

Te WERAITI RADAR DOME via HENDERSON TRAMLINE

260 Series Map: Morrinsville, T14

Topo50 Map: BD36 Lower Kaimai

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START: As this is well outside the Taupo area the first step is to head North on SH1 towards Rotorua then:

- Stay on SH1 at Wairakei by going left 12 minutes
- Pass Kinleith Mill in 45 minutes then through Tokoroa Town
- Pass through Putaruru on SH1 in about 1 hour
- Go right on to Whites Road SH28 in 1:05 minutes
- Right at T-junction to SH5 for Rotorua in 1:10 minutes
- Left on to SH48 two minutes later
- Right on SH28 for Tauranga in 1:20 minutes – toilet stop on LHS
- Minutes later right on SH29 for 3 – 4km with the latter part steep
- Pass the lookout / viewpoint at the top then keep on and turn off left at the lower end of the Old Kaimai Road and park as indicated by WP01.

The drive from Taupo takes just over 1:30 minutes

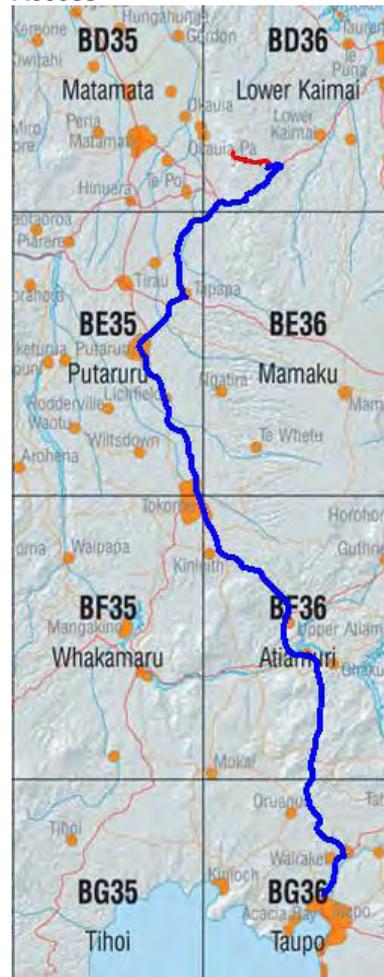
Rough description: A moderate hard in and out walk of just over 15km requiring about 7 hours but with a longish drive of 1:30 minutes to the start. The drive can be seen as the blue line in Figure 1 whilst the tramp is the red line and the target is a huge blue dome or ball on the end of Te Weraiti Ridge. The tramp starts at a fair altitude and starts off losing height to cross the Rataroa Stream. The rest of the walk is, at worst, undulating and starts on good track though there are muddy sections, a few stream crossings and some of the dreaded red slippery clays on the way down. The latter part is on more of a ribboned route than track and is hard going at times. The 500odd metres of altitude gain is mainly on the second half after crossing the North – South track. The profile shows the tramline is fairly gentle then the slopes increase – with the inwards plus outwards walk and the altitude this tramp cover the equivalent of almost 17km mainly in lush, wet broadleaf regrowth forest.

Detail: As noted it takes between one and a half to two hours to drive from Taupo via SH1, SH28, SH5 and SH29, the parking (**WP01** 413masl) for the start of the walk being on the Old Kaimai Road and steeply above the Rataroa Stream. From the car park it is steeply downhill through a paddock, over a stile to the firs, shallow river crossing (**WP02**397masl). A lovely wooded track then leads to second crossing of the Rataroa Stream, this one slightly deeper but still easy on low flow days. After this a fence marks the right hand side of the track and, at the end of this, there is a series of wood edged steps going upwards leading to a minor track junction (**WP03**445masl) where the route goes to the right. The next feature is a bit of a steep downhill to cross the stream yet again but this time at a confluence and in good weather this one is shallow and easy but the flattish rock bottom can be slippery.

There is yet another crossing then steeply upslope on a very eroded section of path on red clays – this can be very slippery. Within an hour a Henderson Tram notice (**WP04**449masl) is located and the route goes to the right on a much wider track with low gradients as this really is part of the old logging tramway – many sections have a lot of the old sleepers still visible. A few hundred metres on from here there is the possibility of going wrong when a dry stream line (**WP05**461masl) is entered.

Do not follow the bit of track within this stream line (*notice the little spur on the mapped track at WP05*) but get into the stream line and immediately get up and out the other (right hand) side; there is a track sign! From here the “tramway” ascends gently till a crest is reached (**WP06**531masl) just after another stream crossing – this is a good morning tea stop location. Continue the ascent to the WNW for another kilometre or so to meet a track sign indicating the North and South track. Stay on the WNW bearing and look out for a small track going off to the right, uphill with pink ribbons marking the location.

