

## The Route

The 20 kilometre Waitangi-Kerikeri walk begins at the Treaty House, or, from the Kerikeri end, at Cobham Road, and takes 4-5 hours at average walking speed. From the Treaty House follow Tau Henare Drive up past the golf course until it becomes Haruru Falls Road. Follow these roads 4.5 kilometres to the Mt Bledisloe summit (135m) and a sweeping view of Waitangi, the Bay of Islands, and the Kerikeri Inlet. A ceramic map at the summit identifies the surrounding landscape.

The walk then enters Waitangi Endowment Forest, part of New Zealand's conservation estate, originally gifted to the nation by the then Governor General, Lord Bledisloe, in 1936.

One kilometre into the forest, the trail reaches the boundary of UBS Timber Investors' Waitangi Forest, managed by Rayonier New Zealand Limited. The road forks, but at this point is signposted, with times and distances. A 2.5 metre cairn, assembled from local volcanic rock by Kerikeri sculptor Chris Booth, lies just beyond this boundary.



A plaque alongside the cairn marks the opening of the walk with a quote from A.R.D. Fairburn's poem *To a Friend in the Wilderness*.

I could be happy,  
in blue and fortunate weather,  
Roaming the country  
between you and the sun

Follow Te Puke, then Te Wairoa forest roads. The route goes through *Pinus radiata* and *macrocarpa* forest and is pleasantly shaded for much of its length with overhanging tree ferns and a pine needle carpet underfoot. After 11.5 kilometres of forest walking, the trail emerges at Inlet Road. Kerikeri township is then four kilometres distant, past flower gardens and orange orchards.

*The Waitangi-Kerikeri walk crosses commercial forest. Please beware of forest operations. UBS Timber Investors' Waitangi Forest, and the adjoining Waitangi Endowment Forest are kiwi sanctuaries. Dogs are not allowed. Please respect a total ban on fire within the forest, including smoking.*

## The History

For roughly one third of its length – from the Treaty House to Te Araroa cairn – the Waitangi-Kerikeri walk follows the route of an old Maori trail. The original trail linked the Maori settlement of Okura (now vanished, but once sited about two kilometres south-west of the Okura River bridge on Kerikeri Inlet Road) with Waitangi.

The forest road on which Te Araroa cairn stands was named for another Maori village – Te Puke – which once stood beside volcanic cones north-east of the cairn.

The pen and ink drawing (below) by the well-known Victorian artist Augustus Earle shows the trail between Kerikeri and Waitangi as it existed in 1827. The purpose of the rahui (right) is not known, but perhaps marked a Maori boundary.

(Research R. Brassey)

Fullers Northland



The stone store at Kerikeri – built 1832-35

National Library of Australia





## Founding Link

At the southern end of the trail is the Treaty House, and the ground where, on 6 February 1840, Maori chiefs and Queen Victoria's representative, Captain William Hobson, signed the nation's founding agreement – the Treaty of Waitangi. At the

northern end of the trail is Kerikeri, also steeped in history. In 1819, the Reverend Samuel Marsden established New Zealand's first mission station in Kerikeri. The first New Zealand soil turned by plough, and the first grass seed sown were here. Both settlements prosper still – Kerikeri as an orchard and craft centre, and Waitangi as a potent symbol. The trail links the two places, and opens views to one of New Zealand's prettiest seascapes – the Bay of Islands. The trail also connects, after a brief walk through the townships either end, with two other walkways – the Kerikeri-Rainbow Falls river walk in the north, and the Paihia-Opua coastal track to the south. Because it links historic places and links too with other trails on a north-south alignment, the Waitangi-Kerikeri trail was named, at its opening, as the founding link of Te Araroa.

At the opening, Maori and Pakeha adorn Te Araroa's cairn with greenery



Gil Hanly

## Te Araroa

A New Zealand-long foot trail was first proposed in the 1970s by the Federated Mountain Clubs. The New Zealand Walkway Commission, set up in 1976, had the long trail as an aim, but did not establish a route before its dissolution in 1989. Te Araroa Trust, a private organisation, was founded in 1994 to realise the goal.

In 1997, after consultation with district, city, and regional councils, DOC and iwi, Te Araroa Trust produced an indicative foot trail for the North Island.

The indicative trail links many

existing walkways, but much of the route awaits development.

The map is not a tramping guide.



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A four-hour walk between New Zealand's two most historic settlements.

# Waitangi-Kerikeri foot trail

