and Sandy Bays) where the track becomes a metal grate for a short time. From the point, there are great views over Middle Harbour and across to the Spit Bridge. The track then continues around the cove and into Sandy Bay, where the walk heads down some stairs and then down a wooden ramp to come to the end of Sandy Bay Rd.
Continue straight: From the end of Sandy Bay Rd, this walk heads along the road, keeping the water to the right, coming to the signposted intersection with Fairbairn Ave.

Spit Bridge to Manly (Manly Scenic Walkway)

Int. Sandy Bay Rd and Fairbairn Ave to Clontarf Reserve (Clonny's) 0.5km 5 mins

(From 1.26 km) Continue straight: From Sandy Bay, this walk follows Sandy Bay Road along the shoreline, keeping the water on the right. At the other end of the beach, the road comes to a footpath on the left marked with a series of yellow posts. The walk follows the 'Mitchell Walkway' up the stair between the rocks. From the the top of the stairs, the walk follows a small track which passes the houses before leading down another set of stairs and across Sandy Bay Rd at the pedestrian crossing, to the Clontarf Marina.

Turn left: From Clontarf Marina, this walk follows the footpath along Sandy Bay Road, keeping the water on the right. About 100m from the marina, the footpath turns right and heads into 'Clontarf Reserve'. The walk passes the 'Manly Scenic Walkway' signpost and heads over the grass towards the children's play area, then past the public phone to Clonny's Cafe.

Clontarf Reserve

Clontarf Reserve is a great picnic area and beach on Sandy Bay Rd, Clontarf. The large park provides great facilities with picnic tables, covered shelters, shaded children's play ground, a kiosk & restaurant, and toilets. The beach in the park has a netted swimming area. The park also has tap water, a public phone, showers and garbage/recycling facilities. There are plenty of shade trees in the park. There is a fee for parking in and around the reserve and the park is well managed by Manly Council. More info

Clonny's

Clonny's is a neat kiosk and restaurant inside Clontarf Reserve. The kiosk is open 7 days (but may close dependant on weather and demand) and serves ice creams, drinks, chips, hot foods, and coffee. For those seeking something finer the restaurant is open for lunch on Saturdays and Sundays serving a 2 course meal for $55. Phone on (02) 9948 2373. More info

Clontarf Reserve (Clonny's) to Monash Cres Track 0.5km 5 mins

(From 1.74 km) Veer right: From the front of Clonney's cafe, the walk heads towards the water, then turns left to head though the park. Passing the toilets and picnic shelters (on the left), the walk then comes to the end of the driveway passing through the park. From the end of the driveway, the walk heads onto the sand, turning left and following the beach in front of the houses until coming to the intersection with the 'Monash Cres' track, near the far end of the beach. (At high tide, the track detours to avoid the beach by heading along Monash Crescent, following the blue 'MSW high tide access' signs).

Monash Cres Track to Int of Manly to Spit track and Castle Rock Beach steps 0.7km 15 mins

(From 2.24 km) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk keeps the water to the right as it heads towards the rocky end of the beach. The walk then follows the 'Castle Rock' sign up the stairs and around the hill for some time, going up and down steps before turning right down some stone cut steps to a signposted intersection, above the tiny Board Beach.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' sign (keeping the water to the right) as it passes up the stairs between the rocks. The track soon comes to a signposted intersection, with the 'Access to Cutler & Amiens Rd' off to the left.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' sign as it heads up the slight hill and across the rock shelf, keeping the water on the right. The walk then steps off the rockshelf to continue along the hillside, undulating steeply in parts. The track is board-walked in many places, with a few access points to the water along the way. The walk crosses a bridge before continuing left around the hill to a well signposted intersection.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly Scenic Walk' arrow down the concrete steps towards the water, to the signposted intersection of the 'Manly to Spit' and 'Castle Rock' beach tracks.

Int of Manly to Spit Track and Castle Rock Beach steps to Castle Rock Beach 0km 1 mins **Optional Side Trip**:

(From 2.95 km) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk leads down the concrete steps to Castle Rock Beach. (Retrace your steps back to the main track, then continue straight to continue along this walk.)

Castle Rock Beach

Castle Rock Beach can be found a short walk down from the Manly-to-Spit walking track, near Ogilvy Road. This small, secluded beach is a great spot for those wanting a quieter day at the beach, instead of the more popular and larger beaches in the area.

