

Spit Bridge to Middle Head Forts



2 hrs 30 mins

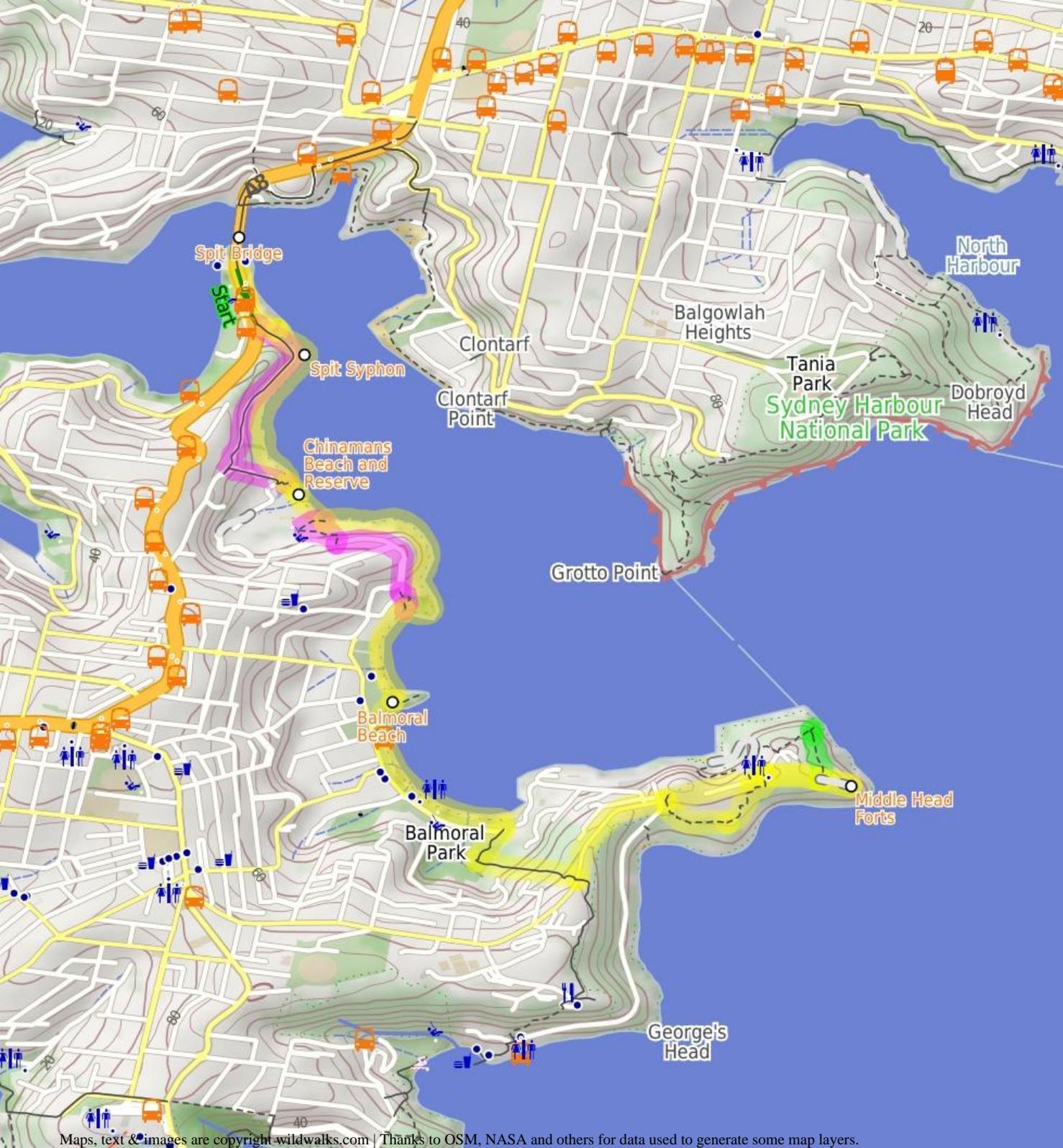
Hard track

6.3 km One way

181m

4

This scenic walk takes you from the Spit Bridge, along the coast to explore the Middle Head Forts. There are a few alternate routes for use at high tide or high seas. Balmoral Beach offers a few spots for a coffee or fish and chips along the way. Middle Head offers plenty of options for exploring the old forts and enjoying a view out the heads.



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.

