

## KAPITI COAST

Paekakariki Escarpment / Kapiti Island

Topo50 Map: BP32 Paraparaumu

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

### How to get to START:

A convenient base for both outings is the Asure Motel on Paraparaumu Beach

### The Paekakariki Escarpment Walk

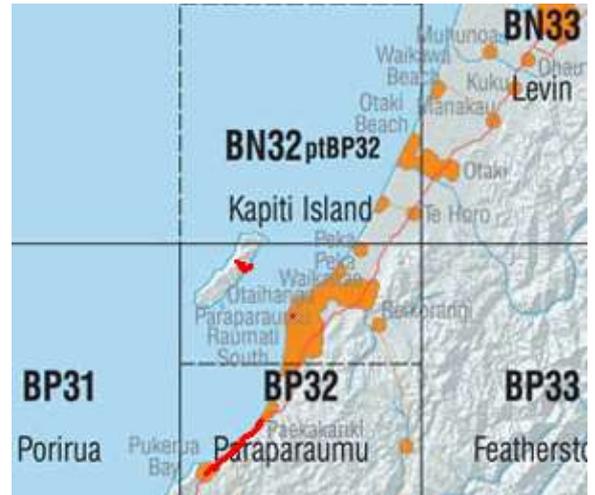
South on SH1 from Paraparaumu and park at the station in Paekakariki  
Walk parallel to the railway to the level crossing and turn right past shops  
Take the first road on the left and follow the signs

### The Kapiti Island

Get info at [www.doc.govt.nz/kapitivisits](http://www.doc.govt.nz/kapitivisits)

Arrange a boat charter from Paraparaumu Beach via:

1. [www.kapitiexplorer.nz](http://www.kapitiexplorer.nz) or
2. [www.kapitiislandnaturetours.co.nz](http://www.kapitiislandnaturetours.co.nz)



**Rough description – The Paekakariki Escarpment** – A ten kilometre walk high above SH1 and the North Island Main Trunk rail line on the Kapiti Coast just south of Paraparaumu from Paekakariki to Pukerua Bay. Not suitable for youngsters, the nervous aged, those who suffer from vertigo or dislike steps. Great plant life and tremendous views whilst the return can be sheer bliss by catching the train back from Pukerua Bay to Paekakariki – remember your Gold Card!

**Detail:** From the station parking area (**WP01**) walk south parallel to the rail line and turn right plus cross the road that crosses the level crossing. Pass a few white concrete seats then left at the junction (**WP02**). Continue down this street to the SW until it meets SH1 (**WP03**) to turn sharply back on itself and head NE up SH1. Head down the steep steps (**WP04**) to get under and away from the chaos of SH1 and on to a well formed track bordered by many native plants and wild flowers. From here it is hard to go wrong as there is nowhere else to go but on the track. Within the hour the first set of steps is met (**WP05**) then there is the first fitness test presented as a very steep zig zag upwards (**WP06**).



If the energy can be found and nerves overcome forget the effort and look down and out towards the sea – the views can be most rewarding – also look out for the cast iron kilometric posts as a gauge of progress.

At the high point (**WP07**), which is also basically the halfway point, there is a seat where a rest can be had whilst some rehydration and refuelling is also done.

Some people do not like ascending large flights of steps whilst other hate going down them – the descents ahead can be daunting. It really is very steep but the views of the shoreline, the non-stop traffic on the highway plus the regular trains make it all rather exciting and help to relieve any possible feelings of insecurity or vertigo!

There are two very new, very stable swing bridges to cross – both bridges (**WP08** and **WP09**) are pretty high but can carry 5 persons at a time so very safe and do give tremendous views though after crossing each bridge there is an inevitable steep re-ascent.

