
TRACKS FROM THE EASTERN HILLS, HUTT VALLEY TO WAINUIOMATA, ŌRONGORONGOS AND THE WAIRARAPA PRE 1860s

Introduction

This document is about tracks that went from the Hutt Valley to Wainuiomata, Ōrongorongos, Remutakas and the Wairarapa. This is before the roads were built when the Europeans started arriving in Wellington Region from the 1840s onwards.

The area for the purposes of this document covers is southwards from the SH2 road where it crosses the Remutaka Range. That is, SH2 road south to Turakirae Head covering the east side which is the Wairarapa and the west side which is Wellington.

The document is split into two parts.

The first part is about Maori Tracks.

The second part is about other tracks to and from Wainuiomata in use before the Wainuiomata Hill Road was built in 1860

For more history about the Māori naming and their association with the Hutt Valley see the book called The Great Harbour of Tara by G. Leslie Adkin.

Modern day named features are used.

Each track has its own map.

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Māori Tracks Information

Māori Tracks were named but this information has been lost.

The Māori Tracks were foot tracks that had years of wear and tear of single file groups moving from one point to another. Most tracks were used to access resources and to get from one settlement to another. Tracks were kept to leading spurs and ridges wherever possible so that the route passed through terrain where the bush was less dense due to shallower and drier soil conditions.

Wainuiomata and the Ōrongorongos was used by the Māori's for berry collection, bird hunting and fishing - that is a food resource area.

Quite a few of the tracks that are being used now were originally Māori Tracks.

A number of Māori Tracks since the 1950s have had earth works done to them meaning that traces of them have been lost. Also some have been upgraded to cater for recreational use.

The Wainuiomata Hill which is located on the Eastern Side of the Hutt Valley prior to the 1850s was known as Pukeatua – which means hill of the god. Puke means hill. Atua means god. The top ridge of the Wainuiomata Hill was once covered in the rātā tree which, in full bloom, made a crown of red on the top of the range.

There was a Māori settlement in the vicinity of William Jones Park and Village area in Wainuiomata. The name of this settlement is unknown.

Post 1840s Tracks Information

These tracks were foot / horse tracks. These were rough paths that were typically flattened by use rather than having been constructed by use. Some of these fell into disuse when a road was built so that it could take a cart and horse.

Benched track means it has a discernible shape as they were usually cut for pack horses. There will be a bank on the up hill side of the track.

Kōnini Firebreak Track

The track starts from 11 Brian Morgan Terrace, Wainuiomata and goes to the ECNZ Power Pylon Road. It is thought that it then goes to the Leightons Gully Track.

It is named after the fruit of the native fuchsia or the kotukutuku.

Source – *Personal Knowledge*.



Main Ridge / Hawtrey Track

The track starts from the top of the Wainuiomata Hill where the Point Howard Track meets the ridgeline. It then follows the ridgeline south above the eastern side of Wellington Harbour to Pencarrow Head / Te Rae-Akiaki. In the northern part prior to the road that goes from Camp Bay, Eastbourne to Gollans Valley, the tracks are named Main Ridge and Hawtrey. South of this, the track is un-named.

There was also access to the track from about 387 Muritai Road that went up Karaka Gully and followed the ridgeline to Pencarrow Head / Te Rae-Akiaki.

Hawtrey is named after Montague John Greg Hawtrey (1805 – 1886) who was of Trinity College, Cambridge, England. He was a friend and supporter of Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1796 – 1862) who was involved in the European settlement of New Zealand.

Main Ridge is a geographical term in that it is the prominent ridge and that it is long and narrow.

Source – *Eastbourne: A History of the Eastern Bays* by Ann Beaglehole.