Spit Syphon

The Spit Syphon was built between 1922 and 1925 by the Public Works Department. It was necessary in order to pump sewage from the north without interfering with water transport. The building is styled with Egyptian influences as displayed by its tall, square concrete walls. [More info.](#)

Chinamans Beach and Reserve

Chinamans Beach and Reserve are wonderful places to have a picnic or a swim, with lots of areas to sit in the sun or shade beside the clear water. The beach does not provide any surf with its north-easterly aspect, but is perfect for launching your kayak or boat into the harbour. Chinamans Reserve has some parking, play equipment, toilets and road access by McLean Cres.

Balmoral Beach

Balmoral Beach takes its name from the royal castle at Braemar in Scotland. This is a beautiful beach, with a great foreshore walk overlooking the sandy beach. The beach is a popular spot with locals and visitors, for sun baking, swimming and having a picnic. Balmoral Beach has very little surf, with a sheltered, easterly aspect. There is also a shark-net swimming area, toilets, shops, cafes and plenty of beach to share on a sunny day.

Middle Head Forts

The forts of Middle Head consist of a rabbit warren of concrete tunnels, winding some 300m around the end of the headland. The fortifications and gun emplacements are varied in size and state, with some closed to protect heritage and the bats. Nearly all the forts overlook the harbour, with views out past the heads and to sea. This is a great area for a little adventure with so many tunnels to explore. For information on tours, click the link. [More info.](#)

Before You walk

Bushwalking is fun and a wonderful way to enjoy our natural places. Sometimes things go bad, with a bit of planning you can increase your chance of having an enjoyable and safer walk. Before setting off on your walk check

- 1) Weather Forecast ([BOM Metropolitan District](#))
- 2) Fire Dangers ([Greater Sydney Region, unknown](#))
- 3) Park Alerts ([Sydney Harbour National Park](#))
- 4) Research the walk to check your party has the skills, fitness and equipment required
- 5) Agree to stay as a group and not leave anyone to walk solo

Think before you TREK

The 'Think before you TREK' program developed by NSW Police & NPWS promotes the benefits of planning ahead for your bushwalking trip by using an easy to remember acronym:

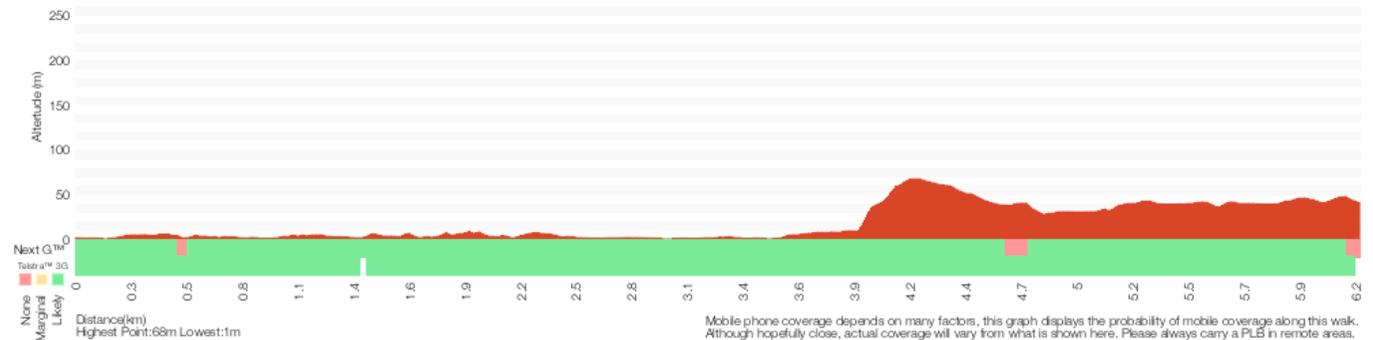
- T** Take adequate supplies of food, water, navigation and first aid equipment.
- R** Register your planned route and tell friends and family when you expect to return.
- E** Emergency beacon (PLB's) should be carried on walks with significant gaps in mobile coverage (check terrain profile).
- K** Keep to your planned route and follow the map and walking trails.

Topo Maps

The maps provided on wildwalks are helpful, but there are times where you may need maps covering a broader area. Maps that cover this walk include;

1:25 000 Map Series:91303N PARRAMATTA RIVER, 91302N SYDNEY HEADS

1:100 000 Map Series:9130 SYDNEY



Grade

This walk has been graded using the AS 2156.1-2001. The overall grade of the walk is determined by the highest classification along the whole track.



