Narrabeen Lagoon Circuit

A History by Jim Somerville
There is nothing more difficult to take in hand or more uncertain of success than to take a lead in the introduction of a new order of things, because the innovation has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new.

Machiavelli

For the cause that needs assistance,  
For the wrong that needs resistance,  
   For the future in the distance,  
      May I help to make a difference.

A little while, too brief at most,  
And even my smile will be a ghost,  
   A little while, the briefest look,  
      And who shall trace the path I took.
Introduction

Narrabeen Lagoon is the jewel in the crown of Sydney’s coastal waterways. Its 2.2 square kilometres surface is popular with kayakers, sailors, anglers and wind surfers while on the shore there are picnic areas and paths popular with walkers, runners and cyclists.

About half of its 55 square kilometres catchment is bush which provides habitat for a wide variety of species viz 160 birds, 18 animals and 23 reptiles.

Because it is intermittently open to the ocean, it is a true lagoon, not the lake which the Geographical Names Board, despite historical and scientific evidence, wrongly designated it from 1977 to 2009.

The eight kilometre track, mostly in the bush, has a long and interesting history. The southern segment was made in the 1840s by James Wheeler in order to get his farm produce to market. When Jamieson Park was dedicated in 1888, it included the first kilometre, but the second was in the Wheeler property which the Government resumed and gave to War Veterans Ltd in 1948. They did not want the track on their property but in 1998 the Land and Environment Court ruled otherwise.

On the western end of the Lagoon, Cromer Golf Club erected “KEEP OUT” signs but this did not deter walkers who knew they were illegal because in 1903 the State Government created a 100 foot recreation reserve beside South Creek. Rather rashly, the Club built their 15th green on the Crown land and this history details its very controversial removal.

However, the prize for the most stubborn opposition must go to the Sydney Academy of the Department of Sport and Recreation which, for many years, used the plea of child safety to oppose all attempts to cross the mere 200 metres of their land. The breaking of this deadlock accounts for much of this brief history, the ironic aspect of which was that their permission to occupy the Crown land foreshore included a clause which gave the general public the right of access.

The track on the northern shore was mostly free from controversy. Following the 1992 separation, Pittwater Council controlled the foreshore from Narrabeen to Deep Creek, on which it built an on-ground path while Warringah Council controlled from there to Middle Creek, building a very expensive elevated one. In each case the picturesque path in the bush beside the Lagoon had to be shared with the nearby noisy Wakehurst Parkway.

Because a circuit of the Lagoon dramatically enhanced recreational opportunities, the campaign had the support of both Councils, several members of Parliament, three State Government departments and many locals, some of whom are named in this history.

Success would not have been possible without the strong support of Dick Persson who was Administrator of Warringah Council from July 2003 to September 2008. By a happy coincidence,
Dick and I had met 25 years before, when I was campaigning for the preservation of rainforests on the North Coast and he was a ministerial adviser in the Wran Labor Government. Recognising that his support was essential, I took him to lunch to talk about old times and my present campaign. In October 2007 he accompanied me on a walk along the Academy foreshore and later made a personal appeal for their co-operation, but was rebuffed.

Rob Stokes’ interest and support continued over the whole period of the campaign. Not only did he work closely with Warringah Council but as a member of State Parliament he helped resolve issues with Sport and Recreation, making quite sure that the several Ministers involved were in no doubt about the local popularity of the project and how important it was to over-ride the Academy.

When a new Warringah Council was elected in September 2008, I immediately approached Mayor Michael Regan and was delighted to find that he too was keen to close the gap. Over the next four years he played a leading role in this endeavour.

Success would also not have been possible without the unwavering interest of John Morcombe of the Manly Daily who used the many controversial aspects of what he frequently referred to as “the long awaited trail”, to raise public awareness. If a letter to the Manly Daily which I thought important was not published (a frequent occurrence), I tried to interest him in writing an article on the issue. I was gratified to read in his piece on 18 June 2011: “Jim Somerville, who has been campaigning for the construction of the trail around the Lagoon for years, said that the problem we now face is that Cromer Golf Club has built its 15th green and the Academy has built its twin boatsheds on the two narrow strips of Crown land reserved for public recreation.”

From its inception in 1977 the Narrabeen Lagoon Committee campaigned very successfully for the preservation and maintenance of the Lagoon. Well known local conservationist Phil Colman, who was Secretary/Treasurer, filed all relevant newspaper clippings in 16 books which provide a valuable record of their activities up to 1995. The most frequent subject is the dredging of the central basin of the Lagoon which was strongly supported, but has still not happened. As I was one of the four Wimbledon Avenue residents who took an appeal to the Land and Environment Court in 1983, which put an end to the 17 year commercial dredging operation based on Wimbledon Island, I was effectively expelled by refusal of renewal of membership. David James, who strongly supported dredging, later suffered the same fate over a different issue.

Shortly after the Narrabeen Lagoon Committee was finally wound up due to lack of interest and funds, in 2005 Judith Bennett, operating under the NSW National Parks Association umbrella, established the Friends of the Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment Inc., which adopted the concept of a Lagoon circuit as one of its objectives. As membership grew into the hundreds, well attended
meetings were held at the Narrabeen Tramshed on a regular basis and events organised on and around the Lagoon, thus encouraging even more residents to become involved.

Council used the American term trail, I prefer the Australian term track, so both are used herein together with path.

This account was written in September 2012 after Warringah Council had reached agreement with the Academy and Cromer Golf Club. Ideally it should include the opening in 2014 but there is irrefutable statistical evidence that few reach the age of 99.
In the Beginning

The first Management Plan for Narrabeen Lagoon, approved by Warringah Council in 1980, required action “to enhance and improve the Lagoon and its surroundings.” The accompanying map showed a track right around except for some private land on the western shore which is designated “possible future walkway requiring further investigation.” This investigation was promoted by David James and Tom Webster, when the former was a Warringah councillor and the latter the Member for Wakehurst in the State Parliament. Both were members of the dynamic Narrabeen Lagoon Committee which opposed the idea because of the likely effect on the breeding grounds of the black swans and other water birds.

In a Recreational Study conducted by Warringah Council in 1991, resident opinion was that spending on beaches and lagoon foreshores was of “extreme importance”. It was therefore no surprise when two years later Council’s Reserves Planner, Terry Carter, sought endorsement for a path linking Dee Why and Narrabeen Lagoons and circling the latter. The concept had the support of Mayor Brian Green who considered it a “very worthwhile plan” but was opposed by Councillor Paul Couvret because “it would mean downgrading Cromer Golf Course … and jeopardize the operations of the Sport and Recreation’s camp”. By successfully moving that it be referred to a committee on which were the two abovenamed organisations and the Narrabeen Lagoon Committee, he effectively killed the proposal.

