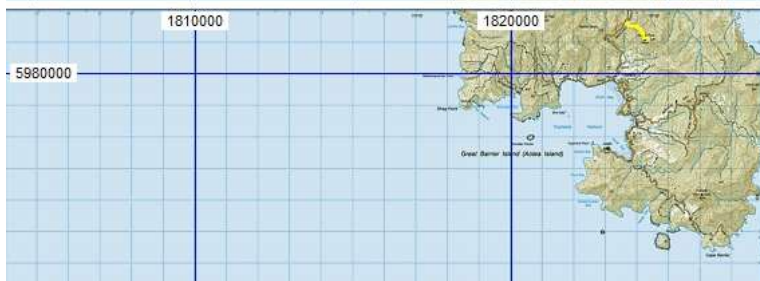


GREAT BARRIER ISLAND

Topo50 Map: AY34 Claris and AZ34 Moehau

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

The following information is designed to indicate the start of the named walk or tramp and to supply a few facts and figures on times, distances and efforts involved. As these tramps are all on Great Barrier Island the first step is to get yourself to Auckland and then over to Great Barrier. On this occasion the choice was simple – the trip was an 80th birthday present which included flights on Barrier Airways from Auckland to Claris. If one goes by ferry there is then the possibility of taking one's own transport but on this occasion there was no problem since the gift included a rental Toyota Rav plus a bach to stay in for 3 nights.



Background information: The main roads on the island are now sealed and in fact are of very good standard though they are very winding to cope with the steep terrain and the gravel roads travelled on were also of very high standard and wider than some of the sealed roads. There is a petrol station close to the aerodrome in Claris but fuel, like everything else, is rather expensive. For example a large bottle of beer cost \$12 in the Irish Pub but worth every cent. Travelling speeds are low and in general it is very comfortable to toodle along between 30 and 40kph but 50kph was reached at times on straight sections of road.

The Hobbits were accommodated in a house opposite the school in Trywhena which is 30-45min south of the airstrip at Claris. There is a shop which has WiFi and a bar with TV whilst for more atmosphere there is the Irish Pub, also with WiFi, 5 or 10minutes back down the road towards Claris. The Irish Pub was the only place that obviously had a generator and most electricity is generated from solar panels. It is quite possible to do a couple of walks per day or one walk and some exploring – like Whangaparapara which was once the centre of whaling activities.

The walks undertaken were:

Red line – Mt Hobson

Blue line –Kaitoke Hot pools

Yellow Line – Station Rock

Mauve line - The first few kilometres of the Kowhai Valley Track were tramped but someone forgot to take his GPS. This walk actually links through to the Station Rock track, the red line.



Kaitoke Hot Pools:



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1817918	5987781	36.0	Car park for Kaitoke Hot Pools
02	1818077	5988011	27.1	10min (411m); Open area with some view southwards
03	1818675	5988084	18.0	20min (1.14km); Edge of the wetlands
04	1818829	5988560	15.8	30min (1.74km); Just on edge of wetlands heading WNW
05	1818133	5988708	28.0	45min (2.66km); DoC toilet
06	1818119	5988746	25.9	47min (2.66km); Picnic bench at hot pools below 187 steps up
07	1818006	5989384	25.0	1:21min (3.57km); Junction with Tramline Track
08	1818060	5988701	32.0	1:50min (4.54km); Last pool on upstream side