Grade 4/6
Hard track

Length	6.3 km One way
Time	2 hrs 30 mins
Quality of track	Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely (4/6)
Signs	Minimal directional signs (4/6)
Experience Required	Moderate level of bushwalking experience recommended (4/6)
Weather	Storms may impact on navigation and safety (3/6)
Infrastructure	Limited facilities, not all cliffs are fenced (3/6)

Are you ready to have fun?

Please ensure you and your group are well prepared and equipped for all possible hazards and delays. Check park closures, weather information and Fire Danger Rating before setting out. Optional side trips and alternate routes noted are not included in this walk's overall grade, length or time estimate. Please allow extra time for resting and exploring areas of interest. The authors, staff and owners of wildwalks take care in preparing this information but will not accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury you may experience. Please take care, have fun - Happy Walking.

Getting there You can get to Spit Bridge South (gps: -33.8044, 151.2461) by car or bus. Car: There is free parking available.

You can get back from Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd (gps: -33.8278, 151.2615) by car or bus. Car: There is free parking available.

Find up to date and more information including; travel directions, weather, park closures and walker feedback at <http://wild.tl/sbtmhf>

0 | Spit Bridge

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0 | Spit Bridge South

(280 m 5 mins) From the intersection opposite 'Sydney Harbour Kayaks', this walk heads down along Spit Rd, on the right, to turn left before the hill into Middle Harbour Yacht Club's car park.

0.28 | Alternate Route Int. Middle Harbour Yacht Club car

(1.1 km 25 mins) Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads up Parriwi Rd, along the hill above the yacht club (the club being below on the left). The walk heads up the road for quite some time, then takes the first left, Cyprian St, which it follows down the hill to a signpost for 'Grecia Lane'. From here, the walk leaves Cyprian St to head down the stairs passing a small grassed area with a bench, before heading down more stairs onto Chinamans Beach. Now Turn right to rejoin the main walk .

0.28 | Int. Middle Harbour Yacht Club car park and Spit R

(930 m 17 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads through the car park towards the Middle Harbour Yacht Club buildings entrance. Veer right: From the Middle Harbour Yacht Club entrance, this walk heads along the road which goes behind the club building. The walk passes a boat ramp on the left and 'The Shores' restaurant before turning right, around the front of the Sydney Water 'Spit Syphon' building platform. From the platform, the walk drops down onto the rocky shore and continues to wind around and through the rocks for some time. As the walk meanders along the rocky shore, it passes over some sandy sections to then come out onto Chinamans Beach Reserve, heading to the bottom of the stairs (to the right).

1.22 | Spit Syphon

The Spit Syphon was built between 1922 and 1925 by the Public Works Department. It was necessary in order to pump sewage from the north without interfering with water transport. The building is styled with Egyptian influences as displayed by its tall, square concrete walls. [More info.](#)

1.22 | Int. Grecia Lane Trk and Chinamans Beach Reserve N

(70 m 1 mins) Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads along the beach, keeping the water to the left. The walk leads to a point on the beach where a wood-railed track leads to the toilet block off to the right.

1.28 | Chinamans Beach and Reserve

Chinamans Beach and Reserve are wonderful places to have a picnic or a swim, with lots of areas to sit in the sun or shade beside the clear water. The beach does not provide any surf with its north-easterly aspect, but is perfect for launching your kayak or boat into the harbour. Chinamans Reserve has some parking, play equipment, toilets and road access by McLean Cres.

1.28 | Middle of Chinamans Beach

(160 m 3 mins) Continue straight: From the middle of Chinamans Beach, near the wood-railed track, this walk heads down the beach, keeping the water to the left. The walk continues to the end of the beach, where there are numerous boats and surf ski's under the trees.

1.44 | Alternate Route Chinamans Beach Reserve South to I

(850 m 18 mins) Turn sharp right: From the southern end of Chinamans Beach, this walk heads up the closest track off the beach, keeping the hill to the left of the track. This area is littered with small boats and surf skis. The track comes out near Rosherville Reserve playground, but turns left before reaching the it. The walk heads up the hill behind the houses (on the right) to the signposted intersection of 'Rosherville Rd' and 'Armitage Lane'. The walk then heads up the hill, coming to Hopetoun Ave just across from where the road joins together again.