Gary Foster of Wheeler Heights wrote to Warringah and Pittwater Councils and the Manly Daily in October 1996, urging action to improve “the limited access to the most beautiful waterway in Sydney”. Terry Carter’s response in the Manly Daily was that “the plan was a good idea but private land created problems”.

Later in the 1990s, when the concept of a Narrabeen Lagoon circuit was raised at Council’s Warringah Lagoons Advisory Committee, it was vehemently opposed by the old guard of the Narrabeen Lagoon Committee. However Council did not accept the Committee’s advice, claiming in a 2007 Recreational Study that a “circuit would be an outstanding iconic recreational tourist facility for Sydney’s northern beaches”.

When Stephen Blackadder was General Manager of Council he frequently raised the concept but progress was impossible because of the attitude of the Academy.

Early in 2007 Council engaged a consultant to advise on a strategy for the development of trails. Following the formation of a working party comprising Council staff, major land owners and user groups, the Regional Multiple-Use Trail Strategy was placed on public exhibition in April and 114 submissions were received. The final report, which was adopted by Council in December, gave the highest priority to a trail around Narrabeen Lagoon, acknowledging that it required further
investigation. The existing Jamieson Park track, also high on the list, was described as “potentially an outstanding track with high interest values and an important part of the loop track around the Lagoon”.

When I became involved early in 2007 the possibility of completing the Lagoon circuit looked bleak. Although the two local Councils were keen, they confronted a strongly opposed State Government Department and an influential golf club. Nevertheless, many local walkers and cyclists were completing the circuit with impunity, ignoring the threatening signs and as the controversy generated more publicity in the Manly Daily, the numbers increased.

**Berry Reserve to Jamieson Park**

If you plan to walk around Narrabeen Lagoon in a clockwise direction (as this account is structured), Berry Reserve, in the centre of the shopping area, is the obvious place to park as the three hour limit is unlikely to be reached. According to the Plan of Management, this Crown reserve, with Warringah Council as trustee, is “highly valued by the community for its visual and scenic qualities, creating an idyllic setting for passive and active recreation.”

Early in 1994 Warringah Councillor Tom Webster placed before Council a proposal for a 1.4km path to be built along the foreshore from Berry Reserve to the Sailing Club in Jamieson Park. Council was successful in obtaining a grant of $69,000 which it matched. At the official opening, Tom Webster rightly praised Council’s Reserve Improvement Program because “this new path benefited the community and the environment.” Modestly, he did not mention that it was his idea. Regrettably, in the south east corner, a small diversion is necessary around some properties beside the water.

The completion of this segment resulted in an excellent walking and cycling path becoming available along the whole of the southern shore from Narrabeen to the weir on South Creek, a distance of 4km.

The timing is significant because it appears that it was in the mid 1990s that General Manager Len Thompson decided to try to complete the circuit, first proposed in 1980, taking into account the views of residents other than outspoken members of the Narrabeen Lagoon Committee.

**Jamieson Park to James Wheeler Place**

James Wheeler, son of George who arrived in 1816, purchased 50 acres from the NSW Government on the western basin of Narrabeen Lagoon in 1842. Using stone and timber on the property, he and his numerous family built “Homestead”. In order to sell the potatoes and cabbages grown on the property, he built a cart track to Narrabeen around Pipeclay Point. The year before his death in 1890 James, who was a member of the Narrabeen Progress Association, successfully
prevented this track being made into a formal road because it would cross his farm. James junior operated a dairy, his wife Alice selling the milk locally until 1920.

In 1948 the Government resumed the property in order to give it to the adjoining War Veterans Ltd which later became RSL Veteran’s Retirement Villages Ltd. The Wheeler family fought the resumption for almost twenty years, before finally losing the battle in the High Court after spending a fortune in legal expenses. In 1963 Alan Wheeler (grandson of pioneer James) and his family were evicted from their home on the property. The Wheeler family were badly treated by both the Federal and State Governments. On the land which they owned for over 100 years, there is now a retirement village, open to all, with units selling for $700,000.

About half of the Wheelers cart track was included in a Recreation Reserve (later named Jamieson Park), which was declared on 7 October 1888, the other half being in land now owned by the RSL. When, in 1996, they announced their intention to build 130 self-care units on their 50 acre Lot 2611 beside the Lagoon, there was considerable community concern and Council refused approval. Their proposal to divert the track onto marshland frequently under water, resulted in a critical article in the Manly Daily, following which I obtained a dozen statutory declarations from residents (for use in the forthcoming Land and Environment Court proceedings), testifying to having used the track for up to 70 years.

In the Court case, which ran for seven days in March 1998, many residents gave evidence as to their concerns about the impact of the proposed development, but Justice Pearlman was not impressed, giving her decision against the Council. However, she did direct that the RSL create easements to allow the historic track to pass through their property on an alignment agreed with Council.

Five years later, when bulldozers began clearing the bush in order to extend Snake Gully Road to the building site beside the Lagoon, community concerns resulted in well attended public meetings being held in Jamieson Park on 27 April and 4 May 2003. Mayor Julie Sutton expressed her support for the formation of the Save Jamieson Park Committee Inc. (with David James as Chairman) to not only campaign against the unwanted development but also to have Council apply to the Lands Department for the re-classification of the unmade section of South Creek Road which the track followed and which was the RSL’s western boundary. There was a very real fear that the RSL would return to Court (as in fact it did a few years later in an unsuccessful attempt to enter from Lantana Avenue) in order to gain access to the site by way of an extension to South Creek Road. Aware of the effect on the track if this took place, Council immediately took the necessary action with the Lands Department but lost because the RSL objected on the grounds that the South Creek Road Reserve was a “potential option for access”. Council tried again in 2007 but the RSL
would not withdraw its objection. When I learned in 2010 that the applicable regulation had changed, I asked Council to reapply but they refused on the grounds of cost.

Justice Pearlman’s decision regarding the alignment of the track forced the RSL to construct a raised boardwalk over Lantana Creek. Seemingly wishing to demonstrate to users that the track was on their land, they publicly dedicated it “to those who served their country” and erected beside the track 24 plaques detailing Australia’s involvement in military actions over the last 130 years. Their presence in this peaceful bush setting is incongruous and a danger to speeding cyclists, but also futile – I have never seen one being read.