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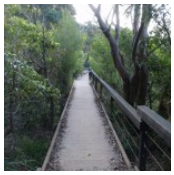

Int of Manly to Spit Track and Castle Rock Beach steps to Int of Grotto Point Lighthouse and Manly to Spit tracks 0.4km 10 mins

(From 2.95 km) Turn left : From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' arrow up the rock steps. The bush track soon crosses a short boardwalk and continues along the rocky track that follows the side of the hill. Soon, the track turns down the hill and winds down to the bottom and steeply back up via concrete steps. The walk then flattens out and crosses a wooden bridge. From the bridge, the track continues up some rock steps, winding up and along the side of the hill, passing some fenced-off rock platforms and coming to the fenced rest area with a bench seat.

Continue straight: From the rest area, this walk follows the bush track up the rock steps and along the side of the hill, keeping the water to the right. The track continues steadily up to the 4-way signposted intersection.

Int of Grotto Point Lighthouse and Manly to Spit tracks to Grotto Point Lighthouse 0.6km 10 mins **Optional Side Trip**:

(From 3.34 km) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the Grotto Point Lighthouse arrow along the rocky bush track, winding down a gentle hill, coming into more dense bush as it winds to the intersection of the Grotto Point Lighthouse and the Grotto Point Cliffs tracks.

Veer right: From the intersection, this walk winds down the hill, passing an old, blank signpost. The track wanders through dense bush and along the ridge, flattening out for a while until it drops down another hill towards the end of the point, coming to the Grotto Point Lighthouse.

(Retrace your steps back to the main track, then turn right to continue along this walk.)

Grotto Point Lighthouse

Surrounded by a white picket fence, the small Grotto Point Lighthouse overlooks Middle Head. The light was designed in the early 1900s by the architect Maurice Festu to assist ships entering the harbour. Construction started in 1910, with the lighthouse being commissioned on September 1 1911.

Int of Grotto Point Lighthouse and Manly to Spit tracks to Grotto Point Engravings track 0.1km 3 mins

(From 3.34 km) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' arrow up the bush track and rock steps. The track winds around to the intersection of the Grotto Point Engravings track, found at the small bench seat and the large wooden sleeper.

Grotto Point Engravings track to Grotto Point Engravings 0km 1 mins **Optional Side Trip**:

(From 3.45 km) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads down the hill, beside a wooden sleeper, passing an engraving of a kangaroo on the right. The short track soon comes to a large rock platform with the rest of the engravings, and information signs.

(Retrace your steps back to the main track, then continue straight to continue along this walk.)

Grotto Point Engravings

The engravings at Grotto Point depict kangaroos, fish and what appears to be boomerangs. The engravings are in quite good condition, considering their age. We have already lost so much of this region's history that historians are not entirely sure if this is the land of the Gayamagal or the Cammeraygal clan. Please take a great deal of care at this site to ensure the longevity of this history. More info

Grotto Point Engravings track to Crater Cove Lookout 0.7km 10 mins

(From 3.45 km) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads up the stone steps, keeping the water below on the right. The track winds to the top of the hill, to the intersection with a track off to the left and a sign pointing back to 'Castle Rock Beach'.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows 'Crater Cove Lookout 700m' sign along bush track, keeping the water to the right. The walk crosses several separate sections of boardwalk and rock platforms as it winds through the heath, to come to a large rock platform with great views at the unnamed lookout in southern Crater Cove .

Continue straight: From the lookout, this walk follows the bush track along the hillside, keeping the water out to the right. The track continues for a short while until coming to an intersection at the base of some stairs on the left.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the bush track down the short hill towards the ocean, soon coming to the Crater Cove Lookout.

Crater Cove Lookout

From this fenced lookout, vistas far out to sea can be enjoyed, with Middle and South Heads just in view. Many yachts sail past, with the container ships out to sea. This is a popular spot for watching the start of the Sydney to Hobart race, or for watching whales as they pass by Sydney.

Spit Bridge to Manly (Manly Scenic Walkway)

Crater Cove Lookout to Int. Arabanoo Lookout Trk and Manly Scenic Walkway 0.3km 5 mins
(From 4.12 km) Veer left: From Crater Cove Lookout, this walk heads up onto the boardwalk, away from the fenced lookout. The track follows the cliffs, keeping the water views to the right. As the boardwalk finishes, the walk continues along a bush track which winds through the scrub to the signposted intersection with a track on the left, which points to Arabanoo Lookout.