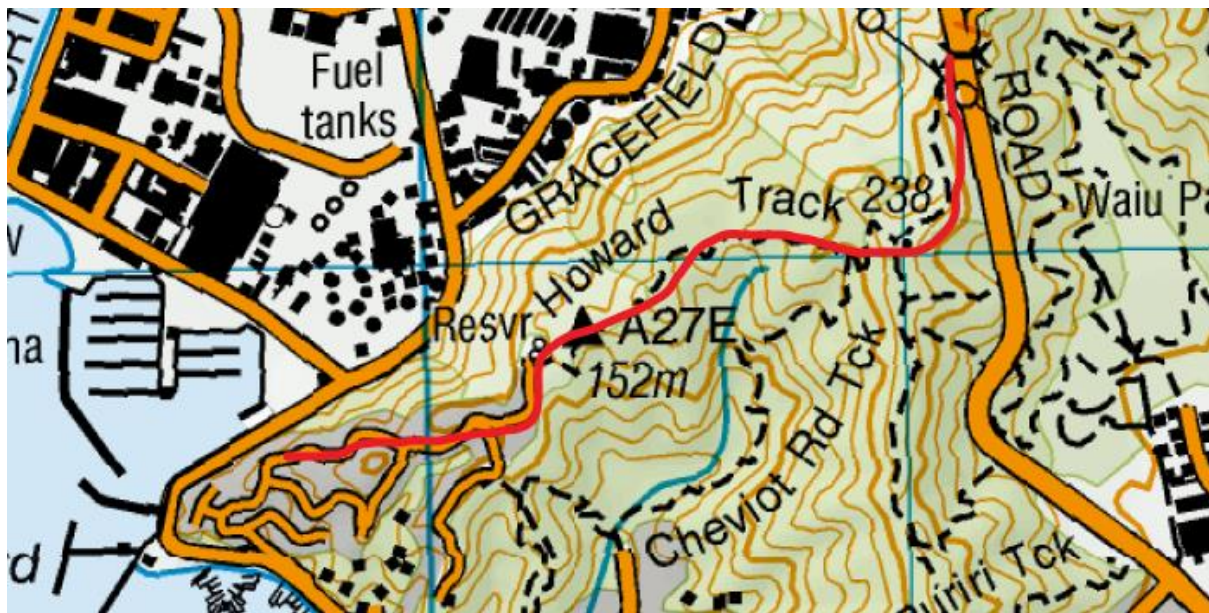
Ngaumatau / Howard Road Track

The track starts from 87 Howard Road, Lowry Bay and goes to the Main Ridge Track between Eastbourne and Wainuiomata. It was used by the early settlers going to and from Wainuiomata from the 1840s until the road was built over the Wainuiomata Hill Road in 1860. There was a Māori settlement called Ngaumatau located at about 3 Howard Road. Also James Jackson (1811 – 1846) and his wife Emma Jackson nee Ogden (1813 – 1888) had a house in Lowry Bay that was located on the ridge above Dillon Street.

Howard Road is named after Philip Henry Howard (1801 – 1883) who was a member of parliament in England and a committee member of the New Zealand Association.

Ngaumatau means a bite of the fish hook. Ngau means bite. Matau means fish hook.

Source – *The Land Barons Of Wainuiomata* by Gavin Wallace.



Ngutu-ihe Track

The track started from the Ngutu-ihe Māori settlement which was located on the north side of Tunnel Grove, Seaview, Hutt Valley and went to Waiū Street, Wainuiomata.

It means a beak of the garfish. Ngutu means beak. Ihe means garfish. It was a Māori settlement associated with the Ngāti-Ira tribal group.

Source – *Nicholas Beynon Map.*



Ōrongorongo River

The track used the riverbed itself.

Ōrongorongo is named after the shortened version of Te Wai O Rongorongo – the waters of Rongorongo. Te means the. Wai means water. O means of. Rongorongo was the wife of Turi Kaihautu of the canoe Aotea. Also sister of Rongokako of the Tākitimu people of the Hawkes Bay area. Rongorongo is a female name. Also Orongo was an ancient deity of Hawaii, where it was known as Orongo. Rongo was the Māori god of agriculture, and father of the kumara.

Source – *A Chronology of the Tararua and Rimutaka Ranges* – 6th Edition by Ross Kerr.