Turn left : From the intersection, this walk heads up Hopetoun Ave, away from the split levels in the road. The walk passes Kirk Oswald Ave (off to the right) and then veers right, where the road changes its name to Burran Ave, and soon splits into two levels again. As the road bends right again, this walk instead continues straight ahead into Stanton Rd. The track heads to the signposted intersection at the end of the road.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads down the steps towards the beach and through a rocky outcrop. The track turns left, winding to the intersection just behind the beach. Now Veer right to rejoin the main walk .

1.44 | Chinamans Beach Reserve South

(1.3 km 24 mins) Turn left: (This section is only possible at low tide and with calm seas.) From the southern end of the beach, this walk heads along the rockshelf, keeping the sea to the left. The walk leads towards the boat sheds with rails, taking the easiest route across the rockshelf for approximately 500m to come out onto Balmoral Beach. The track then continues up the beach for approximately 50m, coming to an intersection with a small track, just before the houses.

Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the beach keeping the water to the left. The walk continues for approximately 200m to the bridge that connects the promenade footpath to the rocky island. The walk climbs the stairs onto the bridge.

2.76 | Balmoral Beach

Balmoral Beach takes its name from the royal castle at Braemar in Scotland. This is a beautiful beach, with a great foreshore walk overlooking the sandy beach. The beach is a popular spot with locals and visitors, for sun baking, swimming and having a picnic. Balmoral Beach has very little surf, with a sheltered, easterly aspect. There is also a shark-net swimming area, toilets, shops, cafes and plenty of beach to share on a sunny day.

2.76 | Rocky Point Bridge

(860 m 14 mins) Continue straight: From the bridge, this walk heads down the stairs onto the beach, keeping the water to the left. The walk continues along the beach for approximately 100m to the pipe and wharf, then continues along the sand to turn off the beach at Balmoral Sailing Club on the right into the car park.

3.62 | Balmoral Park car park

(570 m 15 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the car park and beach to pass '1st Balmoral Sea Scouts' and a childcare centre, on the left. The walk then continues along the footpath outside of the oval to a signposted intersection.

Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the oval, across a bridge. The walk then climbs a few flights of stairs to enter a fenced area with many signs. This walk continues for some time up stairs to turn right, through the fence and continues up stairs to the intersection with Middle Head Rd.

4.18 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Trk

(540 m 10 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the road towards the fence, away from the houses. The road tends right as it comes into HMAS Penguin. The walk continues along Middle Head Rd to the intersection with Chowder Bay Rd, opposite the oval.

4.72 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd

(600 m 12 mins) Turn right: From the intersection of Chowder Bay and Middle Head Rd, this walk heads down through the car park to the far end, where there are signs. The walk heads along the fenceline passing the Sydney Harbour NP sign. The fenceline is followed as it tends right, coming to a gate. Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads through the gate, keeping the view of the water to the right of the track. Note that if the gate is closed, visitors can walk around the right-hand side of the fence. The walk then follows the fenceline, (on the left of the track), to then continue up a small hill along the fenceline and to a short stone wall. The walk continues over the stone wall to the fork in the road.

5.31 | Int. Old Fort and Governors Rds

(190 m 3 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads up 'Old Fort Rd', keeping the unfenced cottage on the right of the road. The walk soon passes a radio tower on the right, and continues past a gate to the intersection, opposite a sign in the clearing on the left.

5.5 | Optional sidetrip to Disappearing Gun Pit North

(270 m 6 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the built-up forts and road, to cross the clearing to the signposted 'Inner Middle Head Forts'. The track follows the arrow on this sign for approximately 200m through the bush to a sunken concrete fort on the right. Continue straight: From the southern fort (surrounded by bush), this walk winds right, away from the fort keeping the sea on the right of the track. The track quickly leads to an intersection near the fort at the sea cliff.

Veer right: From the intersection, this walk heads towards the concrete gun pit and the sea, approximately 20m away. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Turn left.

5.5 | Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd

(110 m 2 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the overgrown management trail to the tallest of the forts. From here, walkers can explore the fortifications.