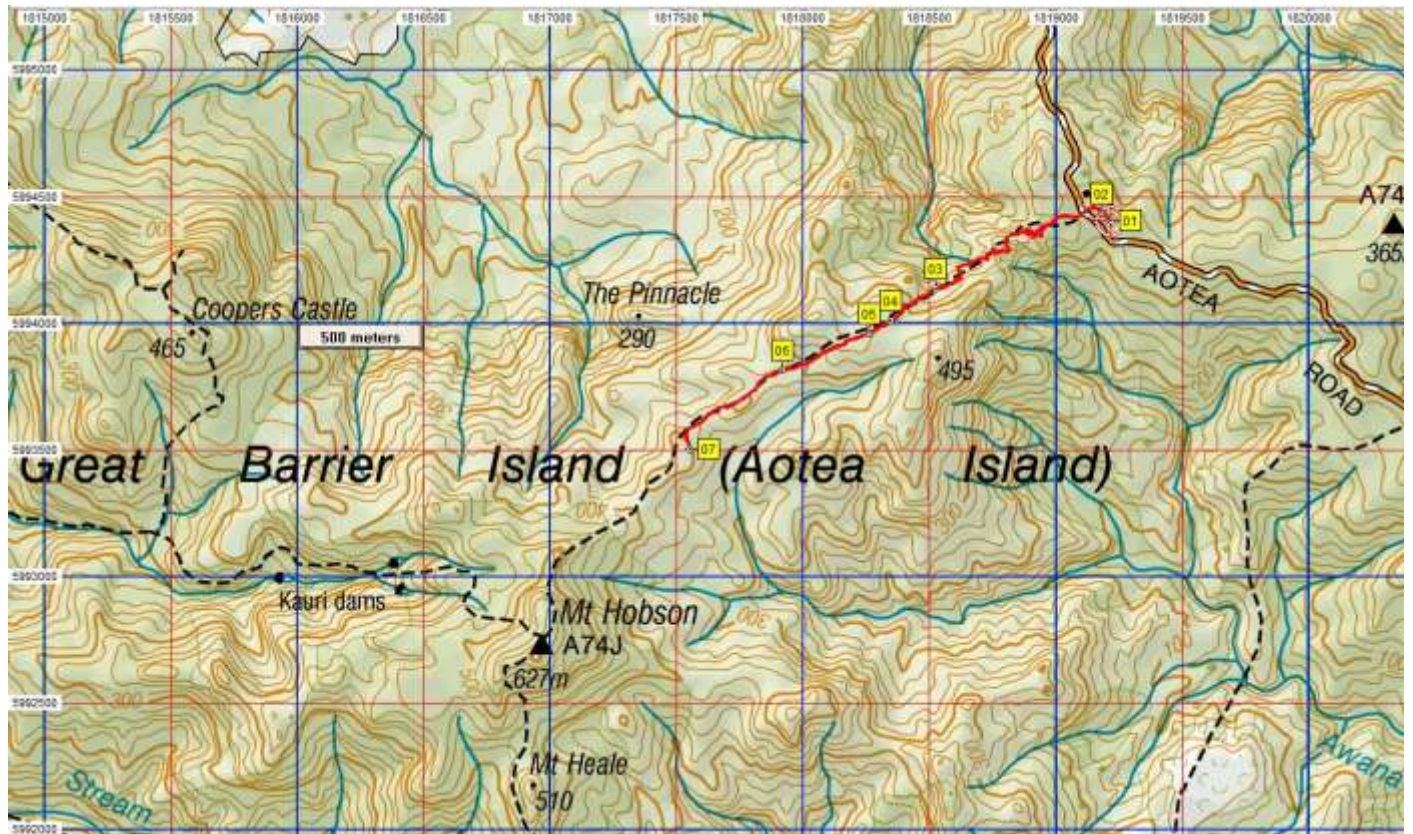
The track starts with a Save the Kauri "boot-washer" so make sure it gets used. The track is very easy going "tourist" grade though after a while the gravel surface can begin to burn the soles of the feet. It is pleasant walking through quite lush bush. Within 45minutes a DoC toilet is passed and this literally is right before the very obvious pool with picnic bench is reached.



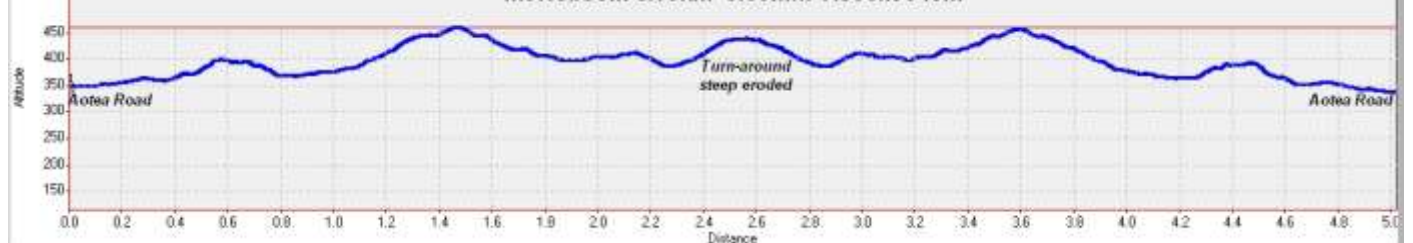
The pool is in a very pleasant location but the colour of the water is not too inviting. For the regular trumper the walk has to be continued for another half hour up the 187 steps to the lookout then on a bit more to meet the Tramline Track which is one of the access routes to Mt Hobson. On the day the same route out was followed with a short diversion upstream from the main pool – not exciting!



