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Contents

- 02 Plan, Prepare, Pack
- 03 Welcome & FAQ's
- 04 ■ **Section A** Kaiaua to Thames
- 05 Kaiaua Town Map
- 06 Birdwatching Tips and Terms
- 08 Waitakaruru
- 09 Kopu Town Map
- 10 Thames Town Map
- 12 1867- Timeline of a Gold Rush
- 13 ■ **Section B** Thames to Paeroa
- 14 The Kopu Bridges
- 16 Little House on the Puriri
- 17 Kaitarakihi
- 18 A Christmas Tradition
- 19 Paeroa Town Map
- 20 Where would we be without Community
- 21 A Slice of Heritage
- 23 Choose Your Ride
- 24 **Full Trail Map** (Pull out Map)
- 27 **Distance Chart** (Pull out Map)
- 29 ■ **Section C** Paeroa to Waihi
- 31 PurePods - Unfiltered, Uninterrupted & Unforgettable
- 33 Hearts of Gold
- 34 A Moving Story - Waikino Hotel
- 35 Waihi Town Map
- 37 A Weekend in the Life of...
- 38 Trail Angel - Steve Lye
- 39 ■ **Section D** Paeroa to Te Aroha
- 40 Te Aroha Town Map
- 42 Iron meets Ironique
- 43 Biking Hiking Shuttles
- 44 ■ **Section E** Te Aroha to Matamata
- 46 The Charm of Manawaru
- 47 The Kaimai Rail Tunnel
- 48 Matamata Town Map
- 49 Southern Delights



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138 Normanby Rd, Paeroa, 3640. www.haurakirailtrail.co.nz
To order more copies contact sales@haurakirailtrail.co.nz



plan, prepare, pack

Packing the right gear, snacks, and tools can be the difference between a fun day out on the trail or a long walk back to the car. Risk can be reduced through careful planning and good decision making. So our hot tips for making your adventure safe and fun are as follows:

Plan your trip:

Seek local knowledge, plan your route and the time you can reasonably expect it to take. The Hauraki Rail Trail is well signposted but we advise carrying our pull-out map with you for guidance.

Check the Hauraki Rail Trail website 'Trail Status' for track closures before you leave home.

Tell someone your plans:

Leave a date or time to raise the alarm if you haven't returned. We recommend that you ride with others.

Be aware of the weather:

Weather on and around the Hauraki Rail Trail can be changeable. Always check the weather and be prepared for unexpected changes.



What to pack:

Know your limits:

It's your responsibility to enjoy and maximise your riding experience. To minimise risk always ride within your physical limits and ability.

Wherever you're headed, give yourself a little peace of mind and **plan, prepare** and **pack** to get the most from your ride.

With your research done, now it's a question of what to pack. We've put together a handy list of the basics to help you prepare for your ride.



Welcome



The warmest welcome to the Hauraki Rail Trail.

The Hauraki Rail Trail is the easiest of the 23 Ngā Haerenga Great Rides of New Zealand. As a Grade One cycle trail, it still offers challenges for those wanting to experience multi-day travel on a bike, with plenty of one-day options and downtime for those looking to take it easy.

Construction of the entire 160km of Trail was finished in 2023, completing the original vision of the Trail stretching from Kaiaua to Matamata, and out through the stunning Karangahake Gorge leg to Waihi. Community is at the heart of everything we do, and this issue celebrates our community heroes who help to make the Trail and its surrounds very special.

The Rotary Shelter project is almost complete, with over 100 volunteers working tirelessly over the past four years to construct 16 shelters along the Trail network. All of the shelters will be fitted out with seating and stories about the area, and each will feature beautiful carvings crafted by our iwi partners.

We learn some pidgin-english with Keith Woodley from the Pūkoro Shorebird Centre. Keith recently celebrated 30 years with the Centre. To mark this special milestone, we asked him to tell us more about his work and the coastal wildlife.

We talk with Trail Angel Steve Lye, about how the Trail has 'saved his life' and with Eddie and Karen Morrow about how a stop at a local café led to a 30-year love affair with the area.

All up, we love what we do, and warmly invite you to slow down your journey, talk with some locals, and enjoy everything we have to offer. Life is simpler and less hurried on the Hauraki Rail Trail.

Stay shiny side up everyone, and I look forward to seeing you out on the Trail soon!

Ngā Mihi Nui. Di Drummond, CEO



FAQS

What level of fitness and skill do I require for the Trail?

The Hauraki Rail Trail is suitable for all fitness levels, ages and skill levels. As a Grade 1 cycle trail it is predominantly wide, flat and smooth. Great for learning new skills, and beginner riders.

Are motorbikes, e-bikes or scooters permitted on the Trail?

Motorbikes are not permitted. This includes any e-bike or scooter larger than 300Watts (300W).

Are Dogs permitted on the Hauraki Rail Trail?

Dogs are not permitted on the Hauraki Rail Trail where it passes through farmland. The Department of Conservation area in the Karangahake Gorge welcomes dogs, but please keep them on a lead at all times and don't forget your 'doggy doo' bags.

How wide are the cattle-stops and bridges along the Trail?

The Trail at its narrowest is 1100mm wide (bridges), making the Trail accessible to most users.

Are there toilets along the Trail?

Yes, there are many toilets on or near the Trail. Check out our distance chart on page 27 in the pull-out feature for toilet locations.

Is there transport to get to and from my vehicle?

Yes. We recommend you book a shuttle to take you to the beginning of your ride, so when you return to your car, you don't need to wait to move onto your next adventure. See page 26 for Shuttle providers.

Want to know more?

You can visit our website at www.haurakirailtrail.co.nz or use the QR code



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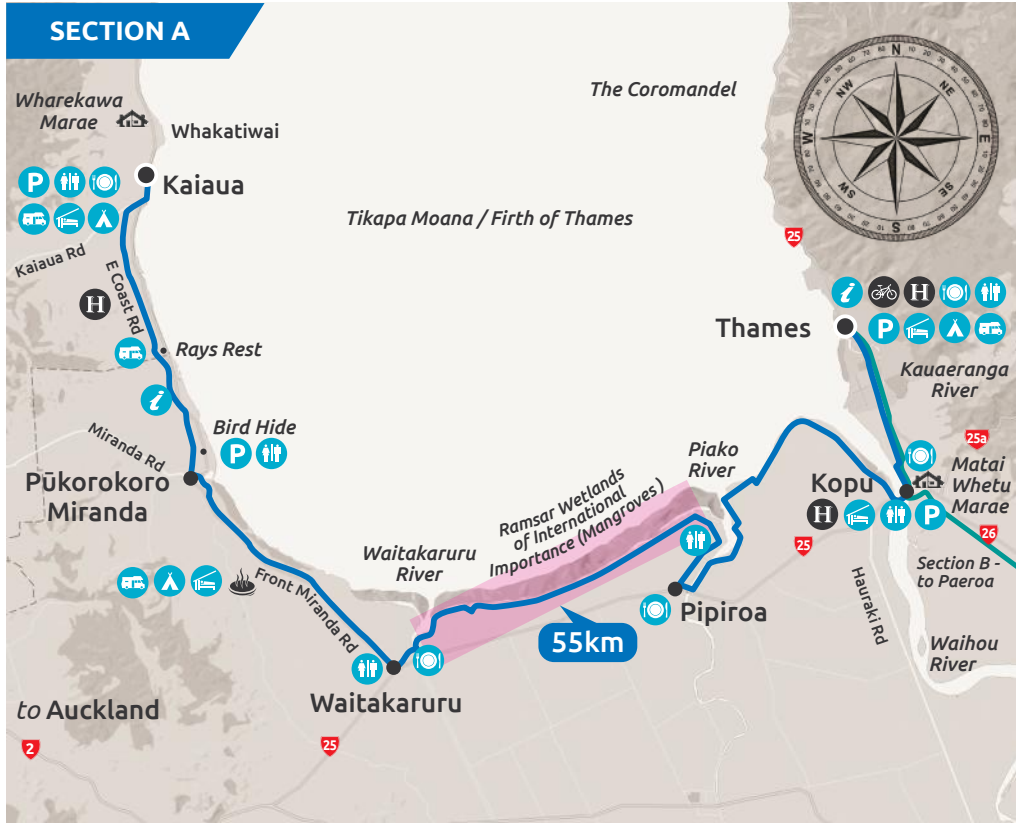
23 GREAT RIDES

Scan the QR code to
find your Great Ride

Ngā Haerenga
GREAT RIDES
OF NEW ZEALAND

Kaiaua to Thames

The sleepy seaside town of Kaiaua is the starting point at the Northern end of the Trail. Following the footsteps of Te Aho, a young Māori warrior who ran this path centuries ago, the Trail hugs the shoreline for 7km before heading inland towards Waitakaruru. From here, marked in pink on the map, the Trail is currently undergoing works by Waikato Regional Council on the stop-banks, so check the website before you ride as it may be closed.



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Key Information:

Distance: 55km (5-6 hours)

Fitness: All Levels

Skill: All Levels

Traffic: Light to Moderate

Grade: 1

Trail Status:



Please Note:

- Phone coverage is generally good
- Gun dogs are permitted on this section during the duck hunting season only
- All dogs are allowed between Kopu and Thames on leash

Highlights include:

- Experience and learn about precious birdlife along the Shorebird Coast
- Expansive shoreline, landscapes and rural tranquility
- The great choice of camping opportunities including freedom camping



Dine & Drink

- 6** The Pink Shop
999 East Coast Road, Kaiaua
- 7** Bay View Hotel
943 East Coast Road, Kaiaua
- 8** Kaiaua Fish n Chips
939 East Coast Road, Kaiaua
- 9** Miranda Farm Shop, Café & Gallery
1107 Miranda Rd, Miranda

Bike Hire

- 81** Shorebird Cycles
933 East Coast Road, Kaiaua

Shuttles

See Shuttle services on page 26

Places to Stay

- 28** Pūkorokoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre
283 East Coast Road, Miranda
- 29** Broadwater Farm
851 Miranda Road, Miranda
- 30** Miranda Homestead B&B
397 Front Miranda Rd, Miranda

Things to See & Do

- 60** Miranda Farm Shop, Café & Gallery
1107 Miranda Road, Miranda
- 61** Pūkorokoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre
283 East Coast Rd, Miranda



Tuesday-Sunday
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TOP 50
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GASTROPUBS

Birdwatching Tips and Terms

What To Look Out For and What To Say

Are you a birder? Do you twitch? Or have you secured a lifer? Here we take a look at the wonderful world of birdwatching terms, and give you some handy hints on how to improve your skills. We spoke with Keith Woodley, Manager of the Shorebird Centre at Pūkoro-Miranda to get some key insights into the happenings and the language that being a bird-spotter brings.

For more than 30 years, Keith has been the Pūkoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre Manager. For Keith, the shell banks, shorebird flocks and ever-changing light, make the surrounding area a special place. Birds were initially a subject for his art expression, but he began seeking out opportunities that brought him into proximity with them.

Before long, Keith was 'born again' as a birder, and quickly progressed to being a full-blown ornithologist - a professional birder. His travels even took him to North Korea, following the flight path of the Godwits that travel vast distances from the shores of Tikapa Moana - the Firth of Thames.

In the world of birds, the jargon is done with a crafty wink and lightheartedness, shortcutting 'conventional' words that would take longer to describe the activity of the birds being watched or those doing the watching.



Birdwatcher or Birder?

These two are sometimes used interchangeably, but there is a distinction. The former is applied to just about anyone who spots a bird enjoying the moment. They're not particularly bothered if they don't see many, but delighted when they do.

The word 'birder' describes people who take their birdwatching a little more seriously. Birders not only tend to own some pricey equipment, they know their stuff and are proud of it, and most will share their knowledge openly. They may organise trips or volunteer at reserves like Keith did in his early days.

Depending on their enthusiasm, birders are sometimes referred to as twitchers. Twitchers are *consumed* by the lifestyle,

Tips on How to Birdwatch

It may seem obvious, but be quiet. Staying patient can be hard, but pays off - most of the time. Our top tip is to take a guided tour with the Ranger at the Shorebird Centre. The best times to see the birds is two hours either side of high tide.

The incoming tide forces them onto our beaches and coastal margins. There they roost until the tide recedes, using time to preen and sleep. This also brings them up against people and our activities. We need to ensure birds are not disturbed, particularly when they are preparing for long migration flights.