Access



Drive takes about 1:30 to 2hours

Fence on the right



Confluence Crossing



Tricky slope on red clay

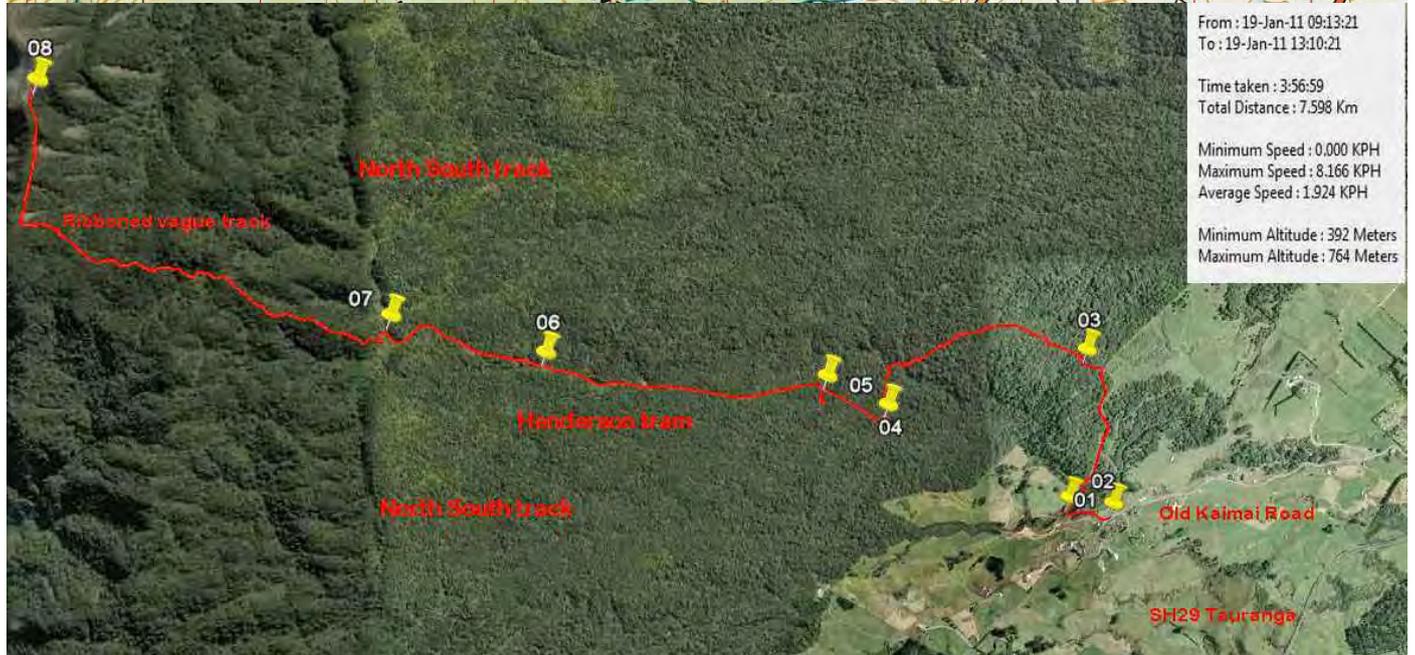
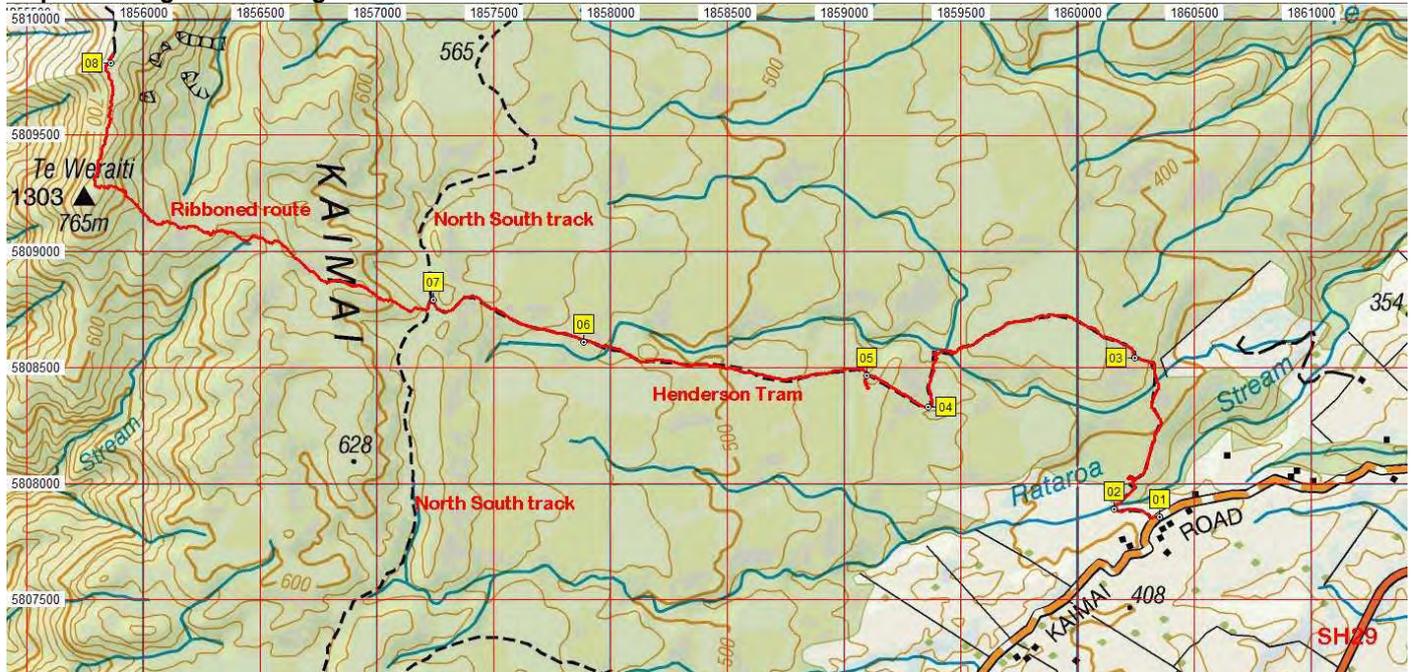