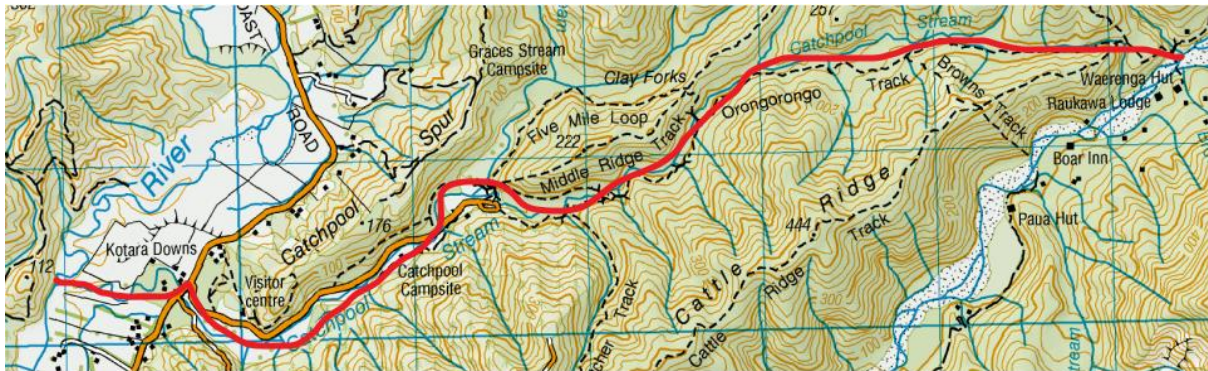
Ōrongorongo Track

The track starts in the Catchpool Valley, Wainuiomata and goes to the mouth of Turere Stream in the Ōrongorongo Valley.

Originally there was a track called The Five Mile as it was 5 miles long from where it started from about 925 Coast Road, Wainuiomata and went along Thistle Stream and then Catchpool Stream. It then went to the mouth of Turere Stream in the Ōrongorongo Valley. This was replaced in 1981 by another track called the Ōrongorongo Track that started from the Catchpool Valley Road Carpark.

Ōrongorongo is named after a shortened version of Te Wai O Rongorongo – the waters of Rongorongo. Te means the. Wai means water. O means of. Rongorongo was the wife of Turi Kaihautu of the canoe Aotea. Also sister of Rongokako of the Tākitimu people of the Hawkes Bay area. Rongorongo is a female name. Also Orongo was an ancient deity of Hawaii, where it was known as Orongo. Rongo was the Māori god of agriculture, and father of the kumara.

Source – *Department of Conservation.*



Pākuratahi / Remutaka To The Wairarapa Crossing Track

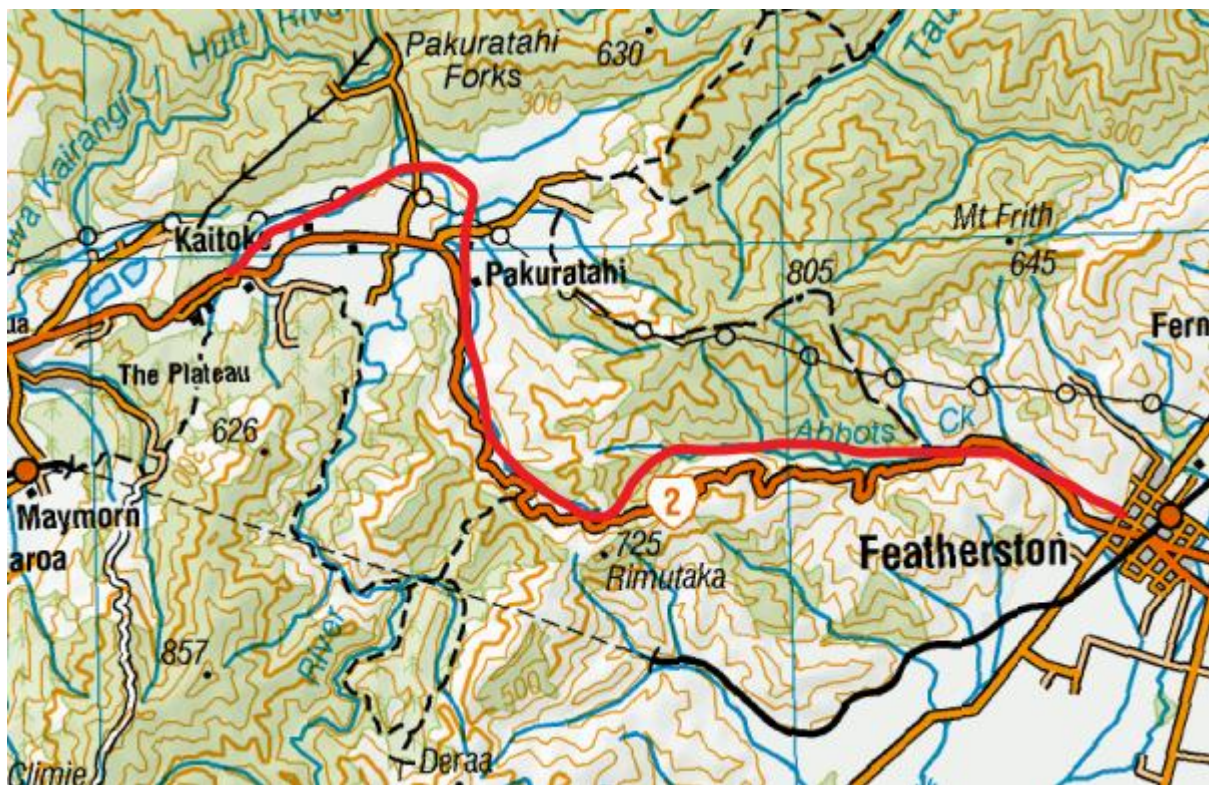
The track followed Pākuratahi Stream, then along Remutaka Stream, over the saddle where the road is, then along Abbots Stream reaching the Wairarapa.