We also need to be mindful that some shorebirds nest on our beaches and coastal margins. Many community members are active with predator control and protecting nesting birds. Everyone else can support those people, by obeying signs indicating birds are nesting, and controlling their dogs and keeping cycles away from the breeding areas.

keeping lists of birds to tick off, often going to great lengths to seek out their favourite birds. The thrill of the chase is as important as the final, sometimes fleeting sighting. Akin to an Olympic sport, twitchers are competitive in the race to reach the top spot and be the first to see *that bird*.

And as for the lifer... A lifer finally seeing the bird they've sought their entire life in the wild, you might find partaking in a celebratory lifer dance. Apparently that is a thing!



Pūkoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre

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283 East Coast Road, Pūkoro-Miranda
09 232 2781 shorebirds.org.nz

Scan the QR code to learn more and visit the Pūkoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre to support the work they do.



Waitakaruru

**WATER WATER EVERYWHERE BUT
NOT A DROP TO DRINK!**



Waitakaruru is a sleepy little town nestled on the Hauraki Plains, belying the original meaning of the area name as 'Agitated Waters.'

The first Europeans to settle around what they then called the Piako Swamp arrived in the late 1800s. They bought land from Māori and began the challenging task of turning it into farmland. The drainage programme was so successful it became difficult to get clean water for stock and personal use. The nearby hills solved the issue with a dam built in 1927 that provided a piped supply, which was a first for rural New Zealand. Today an updated facility, run by Hauraki District Council, supplies a large part of the plains with fresh water.

The Waitakaruru River became an important connection to get product to the Auckland markets. Before roads were built, launches ran regularly to and from Thames and Auckland from Waitakaruru. Everything from Kahikatea logs, flax, peat and dairy products went out that way, with much needed goods coming back via the Waitakaruru River. The first buildings grew up around the river, and arrived by river. The first general store was an old hotel shipped from Kuaotunu on the other side of the Coromandel Peninsula.



At different times, Waitakaruru boasted several stores, a post and telephone office, blacksmith, hardware and timber yard, fish factory, school, church, barber's shop, community hall and even a billiard hall, towing service and a milk bar. Today just over 200 people still live here, servicing the local community and Trail users alike.



What the Flood?

These stop-banks are important and form part of a major flood protection network protecting the Hauraki Plains.



Thanks for your patience while we complete this important maintenance to keep the Hauraki Plains safe.

It's called the Hauraki Rail Trail, but 43 km of it, between Kopu and Kaiaua, is on top of flood protection stop-banks.

These stop-banks are important and form part of the two major flood protection schemes in the Hauraki Plains, the Piako River Scheme and the Waihou Valley Scheme.

Without the stop-banks, much of the Hauraki Plains would be underwater each high tide, so they provide vital protection to residents, properties, businesses, roads and services, as well as giving cyclists something to ride on.

The stop-banks are basically engineered mounds of earth designed to withstand a certain storm intensity. As earth settles over time, the stop-banks require maintenance to keep them at their original height. The foreshore between Kopu and Waitakaruru are being raised, and parts of the foreshore trail will be closed until the upgrade is done.

Be sure to check the Hauraki Rail Trail website for the up to date closures and openings.

We look forward to welcoming you back when the trail is reinstated.



FORESHORE STOP-BANK UPGRADE

Funded: \$1.92m by MBIE

Total project cost: \$3.8m

Project duration: 4 years

Expected completion: June 2025



In 2021, we interviewed Ross after he had ridden 11 of the 23 Ngā Haerenga Great Rides of New Zealand, which as a Tetraplegic is no small feat.

That Guy Ross

For Ross Ormsby, cycling isn't just about improving strength and fitness, it also brings freedom, empowerment and the opportunity for enriching experiences.

Ross uses a clip-on, electric hand-cycle. The hand-cycle is attached to his normal wheelchair, and he puts on fat wheels for safety and comfort.

The creation of an upgraded, purpose built, powerful hand-cycle by mate and fellow tetraplegic, Phil Booth, allows them to do normal things mates might do together. It may require helpers, and friends or family, but it allows group inclusion and the ability for mates to be together having fun.

Ross loves being in the outdoors and connected to the earth and elements, and it expands his world. For him and many others this access to trails gives not only a getting out and amongst it feeling, but also fun exercise and social inclusion with friends, family, local communities, trail users and travel to new places. Ross says that biking trails keeps his body young, and excited about living.



Ross has ridden almost all of the Hauraki Rail Trail. Having a Grade 1 trail is so important for those needing easy rides close to road access. Surface for adaptive, older, young and wobbly riders is also important. For Ross, nearly all of the Hauraki Rail Trail is barrier free, with little help required, and suitable for his hand-cycle/wheelchair. Hard packed is best as the bigger new gravel can rattle a bit. The new bridge approaches are also a bonus.

While our bridges and cattle-stops are 1300mm wide, there are three parts out of Waihi which require assistance. The team at Hauraki are working to improve these areas as Cyclone Gabrielle repairs are rolled out. A final word from Ross, "It's wonderful to have had incident free, fun group rides."

Ka Pai Ross. We look forward to seeing you back on the Trail again soon.



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Thames

Historic Thames township offers many museums, cafés, boutique shops and community art in a charming colonial setting.



Shuttles

See Shuttle services on page 26

Information & Bookings

- 1 Thames Information Centre
200 Mary Street, Thames
Phone: 07 868 9803

Dine & Drink

- 10 Bugger Café
1492 SH25, Pipiroa
- 11 Kopu Café
101 Kopu Road, Kopu
- 12 Burton's on Pollen
444 Pollen Street, Thames
- 13 Gastronomics Café Restaurant & Bar
428-430 Pollen St, Thames
- 14 The Cheese Barn & Farm Park
4 Wainui Road, Matatoki

Places to Stay

- 31 Dickson Holiday Park
Victoria Street, Tararu
- 32 Tuscany on Thames Motel
200 Jellicoe Crescent, Thames
- 33 Avalon Motel
104 Jellicoe Crescent, Thames
- 34 Rolleston Motel
105 Rolleston Street, Thames
- 35 Onetai Estate
209 Onetai Road, Hikutaia

Things to See & Do

- 62 Thames School of Mines
101 Cochrane St, Thames
- 63 Kauaeranga Valley Walks
Kauaeranga Valley, Thames

Bike Hire/ Servicing & Tour Services

- 82 90 JollyBikes
96 Richmond St, Thames

Retail / Other

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308 Pollen Street, Thames
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Timeline of a Gold Rush...

The gold rush of Thames in 1867 was a turning point for New Zealand, attracting over 250 prospectors in just a month, and growing the town's population to 30,000. While the gold itself was a major draw, the boom also led to a surge in hotels - establishments that would become central to the town's vibrant social life. Miners, worn from their gruelling work in harsh conditions, sought refuge in these lively drinking spots.

By the end of 1867, Thames had 14 hotels and restaurants, providing warmth, food, and drink to those chasing their fortune. The Shortland Hotel was the first to open, quickly followed by the Lady Bowen Hotel, shipped in from Auckland to meet the growing demand. Names like the Albion and Moanatairi were borrowed from the nearby gold mines, further intertwining the town's identity with its wealth of natural resources.



The streets echoed with the sound of clinking glasses as miners shared stories of fortune and loss. Two local breweries kept the town well-stocked, with pubs staying open long into the night to accommodate miners' shifts. Reverends even stood outside on empty casks, offering spiritual guidance to those emerging from the saloons.

While not every miner struck gold, the camaraderie and energy of the era defined Thames, leaving a legacy of resilience, celebration, and community. Today, visitors can explore these historic sites, including the Thames School of Mines, a reminder of the town's rich mining heritage.

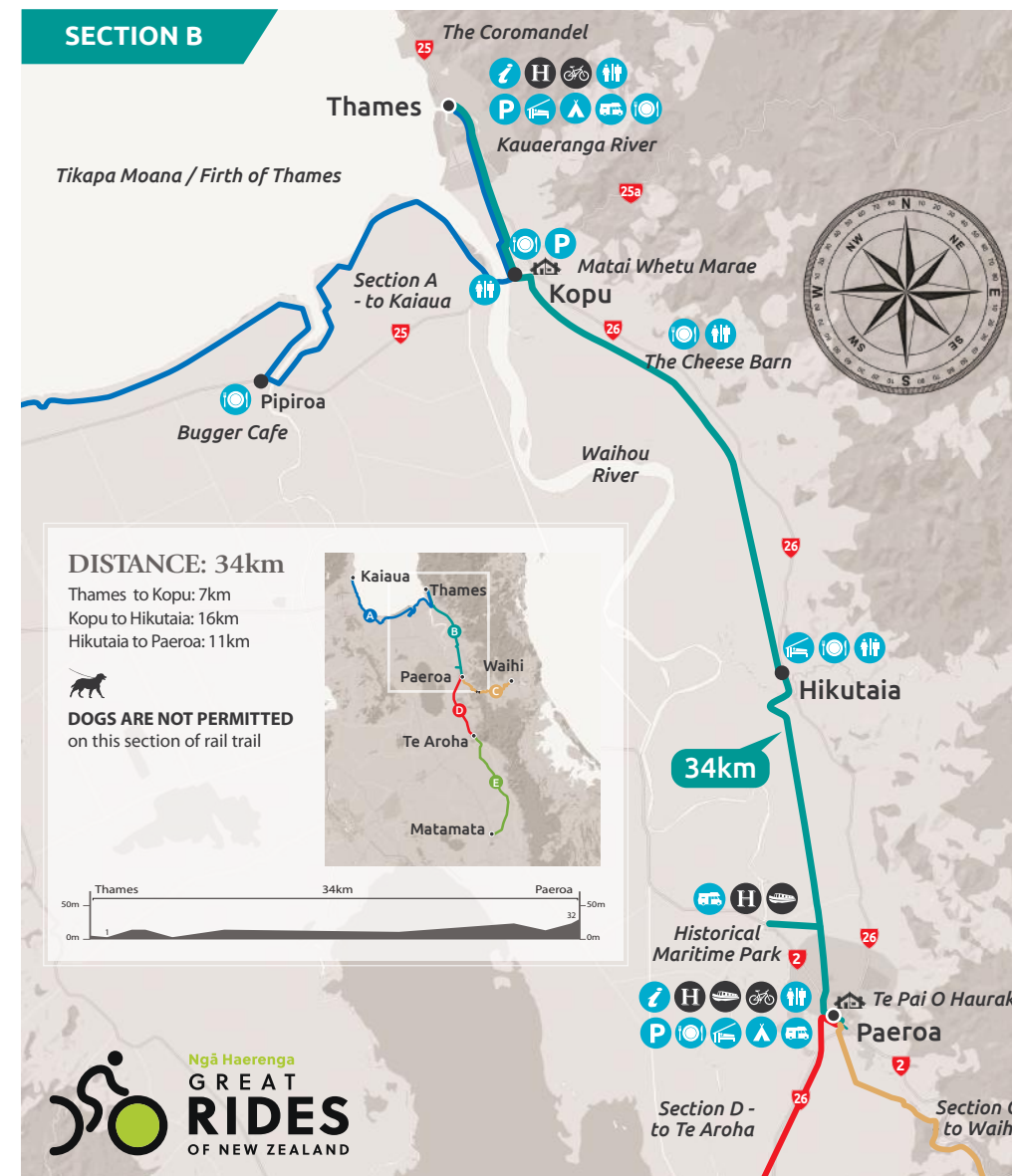


*View of Shortland from the Hape Ranges.
American Photographic Company (1869-1876).
Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa.*



Thames to Paeroa

This richly historic area was once only accessible via the Waihou awa (river). Following the old railway line out of Thames township, the Trail promises lush farmland and impressive views of the Hauraki Plains and forested Kaimai Ranges. The Thames School of Mines and Cheese Barn at Matatoki, are well worth a stop. Drop into the Historical Maritime Park to enjoy a river cruise, which includes refreshments and access to the Park and Museum.