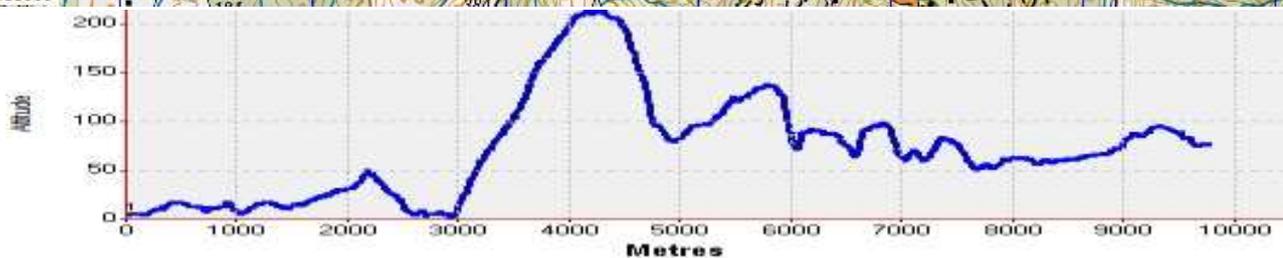
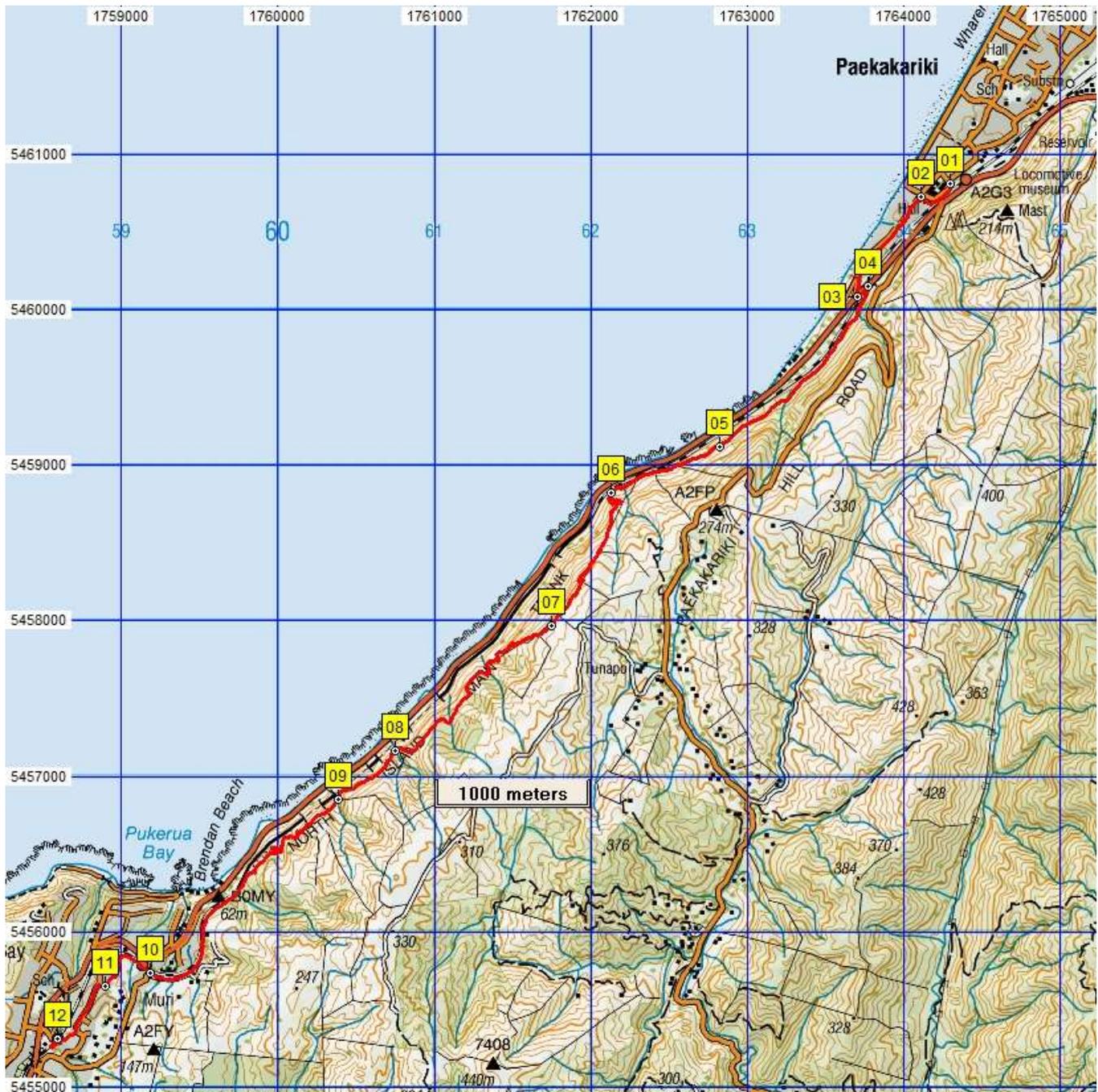


The next section is less visually pleasing as it looks like the buildings etc of Pukerua Bay seem to stay as far away as ever whilst the track is close to the rail line but the station does not show itself. There is large sign advising that whistling is necessary – perhaps this is for trains and not trampers.

Eventually a gate is passed through (**WP10**) giving access to an old railway platform and “station closed” sign.