The lush vegetation west of Pipeclay Point is very attractive. In several places the bordering ferns are head high and the swamp mahogany forest particularly impressive, making this section by far the best portion of the circuit. In the vicinity of Pipeclay Point the track is very close to the Lagoon and was frequently flooded until Warringah Council brought in heavy machinery and raised the level by about a metre.

**Cromer Golf Club**

As long ago as 1903 the Lands Department created a 100 foot (30 metres) “Reserve for Public Recreation and Access” along the western side of South Creek and part of Narrabeen Lagoon foreshore. When Cromer Golf Club Ltd purchased their property in 1927 they were aware of the Reserve, which they tried to lease in 1956. The Minister for Lands refused a lease, instead granting Permissive Occupancy 1956/234, one condition of which was that public access must not be restricted in the 4.4 ha Reserve. The Club was advised that it “may be required to vacate at a future date, because alienation of such lands from public use is against public policy.”

Using concern for public safety as a reason, the Club erected “DO NOT ENTER” signs at the two entry points. When the manager was informed of their illegality in 2007, the offending words were deleted and walkers welcomed. Clearly though, most of the golfers were unaware of the existence of the public reserve, sometimes abusing people using it. Believing that it was not restricting public access, the Club constructed their 15th green and fairway in the Reserve beside the Lagoon.

In 2003 the Club made a Development Application to Warringah Council for the “refurbishment and rejuvenation” of their course. The approval contained a condition, to which they agreed, that within five years they construct a path for walkers and cyclists in the Reserve within 20 metres of South Creek and the Lagoon foreshore. The Club set aside $150,000 in their accounts to carry out the construction but did not do so. In 2008, when a senior member of Council staff insisted on compliance, the Club again raised the safety issue and nothing was done. However, in January 2011, with public pressure mounting and the Council committed to completing
the circuit, the Club was asked comment on a number of options, one of which required the removal of the 15th green and fairway. The Club was upset at this possibility, but both sides were well aware that the Lands Department could terminate the Permissive Occupancy at any time.

At Council’s Community Workshop held in May 2011, Golf Club members were unable to gain majority support for their preferred option, which was a pontoon bridge over the western basin of the Lagoon, so in June, the club launched a campaign which involved over a hundred emails to the local Members of Parliament and Councillors. John Morcombe wrote several articles in the Manly Daily about the over-water proposal which President Len Thompson claimed was the “only way to address the operational and security concerns of both the Academy and the Golf Club”.

Norman Monshall of Allambie Heights had a letter published in the Manly Daily which expressed the views of many when he wrote “I suspect that Mr Thompson is less concerned about the safety of walkers, as ensuring that pesky members of the public are diverted away from a private facility.”

Numerous letters for and against appeared: Col Crawford thought a pontoon bridge would be a huge attraction, Tom Kirsop thought it farcical, George Champion thought it should be public access first, golfers second and I commented that it would be a visual and financial disaster. A month of controversy in the Manly Daily ended on 2 July 2011 with a Meldrum cartoon showing two circuit walkers looking at a huge sign reading “GOLF COURSE BY-PASS BRIDGE” with one saying to the other “I was rather hoping the track would go around the Lagoon, rather than through it!”

Aware that NSW Fisheries were opposed to the idea, I asked their management in Cronulla to inform Council that they would not approve such a structure, but the most they were prepared to say was that they preferred a terrestrial solution.

Council staff found that not only would the over water proposal be much more expensive than the on ground one they preferred, but it would be very costly to maintain. As neither side was prepared to fund the bizarre proposal, the obvious solution was the removal of the 15th green from the Reserve, something the Club had been warned may happen. However, the cost of doing so now became a crucial factor, for having operated at a loss for the last two years, the Club claimed that if it was forced to remodel the course, at a cost of $550,000, it would become unviable, something Council could not contemplate. Faced with this dilemma, legal advice was sought from the Lands Department, which urged a compromise.

So it was that a meeting at Council on 4 July 2011 Mayor Michael Regan, General Manager Rik Hart and Director Malcolm Ryan informed Cromer Golf Club’s General Manager, Rod Davies that council was prepared to offer up to $400,000 for the remodelling of the course. (The club already had the $150,000 reserve created in 2003)
Malcolm Ryan then wrote to President Len Thompson setting out nine conditions for an agreement between the parties. In addition to the $400,000 towards the reconfiguration of the course, fencing was required to separate golfers and trail users and to restrict access not only to the existing weir across South Creek but elsewhere to deter the public from using the Reserve. The Club gave in principle agreement but hinted that it required an additional payment for providing access to contractors, but this was refused. However, when the proposed payment was made public, it was subject to sustained criticism. It was unpopular because many resented such a large sum going to an “exclusive wealthy golf club which was being paid to vacate Crown land.”

Aware of the public hostility, I feared that when approval was sought at the October Council meeting, a majority of Councillors would vote against the proposal, so I wrote to all ten. The last two paragraphs read: “I am aware that there is some disquiet in the community that Council is proposing to meet part of the relocation cost, but I am consoled by the fact that the funding would come from the Federal grant of $4 million to build the path and not from ratepayers. I believe the plan for a path around this jewel in the crown of Sydney’s waterways is an idea whose time has come and I seek your support.”

At the Council meeting David James, Ken Higgs and I addressed Councillors but the item was not reached on the agenda. Postponed to the meeting on 22 November, Michelle Ray (who wanted a reduction to $50,000), was the only negative vote.

Although the weir over South Creek, which has been used as the crossing point for many years, will not form part of the circuit, it is of interest to note that in September 2007, the Risk Management Officer of Warringah Council decided that it was so dangerous that it must be fenced off to prevent access. Lagoon circuit walkers and local residents were outraged! After a lively discussion in the Manly Daily and protest letters to Council, the locks on the gates were removed, but the two fences remained.

The Academy

Although not directly related, the Save Jamieson Park Committee members wanted the Lagoon circuit completed, so late in 2006 I signed a letter to the Minister for Sport and Recreation in the Labor Government urging that “officers of the Sydney Academy work proactively to achieve a dedicated fenced-off Lagoon side right of way to enable walkers and cyclists to enjoy the facility, while at the same time meeting the child protection concerns of your staff.” The reply stated that in negotiations with Warringah Council, a fence had been considered but rejected.