Key Information:

Distance: 34km (3-4 hrs)

Fitness: All Levels

Skill: All Levels

Traffic: Light to Moderate

Grade: 1

Trail Status:



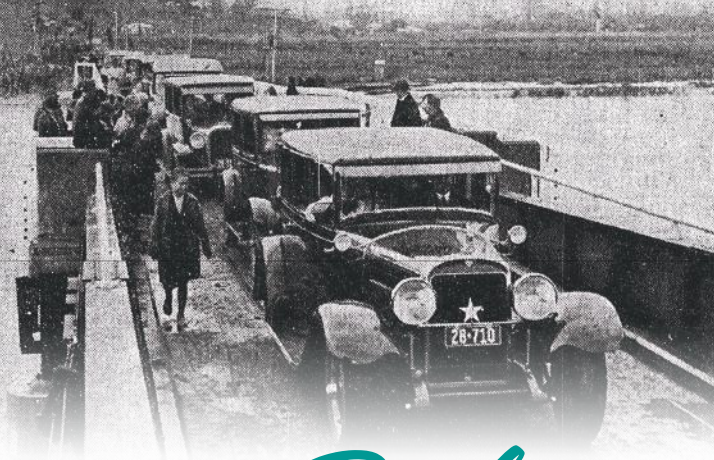
Please Note:

- Phone coverage is generally good
- Dogs are not permitted on this section, except where the trail intersects the urban areas of Thames and Paeroa



Highlights include:

- Thames township
- Gold-mining history
- Historic Kopu Bridge
- Matatoki Cheese Barn
- Rural tranquility and views of the Hauraki Plains and Coromandel Ranges
- Historical Maritime Park
- Antique shopping
- Giant L&P Bottle



Kopu Bridges

Something Old, Something New

Most people who moved around the Plains before 1900 travelled by waka or steamer on the river roads. Those who needed to travel cross-country found the going very tough. The Waihou River was often the final challenge until a ferry began operating in the late 1890s. It ran until the 'Hauraki Bridge' opened in 1928 (later known as the Kopu Bridge and now the Old Kopu Bridge).

Financed by the Thames and Hauraki Plains County Councils and a Government subsidy, the bridge was one lane with five vehicle passing bays. There was also a swinging central portion that opened to let boats through. Cars, trucks and livestock all used the bridge until 1975, when traffic volumes became so heavy that control lights were installed and cattle crossings banned. By the 1990s an average of 9000 vehicles crossed the bridge every day, and over any holiday period, queues were long and frustrating, and a new bridge needed.

Old Kopu Bridge measures 463m long and 3.6m wide. Its swinging span creates a navigable passage which vessels up

Pictured: Top Left: The Opening of the Hauraki Bridge (Now called the Old Kopu Bridge) in 1928. Top right: The new Kopu Bridge opening in 2011

to 15m wide and any height can pass through. At the time of closure, the bridge was the longest, oldest and busiest single lane bridge in the country. It is New Zealand's only remaining operational swing bridge.

The new bridge opened in 2011, costing almost 48 million dollars. Much higher than the old bridge, but with no swinging span, vessels up to 6.5 metres high can pass under it at mean sea level. The new bridge is 587 metres long with 16 spans, and the foundations are driven 36-50 metres deep into the riverbed. The amazing cultural design features include 10 Pou, waka and water etching and design on handrails and concrete barriers, Patiki etching and Ureia (Taniwha) bridge Pepeha. According to Māori folklore, Ureia was the taniwha who lived in Tīkapa (the Firth of Thames).

The Old Kopu Bridge occasionally opens for walkers and cyclists. Keep an eye out for an opportunity to experience our industrial heritage.



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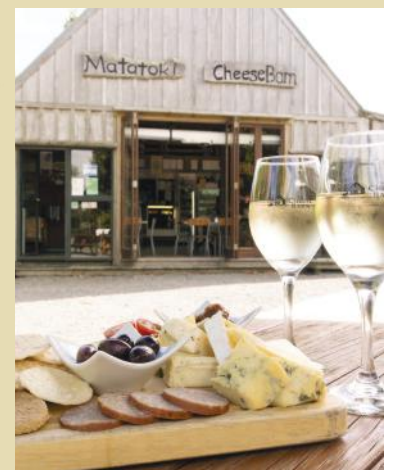
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Little House on the Puriri



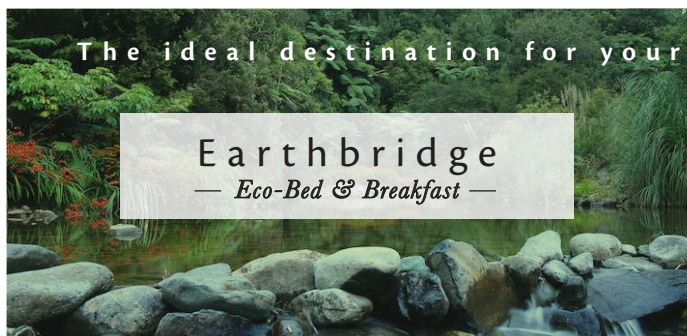
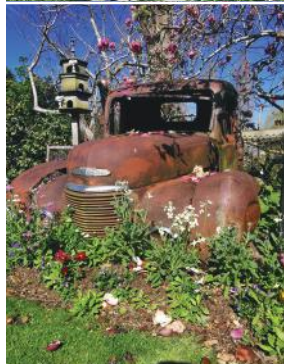
Trish and Dave are proud owners of the Little House On The Puriri, which comes with a curious front garden and a nod to the classic books and beloved television show. The garden is an easy cycle ride of approximately 500m from the Hauraki Rail Trail on a quiet tar sealed road.

Dave and Trish purchased the property 32 years ago and have since retired. Dave the handyman built the little house in the front yard, and Trish, a keen gardener and collector of what she refers to as 'garden art' has planted and added pieces to the front garden as she finds them on her travels. Trish retired seven years ago and the garden is her favourite pastime.

From the roadside, the garden changes with the seasons, and as it's visible from the road, many cyclists stop to look, take a photo or chat with the couple. Trish enjoys walking along the Rail Trail for exercise, and both enjoy meeting the cyclists who stop to see the garden, and are always amazed to learn where visitors come from, as they're not often locals.



One of the Trail's hidden treasures is on a short detour down Puriri Station Road where you'll find the enchanting garden of Trish and Dave Paley.



Hauraki Rail Trail experience

Private eco cottage - sleeps up to 5 guests
Outdoor wood fired bath, gas pizza oven
Bush and river walks
Private swimming hole
Massage by appointment
Delicious organic breakfast supplied daily



Hikutaia, Komata **email** tim@earthbridge.co.nz
ph 027 558 0246 **web** www.earthbridgenz.com

PŪAHO ME TE MAUNGA

Kaitarakihī

In the hills east of Thames and north of the Kopu-Hikuwai Road there is a conical shaped maunga (mountain) that stands 852m tall. Its name is 'Kaitarakihī' (the place where tarakihi / cicada were consumed). From many points across the Trail you can see the sacred maunga. Ngāti Maru have shared the maunga's story with us, and we tell it here and also in more detail at the Kopu Shelter.

A man named Pūaho once lived in the hills behind what is now Thames township. From his whare Pūaho could see the homes of his whanaunga (relatives) and the three great rivers of Hauraki: the Piako, Waiwhakaurunga and the mighty Waihou. He could survey the swamp and forest lands of Hauraki that stretched to the sacred mountains on the western horizon. To the east lay the forests of Ngā Maunga Tapu o Hauraki. Pūaho spent many hours in the forest around his whare spearing and trapping birds and kore, and foraging the fruits of the forest as food for his kin.

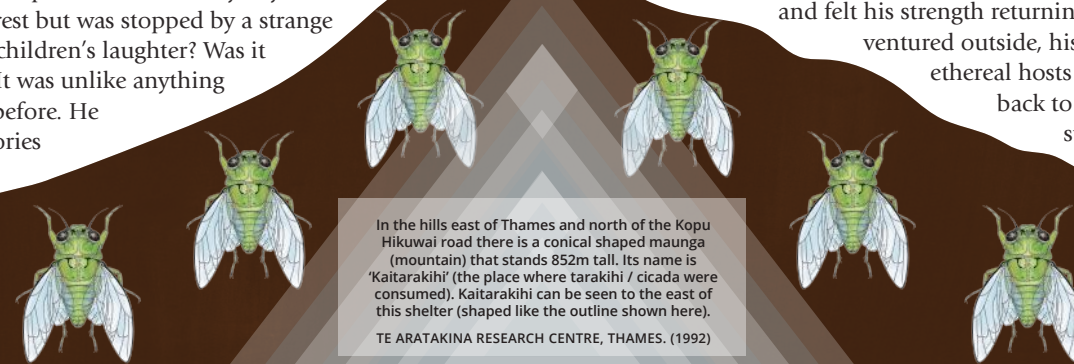
The forest was also home to mischievous forest dwellers, the Patupaiārehe. One misty day Pūaho entered the forest but was stopped by a strange sound. Was it children's laughter? Was it birds chatter? It was unlike anything he had heard before. He recalled the stories

of his elders about the Patupaiārehe who were always blamed for unexplained mishaps, like stored kumara and preserved birds becoming dry and unpalatable, sprung traps, and tuna (eels) that went off on the drying racks. In the hope of catching a glimpse of these mystical people, Pūaho was led far from his usual hunting range and he lost all sense of direction and time. Hungry, tired, and disoriented, he ran on through the forest until he could run no more. Starving and exhausted Pūaho resigned himself to his fate and collapsed unconscious to the ground.

The next Pūaho knew he was being drawn back to consciousness by a sound like the crackling of burning twigs that became a deafening cacophony of sound. Pūaho found himself beneath a shelter of interwoven kareao (supple jack) vines. Outside he saw a myriad of cicadas enveloping his makeshift shelter, herded there by the Patupaiārehe. In his famished state he realised the insects were a food offering served up by his mischievous tormentors. Pūaho ate his fill of the succulent iridescent green creatures and felt his strength returning. When he ventured outside, his still unseen, ethereal hosts guided him back to familiar surroundings.

In the hills east of Thames and north of the Kopu Hikuwai road there is a conical shaped maunga (mountain) that stands 852m tall. Its name is 'Kaitarakihī' (the place where tarakihi / cicada were consumed). Kaitarakihī can be seen to the east of this shelter (shaped like the outline shown here).

TE ARATAKINA RESEARCH CENTRE, THAMES. (1992)



The Show Must Go On: A Christmas Tradition at Paeroa Historic Maritime Park

It all began in 2009 when Ellen Cooper approached the Paeroa Historic Maritime Park (HMP) with a vision to light up the towering mast outside the main building for Christmas. Unfortunately, the park couldn't afford the \$5,000 needed at the time. However, fellow Board members, Gloria and Colin James saw potential and realised the only way to bring the idea to life was to create a full Christmas event at the park.

Ellen's computer skills helped scope out a Christmas-themed light show, and Gloria and Colin were so impressed they sought help from local service clubs like Lions and Rotary, as well as the Hauraki District Council. Together, they raised \$40,000 to purchase the lights. However, with no power leads or extra equipment to run the show, they had to go back to the drawing board. Rotary donated the much needed power leads, and Lions provided signage, while the James's secured \$1,500 from council to build a safe access road to the park.

The first show was a modest success, turning a \$5,000 profit. Over the years, the event has grown into a beloved Christmas tradition, now running over two weeks and attracting thousands of visitors from near and far. In 2021, an unexpected gift came in the form of a free container of Christmas decorations from Westfield Plaza, preventing them from being sent to landfill.

Even though many of the lights are now permanent, work begins in August each year to set up and install the light show. **Now in its 13th year**, the event run entirely by volunteers, has become the backbone of the park's annual funding. Featured on Seven Sharp, this magical display has captured hearts, bringing joy and festive cheer to all who attend, with each year **bigger and brighter** than the last.