5.61 | Middle Head Forts

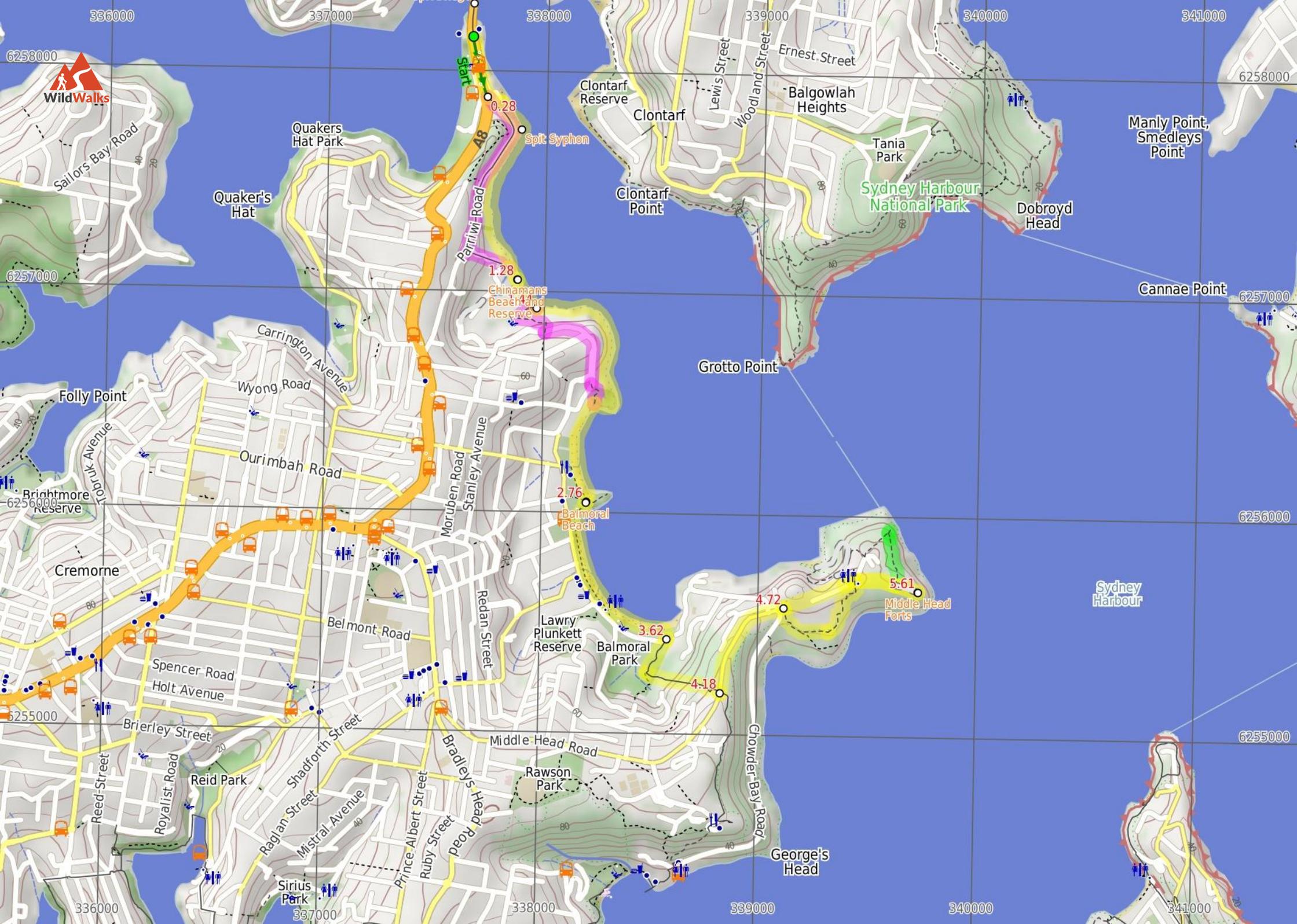
The forts of Middle Head consist of a rabbit warren of concrete tunnels, winding some 300m around the end of the headland. The fortifications and gun emplacements are varied in size and state, with some closed to protect heritage and the bats. Nearly all the forts overlook the harbour, with views out past the heads and to sea. This is a great area for a little adventure with so many tunnels to explore. For information on tours, click the link. [More info.](#)

5.61 | Tallest Fort

(650 m 12 mins) Turn around: From the tallest fort, this walk heads away

from the sea and the forts, along an overgrown management trail. The walk comes to an intersection opposite a sign, on the far side of the clearing.
Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads up the road, away from the forts and into the bush. The walk passes a gate and a radio tower on the left. This walk continues to the fork of Old Fort and Govenors Rds.
Continue straight: From the intersection, the walk heads down Middle Head Rd, away from the houses, to an entrance to the NPWS depot (a driveway with a wire fence).
Continue straight: From the intersection, the walk heads down Middle Head Road, away from the old cottage-style houses and fork in the road. The walk continues past houses, left and right, and then an oval on the right, after which it comes to an intersection in the roads.