Int. Arabanoo Lookout Trk and Manly Scenic Walkway to Arabanoo Lookout 0.3km 5 mins **Optional Side Trip**:
(From 4.41 km) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Arabanoo Lookout' arrow along the rocky track, winding through the thick scrub to the intersection at Dobroyd Scenic Drive.
Turn right: From the intersection, the walk heads towards the bend in the road, keeping the oval to the left. The walk passes the signs for 'Arabanoo Lookout' and soon comes to the lookout.
(Retrace your steps back to the main track, then veer left to continue along this walk.)

Arabanoo Lookout

Arabanoo Lookout has great views over Port Jackson, Northern Harbour and as far as Manly. The lookout also has several signs and monuments, providing historical information on the significance of the area. Looking out over Middle Head, this lookout is named after Arabanoo, an Aboriginal man kidnapped in December 1788, by British marines on Governor Phillips orders. The Governor believed that this was justified as he wished to facilitate communication between the British and the Aborigines. Arabanoo lived in the company of the Europeans until the 18th May 1789 where he died due to smallpox infection.

Int. Arabanoo Lookout Trk and Manly Scenic Walkway to Reef Beach platform 0.8km 15 mins
(From 4.41 km) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' sign down the hill. The track winds slightly as it heads down the spur, with low heath and views of Manly most of the way down, coming to a clear rock shelf. The walk then continues with thick green heath on the right and less dense heath on the left, before coming to the signposted intersection.
Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly via Reef Beach' sign down the hill to a fenced lookout. From the lookout, the track heads further along the hillside to wind down past some more views. The track soon passes by a large rock shelf, as it comes close to the water and then comes to a boardwalk with bench seat behind Reef Beach.

Reef Beach

Reef Beach is a strip of sand facing north-east, towards the Manly Ferry Terminal in North Harbour. The beach is in Sydney Harbour National Park and has toilet facilities about 80m behind the beach. The beach was once a nudist beach, but clothing is no longer optional. The beach is fairly well protected from surf and provides a great place to rest and enjoy the views when walking around Dobroyd Head.

Reef Beach platform to South end of Forty Baskets Reserve 0.6km 5 mins
(From 5.25 km) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads up the hill, keeping the water on the right. The track soon passes a toilet block on the left and then flattens out before coming to the signposted intersection with the high-tide alternate route on the left.
Continue straight: (This section of track may not be passable at higher tides, alternate route provides drier option). From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly via Forty Baskets Beach' sign along the well-defined track, keeping the water on the right. Soon the walk heads down a series of stone steps, passing some National Park signs onto the rock beach. From here, the walk follows the beach/rocks till coming to an intersection with a narrow laneway on the left, just past the start of the hardened footpath.

Forty Baskets Reserve

Forty Baskets Reserve is a beach side parkland and swimming area, east of Beatty St, Balgowlah Heights. The yellow sand beach faces east, towards Manly and North Head, and is fairly well protected from large waves. The reserve has picnic tables, a bubbler (drinking fountain), tap, swings, netted swimming area, open grassy area, some shady trees, and a large toilet/shower and change area. The toilet has a fancy electronic and self-cleaning system, very cool (sounds silly, but check it out). The toilets and showers are accessible to people in wheelchairs, and a wide sealed footpath provides roll-in access from the end of Gourlay Ave.

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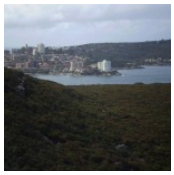

South end of Forty Baskets Reserve to End of Gourlay Avenue 0.4km 5 mins

(From 5.84 km) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk follows the footpath across Forty Baskets Reserve (keeping the water on the right). The footpath heads behind the beach, the ocean pool, the picnic tables, water fountain and swings, then heads up the small incline to where the track meets the toilet block at the northern end of the reserve.

Continue straight: From the toilet block, the walk follows the footpath up the gentle hill, keeping the water on the right. The footpath soon comes the intersection with a set of stairs, uphill to the left.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the footpath up the gentle hill, keeping the water to the right. The path soon comes to another intersection with a set of stone and dirt stairs (uphill to the left).

