



## IMPROVING ACCESS TO NATIONAL PARKS PROGRAM – BLUE MOUNTAINS

### COMMUNITY INFORMATION LETTER

This letter is an introduction to an important program of works that will be occurring within the Blue Mountains National Park over the next three years. These works are a component of the *Improving Access to National Parks Program* announced by the Premier in February 2019. Key projects relevant to the Blue Mountains in the Premiers announcement were:

- The Grand Cliff Top Walk; and,
- Gordon Falls Lookout accessibility upgrade.

We are now well advanced in planning the Gordon Falls Lookout accessibility upgrade and able to share details of this exciting project with you.

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#### IMPROVING ACCESS TO NATIONAL PARKS PROGRAM

The *Improving Access to National Parks Program* (IANPP) is the largest ever investment in visitor infrastructure within NSW's national parks. In February 2019, the NSW Premier announced a \$149.5 million investment over four years across NSW's network of national parks.

The IANPP's main goals are to enhance safe access to national parks, improve the visitor experience, accommodate increased visitation, and bolster and grow the visitor economy.

This program is well timed for Blue Mountains National Park, which receives over 8 million visits annually. NPWS will be able to improve existing walking tracks, upgrade visitor precincts, improve lookouts, and provide new accessible sites for people with special needs, families, seniors and international visitors.

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#### GRAND CLIFF TOP WALK AND GORDON FALLS LOOKOUT ACCESSIBILITY UPGRADES

The Grand Cliff Top Walk Project (GCTW) will upgrade existing escarpment walking tracks between Wentworth Falls and Katoomba. The project is envisioned as a high-quality, world class, multi-day walking track experience. The GCTW will allow visitors to experience both the natural values of the park, and access and support the visitor economy of the Blue Mountains.

Currently the NPWS Walking Track team is proceeding with upgrade works to the Undercliff / Overcliff Track at Wentworth Falls. These works were urgent due to the poor condition of the track. A detailed planning exercise is underway for the remainder of the route and NPWS will be able to provide further details on the GCTW shortly.

A key component of the GCTW is an upgrade to Gordon Falls Lookout to provide accessible access. Gordon Falls Reserve (Leura) has existing parking, picnic facilities, toilets, playground, accessible parking, and walking track access to a lookout over the Jamison Valley. It is strategically placed approximately half-way along the GCTW between accessible sites at Wentworth Falls and Echo Point.

The Gordon Falls Lookout accessibility upgrade will provide a new experience designed to expand opportunities for families, seniors and people with accessibility needs. This includes the



construction of a new lookout platform and an elevated boardwalk that will merge with the existing walking track system.

The alignment of the elevated boardwalk has been deliberately chosen to provide a more intimate experience for those who may not normally have that opportunity; it is designed to weave through the mature forest, close enough to touch, smell, and enjoy the trees. The elevated boardwalk is accessibility compliant and will provide wheelchair access to a new lookout, above the existing Gordon Falls Lookout, well-chosen to allow views to both Gordon Falls and Mt Solitary.

Consultation with Blue Mountains City Council is underway to determine how best to integrate the new boardwalk with the existing carpark and picnic facilities. The project is due to commence construction in June 2020 and further updates will be provided regarding construction impacts and schedules. NPWS will minimise construction impacts wherever possible.

The current plans for the new elevated boardwalk and lookout are attached for your information.

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#### HAVE YOUR SAY

NPWS welcomes comments from the Blue Mountains community and industry groups.

Please submit to:

NPWS  
Gordon Falls Project  
PO Box 43, BLACKHEATH, NSW

OR email with subject header: Gordon Falls Project

[npws.uppermountains@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:npws.uppermountains@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cameron Chaffey".

**Cameron Chaffey**

**Acting Director**

**NPWS Blue Mountains Branch**



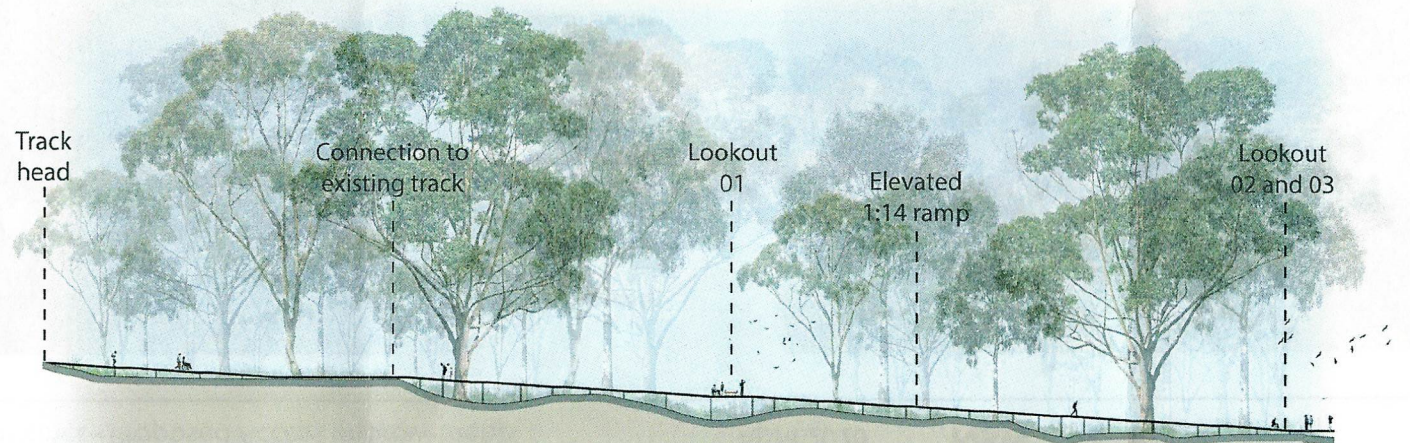
# NPWS Blue Mountains Branch - Improving Access to National Parks