Pākuratahi means first swamp hen. Pākura means swamp hen which is also known as the native bird pūkeko. Tahi means first.

Remutaka means edge of his cape touching the ground on that spot. Remu means edge. Taka means ground. Also a noted iwi ancestor Haunui-a-Nanaia of the Kurahaupō people from the Hawkes Bay area was resting or sitting on the pass, while looking over Wairarapa when he first saw these ranges. It was named as part of his journey of discovery across the southern North Island. In 2017 the name changed from Rimutaka to Remutaka.

Wairarapa means glistening waters. Wai means water. Rararapa means glistening.

Source – *A Chronology of the Tararua and Rimutaka Ranges* – 6th Edition by Ross Kerr.



Parangarahu / Fitzroy Bay To The Wainuiomata River Track

The track starts from the Māori settlement at Parangarahu in Fitzroy Bay and goes to the Lighthouse Bridge along the Wainuiomata River. The lower Wainuiomata Valley pre 1860s was a cultivation area. There were also eel ponds in the river. It was used to bypass going around Barring Head / Ōrua–Pouanui. Also to cross the Wainuiomata River here as it is safer than at the mouth of the river.

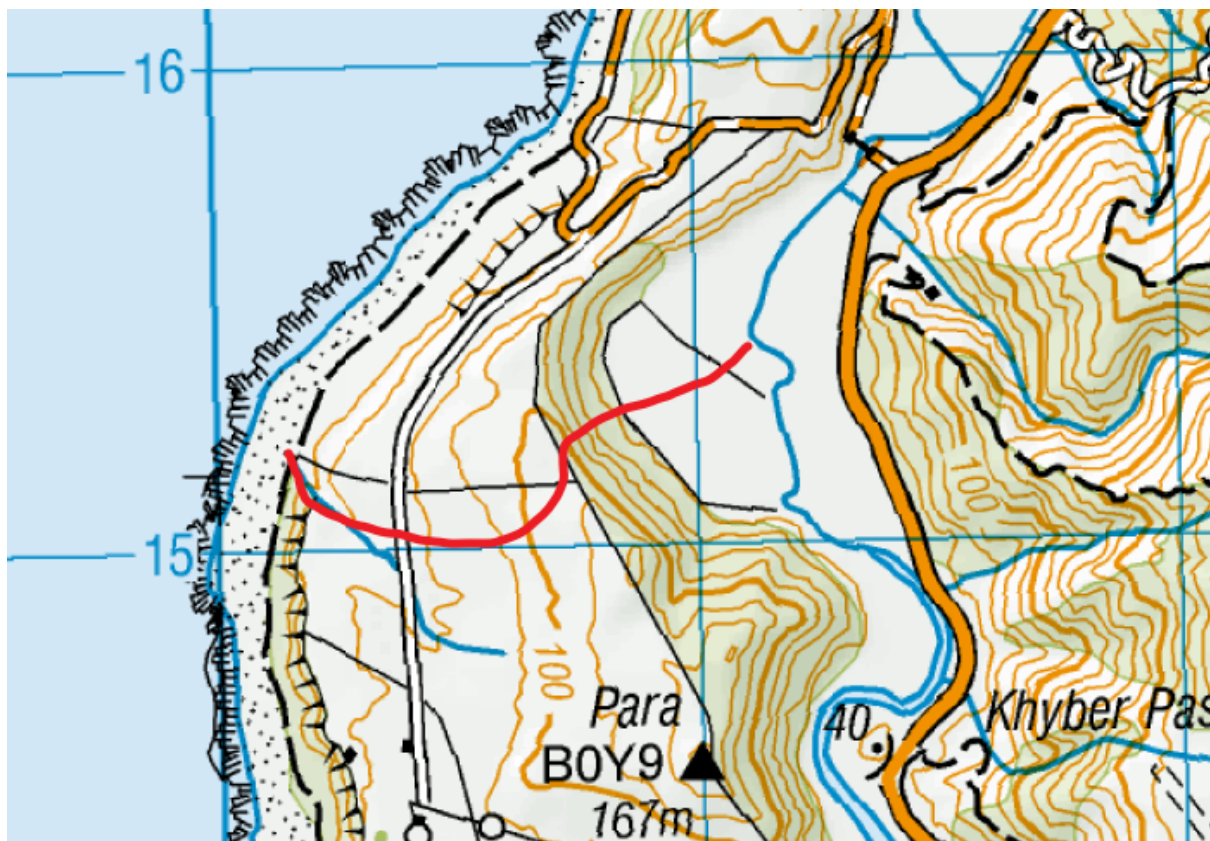
Fitzroy Bay is named after Robert Fitzroy (1805 – 1865) who was a Governor General of New Zealand from 1843 to 1845. He was also the captain on the ship Beagle with Charles Robert Darwin (1809 – 1882).