I was annoyed that a minister whose responsibility it was to encourage recreation was deliberately preventing it and insulted at being regards as a potential paedophile, so I decided to conduct a campaign to change his mind. Over the first half of 2007 he received a barrage of letters
and emails, but to no avail. As this approach was hopeless, I decided to campaign at a higher level by seeking the support of Rob Stokes MP, Member for Pittwater. His reply was encouraging: “like you I was perplexed confused and amazed that certain bureaucrats oppose the construction of a foreshore walk by the Academy as its foundation in 1958 was for “the purpose of national fitness and physical education”. When his first Parliamentary question was rejected by the Minister on the grounds of child safety, he asked another in regard to the conditions which would need to be satisfied. When the reply was that “there was a consensus … that it was inappropriate,” Rob Stokes told me “this bureaucratic obstruction by Academy staff to a facility designed to encourage recreation, was an irony worthy of the writer of ‘Yes Minister’.”

Frustrated at this rejection by one of their own, I sought the help of the one person in Parliament that I knew all members feared – the Government Whip. As it was this letter dated 13 October 2007 which broke the deadlock, it is reproduced here:

“Dear Gerard Martin,

The almost complete path through the bushland around Narrabeen Lagoon is extremely popular with walkers, joggers and cyclists. The final link cannot be completed while the Academy of Sport and Recreation continues their refusal to allow the path to traverse 200m of their property. Despite this, many people ignore the warning against trespass and complete the round trip with impunity.

Ironically, the Department’s mission statement states ‘we want more people, more active, more often. We do this by working in partnership to create opportunities for people to get active. Specifically we work with:-

- communities to identify local solutions to physical inactivity
- government to provide integrated solutions to community needs.’

Warringah and Pittwater Councils and an active community have “identified a local solution to physical inactivity” by developing the path around Narrabeen Lagoon only to be barred by the Academy.

The claim to be working with governments “to provide an integrated solution” is laughable when you consider that three separate arms of the NSW Government are being frustrated in their attempt to complete the path:-

- Department of Planning have included the proposed path in their 2005 and draft 2007 Metropolitan Strategy
- The RTA – Bicycle Paths group are very supportive and have promised funding for the Deep Creek pedestrian bridge
- Local Government – both local councils have built their sections of this recreation facility at considerable cost.
In addition, the Department of Environment and Conservation recently announced a grant of $1.9m to improve the catchment of Narrabeen Lagoon.

Minister West is not only failing to comply with his mission statement but more importantly, he is out of step with four of his colleagues. In these circumstances, I believe that as Government Whip, you should resolve this impasse. Would you be prepared to receive a small delegation concerned with the completion of the path?

Yours faithfully,

J.G. Somerville, AM, FCPA”

Gerard Martin agreed, so together with another supporter, Richard Hunter of Wheeler Heights, on 24 November 2007 we went to visit the Whip, delighted to find Rob Stokes already there. Gerard Martin, seeing through the defence of what he called “these stubborn bureaucrats”, told Philip Kelly, the Minister’s Chief of Staff, that he too favoured a fence and directed that he arrange for his Minister to visit the site and meet the local supporters.

As it had now become a Council matter, I hastened to tell Administrator Dick Persson the good news. As he believed that Academy staff had captured their inexperienced Minister and therefore my campaign hopeless, he was delighted, organizing a strong reception committee.

Thus, when he arrived to walk the walk beside the Lagoon on 3 March 2008, Minister Graham West met not only Dick Persson but also Rob Stokes, Brad Hazzard, David James, Rik Hart, Mark Ferguson, David Kerr and three members of the Friends of Narrabeen Catchment – namely Tony Carr, Judith Bennett and Jim Somerville.

At the meeting following the inspection, many of those present spoke passionately about the need to close the missing link and complete the circuit. Clearly in trouble, Academy staff again raised the child safety issue, but the Minister directed that the path be built with a fence to keep out paedophiles and that it be kept closed from dusk to dawn. Afterwards the Minister told Rob Stokes privately of his bemusement as to why a Ministerial visit was required to achieve such an obvious commonsense solution!

Six weeks later an annoyed Dick Persson sought an urgent meeting with Graham West to finalise the route and construction of the trail because Academy officers were insisting that it be elevated 2.5 metres at Council expense.

Reflecting their dismay at having been over-ridden, Academy staff engaged in more stalling tactics. The promised joint press release did not eventuate. On 1 July 2008 Minister West conducted a tele-conference involving the four key players at the site inspection three months earlier: Rob Stokes, Brad Hazzard, Dick Persson and David James. He proposed that his Department would construct a $400,000 elevated walkway in two years time when funds were available.
Believing that this was a tactic deliberately designed to defeat the project, David James alerted me, whereupon I convinced Rob Stokes that there was mischief afoot and asked him to discuss it with the Minister. I also alerted Gerard Martin, Government Whip and the Planning Minister to this bizarre and very expensive proposal. A month later Minister West back-tracked, writing to Dick Persson to inform him that Council should build the path along the ground as originally agreed and the Whip confirmed this to me.

Seeing the need for publicity to avoid any further stalling by the Academy, Dick Persson invited the Minister and a few local supporters to a simple ceremony beside the Lagoon on 1 September 2008. As the Minister did not attend, one of his staff produced a media release in which he congratulated Warringah Council and local residents on their long-standing and enthusiastic support. Dick Persson, welcoming the news that access had now been granted by the Academy said it provided an outstanding recreational opportunity for residents and visitors. Under the heading “Lagoon Walking Track Green Light”, the next day’s Manly Daily quoted Dick Persson as saying “this would not have happened if Jim Somerville wasn’t so stubborn”. Two Academy staff stood nearby, taking no part in the Council’s champagne celebration.

With all obstacles now cleared away, on 17 November 2008 Warringah Council held a stakeholders technical workshop attended by the Academy, the Golf Club, Pittwater Council and the relevant State Government agencies. Asked to put their views in writing, most took one or two pages but that of the Academy ran to 26. Their concerns on the safety issue were very serious, including assault, voyeurism, vandalism, intruders and theft. Three separate reports were commissioned from which the Academy identified “a significant threat to participants and trail users safety and the viability of the Academy programs”. Risk management was considered “high to extreme”.