After the “closed station” the track heads up a grassy slope, which most legs seem to object to, and after about three and a half hours the walking is on the streets of suburban Pukerua Bay (**WP11**) before a walkway with the picture of a “puffing” train goes to the right, past a large skate park and children’s playground leading to the Pukerua Bay rail station (**WP12**). Trains are scheduled about every thirty minutes and offer a very comfortable – free if a Gold Card is held – ride back to the starting point in Paekakariki Station. The whole walk is signposted to take 4 hours and this time can easily be met by most people.



N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1764222	5460148	20.0	Park near station, walk SW parallel to rail then turn right and cross road
02	1764028	5460062	18.0	250m (10min); Turn left to SW after shops
03	1763620	5459422	13.0	1km (20min); Turn sharply back N on to edge of SH1
04	1763694	5459487	11.0	1.1km (22min); Down steps to cross under SH1 and railway line
05	1762746	5458461	49.0	2.6km (48min); First of the steps
06	1762048	5458163	5.0	3.4km (1:05min); Low point with massive zig zag ascent ahead
07	1761667	5457312	206	4.83km (1:53min); Seat with view at halfway high point
08	1760672	5456505	72.0	6.47km (2:33min); First high swing bridge
09	1760304	5456188	65.0	7.81km (2:44min); Second high swing bridge
10	1759107	5455067	64.0	9.09km (3:20min); Through gate to "closed" rail station
11	1758819	5454990	88.0	9.54km (3:27min); Off track and on to street in suburbia
12	1758513	5454647	76.0	10.21km (3:40min); Pukerua Bay rail station for train north to start point at Paekakariki

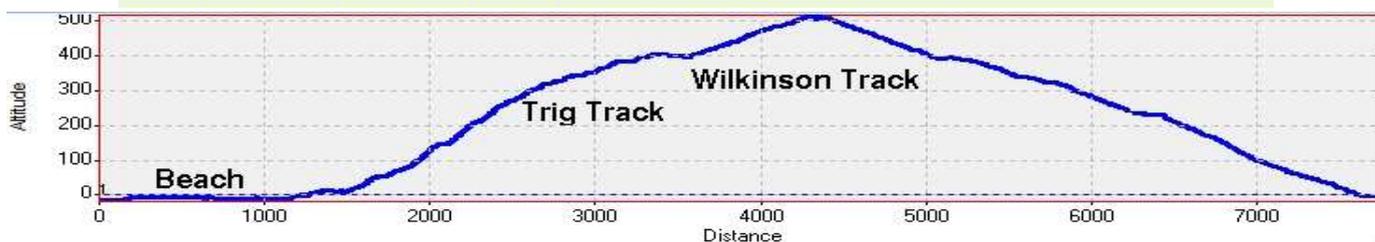
## Kapiti Island

This is one of the “not to be missed” opportunities that DOC manages and all that is done here is to show on the map where one can walk with an indication of times involved – the standard trip organised by the boat charter companies allows ample time for a good look around and browse.

The route recommended is to go up (WP03) the trig track – too steep, root infested and slippery for safe descent – passing some feeders (WP04) en-route to reach the Junction (WP05) before heading to the tower (WP07) on the summit. The return route is on the wide though rather muddy and slippery when wet Wilkinson Track



N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1763020	5475183	0.0	Disembark from boat
02	1762809	5475131	4.0	650m (45min); Flushing toilets on track after "briefing"
03	1762586	5474858	14.0	1.5km (1:01min); Junction with Loop Track off to right
04	1761965	5475195	340	2.85km (2:03min); Feeding station on pretty steep Trig Track
05	1761868	5475432	398	3.46km (2:23min); Junction to muddy, wide Wilkinson Track
06	1761414	5475693	503	4.25km (2:45min); Bottom of viewing tower
07	1761383	5475668	513	4.25km (2:47min); Top of viewing tower / Trig
08	1762340	5475165	242	6.22km (3:49min); Feeding stations and picnic table on Wilkinson Track
09	1762768	5475304	43.9	7.37km (4:36min); Junction with Loop Track joining from south side
10	1762842	5475298	4.9	7.78km (4:45min); Back on beach near Info Centre shelter



There really are birds everywhere and on the day the following were seen Kereru (fat as chickens), Weka (everywhere), Stitchbirds, Saddlebacks, Tomtits, Fantail, Robin, Tui and, of course, the entertaining Kaka. Many others were heard but not seen This is a weather dependent trip as it involves the boat trip which takes about 20min each way.



Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin GPSmap 62sc **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit **masl** = metres above sea level