Summary navigation sheet for the Spit Bridge to Middle Head Forts



km	From	Up/Dwn	Length	Initial directions (Use full tracknotes and maps for more detail)
Start	Spit Bridge South -33.8044,151.2461 (GR Parramatta River, 377582)	4 -1	280 m 5 mins	From the intersection opposite 'Sydney Harbour Kayaks', this walk heads down along Spit Rd, on the right, to turn left before the hill into Middle Harbour Yacht Club's car park.
0.28	Int. Middle Harbour Yacht Club car park and Spit Rd -33.8068,151.2468 (GR Parramatta River, 377579)	56 -55	1.1 km 25 mins	Alternate Route Int. Middle Harbour Yacht Club car park and Spit Rd. Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads up Parriwi Rd, along the hill above the yacht club (the club being below on the left).
0.28	Int. Middle Harbour Yacht Club car park and Spit Rd -33.8068,151.2468 (GR Parramatta River, 377579)	20 -19	930 m 17 mins	Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads through the car park towards the Middle Harbour Yacht Club buildings entrance.
1.22	Int. Grecia Lane Trk and Chinamans Beach Reserve North -33.8138,151.2479 (GR Parramatta River, 378571)	0 -3	70 m 1 mins	Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads along the beach, keeping the water to the left.
1.28	Middle of Chinamans Beach -33.8143,151.2483 (GR Parramatta River, 379571)	5 -1	160 m 3 mins	Continue straight: From the middle of Chinamans Beach, near the wood-railed track, this walk heads down the beach, keeping the water to the left.
1.44	Chinamans Beach Reserve South -33.8155,151.2493 (GR Parramatta River, 380569)	43 -42	850 m 18 mins	Alternate Route Chinamans Beach Reserve South. Turn sharp right: From the southern end of Chinamans Beach, this walk heads up the closest track off the beach, keeping the hill to the left of the track.
1.44	Chinamans Beach Reserve South -33.8155,151.2493 (GR Parramatta River, 380569)	28 -32	1.3 km 24 mins	Turn left: (This section is only possible at low tide and with calm seas.) From the southern end of the beach, this walk heads along the rockshelf, keeping the sea to the left.
2.76	Rocky Point Bridge -33.8234,151.2517 (GR Sydney Heads, 382560)	9 -5	860 m 14 mins	Continue straight: From the bridge, this walk heads down the stairs onto the beach, keeping the water to the left.
3.62	Balmoral Park car park -33.8291,151.2557 (GR Sydney Heads, 386554)	67 -4	570 m 15 mins	Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the car park and beach to pass '1st Balmoral Sea Scouts' and a childcare centre, on the left.
4.18	Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Trk -33.8313,151.2583 (GR Sydney Heads, 388552)	3 -30	540 m 10 mins	Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the road towards the fence, away from the houses.
4.72	Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd -33.8278,151.2615 (GR Sydney Heads, 391556)	21 -19	600 m 12 mins	Turn right: From the intersection of Chowder Bay and Middle Head Rd, this walk heads down through the car park to the far end, where there are signs.
5.31	Int. Old Fort and Govenors Rds -33.8267,151.265 (GR Sydney Heads, 394557)	1 -4	190 m 3 mins	Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads up 'Old Fort Rd', keeping the unfenced cottage on the right of the road.
5.50	Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd -33.8269,151.267 (GR Sydney Heads, 396557)	5 -18	270 m 6 mins	Optional sidetrip to Disappearing Gun Pit North. Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the built-up forts and road, to cross the clearing to the signposted 'Inner Middle Head Forts'.
5.50	Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd -33.8269,151.267 (GR Sydney Heads, 396557)	2 -6	110 m 2 mins	Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the overgrown management trail to the tallest of the forts.
5.61	Tallest Fort -33.8271,151.2681 (GR Sydney Heads, 397557)	21 -15	650 m 12 mins	Turn around: From the tallest fort, this walk heads away from the sea and the forts, along an overgrown management trail.