Believing that the public had the legal right to walk along the Academy foreshore between high and low tide, I sought clarification from the Lands Department. To my delight, their reply revealed that as a result of the Academy dumping soil and rocks in the Lagoon during their building program about fifty years ago, the foreshore was now Crown land over which they had been granted Permissive Occupancy in 1972. I immediately obtained a copy, noting with pleasure that it clearly stated that public access must not be restricted. Faced with this unfortunate revelation, the Academy staff could no longer claim that this strip, in which the path could be built without their permission, was a normal lease.

The Strategic Planning Section of Warringah Council decided in December 2008 to make an application to the Federal Government for a grant of $4.5 million under the $300 million Regional and Rural Infrastructure Program to enable the completion of what was now being called the Narrabeen Lagoon Multi-use Trail. The two volume, 70 page submission prepared by Suzy
Lawrence stated that Council was “extremely committed to progressing the project which would provide iconic recreational and tourist activity”.

The submission identified a number of supporting strategic documents, viz NSW Planning Department Draft North East Regional Strategy, the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, Narrabeen Lagoon Estuary Management Plan and the Warringah Bicycle Plan. The Deep Creek to Middle Creek section was scheduled for completion by July 2010 at a cost of $2.4 million and the Middle Creek to South Creek section by August 2011 at a cost of $2.9 million.

The application was successful. On 6 May 2009 Peter Garrett, Minister for Environment, made the announcement before a small group of Council staff and supporters beside the Lagoon. The whole of next day’s Manly Daily front page featured him as the “$4m Man”, saying “this will be a terrific project which will bring enormous benefit to the community”. Warringah Mayor, Michael Regan, said he was “absolutely delighted”, and Pittwater Mayor David James said that “a track around the entire Lagoon was first talked about in the late 1970s, so this Federal funding will mean the completion of a long running project.”

Some months before the Federal Government grant, Kristina Keneally, Minister for Planning in the NSW Government, announced a grant of $320,000 for the track from the Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

Philip Yeadon, who was appointed Senior Projects Manager in June 2009, decided that what was now being called NLMUT (Narrabeen Lagoon Multi-Use Trail), should be built in stages. Stage 1 was between Deep and Middle Creeks, with Pittwater Council responsible for the Deep Creek bridge and Stage 2 was through the Academy and the Golf Club.

The Federal grant was part of a stimulus package which contained a requirement that spending commence in six months. This caused problems as the first stage was still being designed. Eventually an extension of time was obtained, but due to the concentration of effort on Stage 1, no negotiations with the Academy took place.

In a Cabinet reshuffle a week after the September 2008 announcement, Graham West was replaced as Minister for Sport and Recreation by Kevin Greene. In answer to a Parliamentary question in January 2009, the new Minister advised Rob Stokes that he was in agreement with the ground level trail going through the Academy.

In an endeavour to demonstrate that walkers could avoid trespassing by using the Crown land and the shallow Middle Creek delta, Richard Hunter and I began clearing and signposting a path through the lantana near the boatshed. Unfortunately our activity was observed and we were forced to make a hurried departure. A few weeks later, having finished the task, I was challenged when walking out and accused of trespassing and destroying flora. In support of my contention that the lantana was on Crown, not Academy, land I agreed to supply a copy of their Permissive Occupancy.
This proved to be a tactical error, because they then asked the Lands Department to convert it into a Crown Reserve under their care control and management. Initially Departmental officers were supportive, but changed their mind following a meeting at Warringah Council when David James pointed out that this would enable the Academy to prevent walkers using the Crown land.

Fearing that problems would arise when Council officers sought formal approval for the design and construction of the trail, I asked the Director of what was now the Lands and Property Management Authority to play a positive role in this development on Crown land. Director Bronwyn Connolly responded in December 2010 proposing that the Crown land be classified as a Reserve for Public Recreation once the route of the trail was agreed. I passed a copy of the letter to Council officers concerned, with the comment that this was an excellent result.

During 2010, together with other supporters of the project, I was convinced that if the Labor Government was defeated at the March 2011 elections (as seemed likely), the Academy would persuade their new Liberal Minister to rescind the approval given in 2008. To prevent this happening, I asked senior Council staff, personally and by letter, to rearrange priorities and erect the promised fence or obtain written approval before the election. However, this was refused, Mayor Michael Regan believing that the two local Liberal Party members, Messrs Stokes and Hazzard, would be able to restrain the new Minister and that is indeed what happened.

Middle to Deep

Due in part to the requirement that flora impact statements cover a flowering season, progress on this section of the trail was very slow. It was not until July 2010 that Council approved a contract to Fleetwood Urban Pty Ltd for $2.1 million.

The very high cost (half the Federal grant) of this 850 metre segment was the subject of public criticism by Ken Higgs of Manly Vale. Council responded that elevation was necessary to prevent flooding and preserve flora and the width of 2.5 metres was necessary to allow two wheelchairs to pass. As the deck was supported by five massive steel girders flanked by large wooden beams, to the layman it certainly appeared to be over-engineered.

Council held a ‘turning of the first sod’ ceremony on 24 August 2010 at Middle Creek Reserve. Construction was expected to take eight months but took fourteen due in part to bad weather. Together with the pedestrian bridge over Deep Creek, the trail was opened at a joint Pittwater and Warringah Council ceremony on 13 October 2011.

The resultant publicity in the Manly Daily led to its immediate use and high praise for the trail itself and the numerous viewing platforms close to the Lagoon.
In December 2011 the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (NSW) awarded Warringah Council the Minister for Planning “Sydney Greenspace Award” for the trail which was considered to be of a very high standard.

**Deep Creek Bridge**

When Angus Gordon became General Manager of Pittwater Council in 1996, he pushed for the Narrabeen Lagoon Joint Flood Plain and Estuary Committee to complete the required Plan so that funds could be sought from Government for a pedestrian bridge over Deep Creek. Pittwater Council approached the Roads and Traffic Authority in 2003 with two concept designs and cost estimates and agreement was reached whereby the RTA would fund half provided the two Councils shared the other half as it was their common boundary. As Warringah Council did not co-operate, the bridge was put on hold for six years, despite the fact that in 2002 both Councils had formally adopted the second Management Plan for Narrabeen Lagoon which listed the circuit track as an “action item”.

After an extensive design period, Pittwater Council let a contract to Australian Prestressing Services in December 2011 for $912,000.

Work began in March 2011 and completion was expected in June but it was not until September that two sixty tonne cranes lifted the 50m single span into position level with, but downstream of, the road bridge.

A local architect, who considered it a monstrosity, wrote to Warringah Council offering to design the pedestrian bridges over Middle and South Creeks, free of cost. The offer was politely refused.