Mt Hobson:



Mt Hobson: 5.03km 3:03min Ascent 348m



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1819218	5994406	349	Car park on RHS of road plus DoC toilet at N end
02	1819180	5994435	349	2min (58m); LHS of road info board at track entrance
03	1818525	5994141	386	33min (1.09km); Serious steps upwards
04	1818348	5994010	445	42min (1.34km); More steps up
05	1818260	5993963	460	48min (1.47km); Steps down
06	1817918	5993816	398	1:02min (1.86km); Morning tea spot
07	1817552	5993505	438	1:38min (2.53km); Badly degraded track going steeply up - dodgy for descent

There are 3 distinct routes to ascend Mt Hobson and what was described as the shortest was perhaps not the easiest for the trampler of advanced years. A little bit of a drive to get on to Aotea Road north of Claris but nothing too exciting as this is a sealed road and it is in good condition, a few pretty good views en-route if you can spot where to stop in time. Signage for the track in via Windy Canyon comes upon you quite suddenly so stay aware after passing another track exiting on to the road about 3km before the desired starting point. There is ample parking space, picnic table and DoC toilet on the opposite NE side of the road. A large info board greets the walker then it is straight onto the level track after boot-washing – enjoy the level part.



Within a few metres the vista of Windy Canyon opens up and the use of very well-constructed staircases begins and this is a taste of what is to come.

In fact there is very little track walking to do as if you are not ascending a staircase then you are descending. However the further you go there are fewer staircases and the rougher the track becomes as the refurbishment / improvement of the track is obviously a job-in-hand.