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk follows the footpath, keeping the water below on the right. Soon, the walk passes around a blue metal gate then continues on to the hairpin bend at the end of Gourlay Ave, just above a small marina.

End of Gourlay Avenue to Int of Beach Ln and North Harbour St 0.5km 5 mins

(From 6.29 km) Veer left: From the gate, this walk heads up Gourlay Ave along the road. The road soon starts to flatten out and passes a car park on the left. The walk then follows the road around the left-hand bend to come to the intersection with a track heading between the houses on the right, signposted with an arrow pointing to 'North Harbour Reserve 0.5km'.

Veer right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' arrow down the hill and across the bridge (and a wonderful waterfall after rain). On the other side, the footpath leads up to Clarence St.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Manly' sign down along North Harbour St. The road then comes to the top of a set of stairs (heading down to North Harbour Reserve) at the intersection of Beach Ln (unsignposted).

North Harbour Reserve

North Harbour Reserve is a large open parkland on the intersection of Lower Beach and Condamine Streets. The park has shaded play equipment for children, free Electric BBQ's, tap water, picnic tables, Garbage/recycling bins, some shady trees, and a public toilet (at the top end of the park). The park looks across the top of North Harbour and provides some great views. The 'Shop at the Park' provides cafe food and lunch.

Int of Beach Ln and North Harbour St to Int. of Lauderdale avenue and Manly Scenic Walk 0.5km 10 mins

(From 6.75 km) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk follows 'MSW to Manly' down the stairs, towards the water. Once at the edge of the water, the walk turns left and follows the footpath along the waters edge, around North Harbour reserve. At the other end of the park, the walk follows the footpath up the stairs to the end of King Avenue (aka Boyle St at this point).

Continue straight: From the intersection, the walk follows King Road, as it bends to the right, then left up the gentle hill, reaching a 'T' intersection with Lauderdale avenue.

Turn right: From the intersection, the walk follows the footpath along Lauderdale Avenue, down the hill past the bus stop sign. After a couple of houses the footpath comes to a clearing on the right, with views of the water and a signposted intersection with the sealed 'Manly Scenic Walk' footpath.

Int. of Lauderdale avenue and Manly Scenic Walk to Manly Wharf 1.9km 30 mins

(From 7.26 km) Veer right: From the intersection, the walk heads down the hill following the 'Manly' sign along the concrete footpath. With the water on the right, the track winds around the back of some apartment buildings through some open parkland, until the footpath comes to the end of Bolingbroke Parade.

Turn right: From the end of Bolingbroke Parade, this walk follows the concrete footpath, keeping the water to the right. The path winds behind the houses, through the open parkland, following the water. The walk passes picnic chairs and some nice views before coming to Fairlight Beach and ocean bath.

Continue straight: From Fairlight Beach, this walk follows the wide yellow footpath past the pool, keeping the water on the right. The footpath continues behind the houses and past several information signs before emerging onto Commonwealth Parade. Once beside the road, the footpath bends left and heads past Manly Waterworks. Just before West Esplanade, this walk turns right and heads along the footpath, with Manly Cove beach on the right, and soon comes to the ferry wharf.