Ōrua–Pouanui means of the place of the den or retreat of Pouanui. O means of. Rua means place. Pouanui is a name of a person.

Parangarahu means the fern baskets. Para means fern. Nga means the. Rahu means basket.

Wainuiomata is named after the big water or stream of Mata. Wai means water. Nui means big. O means of. Mata refers to a woman's name Roimata. This is an official version. The origins of the word are disputed and there are other translations.

Source – *Orua–Poua–Nui – Baring Head Cultural Values Report by Raukara Consultants.*



Spooners Hill Track

The track starts from 33 Parkway, Wainuiomata and goes to the ECNZ (Electricity Corporation of New Zealand) Power Pylon Road. Quite where it went after getting to the ECNZ Power Pylon Road is unknown. However it is thought that it went to Ngutu-ihe Māori settlement which was located on the north side of Tunnel Grove, Seaview, Hutt Valley.

It is named after an implement consisting of a small, shallow oval or round bowl on a long handle, used for eating, stirring, and serving food. The area is shaped like a upside down spoon so hence its name.

Source – *Wellington Regional Trails*.

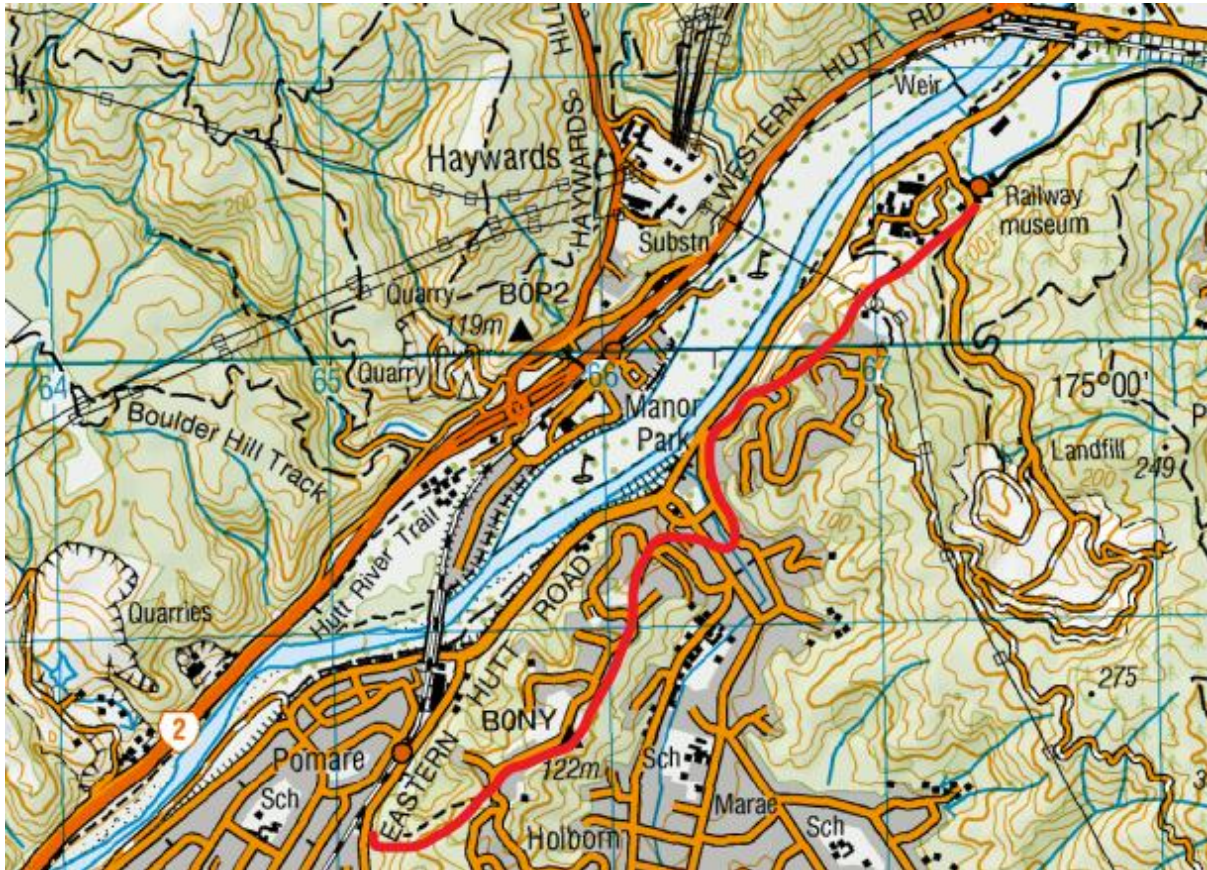


Taitā Track

The track started from about 198 Eastern Hutt Road, Taitā, Hutt Valley. It then went up the ridge, then down into Stokes Valley along the ridge in what is now Holborn Drive. Once on the flat it was a semi-circular curve crossing the Stokes Valley Creek to what is now Thomas Street. Then it climbed the hill along what is now Manor Drive and then came out at the Silverstream Railway at Reynolds Bach Drive, Upper Hutt. The track fell into disuse when the road was constructed through the Taitā Gorge in 1847.

It means an accumulation of logs or driftwood. This occurred just south of the Taitā Gorge area where logs that came down in floods accumulated in a certain corner.

Source – *Stokes Valley Through the Years* by Milton and Poppy Watts.



Te Rae–Akiaki / Pencarrow Head Track

The track starts from the Pencarrow Coast Road / The Great Harbour Way / Te Aranui O Pōneke just north of the headland. It goes up to the ridge and then down to the west side of the mouth of Lake Kohangapiripiri. It is also known as the Lighthouse Track. It was used to bypass the headland itself as the sea used to be at the base of the cliffs. After the 1855 earthquake the land was raised in the area. Also a road has been constructed around the headland.

Pencarrow means a head of the valley or high fort. It is from the Cornwall, England residence of Sir William Molesworth (1810 – 1855) who was a director of the New Zealand Company. He was also a member of parliament in England.

Te Rae–Akiaki means the headland where the sea dashes up or pounds. Te means the. Rae means headland. Akiaki means dash.

Source – *Personal Knowledge*.

