

Te Ara O Hei- "The Path of Hei" (Coromandel Walks) - Project Fact Sheet # 2

THE TRACK AND ANCILLIARY WORKS

The walkway will mostly be a flat gradient, with some short steeper sections. In some sections the walkway will also climb hills, skirt the cliff edges, meander through coastal scrubland, pass across small sections of working farmland and skirt small coastal/rural communities, thereby offering a unique and diverse environment for an optimal walking experience that showcases much of what New Zealand has to offer, all in a one-day walk.

From start to finish (Stages One and Two), the walk would take a full day or 8 hours to complete, while the core part of the walkway (Stage One) will take between 3-6 hours to complete.

Track Signage

There will be four categories of signage on the track as follows:

1. Information signage - about track location and orientation and will include a map showing current location in relation to walking route and other relevant information about the location.
2. Direction Signage - includes destination route and approximate time to specific destinations as well as information about how hard/easy the walk will be.
3. Way finding markers -these will be on wooden posts and will have directional arrows as well as location numbers, so that walkers can let emergency services know where they are on the walkway in the event of an emergency.
4. Interpretative signs - Includes information about specific points and track features including cultural areas of interest.

There will also be additional signage at appropriate locations to inform walkers of hazards and to keep to the track and respect private property.

Purangi Crossing

In the short to medium term, our Council has put out an Expression of Interest for a commercial operator to provide a punt as a way of taking walkers across the Purangi Estuary. It's envisaged this service will be all year round and run on demand during the peak period. The proposed un-motorised punt crossing service will be low impact on the environment and beach users, and does not require any additional structures on the coast. A long term aspiration is for a boardwalk around the Purangi Estuary. However this is still in the very early planning stages. Once we have further detail and a formal proposal from our preferred EOI partner we will update the community and adjoining residents about the proposed crossing service.

Platforms, Boardwalks and Bridges

Five viewing platforms are proposed in total. These platforms are set back from the cliff edge and are designed to minimise visual impact from the coast. The platforms are critical health and safety feature to prevent walkers taking risks to access popular viewpoints, particularly in areas that are difficult to keep walkers safe, by either planting or installing other measures such as safety fencing.

As well as the viewing platforms, there are also some areas with boardwalks proposed.

A short 8m wooden bridge is also proposed along the western boundary of the property at 282 Lees Road. A pedestrian underpass will also take walkers under an existing working farm track to join the Cathedral Cove Track.

Of more significance and for wider community benefit is the proposed 22m single span bridge adjacent to the road that will allow walkers to safely cross the Flaxmill Bay stream rather than conflicting with vehicles using the existing road ford.

Landscaping/Planting

Extensive planting is proposed along parts of the walkway initially with further planting planned as the walkway develops. The proposed landscaping will help to protect and in many cases enhance the existing coastal environment; provide amenity and shading for walkers, as well as providing screening to adjoining private land owners where needed.

A significant amount of planting and landscaping will be carried out around the proposed new car park to be built at Lees Rd, as well. To add to this riparian planting along the stream and walkway from the new car park to a new access point to Cathedral Cove will further enhance the ecological and landscape environment. This mitigation planting will have long term environmental benefits, which includes helping to achieve the green streams objectives of Waikato Regional Council as one of the headwaters of the Purangi Estuary.

Kiosk and toilets

An information kiosk will be built at the new Lees Road car park. The kiosk will provide information to visitors as well as a location where people make bookings for tours in Hahei Village and surrounding areas. It will also be the place to view the shuttle service times and seek out other relevant information.

The proposed kiosk can seat up to 100 walkers will include a toilet block for walkers at the start for the track. It is intended that the kiosk will also sell refreshments for walkers and will have with a seated area and kitchen for food preparation. The Kiosk should create jobs for up to 5 staff in the summer period.

The walkway also will be well serviced by existing toilets, however in addition to the new toilets at the Lees Road car park, two new toilets are proposed at the junction of the existing Cathedral Cove track which is approximately 1.3 km from the Lees Road car park. A further toilet is also proposed on the return walk from Hahei to the Blowhole (stage 1A) south of Hahei.