**Bilarong Reserve and Sanctuary**

The dredging of Narrabeen Lagoon began early last century. In 1968 Warringah Council dredged the north east of the central basin, reclaiming the shoreline and creating a large open space which later became known as Bilarong Reserve. Dredging was controversial because of the noise and disposal of the sand and silt, so in 1983 Council signed a contract with Hollywood Sands for $195,000 to conduct a pilot dredging program on the western end of the Reserve using an underwater curtain to allow the fines to be returned to the bed of the Lagoon. Even though it only continued for four months, the local residents objected because of the noise of the plant and the movement of sand trucks. However, it was deemed a success and the road built to the site now provides an excellent parking area and access to the track through the Bilarong Sanctuary to Deep Creek.

In 1991 Warringah Council approved the expenditure of $4 million on a major dredging program, basing the plant on an extensive area north west of Deep Creek bridge. Some Elanora
Heights residents protested and formed a Save Deep Creek Committee to fight the scheme on the grounds of noise and delays to motorists using the Wakehurst Parkway. Two weeks before their appeal in the Land and Environment Court, Council withdrew the proposal. The impending formation of Pittwater council, which occurred in 1992, may have been a factor in the cancellation.

Pittwater Council built the section between Bilalong and Deep Creek over two years using funds provided by the Sydney Catchment Management Authority and the Lands Department, which it matched. When it was finished in 2003, the pedestrian bridge over Deep Creek was only a proposal, so the path went under the road bridge, enabling walkers to cross the creek using the sewage iron bridge 300 metres upstream.

When Narrabeen Lagoon Committee members claimed that the proposed route would interfere with the habitat of black swans, herons and egrets, Mayor Patricia Giles convened a meeting at which a compromise was reached; the path was moved away from the shoreline and closer to the Wakehurst Parkway, thus making it safer for birds but noisier for humans.

**Options**

When facing difficult decisions, Warringah Council routinely engages consultants. The best possible route had to be found through the Academy, the golf course and South Creek Reserve, so Council appointed a specialist consulting firm. They held discussions with the stakeholders (but not, as promised, with informed members of the public), culminating in the production of an 18 page illustrated, complicated Information Pack for public comment.

In conjunction with Council, a Community Workshop was held at Long Reef Golf Club on 5 May 2011 at which 49 participants, arranged in small groups, studied the various options and expressed their individual preferences.

As expected, members of the Cromer Golf Club attended in force, expressing their preference for either a long or short pontoon bridge over the western basin even though the Information Pack indicated by numerous $ signs that it would be much more expensive than the on-ground alternative.

For no apparent reason, the Crown foreshore route through the Academy was not listed as an option, the Consultant highlighting their proposal which was an expensive elevated trail through the bush on the escarpment, well away from the Lagoon.

I took great exception to this serious error by the Consultant in the option process and in a letter to General Manager Rik Hart, I pointed out that the Minister’s media release referred to the trail being “on the foreshore land adjoining the Academy” and not, as the Consultant claimed “on ground through the Academy”. I also claimed that “the Academy had apparently wrongly informed the Consultant that the decision was for a path on their land enclosed by two high fences. This
fiction, expanded to include three gates requiring night closure by Council, was designed to make the project as complicated and expensive as possible. As you were present at the site inspection and know the facts, I believe you must accept some responsibility for the situation which has now arisen where two expensive options were presented to the Workshop while the cheap, officially approved one was omitted.”

Council staff prepared a 74 page report on the Workshop which, together with the Information Pack, it put online, calling for public comment. This comprehensive exhibition attracted 136 submissions – 70% of which were from golf club members or supporters, half of whom believed that the club should be compensated for the loss of the 15th green. In a further report, Council commented that these submissions were “not representative of the entire community due to the high representation of a single mobilised group”.

The over-water option was opposed by the Manly Warringah Kayak Club which claimed that it would prevent the running of their 12km monthly championship. The Narrabeen Lakes Sailing Club also opposed this option, claiming that it would interfere with their events.

Although invited, no Government departmental staff attended the Workshop. However, Council was warned in correspondence that it did not own the Lagoon and that a licence for any obstruction would be required. Whilst it was now clear that the pontoon bridge idea was not a feasible option, the Golf Club fought on, publicly accusing the Council of bias in the presentation of options.

By the middle of 2011, with the time-wasting options consultation process over, newly appointed Senior Project Manager Charles Munro, Director Malcolm Ryan and Mayor Michael Regan began serious negotiations with Cromer Golf Club and the Academy. It was now clear that the two main obstacles preventing the trail being constructed on the Lagoon foreshore were the 15th green and the boatshed, both on Crown land. Council’s generous offer of $400,000 for the removal of the 15th green and the remodelling of the golf course removed that obstacle, but the Academy’s huge twin boatshed was a major problem until Brad Harris, one of Charles Munro’s staff, came up with the brilliant idea of cutting it in half and moving the two parts to more suitable locations on Academy land. Once Council obtained expert opinion as to feasibility and offered $220,000 to cover the cost, the seemingly intractable problem was solved.

Negotiations with the Golf Club and the Academy having succeeded, a ten page executive summary was prepared for consideration by Council at their 18 October 2011 meeting but had to be deferred until 22 November, where the following resolutions were passed:-

A. That Council endorse the Option 3B concept including a primarily on-ground trail through the Crown land adjoining the Academy of Sport and Cromer Golf Course and through an existing
track along the foreshore of South Creek Reserve and that the Options Report (Attachment Booklet 1) containing technical assessments and consultation outcomes be publicly exhibited;

B. That Council endorse the negotiation of an agreement with the Academy of Sport by 17 May 2012 for it to relocate its watercraft activities away from the current boatshed location on Crown land to allow the trail to be constructed along the foreshore (Option 3B) with the public access area fenced one side and open to the lagoon, noting that up to $220,000 has been included for boatshed relocation and/or rebuilding in the Option 3B budget estimate;

C. That Council endorse the negotiation of an agreement by 17 May 2012 with the Cromer Golf Club to reconfigure the golf course to remove the existing 15th hole and to allow access for the trail to be constructed along the lagoon foreshore. The total of Council’s contribution for the golf course reconfiguration, including construction access, approvals and other costs is to be limited to $400,000;

D. That public access be directed along the Option 3B foreshore route through South Creek Reserve and that development of a contiguous 4 hectare habitat area be further explored by fencing off informal tracks, removing the current unsafe access across the weir and revegetating and limiting general public access to the public reserve along the western foreshore of South Creek;

The Academy Fights On

When Council’s Senior Project Manager sought to negotiate the formal agreement with the Academy, he met with stalling tactics. The plan agreed to verbally, which involved moving half of the twin boatshed to Middle Creek, was no longer considered feasible, so a new boatshed was proposed. As Council was unwilling to increase their $220,000 contribution, Mayor Michael Regan asked Rob Stokes to endeavour to obtain $300,000 additional funding from the State Government, but he refused, suggesting instead that the trail go behind the twin boatshed.