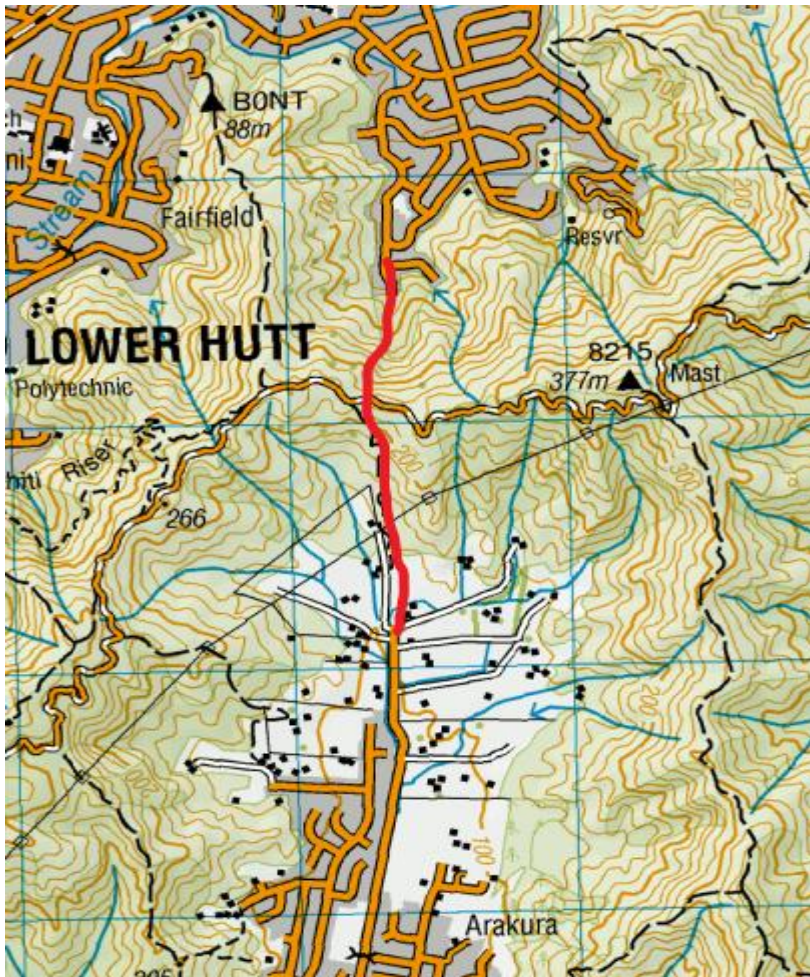


Upper Fitzherbert Road Track

The track started from Seddon Street / Wilcox Grove, Naenae, Hutt Valley and went to Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. Also the Rau-Mānuka land block in Naenae, Hutt Valley was located here. Te Mako Māori settlement that was located in Naenae, Hutt Valley at the foot of the hills in vicinity of Summit Road, Hutt Valley. So the Summit Road Track would probably have been better as this is along a ridgeline.