Museum Park History



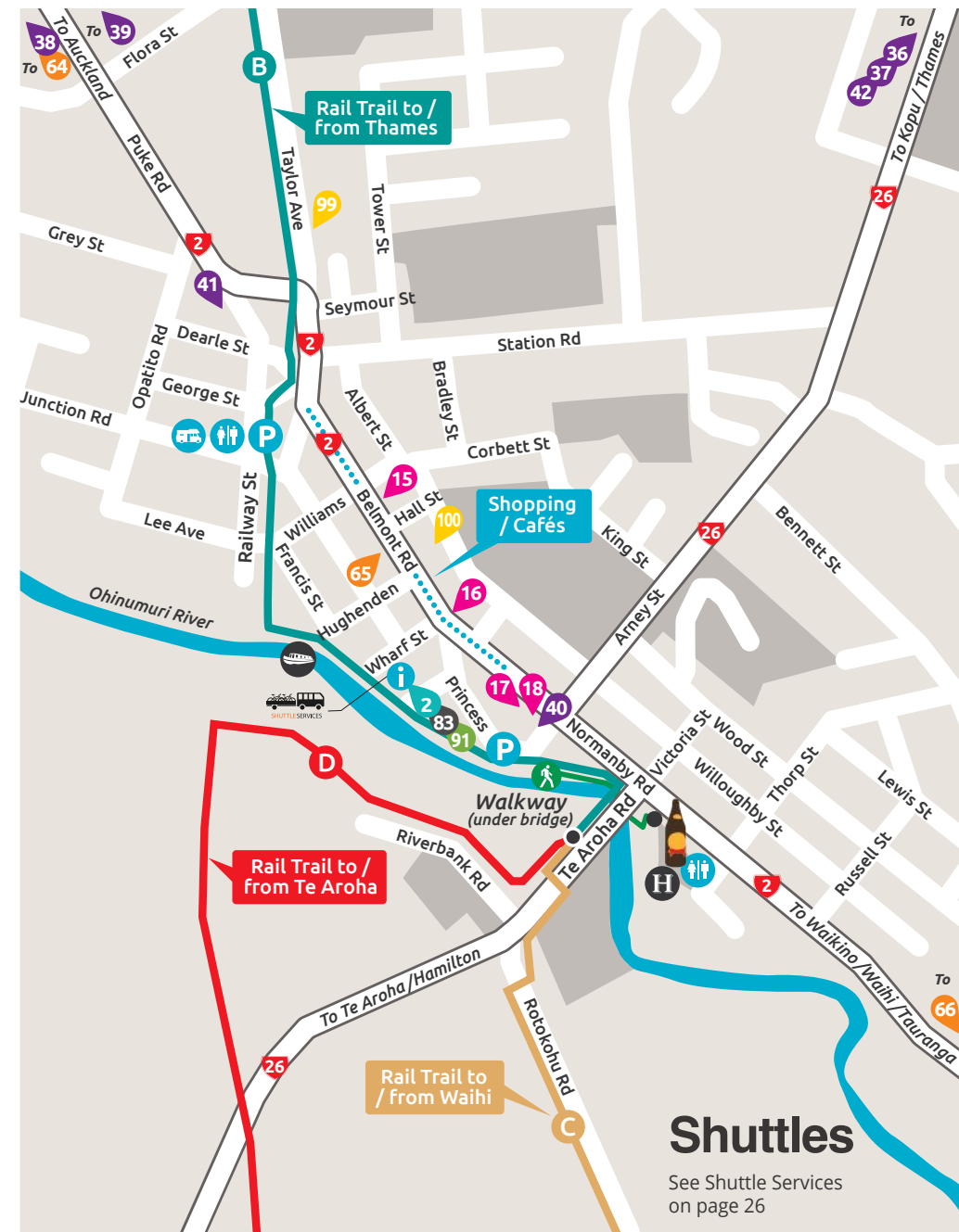
689 SH2, Paeroa ✉ hmp@outlook.co.nz
07 862 7121 or 027 410 7977
historicmaritimepark.co.nz

River Cruises Camping

Self-Contained

Paeroa

Paeroa is central, with bike hire, shuttle services, eateries, accommodation, and many antiques and collectables shops. Drop into the Info Hub for a map of the town's Heritage Trail.



Information / Bookings

2 Paeroa Information Hub
6 Wharf Street, Paeroa
Phone: 07 862 8636

Dine & Drink

- 15** Providence Pantry
22 Belmont Road, Paeroa
- 16** Courtyard Café
72 Normanby Road, Paeroa
- 17** Subway Paeroa
Normanby Road, Paeroa
- 18** One 3 One Bar & Restaurant
131 Normanby Road, Paeroa

Places to Stay

- 36** Corbett House B&B
8088 State Highway 26, Hikutaia
- 37** Earthbridge Eco B&B
812 Maratoto Road, Komata
- 38** Historical Maritime Park
(Campervans) Puke Rd North, Paeroa
- 39** Paeroa RV Centre
10 Coronation Street, Paeroa
- 40** Pedlars Motel
2A Arney Street, Paeroa
- 41** Paeroa Motel
2 Puke Road, Paeroa
- 42** Racecourse Motel
68 Thames Road, Paeroa

Things to See & Do

- 64** Historical Maritime Park
6894 State Highway 2, Paeroa
- 65** The Paeroa & District
Historical Museum
37 Belmont Road, Paeroa
- 66** Bullswool Heritage Farm
240 Rahu Road, Karangahake

Bike Hire / Tour Services

- 83** Hauraki Bike Hire
6 Wharf Street, Paeroa
- 91** Valley Tours & Transfers
Wharf Street, Paeroa

Retail / Other

- 99** BuildLink Paeroa
Taylor Avenue, Paeroa
- 100** Fee and Mands
1 Willoughby St, Paeroa
- 101** Self Service Laundromats
Paeroa, Waihi, Waihi Beach

Shuttles

See Shuttle Services
on page 26

Where would we be without Community?



A project as large and long as the Hauraki Rail Trail needs countless contributors to make it happen and keep it running. Financially it needs national support to get it off the ground and regional support to keep it maintained. But it also needs community support to instigate and help with improvements to the Trail.

There has been no project more visible or welcomed, as we celebrate the work of over 100 Rotarians in the fund-raising and construction of 16 shelters across the Trail network.

Initial discussions about building a shelter on the Hauraki Rail Trail started in 2019, when Warren Sly from Thames Rotary approached the Trust with \$5,000 and a great idea for a single shelter. The Trust was so excited about the concept, the project quickly ballooned into a \$360k project that placed 16 shelters along the 160km of Trail.

Construction began in 2020 with Rotarians from Area 4, which included Thames, Paeroa, Te Aroha, Morrinsville and Matamata chapters. COVID derailed the initial momentum, and many discussions ensued regarding potential sites for the fabulous shelters which resemble small train stations. The project was so successful, many other community groups and funding partners came onboard to help with materials, labour, and the all-important funding.

MBIE provided the major share of funding, walking the journey with us over the past five years to see the project to fruition. Other funders included Trust Waikato, James Searle Say Trust and members of the public who wanted to be involved. Local historians, architects, farmers, and community members also willingly gave their time to support the development of the areas around the shelters.

Tumeke!

Scan the QR code to read the full story >



"E kore e pahawa i te kupu ngā mihi i tō mahi katoa ki roto i tō hāpori"

"There are not enough words to thank you all for the work you do in your communities"



A Slice of Heritage

The Paeroa Races were once a cornerstone of the local community, drawing crowds from all over to witness the thrilling competitions. Set against the stunning backdrop of the black rock hills and lush farmland, race days were marked by the thunderous sound of horse hooves, the cheers of the crowd, and the sense of excitement in the air.

Today, while the races may no longer be held, the Paeroa Racecourse Motel remains an ideal spot for those visiting the Hauraki Rail Trail. Cyclists gather under the gazebo, share stories, and cook up a BBQ feast as they relax and refuel. Its serene location offers guests a peaceful retreat, with the picturesque hills providing a timeless backdrop.

During its heyday, the Paeroa Racecourse Motel was the go-to accommodation for jockeys, horse owners, and race enthusiasts. It was the perfect place to unwind after a long day of exhilarating races, with its iconic history intertwined with the racing culture of Paeroa.

The Motel, run by Patricia McLarin, has deep roots in the area's rich history, and is brimming with stories of the past. One such story is that of Margaret Mace, now in her 90s, who was a founding member of Paeroa's Farmers Glengarry marching band when she was a young girl. Her grandparents, Peter and Ellen Swney, were avid racegoers at Paeroa and Te Aroha racecourses, winning prestigious cups with their horses, adding to the family's connection to the region.



Did you know that Marching as a competitive sport was invented in New Zealand? The marching girls travelled the country, competing and showcasing their skills, a legacy that has seen marching enjoy a resurgence today.

If you're here for the history, the scenery, or camaraderie, the Paeroa Racecourse Motel offers a slice of heritage and a welcoming place to rest.



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SNAP TO WIN!

Hold our Official Guide aloft somewhere along the Trail, an intrepid place in Aotearoa or in a far-flung corner of the world, take a photo and share it with us to be in with a chance to WIN!

See our website for T&C's

Follow @haurakirailtrail on Instagram and/or Facebook and tag us #haurakirailtrail in the post



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\$25.00
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All profits go towards making our Trail better for all to enjoy
TO ORDER e: sales@haurakirailtrail.co.nz

Choose your ride

Day Rides:

Section A: Kaiaua to Thames - 55km (5-6 hours)

Kick off your adventure along the Shorebird Coast, and encounter an array of birdlife. Pedal through lush farmlands and wetlands with stunning views of Tikapa Moana and the Coromandel. This Section sets the tone for a journey packed with natural beauty and coastal vibes.

Section B: Thames to Paeroa - 34km (3-4 hours)

Roll through picturesque farmlands and charming townships, with the Waihou and Ohinemuri Rivers keeping you company. The highlight is Paeroa, home of the iconic giant L&P bottle, and time for a classic photo and antique shopping.

Section C: Paeroa to Waihi - 24km (2-3 hours)

Prepare for a breathtaking ride through the Karangahake Gorge, where you'll cross bridges, cruise alongside bush-clad mountains, and tackle the epic 1.1km tunnel. This Section is pure magic and a Must-Do for any cycle trail enthusiast.

Section D: Paeroa to Te Aroha - 23km (2-3 hours)

Follow the old railway route as you cycle through lush farmlands with the majestic Mt Te Aroha and Kaimai Ranges as your backdrop. This Section is all about soaking in the serenity and enjoying the wide-open spaces.

Section E: Te Aroha to Matamata - 37km (2-4 hours)

Venture past goat, dairy, and thoroughbred farms on your way to Matamata. Along the route, catch views of the stunning Wairere Falls and historic Firth Tower. For a final touch of magic, end your journey at Hobbiton Movie Set.

Tick off the Trail in 5:

Embark on a 5-day cycling adventure along the Hauraki Rail Trail and delve into the rich history, culture, and heritage of this incredible region. Stretching from the Shorebird Coast in the North to Matamata in the South, the Trail takes you through diverse landscapes



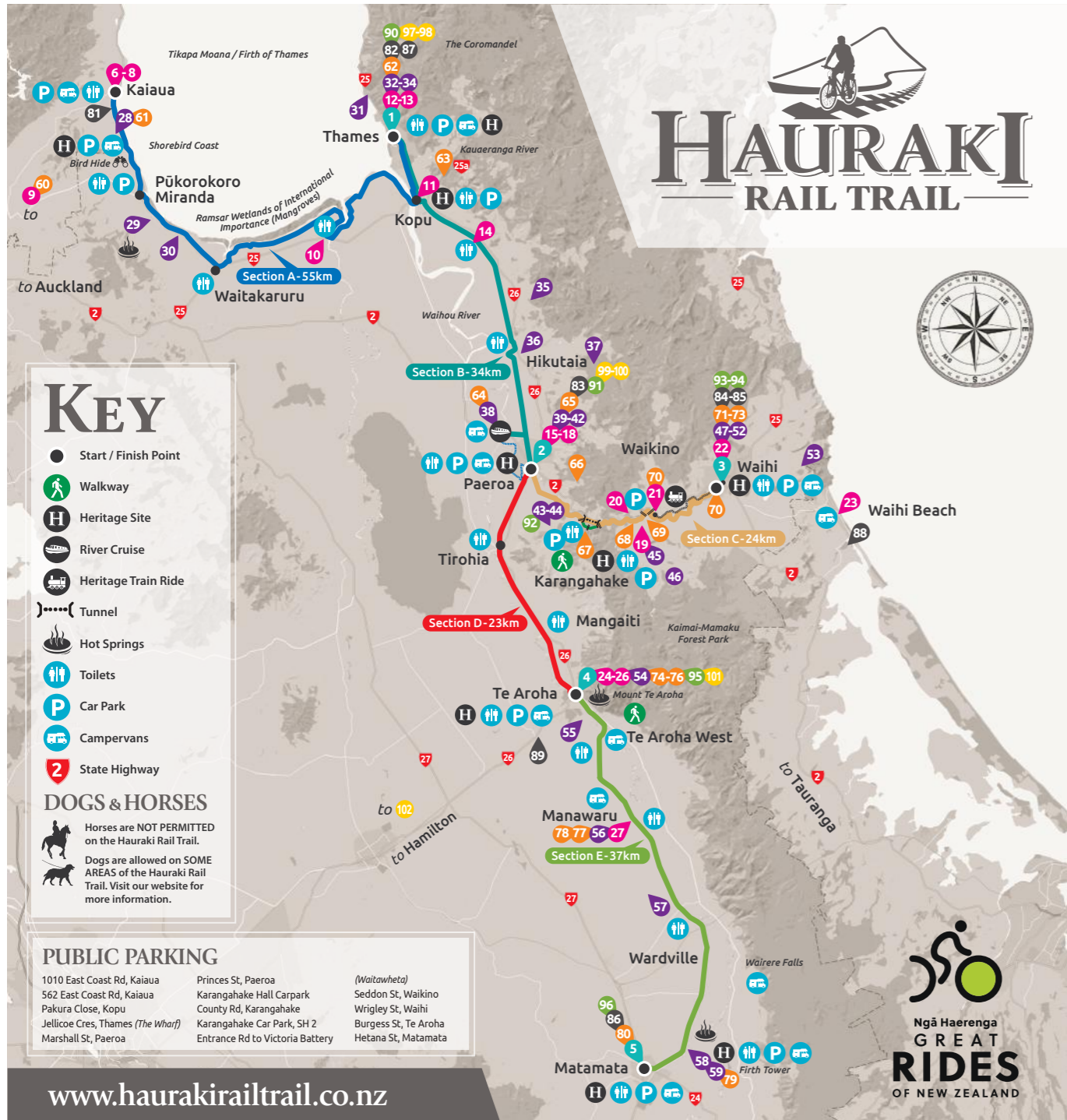
Journey along the Hauraki Rail Trail, one of New Zealand's oldest railway corridors.