As negotiations dragged on month after month, I became convinced that the Academy did not intend to sign a formal agreement before the three month’s deadline set by Council of 17 May 2012, so I decided to write to the Director of Sport and Recreation saying, in part,

“It is quite ludicrous that after five months negotiation, your officers have been unable to reach agreement with Council on the removal of a boatshed, the erection of a fence and the construction of a 35m path between the Crown land and Middle Creek. It appears that they do not agree with the full implementation of your mission statement: ‘we want more people, more active, more often.’”

Warringah and Pittwater Councils have identified a “local solution to physical inactivity” and have spent $5 million developing a track around Narrabeen Lagoon, only to be blocked by the
Academy. I deplore the bad faith displayed by your officers and urge you to insist that they have more regard for your mission statement and the public interest by signing an agreement with Warringah Council before 17 May.”

When the Director ignored my letter, I decided to go higher, sending copies of the full letter to three more senior people in Government:

- Minister Graham Annesley, seeking his co-operation because stalling by his staff had resulted in the matter having to be deferred from the March, April and May council meetings;
- Daryl Maguire, Government Whip, urging him to suggest to Minister Annesley that he make a site visit, similar to that of his predecessor in 2008, and negotiate the required agreement on the spot;
- Chris Eccles, Director General, Premier and Cabinet, urging his intervention and concluding “while I freely acknowledge that a government is more powerful than a council, I believe that in this instance commonsense and natural justice should prevail.”

Additionally, I asked Phil Colman to raise the matter with Brad Hazzard on a personal basis. He later confirmed that he had asked Minister Annesley to fix the problem.

I also appealed to Rob Stokes to intervene in order to break the deadlock. Graham Annesley advised him on 18 May that he had “met with officers of the Academy and Cromer Golf Club in order to further progress discussions and lead to a resolution as quickly as possible.”

The negative attitude of the Academy is illustrated by the sad story of the Wakehurst Parkway entrance gate. Some years before, in order to improve traffic movement, a new entrance, without a gate, was installed several hundred metres further west and the old gate locked. Walkers found it quite easy to go around the short adjoining fence until the Academy erected a barbed wire extension to stop them. I restored the entrance but within weeks, steel rods replaced the barbed wire and I was beaten! No doubt upset by the increasing number of trespassers, in mid 2012 the Academy admitted defeat, opened the gate and erected a large sign which stated that “a temporary pedestrian route has been constructed to assist trail users to rejoin the completed trail via the golf course.”

Apparently the phantom paedophiles still existed, for one sign warned that “inappropriate conduct will be reported to the Police”. The Academy insisted on using the incorrect “Lake Walk”, while the Golf Club had the good sense to use “Lagoon Track”.

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The Golf Club Fights On

As mentioned earlier, the Cromer Golf Club is partly constructed on Crown land occupied under a Permissive Occupancy which stipulates that “the tenant must not unnecessarily obstruct access by the public across the foreshore”. Since 1903 the public has been able to walk in the 100 foot Reserve for Public Recreation and Access beside South Creek and the Lagoon. Until recently the number of users has been small, with most understanding the need for caution when golf balls were in play, however the publicity surrounding the proposed Lagoon circuit has resulted in greatly increased usage by walkers and cyclists.

Council Option 3B involved an on ground path beside the water in the public Reserve and the reconfiguration of the course by the removal of the 15th green resulting in the separation of trail users and golfers. Understandably the Club was unhappy with the prospect but they were using public land and did obstruct public access.

In July 2011 a compromise was reached whereby Council offered a $400,000 contribution towards the reconfiguration. President Len Thompson (former General Manager of Warringah Council) advised that “at separate meetings of the Board and members, the Club considers that Council’s proposal seems in principle to be a reasonable way forward.” However there was a problem – the reconfigured course must be constructed and playable before it vacated the 15th green so a signed agreement was required by December 2011. Negotiations dragged on until May 2012 without any formal agreement. When Rob Stokes asked Council for a briefing in delays to the circuit in May 2012, he was told “the Golf Club is the problem”.

Council Frustration

The 17 May 2012 deadline set by Council for the completion of agreements with the two opponents came and went without any approvals as both the Academy and the Golf Club continued their stalling tactics. One wanted a new, very expensive boatshed but lacked the funds to build it, the other continued to find problems with the required reconstruction of their course. After many months of debate, Council officers decided to threaten them both with changes to their Permissive Occupancies which would allow the track to be constructed on the Crown land.

The Deputy General Manager, Environment, Malcolm Ryan, reported on the failure of negotiations to the Council meeting on 26 June and made the following recommendations which were passed with one dissenter:

A. That Council delegates authority to the General Manager to execute an Agreement by 31 July 2012 with Cromer Golf Club incorporating terms 1.1 through 1.9 as set out in this report, which includes a contribution by Council of $400,000 (ex GST) towards the golf course reconfiguration and securing construction assess;
B. That, should such agreement in item A above not be achieved within this period, Council
delegates authority to the General Manager to negotiate with the Minister administering the
Crown Lands Act 1989 as required to enable Council to have occupation of sufficient parts of
the Crown Land reserve to construct the Trail;

C. That Council delegates authority to the General Manager to execute an Agreement by 30
September 2012 with the Sydney Academy of Sport (or parent organisation) incorporating
terms 2.1 through 2.7 as set out in this report, which includes a contribution by Council of
$220,000 (ex GST) towards relocation of watercraft activities away from the Crown Land
Reserve;

D. That, should such agreement in item C above not be achieved within this period, Council
delegates authority to the General Manager to negotiate with the Minister administering the
Crown Lands Act 1989 as required to enable Council to have occupation of sufficient parts of
the Crown Land reserve to construct the Trail.

As I felt it quite intolerable that the Academy should be allowed to stall for another three months, I
asked Rob Stokes to have a quiet word with Minister Annesley who may or may not have been
complicit in this further delay, but to no avail.