It is named after William Fitzherbert (1810 – 1891) who was a member of parliament who represented the Hutt electorate in the 19th century. He also owned substantial areas of land in Wainuiomata in what is now Fitzherbert Road to Upper Fitzherbert Road area.

Source – *Nicholas Beynon Map.*

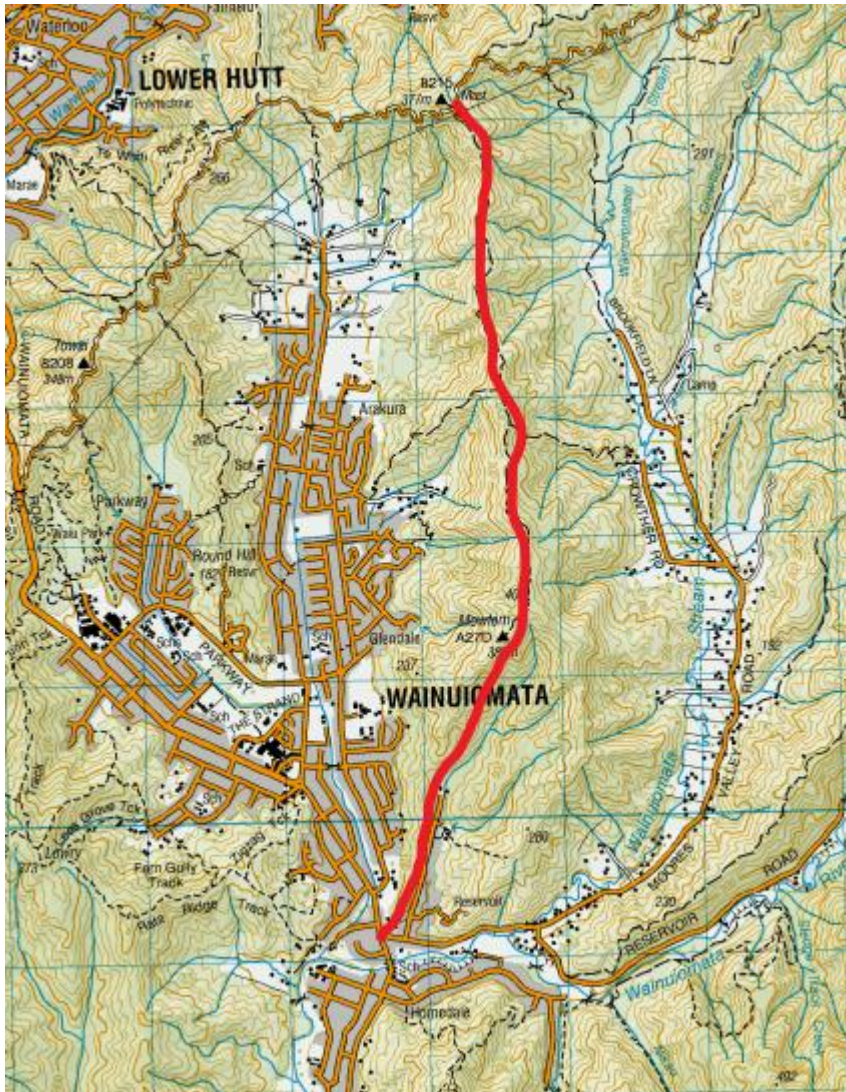


Wainui Centre Track

The track is between Moores Valley and the main Wainuiomata Valley. This track goes to the Māori settlement that was located at William Jones Park / Village area, Wainuiomata. The Māori people used ridgelines to travel between places.

