

Walk from Granny's to Main Beach

Edited by Bev Mortimer

A wooden + R1-million boardwalk from Granny's Pool to Main Beach is on the cards and excitement is already mounting among walkers, hikers, fishermen, nature lovers and photographers.

There is a path along the entire stretch of coast from the Kromme River mouth to the Cape St Francis lighthouse, except for the few 100 meters between the St Francis Bay main beach and Granny's Pool. This stretch is boulder-strewn and rocky, difficult to traverse even at low tide, and impassable at high tide.

The St Francis Bay Kromme Enviro-Trust is the applicant and the aim of the boardwalk is to complete the coastal path from the Kromme River to the Cape St Francis lighthouse. In addition it will link the coastal amenities of St Francis Bay, provide safe passage for the community between the main swimming beach and the only paddling pool in St Francis Bay, improve access for fishermen; and protect the ecology of the coastal fringe.

"The Two Harbours Walk from Port St Francis to Granny's Pool is a boardwalk for much of its length," the Trust says, "wherever the terrain is difficult it is only logical to continue this amenity for the extra few hundred metres to main beach."

"Many visitors, including the increasing number of Chokka Trail walkers, use the Two Harbours boardwalk and the access it provides to tourist amenities. Both visitors and residents will make use of the variety of amenities offered in the area by using the proposed walkway, with resulting economic benefits to St Francis Bay."

Granny's Pool is the only rock pool in St Francis Bay where members of the community from toddlers to the elderly,

including the less able can paddle and swim. However, because there is no direct access to the pool from main beach, bathers are required to travel a longer route to gain access to the pool. Walking is at present too difficult and unsafe. The boardwalk will provide safe passage and enable people to move back and forth easily between the two swimming spots.

"Fishermen use this stretch of coast constantly, because of its proximity and the abundance of fish present in the area. They too must contend with the rocky terrain and the impossibility at high tide. The boardwalk is proposed to include fishing bays to accommodate the fishermen's needs, the Trust says.

In addition, fishermen and walkers making their way along the existing fringe at the edge of the rocks create erosion of the sandy soil and destroy plant growth, gradually weakening the landforms and causing coastal retreat, the Trust maintains. "The boardwalk will protect the coastal fringe from this destruction.

"Many residents of St Francis Bay commemorate their loved ones with community amenities such as park benches. The boardwalk is a large-scale community amenity and it is proposed that commemorative plaques be erected at 1 metre intervals for those who would like to remember people who are gone. This is not a municipal project and funds will be needed to construct the walkway. The commemorative sections of the walkway will be sold to the public at R2500 a metre."

The proposed walkway will be about 395 metres in length and 1.2 metres wide, with a guardrail of 0.9 metres in height and will be constructed within the littoral estate zone



An impression of what the proposed boardwalk will look like

and the high-water mark of the sea. The vegetation type present on the site is Alga Dune Strandveld (Least Threatened) and the site does not occur within a Critical Biodiversity Area or Ecological Support Environmental Process.

The St Francis Bay Kromme Enviro-Trust will require prior authorisation in terms of the following: National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act 107 of 1996); the 2017 NEMA EIA Regulations; National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act (Act 24 of 2008); Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (Act 25 of 1999); Eco-Route Environmental Consultancy has been appointed as the Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to ensure compliance with the regulations contained in the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998 as amended) and the 2017 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations for a Basic Assessment Process.

Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) will be provided with a Background Information Document (BID) to provide information regarding the development proposal; to describe the environmental process being undertaken in terms of the above mentioned regulations; and to provide the way forward.

The proposed boardwalk will be 1.2 metres wide with a guardrail of 0.9 metres high.

Currently the following alternative is being considered for this project: *Two fishing platforms will be included in the design of the boardwalk.

The procedures of a Basic Assessment Environmental Process, as per the 2017 EIA Regulations, are being undertaken for this environmental process.

A pre-application Public Participation Process (PPP) is being undertaken to inform the development proposal prior to submission of a formal Application to the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

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See how many words you can make from the letters. No words are to be less than four letters. Every word has to contain the middle, bold letter. The goal is to also find the nine letter word(s). No plural nouns, capital letters, slang, or foreign language words (unless accepted in the Oxford English dictionary). This month's total: 48 words excellent, 40 words good, 30 words fair. Note: Words ending in 's' like 'jays' have been allowed. The correct solution is on p14.

Word Puzzle compiled by Bev Mortimer

C	O	D
N	E	M
R	M	E

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