The Golf Club was the first to capitulate, signing a legal agreement with Council just before
the deadline. When it was made public in September 2012 President Len Thompson told the Manly
Daily that he was delighted the multi-use trail was nearing completion. “All the club members are
in favour of it now that they’ve seen that it won’t penalise us”, he said. (Conveniently overlooked
was the fact that this same sensible and generous solution was offered to the Club in July 2011).
Michael Regan, newly re-elected Mayor of Warringah, said “the agreement with the Golf Club
brings us one step closer to the completion of one of Sydney’s best walks”.

Following deliberate damage to the 15th green, Council erected signs at both entrances to the
course stating that it did not “recommend or endorse” the use of the unofficial track. The rapidly
increasing number of walkers and riders faced a STOP sign and were asked not to continue until the
circuit was completed in 2014. However Council’s signs were ignored because most knew that
except for one small section near the 15th green, the track was in a Reserve for Public Recreation
and Access.

Just before the September deadline, Minister Annesley and Brad Hazzard met with senior
Council staff and after viewing plans, gave their approval for a legal agreement covering the bridge
over Middle Creek and the path within the Academy.

The refurbished Middle Creek Reserve, opened in August 2012, provided picnic areas and
parking for only 40 vehicles but, best of all, a paved path from the existing track from Deep Creek
to where the new pedestrian bridge would be built over Middle Creek. In reporting the upgrade in
the Manly Daily, John Morcombe quoted council’s General Manager, Rik Hart, as saying “it’s exciting that there is just one stage to go before cyclists and walkers can enjoy the new pathway around one of Sydney’s most beautiful waterways”.

**Conclusion**

Although the 1980 Management Plan for the Lagoon envisaged a circuit track, it was not until Warringah Council received the $4 million Federal grant in 2009 that work actually began. Over the next two years the existing track was extended from Deep Creek to Middle Creek Reserve, leaving a gap of only 600m, almost all of which was waterfront Crown land. Decades before, the Lands Department had given the Academy and Cromer Golf Club the right to use this Crown land provided they did not obstruct public access, but that is exactly what they did; one with a large boatshed and the other with a green and fairway. After negotiating for many months, Council finally persuaded these two naysayers, whose business was recreation for a few, to allow many thousands of ordinary citizens to use this public land.

Council deserves great credit for pressing ahead in the face of long-standing opposition by a State Government authority. Despite the fact that I had broken the deadlock in 2008 by obtaining the support of the Minister for Sport and Recreation, the management of the Academy did not approve and it was not until Council’s ultimatum in June 2012 that they finally agreed.

Not everyone approved of the project. Some thought spending $2.1 million on a mere 850 metres of track was excessive and there seemed to be general agreement that the Deep Creek bridge was over-engineered. Many members of the general public were outraged at such a large sum being given to Cromer Golf Club and the members themselves were outraged at having to reconstruct their course.

My relationship with Warringah Council during the campaign was ambivalent. Because I had broken the long standing deadlock, resulting in a shared goal, the NLMUT team were quite open with me; only once did I resort to freedom of information procedures to obtain factual data. However, on two occasions when I considered their approach was wrong, I told them so. The two issues were: postponing for almost three years the inevitable confrontation with the Academy and in mid 2011 asking the public which of the consultants route options they preferred. I felt Council staff should have made the decision and then sought public comment, thus speeding up the process by six months and avoiding the costly Workshop and very public confrontation with the self-interested Golf Club which did not want the trail anywhere near their course. Another of my criticisms of the Workshop related to the omission from the consultant’s options of the logical route on waterfront Crown land outside the Academy, which was the option later chosen by Council.
One resident, known to me, who disagreed with Council’s choice of route, used freedom of information procedures to obtain copies of 160 documents relating to Stage 2. I was annoyed that my supposedly private letters to Council had been given to my opponent.

This account of the long fight for a track around Narrabeen Lagoon is replete with ironies, the most pertinent being that the mission statement of the Department of Sport and Recreation, which opposed it for 16 years, is “we want more people more active, more often.” Others were:

- In a media release, Minister Graham West said that the path was a good example of State and local governments working together, when in fact, it was the exact opposite for most of the time.
- I was advised by a Member of Parliament not to approach the Government Whip as he “does not get involved in local matters.” Fortunately I disregarded the advice, as he was the one who broke the impasse.
- The Narrabeen Lagoon Committee opposed the track around the Lagoon while its successor, Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment, supported it.

The inherent appeal of the circuit was that, apart from the urbanised area near Narrabeen shopping centre, it would be almost entirely through bush and open space. Only when crossing the Lagoon itself on Pittwater Road and for a few hundred metres along the Wakehurst Parkway, does it become a normal footpath. The idea was that if people could ride or walk the eight kilometres they would get a greater appreciation of the treasure that is Narrabeen Lagoon. Even though incomplete, it is very popular, proving that it fills a very real recreational need. I am therefore delighted that my last campaign has finally resulted in the public interest overcoming decades of self-interest.
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步行和野餐：戴好结实的鞋子和驱蚊剂。请不要在鸟儿或动物附近喂食，因为这会让它们生病并帮助捕食者生存。

骑自行车：沿着道路骑行，保持安全，并使用您的铃铛。不要在不平整或受损的道路上骑行 – 为了确保骑行者的安全，自行车在某些地方被禁止进入，特别是在Garigal National Park。

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宠物：牵着狗在大部分区域（除了海滩和野生动物保护区及国家公园外），但请确保不要打扰在那里筑巢或觅食的当地野生动物。在非沿海地区，禁止喂食喂食动物。保持宠物在视线范围内，危险时请将其带入车内。

地图注释:

深水溪小径：从Bilarong保护区走过去，过海草和海草社区，穿过野生动物保护区。经过Sheoak和Saltmarsh森林，进入Deep Creek的开阔森林，野花、草本植物、瀑布和鸟类。

鹈鹕人行道：观看诺拉比溪入口和瞭望塔。参观岩石平台，游泳或在东滩划船。走到Coastal Environment Centre和Mullet Creek Warriewood wetland。

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步行与野餐：戴好结实的鞋子和驱虫剂。请不要在鸟儿或动物附近喂食，因为这会让它们生病并帮助捕食者生存。

骑行：沿着道路骑行，保持安全，并使用您的铃铛。不要在土路或损坏的道路上骑行 – 为了确保骑行者的安全，自行车在某些地方被禁止进入，特别是在Garigal National Park。

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