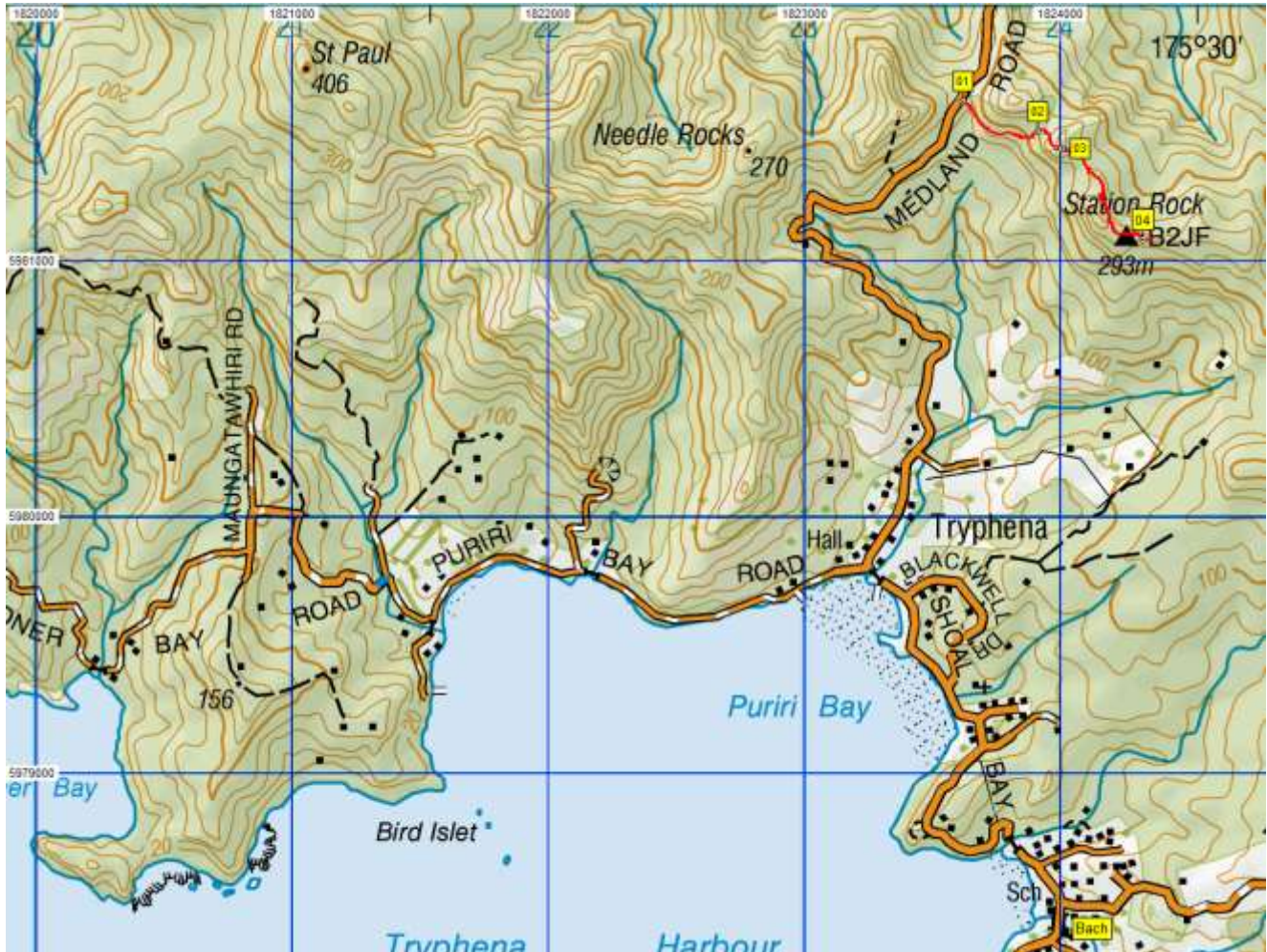


A good spot for morning tea and a seat presents itself after around one hour when there is a large artifact from the days of active logging. This is a huge log supported by two others and was where some of the pooley devices passed over.

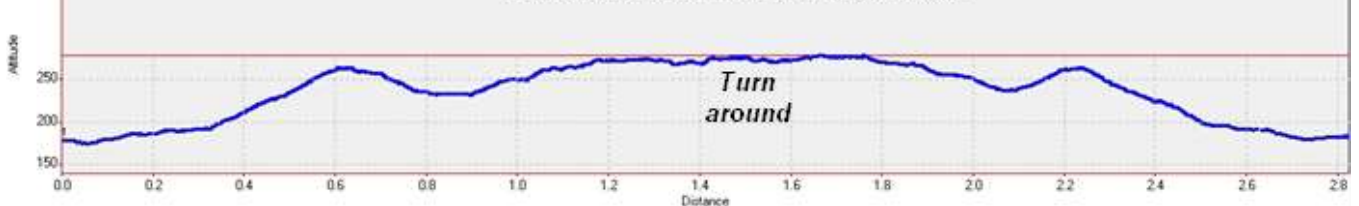
On the day the track degraded very badly after about 1:30min and though the slope in question was easy enough to ascend it was fairly difficult for the older trumper to descend – so the plug got pulled and the party retired back out the way they came in.



Station Rock:



Station Rock 1:52min 2.83km 200m ascent



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1823619	5981627	178	Track start 10min from Tryphena on Medland Road
02	1823913	5981507	224	1min (425m); Best set of stone steps
03	1824004	5981441	260	18min (595m); Notice post with junction for first high point
04	1824322	5981087	272	52min (1.41km); Station Rock high point and turn-around
Bach	1824124	5978393		Small green house 150m up track just past the school on opposite side of the road