and historic towns, offering a unique blend of natural beauty and fascinating stories.

Each day reveals something new, from the serene wetlands and lush farmlands to the dramatic Karangahake Gorge, where you can explore the remnants of New Zealand's gold mining past.

A multi-day ride allows you to fully immerse yourself in the Trail's charm, with time to pause at historic sites, capture stunning photos, and enjoy leisurely lunches in local cafes. The five Sections range from 23km to 55km - perfect for tackling one each day.

With plenty of attractions and activities along the way, from cultural sites to scenic detours, this self-guided adventure offers the freedom to explore at your own pace and truly connect with the heritage of the region.



Information/Bookings

- 1 Thames Information Centre**
200 Mary Street, Thames
Phone: 07 868 9803
- 2 Paeroa Information Hub**
6 Wharf Street, Paeroa
Phone: 07 862 8636
- 3 Waihi isite visitor information centre**
126 Seddon Street, Waihi
Phone: 07 863 6715
- 4 Te Aroha isite visitor information centre**
102 Whitaker St, Te Aroha
Phone: 07 884 8052
- 5 Matamata isite visitor information centre**
45 Broadway, Matamata
Phone: 07 888 7260

Great Rides APP
Download from Apple Store or Google Play

Dine & Drink

- 6 The Pink Shop**
999 East Coast Road, Kaiaua

7 Bay View Hotel
943 East Coast Road, Kaiaua

8 Kaiaua Fish n Chips
939 East Coast Road, Kaiaua

9 Miranda Farm Shop, Café & Gallery
1107 Miranda Road, Miranda

10 Bugger Café
1492 SH 25, Pipiroa
- 11 Kopu Café**
101 Kopu Road, Kopu

12 Burton's on Pollen
404 Pollen Street, Thames

13 Gastronomics Café Restaurant & Bar
428-430 Pollen St, Thames

14 The Cheese Barn & Farm Park
4 Wainui Road, Matatoki

15 Providence Pantry
22 Belmont Road, Paeroa
- 16 Courtyard Café**
72 Normanby Road, Paeroa

17 Subway Paeroa
Normanby Road, Paeroa

18 One 3 One Bar & Restaurant
131 Normanby Road, Paeroa

19 The Falls Retreat
25 Waitawheta Road, Waikino

20 Waikino Hotel
8541 State Highway 2, Waikino

21 Waikino Station Café
33 Cadman Street, Waikino
- 22 Waihi Memorial RSA**
13 Seddon Street, Waihi

23 Flat White Café and Bar
21 Shaw Road, Waihi Beach

24 Domain Cottage Café
Te Aroha Domain, 102 Whitaker St

25 Ironique Café and Bar
159 Whitaker St, Te Aroha

26 The Duck and Cover Bar & Restaurant
174 Whitaker Street, Te Aroha

27 Café 77
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

Places to Stay

- 28 Pūkoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre**
283 East Coast Road, Miranda

29 Broadwater Farm
851 Miranda Rd, Miranda

30 Miranda Homestead B&B
397 Front Miranda Rd, Miranda

31 Dickson Holiday Park
Victoria Street, Tararu

32 Tuscany on Thames Motel
200 Jellicoe Crescent, Thames

33 Avalon Motel
104 Jellicoe Crescent, Thames

34 Rolleston Motel
105 Rolleston Street, Thames

35 Onetai Estate
209 Onetai Road, Hikutaia
- 36 Corbett House B&B**
8088 State Highway 26, Hikutaia

37 Earthbridge Eco B&B
812 Maratoto Road, Komata

38 Historical Maritime Park*
(Campervans) Puke Rd North, Paeroa

39 Paeroa RV Centre
10 Coronation Street, Paeroa

40 Pedlars Motel
2A Arney Street, Paeroa

41 Paeroa Motel
2 Puke Road, Paeroa

42 Racecourse Motel
68 Thames Road, Paeroa

43 Crown Ridge B&B
77 Crown Hill Rd, Karangahake

44 Hauraki Experience
89 Terrace Rd, Karangahake
- 45 The Falls Retreat**
25 Waitawheta Rd, Karangahake

46 Pure Pods
Waikino

47 Palm Motel Waihi
123 Parry Palm Avenue, Waihi

48 Shunters Cottage
Wrigley Street, Waihi

49 Goldmine Motel
6 Victoria Street, Waihi

50 Trailblazers Studios
33 Union Street, Waihi

51 The Barn Bed & Breakfast
3 Symonds Street, Waihi

52 Waihi Camp & Cabins
6 Waitete Road, Waihi
- 53 Orokawa Bay Retreat**
28 Poets Corner Rd, Waihi

54 Te Aroha Accommodation Central
www.tearoaaaccommodationcentral.com

55 Te Aroha Holiday Park
217 Stanley Road, Te Aroha

56 Community View S/C Campervan Park*
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

57 Housewithnonails
80 Waghorn Road, Wardville

58 Firth Tower Reserve - Campervan Park*
266 Te Aroha Road, Matamata

59 A Place in the Paddock

* Self contained motorhomes, campervans and caravans ONLY

Things to See & Do

- 60 Miranda Farm Shop, Café & Gallery**
1107 Miranda Road, Miranda

61 Pūkoro-Miranda Shorebird Centre
283 East Coast Rd, Miranda

62 Thames School of Mines
101 Cochrane St, Thames

63 Kauaeranga Valley Walks
Kauaeranga Valley, Thames

64 Historical Maritime Park
6894 State Highway 2, Paeroa
- 65 The Paeroa & District Historical Museum**
37 Belmont Road, Paeroa

66 Bullswool Heritage Farm
240 Rahu Road, Karangahake

67 Karangahake Gorge Walks
See www.doc.govt.nz

68 Owharoa Falls
Waitawheta Road, Waikino

69 Victoria Battery Tramway & Museum
Ohinemuri River, Waikino
- 70 Goldfields Railway Inc**
38 Wrigley Street, Waihi

71 Waihi Gold Discovery Centre
126 Seddon St, Waihi

72 Waihi Martha Mine Pit Rim Walk
Martha Street, Waihi

73 Waihi Art Centre & Museum
54 Kenny Street, Waihi

74 Swim Zone Te Aroha
The Domain, Te Aroha

75 Te Aroha Mineral Spas
The Domain, Te Aroha
- 76 Te Aroha Museum**
The Domain, Te Aroha

77 Community View - Climbing Wall
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

78 Heritage Centre at Community View
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

79 Firth Tower Museum
266 Te Aroha Rd, Matamata

80 Swim Zone Matamata
10 Meura Street, Matamata

Bike Hire

Bike Servicing

Tour Services

Retail & Other

Shuttles

- | | | | |
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| Adventure Bike Hire Shuttles
All Sections
Phone: 027 398 2866 | Shorebird Cycles
All Sections
Phone: 021 243 0513 | JollyBikes
All Sections & Airport transfers
Phone: 07 867 9026 | Valley Tours & Transfers
All Sections & Airport transfers
Phone: 027 549 6357 |
| | Waihi Bicycle Hire - Shuttles
All Sections
Phone: 07 863 9015 | Biking Hiking Shuttles
All Sections
Phone: 021 065 3382 | Riverside Adventures
All Sections
Phone: 0800 247 448 |

[illegible]

Want to find a toilet? Toilets are marked at their location, for example, at Buchanan Road. Both the side row and the bottom row point directly to a toilet. If you are at Pipiroa, you can follow the horizontal line across to Buchanan Road, and you will see the public toilet is 2km away.

We haven't added times to this chart as we all travel at different speeds, and wind direction can make a big difference. Don't forget to take plenty of water, and layers of clothing in case the weather changes.



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App Store QR Code

Take two days to explore the most popular section which follows the Ohinemuri River through the spectacular Karangahake Gorge. This distinctly different landscape features the cascading Owaharoa Falls and photogenic gold mining sites. Pack a headlamp for the 1100-metre long railway tunnel. The Goldfields Railway train is a Must Do.

SECTION C

Waihou River

Section B - to Thames

Historical Maritime Park

Te Pai O Hauraki

Paeroa

Ohinemuri River
Ngahutoitoi Marae

24km

Tirohia Marae

Waikino

Karangahake

Waikino Railway Station

Waihi

Waihi Railway Station

To Waihi Beach

Old Tauranga Rd

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park

Owharua Falls

Victoria Battery

The Falls Retreat

DISTANCE: 24km

Paeroa to Karangahake: 8km
Karangahake to Waikino: 7km
Waikino to Waihi: 9km

Dogs on leads are permitted in the Karangahake Gorge section of the Rail Trail from Waikino Station to the old Karangahake Hall site at Crown Bridge at the northern end of Victoria Tunnel, and where the Rail Trail intersects the urban areas of Waihi, Paeroa, Te Aroha and Thames. **DOGS ARE NOT PERMITTED** on any other section of the Rail Trail.

Ngā Haerenga GREAT RIDES OF NEW ZEALAND

Map showing the route from Paeroa to Waihi, with key locations marked: Kaiaua, Thames, Paeroa, Waihi, Te Aroha, Matamata.

Scale: 0 to 100m.



Please Note:
Mobile phone coverage can be patchy for parts of the Karangahake Gorge Dogs on lead from Waikino Station to Karangahake Hall only, and where the trail intersects at Waihi/Paeroa

The spectacular
Karangahake Gorge
The historic 1.1km
railway tunnel
Picnic and swim at
Owharoa Falls
The 30 minute Goldfields
Railway train ride
between Waikino and
Waihi
Victoria Battery Tramway
and Museum
Bullswool Heritage Farm





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In an era when responsible travel is front of mind, PurePods stands as a beacon of eco-friendly accommodation. Founded by Grant Ryan, the idea came from his childhood experiences of growing up on a Southland farm and being spellbound by remote New Zealand landscapes.

Grant felt more people needed to see and feel the wonders nature had to offer. It is more than just being in the area and staying in a hotel, tent or cabin. It is about being surrounded by nature, nestled in comfort, immersed in the landscape, and not shutting it all out when you close the door.

A "food for the soul" experience serves up uninterrupted views, stunning New Zealand scenery and the opportunity to slow down. Delivered in a sustainable, stylish, and innovative glass cabin, this is where immersion, seclusion and innovation intersect to magnify the senses and create connection and restoration.