Gordon Falls Visitor Precinct - Proposed Access Improvements

April 2020



**Project Consultants**  
Landscape Architecture: Newscape Design  
Engineering: Acor



Section 01 (along centreline)



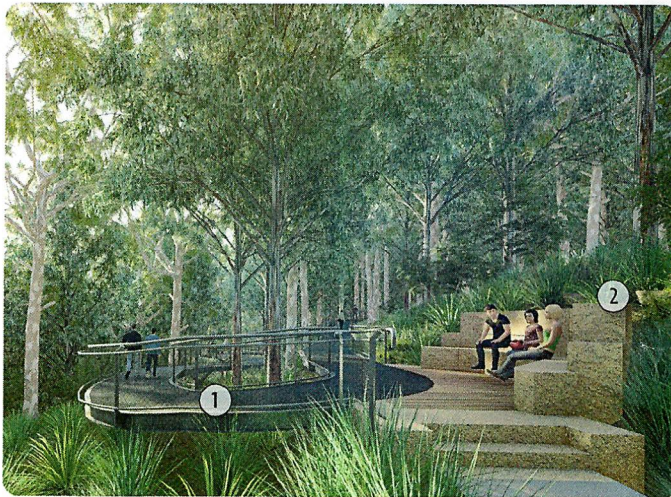
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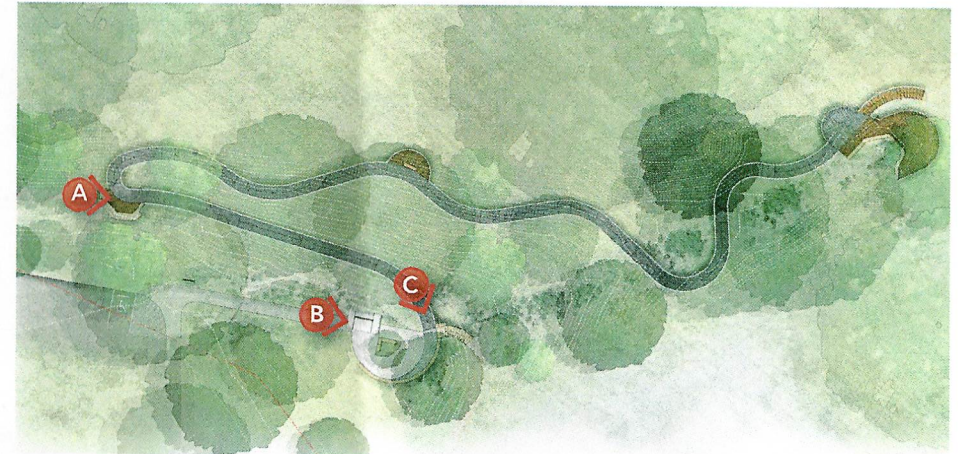
**Project Consultants**  
Landscape Architecture: Newscape Design  
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View A: Boardwalk entrance from existing track from north

### KEY

1. Disabled accessible boardwalk
2. Informal rest area with sandstone seating wall
3. Track head sandstone seating wall with precinct welcome signage
4. New native planting with tree and grasses
5. Open lawn area
6. Information shelter



View B: Track head precinct entrance area looking toward sandstone seating wall



View C: Track head precinct entrance area looking toward information shelter



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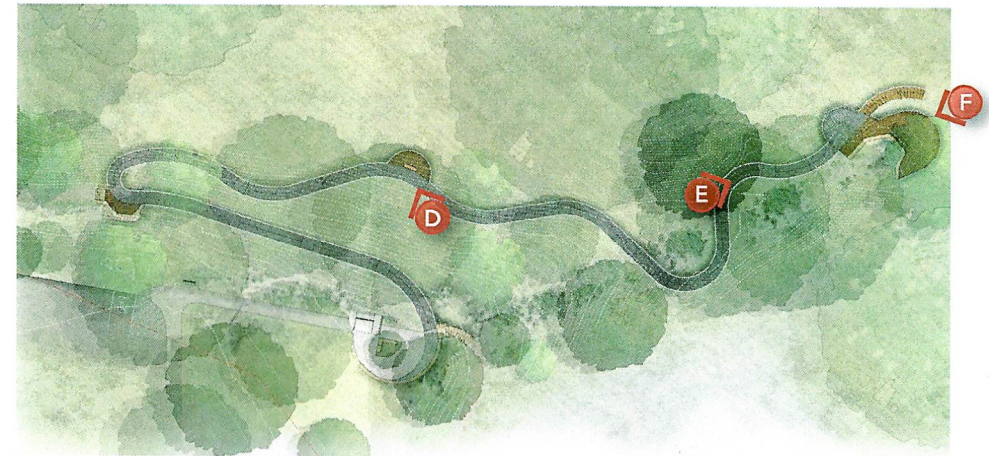
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View D: Lookout 01 with panoramic valley views

### KEY

1. Lookout 01 with accessible bench seat
2. Disabled accessible boardwalk
3. Lookout 02
4. Lookout 03
5. Sandstone seating wall
6. Steps connecting to lower Gordon Falls lookout



View E: Accessible boardwalk looking east towards lookout 02 and 03



View F: Lookout 03 in the foreground and lookout 02 in the background with views towards Gordon Falls