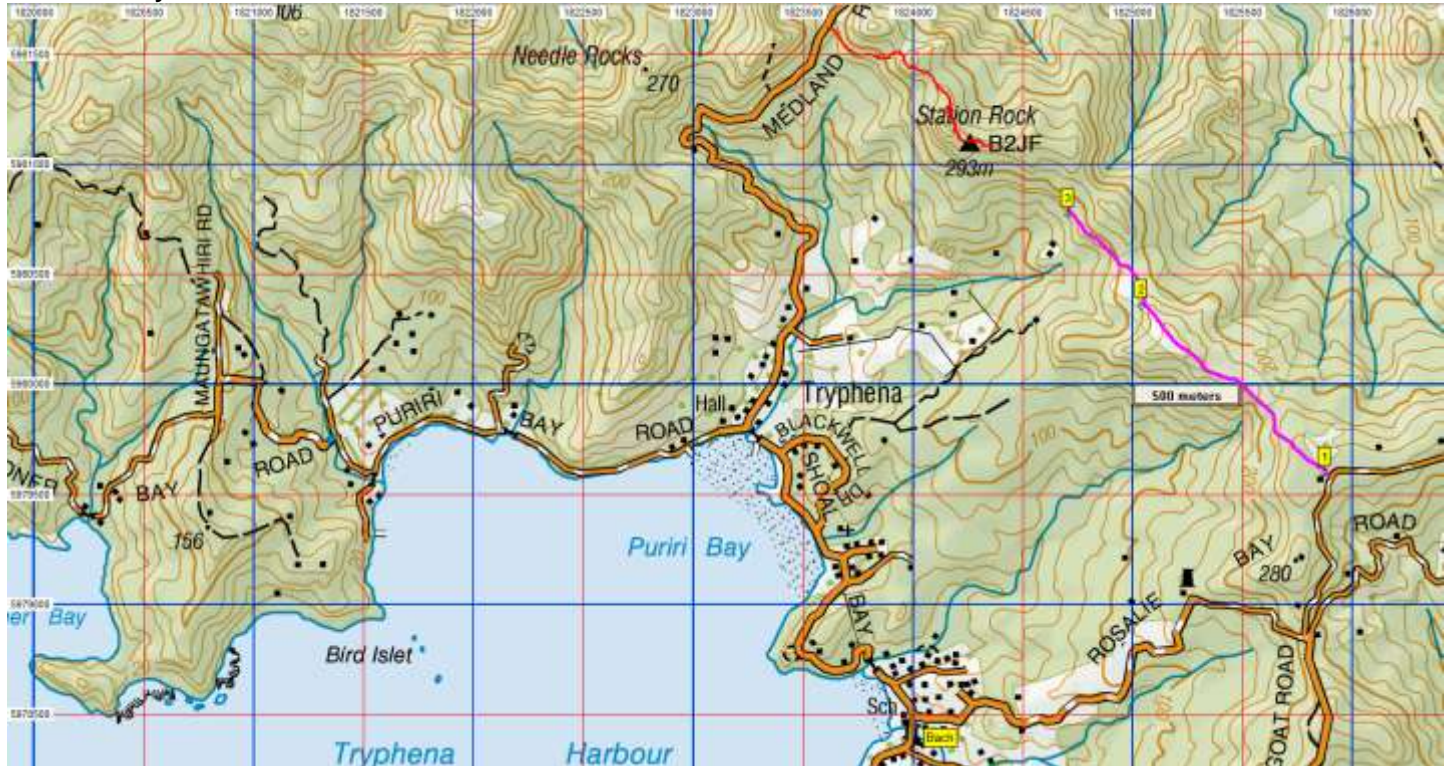


This track starts some 10min from the bach which is shown on the above map of Tryphena. The start is some 2-3km from the coast on Medland Road – there is a small bay large enough to take one or two cars.

This is a tramping track and quite easy to follow and it has the odd wooden staircase as well as a couple of sections of stone steps. By continuing to the SE one runs into the Kowahai Valley track but this track is not shown on any map. There are two high points to be surmounted but it is a very short easy walk.



Kowhai Valley Track



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
1	1825872	5979596	250	Shelter at bend in road with sign post pointing to Kowhai Valley Track to NW
2	1825038	5980358	220	Bend in road where notice says "end of road ahead". Track with DoC markers off left
3	1824704	5980772	180	On gentle track with wire fence and obvious house on IHS
Bach	1824124	5978393	15.0	Small green house 150m up track just past the school on opposite side of the road

Information on this walk is sketchy because it was unplanned and the GPS was not available. However very easy to get to the start by heading ENE up Rosalie Bay Road - which is a pretty steep windy gravel road - for 3km to reach a junction where there is a large shed or shelter with pictures of insects decorating it. Signage is very clear.

It was in fact a mistake to park here as the first km that was walked is actually still on the same gravel road. There is ample parking at a bend where there is a notice stating that the accessible road stops just ahead.

The track with orange DoC track indicators starts at this bend and soon reverts to more gravel road heading quite steeply downhill until there is a simple barrier across the way ahead and the track heads more steeply downhill on the right signposted Medland Beach. A few metres down here the Station Rock track is signed off left on a very gentle slope through palms.