This is the PurePods concept. A 100% Pure New Zealand experience in a network of glass eco-cabins located in remote and spectacular parts of New Zealand - just for two. At PurePods, sustainability is at the core of everything. They are made

for stargazing,
and maximise
uninterrupted
views of the
night sky.

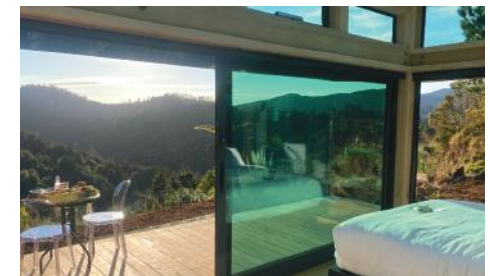


Conservation and reclamation of the natural environment is close to the heart of PurePods. They

partner with landowners committed to sustainability, and through the commercial returns from a PurePod they are able to expand their conservation activities through the extension of nature covenants and the reduction of stock grazing in sensitive areas.

Located in the Karangahake Gorge, the Ruru PurePod is tucked among the serene beauty of forest, mountains, and farmland and offers an unforgettable escape into nature. With sweeping views of Mt Karangahake, the only sounds you hear are the whispers of nature and the Waitawheta River below.

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New Zealand
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in remote and
spectacular parts of
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- just for two.*



The Ruru PurePod is tucked among the serene beauty of forest, mountains, and farmland



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waikinoystationcafe




Hearts of Gold

SECTION C: Paeroa to Waihi

When the Hauraki Rail Trail was constructed in 2012, tourism through the Hauraki District was limited. Some would stop as they passed through the Karangahake Gorge on their way to and from a distant destination. And while others often wondered about the large structures at Victoria Battery, few would stop. But for Eddie and Karen Morrow, who had been holidaying in the Coromandel, a stop at the Pipiroa Country Kitchen (now the Bugger Café) would be the start of a 30-year love affair with the area.

Heading home from a weekend in the Coromandel, they stopped at the café for some dinner. The place was humming and had a really great vibe. By the time they reached home in Auckland, they had made the decision to sell up and buy the café.

The stunning Karangahake Gorge had always drawn them as a location, so

the chance to work with Goldfields Railway and DoC on a new project was exciting. After designing and setting up the café from scratch, they opened the Waikino Station Café in December 2000. The Kiwi Dream had doubled.

By 2005 the Morrows had sold both cafés and concentrated on growing great kids. Eddie moved into regional tourism consulting and project management, and it didn't take long before another major project was on the cards, this time developing and building the Gold Discovery Centre at Waihi.

Eddie and Karen Morrow have spent 30 years loving the 'great vibe' of the Hauraki.

They have now celebrated ten years with business partners Bill and Barb, and have extended their offering to include bike hire, shuttles and itinerary planning, along with Gold Mine Tours, Waihi Gold Experience and Information services, making the Gold Discovery Centre a vibrant visitor hub for the district and wider region.

GOLD DISCOVERY CENTRE

GET INSIDE THE FENCE & GET THE INSIDE STORY




Learn about Waihi's fascinating gold story that began in 1878 and still continues today...

golddiscoverycentre.co.nz

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- ✓ Karangahake Gorge
- ✓ Old Train Tunnel
- ✓ Oharoa Falls
- ✓ Victoria Battery
- ✓ Waikino Station & Café

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126 Seddon St.
WAIHI
07 863 9015



A Moving Story

Tucked in the Karangahake Gorge, the historic Waikino Hotel has seen fire, floods, prohibition, and relocation to its current spot. Originally the Owharoa Hotel in 1897, it became a hub for thirsty miners. However, disaster struck in 1906 when fire consumed the hotel, leaving owner Ralph Montgomery under-insured. Not giving up, he moved the Waitekauri Hotel to Waikino - the first Waikino Hotel.

Prohibition in 1920 forced the Hotel to close. It was subsequently demolished, its timber repurposed for cottages. The site lay dormant until 1926, when the Mackaytown Hotel

was moved to resurrect the watering hole. Since then, it's weathered ghost stories and floods, standing strong while the town succumbed to water.

Today, the Hotel stands proudly, thanks to renovations and vision of publican Wayne Chowles, breathing new life with his passion for hospitality, craft beer, and spirits. His Kaimai Brewing & Distilling Co. produces award winning 'Eliza's Claim' Gold gin, proofed with artisan spring water and infused with botanicals.

At the Waikino Memorial Bridge, cross the river and enjoy a meal, tippie, or gin dusted with edible gold. The Waikino Hotel isn't just a place to rest, it's where history lingers in every sip.



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Waihi

Waihi was known as New Zealand's 'Heart of Gold'. Its gold mining history spans three centuries and the local open-pit mine is fully operational. Visit the Gold Discovery Centre which makes the gold heritage come alive. Then cross the street to view the Martha Mine.



Information & Bookings

- 3** Waihi isite
126 Seddon Street, Waihi
Phone: 07 863 6715

Dine & Drink

- 22** Waihi Memorial RSA
13 Seddon Street, Waihi

Places to Stay

- 47** Palm Motel Waihi
123 Parry Palm Ave, Waihi
- 48** Shunters Cottage
Wrigley Street, Waihi
- 49** Goldmine Motel
6 Victoria Street, Waihi
- 50** Trailblazers Studios
33 Union Street, Waihi
- 51** The Barn Bed & Breakfast
3 Symonds Street, Waihi
- 52** Waihi Camp & Cabins
6 Waitete Road, Waihi
- 53** Orokawa Bay Retreat
28 Poets Corner Road, Waihi

Things to See & Do

- 70** Goldfields Railway Inc
38 Wrigley Street, Waihi
- 71** Waihi Gold Discovery Centre
126 Seddon Street, Waihi
- 72** Waihi Martha Mine Pit Rim Walk
Martha Street, Waihi
- 73** Waihi Art Centre & Museum
54 Kenny Street, Waihi

Bike Hire / Tour Services

- 84** Adventure Bike Hire
Waihi, 027 398 2866
- 85** Waihi Bicycle Hire -
Tours & Shuttles
126 Seddon Street, Waihi isite
- 94** Waihi Gold Discovery Centre
126 Seddon Street, Waihi

Shuttles

See Shuttle Services on page 26

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A weekend in the life of...

Orokawa Bay Retreat is a hidden gem just ten minutes from Waihi, offering the perfect coastal escape for those who crave tranquility and connection with nature. Nestled on a ridge, 270 meters above sea level, this retreat feels as though it belongs entirely to the surrounding beauty, where the rhythms of the ocean and native birdlife create a serene, almost otherworldly atmosphere.

Seeking solitude or a cosy getaway with friends or family? The lodge comfortably sleeps up to eight, yet is just as inviting for a private retreat. Each room opens into a beautiful outdoor atrium, blending the comfort of the indoors with the untouched beauty of the area. Take your time here, breathe in the fresh sea air, pick up a book, or simply unwind.



Start your days with the breathtaking sunrise over the sea, then let the team from Waihi Bicycle Hire & Tours whisk you away for an adventure through the Karangahake Gorge. Enjoy lunch at the historic Waikino Hotel, and return to the retreat for an evening of pure relaxation and sunset over the Coromandel Ranges. A soak in



the hot tub overlooking the sea or a waterfront dinner at the Flat White Café - every moment feels like a personal slice of paradise

No visit is complete without exploring Orokawa Bay itself, a 45-minute walk from Waihi Beach to a pristine, white sandy shoreline framed by ancient pohutukawa trees. With rock fishing, coastal views, and peaceful picnic spots, Orokawa Bay is a Must-Visit for those looking to immerse themselves in New Zealand's coastal magic.



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TRAIL ANGEL

Steve Lye

Trail Angels are our very best friends on the Hauraki Rail Trail. This year we are celebrating Steve Lye, who is a regular cyclist on the Trail, clocking up 22,000km over the past four years. You can find Steve daily on the Trail between Waihi and the Karangahake Gorge and he is often our eyes and ears on the Trail, reporting trees down, terrain issues or other risks to our trail users.

Steve had been involved with the Hauraki Rail Trail construction in his role as a roading engineer with council. However, he never actually cycled the Trail until approximately two years before he retired, having a little more time to take up cycling.

Cycling was suggested by his doctor as a way to improve his health. In the first two years, cycling the Trail five to six days a week had resulted in a significant 50kg of weight loss. Steve is thankful for the Trail, and says this literally saved his life, and is now far more mobile and fitter. Gone now is the sleep apnea, and as a result his doctor claimed Steve had extended his life by 20 years.

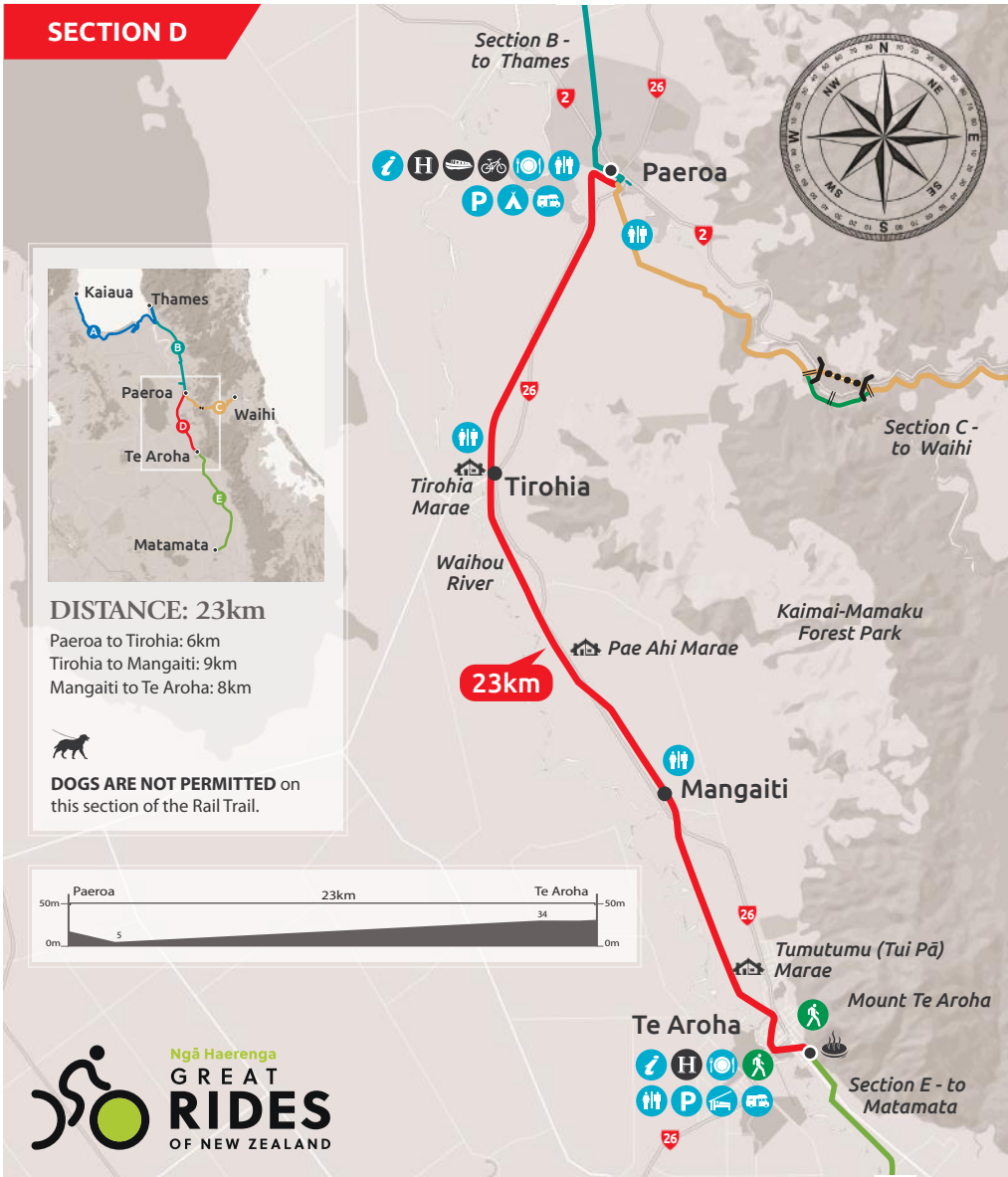
Steve believes the biggest win has been his mental health. "A good hard ride is great medicine for my mental health when the mood is flat. A good brisk ride provides a top up of my endorphins resulting in seeing the rest of day in a more positive way. I am thankful for the Trail as it is too dangerous to ride on the road."

