

Te Ara O Hei- "The Path of Hei" (Coromandel Walks) - Project Fact Sheet # 1

THE TRACK (AN OVERVIEW)



Te Ara O Hei is the first section of the walkway that forms part of TCDC's wider strategy of connecting walking tracks across the Coromandel Peninsula. Stage One of the walkway will take walkers on a 14.2km walk from Whitianga to Te Pupuha (the Blow Hole).

It is intended that future stages will extend the walkway further south to Hot Water Beach and once completed the walkway will be a 21km long coastal walkway from Whitianga to Shakespeare Cliff (Paparoa), to Cathedral Cove (Mautohe), through to Te Pare Pa (Hahei) onwards to Te Pupuha (the Blow Hole) and then to Hot Water Beach (Te Puia).

The walkway will be a world class visitor destination offering a special three-coast experience, taking in some of the Coromandel's most awe-inspiring coastlines and connecting two existing visitor destinations, namely Hot Water Beach (Te Puia) and Cathedral Cove (Mautohe).

Although Cathedral Cove (Mautohe) is world famous for its beauty, there are a large number of additional not so well-known features which will be highlighted along the walkway. Below is a list of some of the attractions the walkway will pass between Whitianga south to the blowhole near Hahei:

- ❑ **Whitianga Township** - The sunny seaside township of Whitianga is thought to be the first landing place of Kupe, who discovered New Zealand around 950AD after sailing from Tahiti.
- ❑ **Ferry Landing** - New Zealand's first hand-hewn stone wharf at Ferry Landing. Constructed in 1837, the Category One Historic Places Trust-rated structure is one of, if not the oldest surviving structures in the country.
- ❑ **Shakespeare Cliff** - A destination in itself this reserve provides spectacular views and was New Zealand's first trig point was established at Shakespeare Point, when Captain James Cook came ashore on November 9th 1769, to observe the transit of Mercury, giving him an exact longitude and latitude – hence the name Mercury Bay

- **Cook's Beach** - Cooks Beach was the first place that Cook's men were able to trade with Māori on their trip down the east coast on New Zealand, while botanist Joseph Banks explored the surrounding flora and fauna.
- **Purangi Estuary** - the picturesque Purangi Estuary is situated at the southern end of Cooks Beach where the Purangi estuary meets the sea. A popular spot for fishing boats using the boat ramp and swimmers using the sandy beach alongside the Purangi reserve and picnic areas.
- **Stella Evered Reserve** - Situated up Lees Rd, overlooking the Purangi Estuary and opposite Cooks Beach, the Stella Evered Reserve is a working farm, open to the public. Eric Evered entrusted the care of the Park to Perpetual Guardian Trust, an enduring professional trustee company, that's been in business since the 1880's. In addition to sheep and cattle, there's an array of citrus, apples, chestnut and walnut trees, which the public are welcome to pick and eat as they wander through the grounds. One of the more significant trees around the Reserve is a large pohutukawa, which graces the beachfront on the Purangi Estuary and is estimated to be between 600 - 1000 years old. The stream nearby is where Captain Cook refilled his water barrels when he first arrived in Mercury Bay on his ship Endeavour. The reserve is also being developed in partnership with the Perpetual Guardian Trust and our Council has planted a memorial forest, to commemorate the New Zealand soldiers who lost their lives in the battle of "The Somme" 100 years ago. www.tcdc.govt.nz/ww1memorialforest
- **Loop track and viewing platform off existing Cathedral Cove Walkway** - A recently constructed loop track from the existing Cathedral Cove walkway was completed in September 2016. This track will eventually take walkers north to Whitianga. Currently the return loop takes walkers to a newly constructed viewing platform which takes in a 160 degree panoramic views of the coast and islands.
- **Cathedral Cove** - The spectacular Cathedral Cove is a 1.6km diversion from the main track that takes walkers to the Te Wanganui-a-Hei Marine Reserve, one of only eight in the upper North Island featuring limestone arches and sea caves.
- **WW1 Memorial Forest** - Te Wao Whakamaumaharatanga- at Cathedral Cove, 2779 trees have been planted, one for each New Zealand soldier killed in the Gallipoli campaign in 1915.
- **Hahei Village** - This picturesque village boasts one of the most iconic beaches in the Coromandel, white sands, and gateway walk to Cathedral cove. From the village there are a range of activities including snorkelling, diving, kayaking to the nearby Te Whanganui-a-Hei Marine Reserve, or just relaxing on the beach or sampling local food and beer at the pour House.
- **Hereheretaura Ngati Hei Pa Site** - Te Pare Historic Reserve, which is home to the historical twin pa of Te Pare pā and Hereheretaura pā; the site of a Ngati Porou invasion where the attackers captured the higher pā and used their muskets to massacre the local Ngati Hei people sheltering at the lower pa. The historic terraces surrounding the pā sites will be sensitively restored as part of the development and provide safe access, reducing the impact of current and projected visitor numbers;

- **The Hereheretaura Peninsula** - where scenes from the blockbuster Adam Adamson film “The Chronicles of Narnia” were shot;
- **Blowhole (Te Pupuha)** - In rough weather the blow hole shoots sea water high into the air and in fine weather the third platform will allow walkers to see the 24m into the blowhole;

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