Morning tea at edge of tramway



North South track notice

Map and Google Earth Image with GPS data

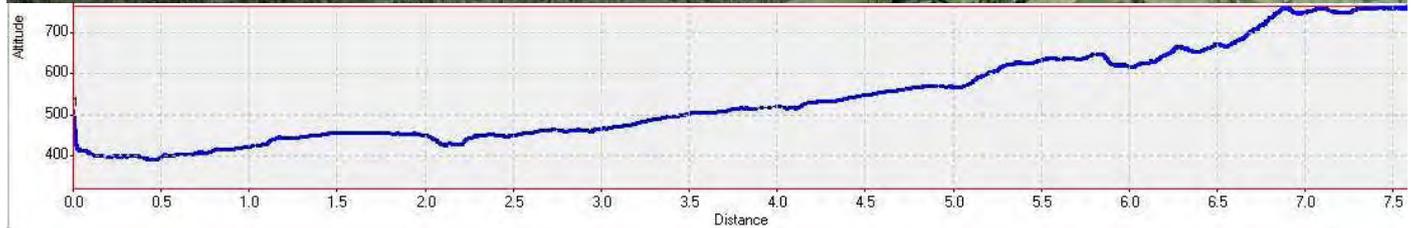


From : 19-Jan-11 09:13:21
 To : 19-Jan-11 13:10:21

Time taken : 3:56:59
 Total Distance : 7.598 Km

Minimum Speed : 0.000 KPH
 Maximum Speed : 8.166 KPH
 Average Speed : 1.924 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 392 Meters
 Maximum Altitude : 764 Meters



Profile for inwards trip only

Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	2770582	6369595	413	Park at edge of Old Kaimai Road
02	2770387	6369629	397	5mins; Cross the Rataroa Stream then lovely wooded track to second stream crossing
03	2770476	6370280	445	20mins; Minor T-junction, go right
04	2769594	6370069	449	40mins; Meet sign for Henderson Tram and go right to NW
05	2769333	6370204	461	1hour; Careful to check for track marker on your right on entering stream line. Do not follow stream
06	2768122	6370350	531	1:20min; Morning tea on crest after another stream crossing on tramway with many old sleepers
07	2767476	6370532	569	1:45min; Notice for North & South tracks. Go North a few metres then right , uphill on ribbons
08	2766098	6371555	759	3:30min; Te Weraiti Radar station, big blue dome. Views of Matamata and Mangatautari

NZTM	
Easting	Northing
1860349	5807857
1860155	5807891
1860242	5808542
1859361	5808330
1859099	5808465
1857886	5808609
1857240	5808790
1855859	5809811

There is now a long, slow ascent of about 90 minutes through rather dense regrowth forest where every move has to be planned as the ribbons are not always visible and the vestiges of track on the ground not too clear – if in a large party ensure each tramper knows the one behind is still in contact. The direction is still WNW for about 3km and until the ridge is crested – at this point the direction changes to virtually north.

From this point it takes around 20 minutes till suddenly the bush stops and a clearing is reached which has a tower with a large blue dome or ball on top – this is the Te Weraiti radar station maintained for / by New Zealand Airways.

AIRWAYS
NEW ZEALAND
Te Weraiti Radar Station



Yes, there is a track behind them



Lunch at the top



Dome from the bush

Good views of Matamata and Mangatautari and miles of well-developed farm land are available from here but ignore the road that is obviously there to bring in fuel and services for the station – the way out is the reverse of the walk in! Once back out it is nice to sit down and get the boots plus mud off.



Dome from the service road



The blue dome

- Notes:**
- **GPS** = Garmin GPSMap 60CSx
 - **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
 - **masl** = metres above sea level