"A good hard ride is great medicine for my mental health."



Paeroa to Te Aroha

Heading south, this leisurely section passes through lush Waikato farmland dotted with dairy cows and farm animals. The Kaimai-Mamaku Ranges and Mt Te Aroha (952m - The Mountain of Love), and expansive views over the Hauraki Plains are a feast for the eyes. Pack your togs and make the most of Te Aroha Mineral Spas. It's a great way to soothe pedal weary muscles at the end of a ride.



Key Information:

Distance: 23km (2-3 hours)

Fitness: All Levels

Skill: All Levels

Traffic: Light to Moderate

Grade: 1

Trail Status:



Please Note:

- Mobile phone coverage is good.
- Dogs only permitted where the trail intersects at Paeroa/Te Aroha.

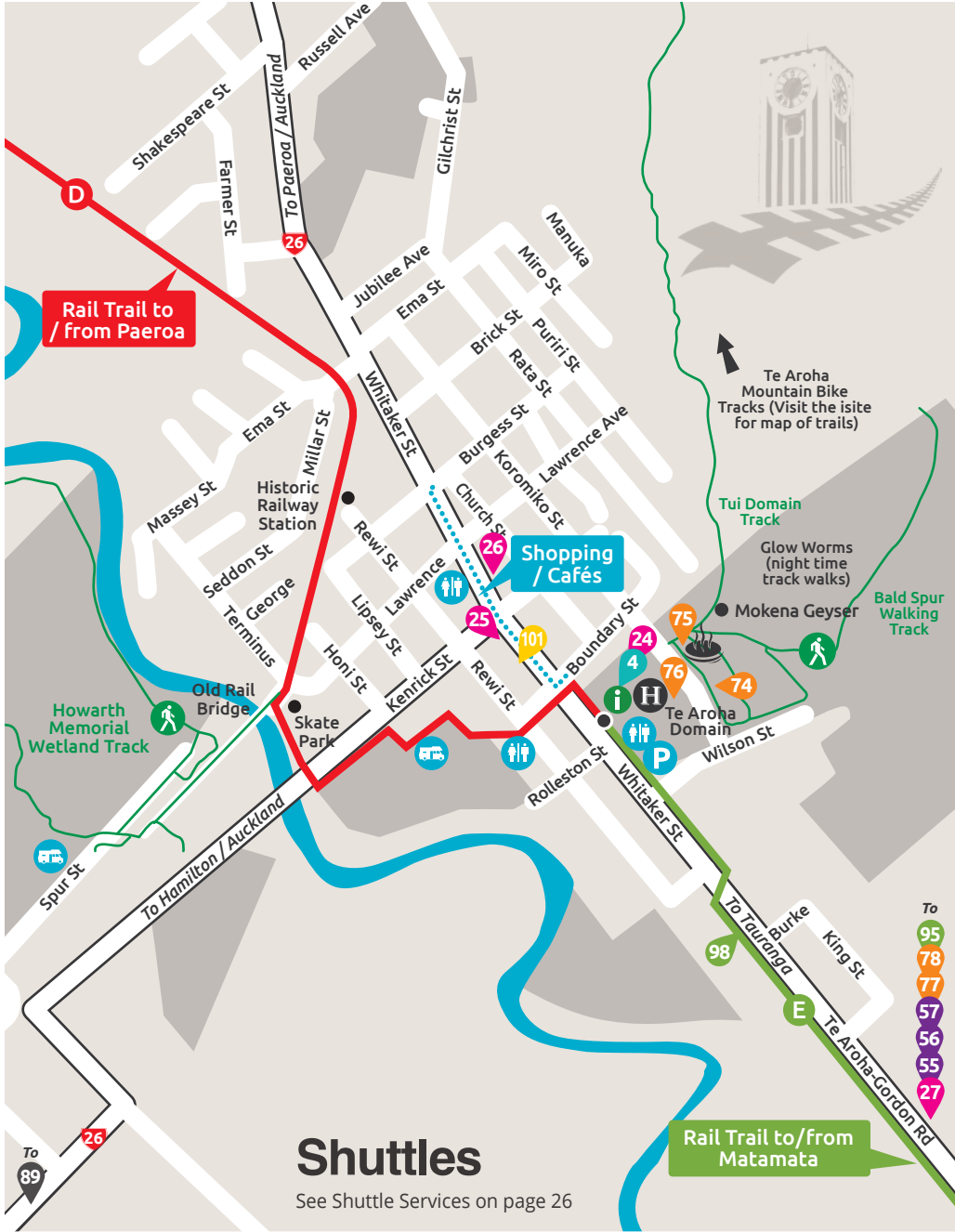
Highlights include:

- Leisurely riding beside the Kaimai Ranges
- Views of Mt Te Aroha
- Country landscapes and farm animals
- Soak in the Te Aroha Mineral Spas
- Adrian Worsley sculptures
- Tintype Central - wet plate portrait studio



Te Aroha

This quaint rural township has a lovely domain, great walkways, art and cafes. Look out for the quirky art installations.



Information & Bookings

- 4 Te Aroha isite visitor information centre
102 Whitaker St, Te Aroha
Phone: 07 884 8052

Dine & Drink

- 24 Domain Cottage Café
Te Aroha Domain, 102 Whitaker St
- 25 Ironique Café and Bar
159 Whitaker St, Te Aroha
- 26 The Duck and Cover Bar & Restaurant
174 Whitaker St, Te Aroha
- 27 Café 77
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

Places to Stay

- 54 Te Aroha Accommodation Central
www.tearoaaaccommodationcentral.com
- 55 Te Aroha Holiday Park
217 Stanley Road, Te Aroha
- 56 Community View - S/C Campervan Park*
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru
- 57 Housewithnails
80 Waghorn Road, Wardville

Things to See & Do

- 74 Swim Zone Te Aroha
The Domain, Te Aroha
- 75 Te Aroha Mineral Spas
The Domain, Te Aroha
- 76 Te Aroha Museum
The Domain, Te Aroha
- 77 Community View - Climbing Wall
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru
- 78 Heritage Centre at Community View
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

Bike Servicing

- 89 The Cycle Fixery
8 First Ave South, Waihou

Tour Services

- 95 Biking Hiking Shuttles
651 Te Aroha Gordon Rd, Te Aroha

Retail

- 101 Tintype Central
123 Whitaker St, Te Aroha



tearohamineralspas.co.nz



Iron meets Ironique at a favourite local Café

Te Aroha township is a treasure trove for art lovers, especially those drawn to the creative genius of local sculptor Adrian Worsley. Known for his remarkable ability to transform recycled materials into stunning sculptures, Adrian has made a lasting mark on the town, from its main street to the iconic Ironique Café.

Adrian's background as a fitter and welder has been instrumental in his unique approach to art, where industrial remnants are given new life. His work can be found throughout Te Aroha, including functional yet artistic pieces like bicycle racks and a striking Penny Farthing sculpture at the Te Aroha Railway Station. Visitors can explore the town's art trail, dotted with Adrian's work, making it a Must-See for those cycling through the Hauraki Rail Trail.



A standout project was his fit-out for Ironique Café, where Adrian's flair for up-cycling has created a distinct atmosphere that

perfectly complements the café's rustic charm. From the intricate design of the café's interior to the artistry seen in the town's outdoor sculptures, Adrian's touch is unmistakable.

Sonam and her husband Sarav, who recently took over the Ironique Café, instantly fell in love with the town's peaceful atmosphere and the café's unique appeal. They're committed to maintaining the café's long-standing reputation, while introducing new elements such as dinner services and hosting special events. The couple takes pride in their loyal team, many of whom have been with the café for seven years.

Stop by for Adrian's art and Ironique's excellent food and ambiance, as the collaboration between local artists and businesses creates a compelling reason to visit.



Biking Hiking Shuttles

A large majority of the Hauraki Rail Trail hugs the edge of the Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park along Sections C, D, and E, known by locals as the Kaimais. The Trail cuts through the Karangahake Gorge, which forms the Trail on the northern edge of the Kaimais. On the opposite side of the Ohinemuri River stands the southern tip of the Coromandel Ranges.

The Kaimais stretch for 70 kilometres to the south, all the way to the Mamaku Plateau near Rotorua, and form a natural barrier between the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions. In ancient times, the Kaimais were a Noah's Ark for plants, riding high above seas of ice and oceans of water. In more recent times, Māori settlers formed tracks through the range, hunted in its subtropical forest, and used its plants for food and medicine.

Two of the best walks are the Waitewheta Track, which follows a kauri log tramline past rocky bluffs,

Sue & Pete Middleton are passionate about sharing the beauty of the outdoors with others.

deep gorges and waterfalls, and the walk from Te Aroha Domain to the summit of Mt Te Aroha (952m). There are huts, shelters and picnic areas throughout the 300 kilometre track network which make it more accessible for hikers keen to explore across multiple days.

Sue and Pete Middleton, the duo behind Biking Hiking Shuttles, have made it their mission to help people explore the stunning Hauraki Rail Trail and Kaimai Range, on bike or on foot. As avid cyclists and hikers, they're passionate about sharing the beauty of the outdoors with others. Sue grew up close to the famous Wairere Falls and was always keen to return following an extensive period overseas.

This year, Sue and Pete enjoyed a bike ride from Cape Reinga back home to Te Aroha. They were relieved to make it to the ferry at Pouto Point to cross the Kaipara Harbour, and not have to take the 100km detour on gravel roads! They also undertook a multi-day hike along the Kaimai Range on the old North - South track with family, taking seven days sleeping in huts and camping along the way.



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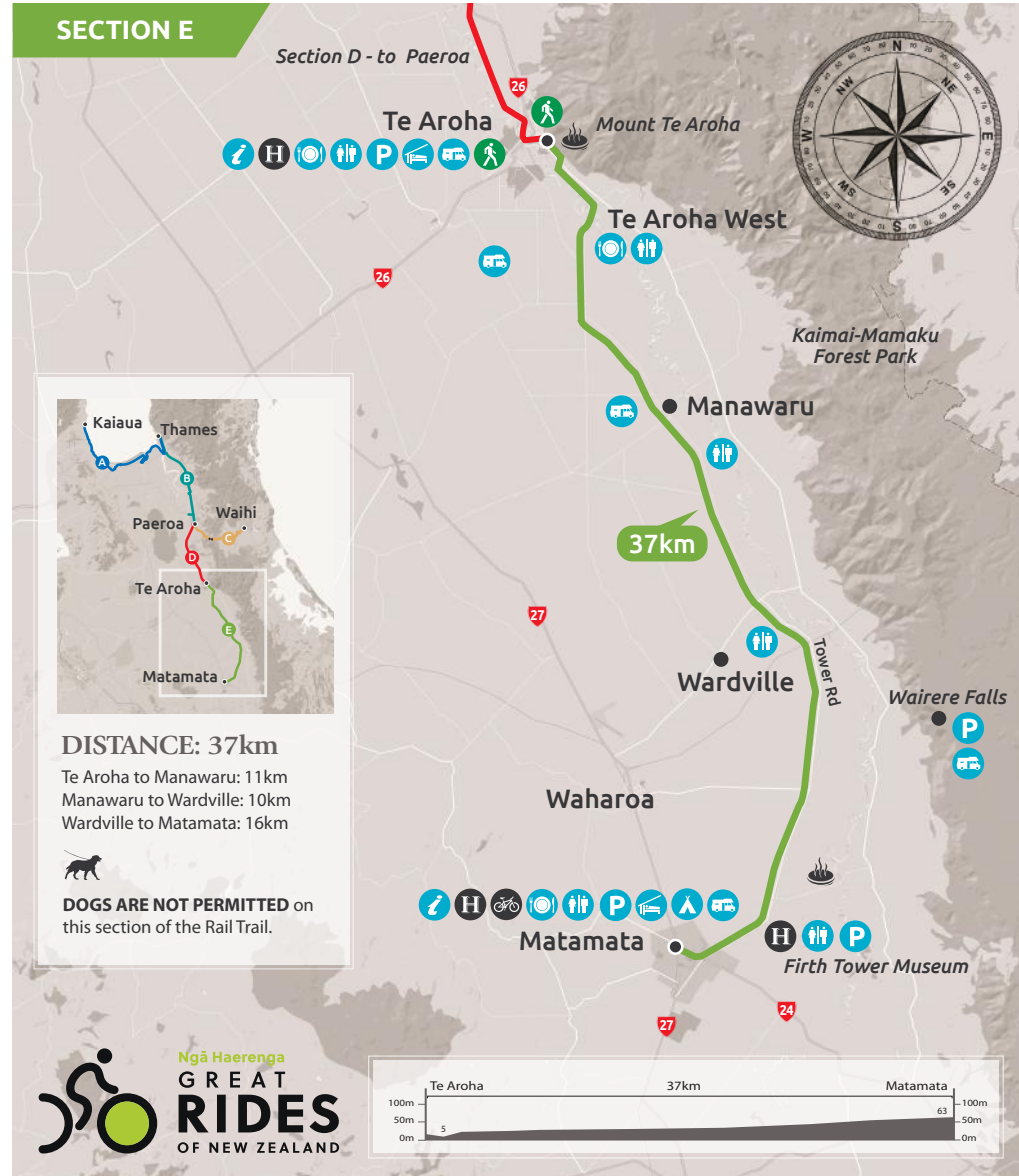
- We cover all five sections of the Hauraki Rail Trail
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Te Aroha *to* Matamata

Relax and make the most of this simple journey past goat, dairy and thoroughbred farms. As you approach Matamata look out for the majestic Wairere Falls - the highest waterfall in the North Island. Stop at the Firth Tower to enjoy the tranquil gardens and explore the museum displays. A visit to Hobbiton Movie Set is a Must Do. Take a Tour, feast like a Hobbit, and enjoy a tipple at the Green Dragon Inn.