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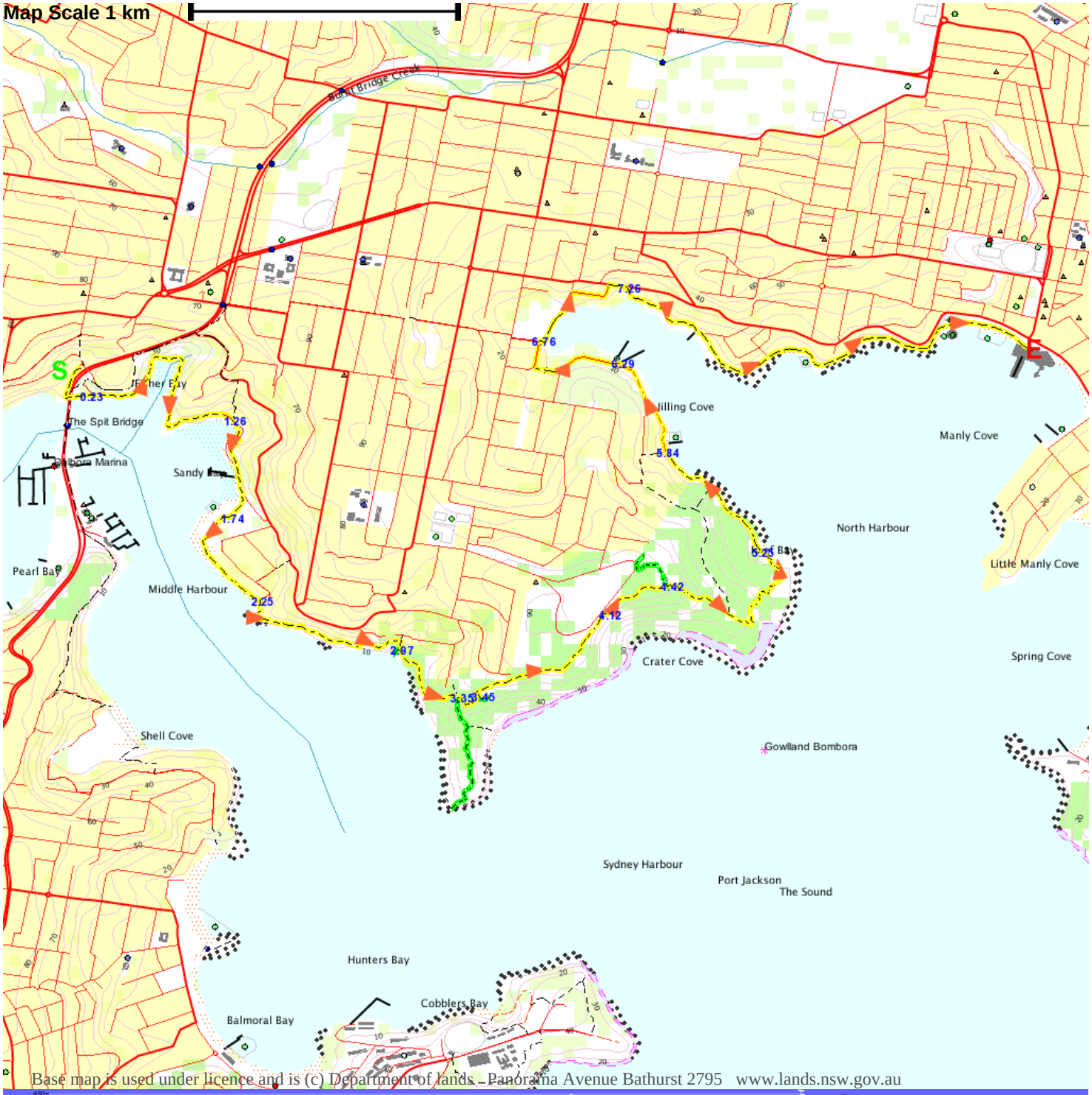
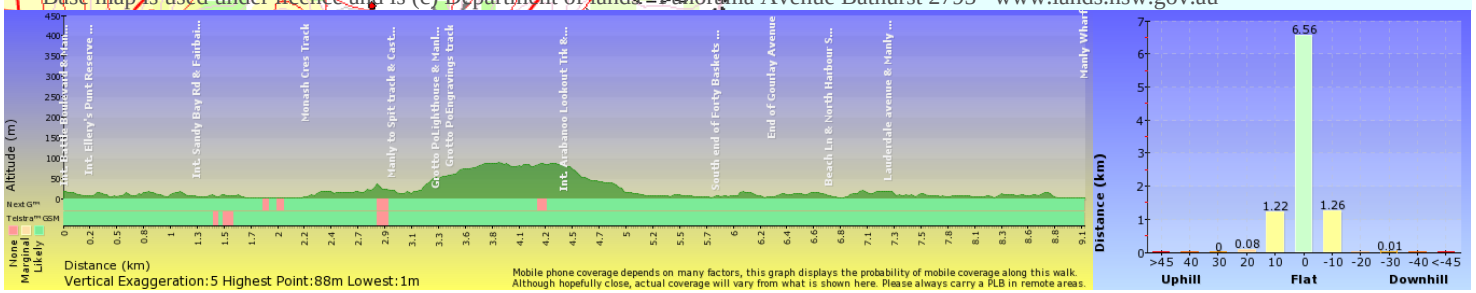
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