Key Information:

Distance: 37km
(2-4 hours)

Fitness: All Levels

Skill: All Levels

Traffic: Light to Moderate

Grade: 1

Trail Status:



Please Note:

- Mobile phone coverage is good.
- Dogs only permitted where the trail intersects at Te Aroha/Matamata.



Highlights include:

- A leisurely ride through lush Lush Waikato farmland and horse studs
- Historic Firth Tower Museum and Gardens
- Stunning Wairere Falls and 5km walking track
- Hobbiton Movie Set Tours or a tipple at the Green Dragon Inn



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Be enraptured by the charm of Manawaru

Nestled in the heart of the Waikato, the small settlement of Manawaru offers a story as rich as its farmlands. Derived from the Māori phrase 'Manawa rū,' meaning shaking heart—be it fidgety, anxious, enraptured, or delighted—this town has transformed from a modest dairy farming community into a vibrant stop for visitors seeking a taste of rural New Zealand

In the 1870's the Crown wanted to develop the area West of the Waihou River as agricultural land. Dairy farming proved lucrative, and before long the clip-pity-clop of horse hooves rang out across the yard, bringing cream and milk to the newly formed Manawaru Dairy Co-operative number 77. Wagons

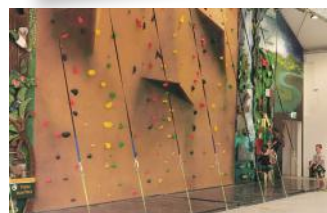


creaked and machines whirled with the vibrant activity, but many labourers moved on to more lucrative pastures elsewhere. Eventually the Dairy closed, sitting neglected for almost 40 years.

Partially due to the Hauraki Rail Trail driving visitors through the settlement, an opportunity arose giving the Dairy a new lease of life.



Today, the legacy of hard work and community remains, but Manawaru is now a place to relax, refuel, and explore. The charming local Café 77, with its farm-to-table ethos, offers fresh coffee, homemade pastries, and hearty meals crafted from local produce, and is a perfect stop for cyclists riding the Trail.



Beyond the café, you'll find a collection of businesses that continue to build on the area's farming roots. The Old Dairy Factory has been repurposed into a multi-purpose centre that houses a heritage museum, rock-climbing wall, and purpose-built camper-van site for visitors.

It's a chance to experience a slice of rural life, enjoy warm hospitality, and immerse yourself in the history of the land. So next time you're passing through, stop in at Manawaru, take in the scenery, and be enraptured by its charm.



The Kaimai Rail Tunnel



North of Matamata, the Hauraki Rail Trail passes over the main trunk Railway line between Tauranga and Hamilton. The Train makes a direct beeline from under the majestic Kaimai Ranges as it passes under the Trail and continues its journey to Hamilton.

Prior to the Railway tunnel opening in 1978, the trains used to pass through the Karangahake Gorge, where much of the Hauraki Rail Trail now sits. A rail tunnel through the Kaimai Ranges was proposed in 1913, but the idea was not taken seriously until the 1950s. The easier route would allow larger locomotives to pull longer trains with greater loads. It would increase profits, but the build would be extraordinarily expensive, at £5.7m, (almost \$12m) – a huge amount in the 1960s.

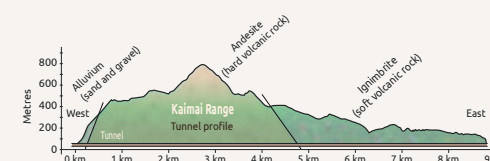
In 1969, tunnelling began on the western side and the two sides met in 1976. The final cost was \$43 million for the tunnel and \$13 million for the track deviation, a total of \$56 million – well over budget.

From the start, the tunnellers faced difficulties. Due to the variable geology, traditional drill and blast methods were used

on hard rock where tunnelling machines failed, and heat build-up caused exhaustion. The machines made better progress in the softer rocks to the east (up to 32 metres/day). High water flows caused constant flooding, and contributed to rock instability. Sadly this led to the death of four workers when the tunnel collapsed, trapping another seven men inside for 80 hours.



The first official train through the tunnel was the Silver Fern passenger railcar. Now almost all trains using the line are freight only. For many years the Kaimai Rail Tunnel was the longest tunnel in the Southern Hemisphere and it remains the longest in New Zealand.



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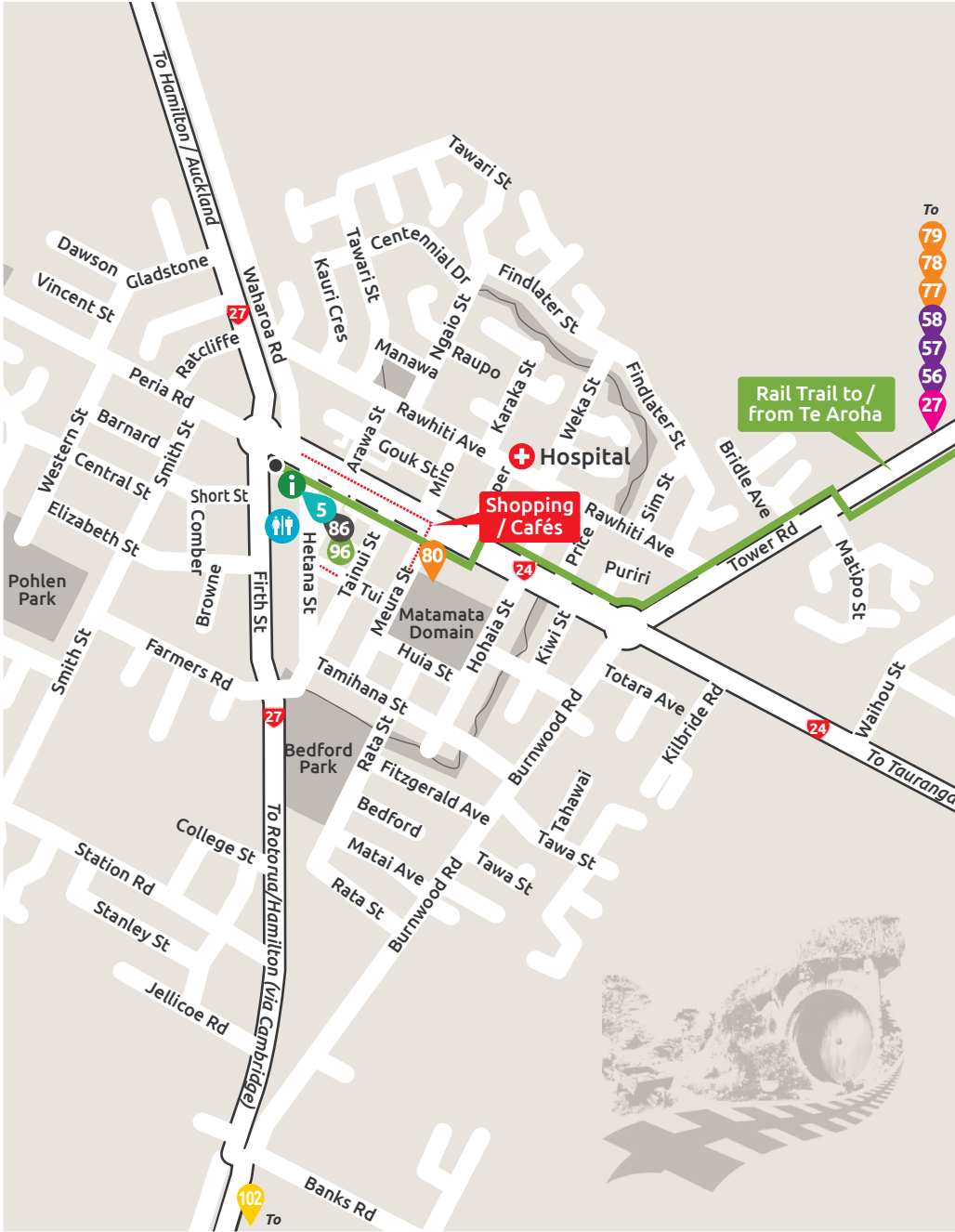
128 Broadway, Matamata 3400 Ph 07 888 8482 0508 128 128 Em broadwaymotel@xtra.co.nz



www.broadwaymatamata.co.nz

Matamata

Matamata offers walking, golf courses, and extensive cafes and accommodation. The unique Visitor Centre is a fantastical nod to Hobbiton, where you can book Tours to the enchanting village.



Information & Bookings

5 Matamata isite visitor information centre
45 Broadway, Matamata
Phone: 07 888 7260

Dine & Drink

27 Café 77
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru

Places to Stay

56 Community View - S/C Campervan Park*
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru
57 Housewithnails
80 Waghorn Road, Wardville
58 Firth Tower Reserve - Campervan Park
266 Te Aroha Road, Matamata

Things to See & Do

77 Community View - Climbing Wall
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru
78 Heritage Centre at Community View
420 Manawaru Rd, Manawaru
79 Firth Tower Museum
266 Te Aroha Rd, Matamata
80 Matamata Swim Zone
10 Meura Street, Matamata

Bike Hire / Tour Services

86 Riverside Adventures
396 Horahora Road, Piarere

Trike Hire

102 Ride Your Trike NZ
Hamilton Gardens, Hamilton

Shuttles

See Shuttle services on page 26



SECTION E: Te Aroha to Matamata

Southern Delights

Nestled at the base of the stunning Kaimai Ranges, Matamata is much more than just a gateway to Hobbiton - it's a vibrant township that offers plenty for visitors to see, do, and enjoy either before or after your ride on the Hauraki Rail Trail. With its scenic surroundings, rich rural heritage, and welcoming atmosphere, Matamata is the perfect spot to relax and unwind.

Known for its fertile plains and thoroughbred horse breeding, the region surrounding Matamata, including nearby Wardville and Manawaru, boasts lush landscapes that make for a breathtaking section of the Rail Trail. The rural charm of the area is complemented by the natural beauty of the famous cherry blossoms, which burst into bloom each year, drawing visitors from near and far to admire their vibrant display.

A stroll down Matamata's main street reveals tree-lined avenues, boutique shops, and a fantastic range of cafes and eateries. Whether you're craving locally grown produce, craft beer, or cider, the town's hospitality

is second to none. Matamata also offers a variety of accommodation options, from charming B&Bs to motels and a campground, providing the perfect place to rest and recharge after a day on the Trail.

Of course, no visit to Matamata is complete without experiencing the famous Hobbiton Movie Set, located just outside of town. But even without the magic of Middle-earth, the township itself has plenty to offer. Take in the peaceful rural atmosphere, explore local walking tracks, and perhaps treat yourself to a meal or drink at the Merchant of Matamata, a modern provincial pub housed in a former farm supply depot.





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