It is named after that the track is in the middle of Wainuiomata. That is between Moores Valley and the main Wainuiomata Valley. Wainui is the shortened version of Wainuiomata.

Source – *Personal Knowledge.*



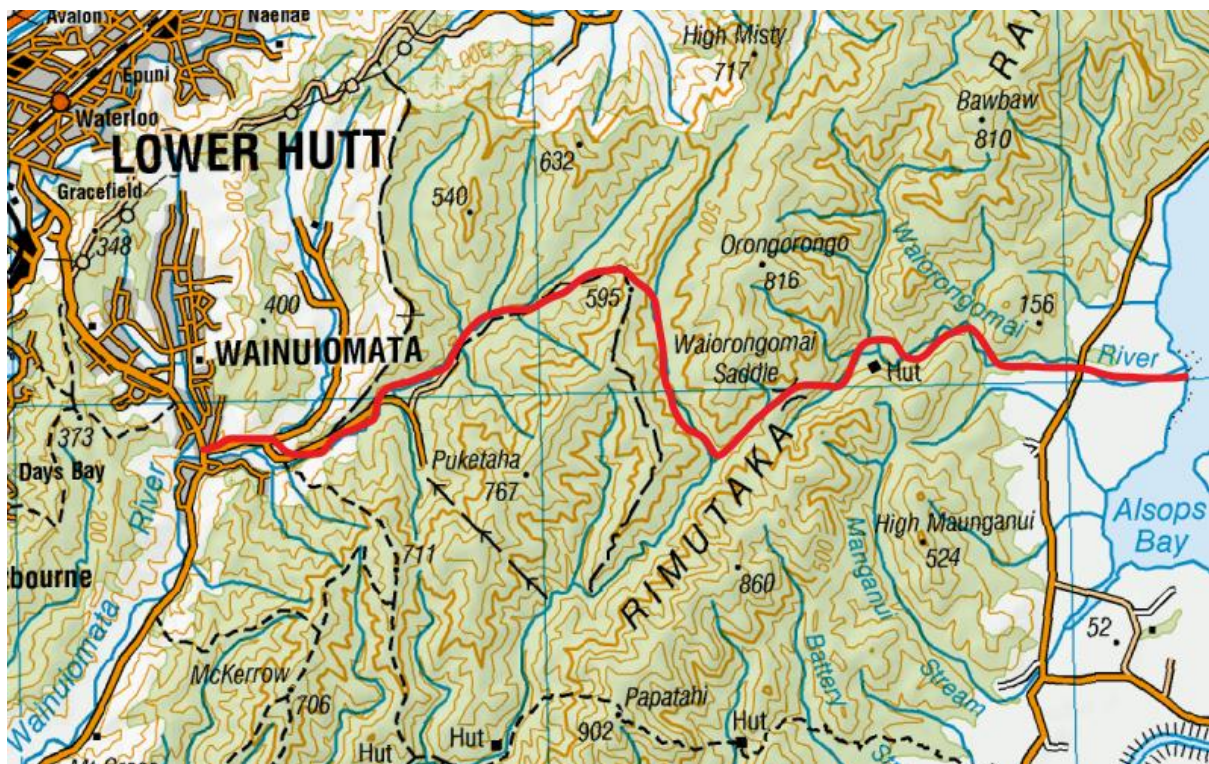
Wainuiomata River To The Wairarapa Track

The track started from what is now the Homedale / Village area, Wainuiomata and went up Reservoir Valley following the Wainuiomata River. Then it went up the Wainuiomata River East Branch, then crossed over the ridge to the Ōrongorongo River near the head of the valley. Then it went downstream a bit. It then went up another stream and then over the Waiorongomai Saddle. It then went along the Oreore Stream until it reached the Waiorongomai River. Once there it followed the river downstream until it reached the Wairarapa area.

Wainuiomata is named after the big water or stream of Mata. Wai means water. Nui means big. O means of. Mata refers to a woman's name Roimata. This is an official version. The origins of the word are disputed and there are other translations.

Wairarapa means glistening waters. Wai means water. Rararapa means glistening.

Source – *Nicholas Beynon Map.*



Wainuiomata River Track

The track started from what is now the Homedale / Village area, Wainuiomata and went down the west side of the Wainuiomata River. Hence this is why these houses being Willowbank – Burdans, Hermitage – Graces, and Richard Prouse's were built on this side of the river in the 1850s. This is because it was thought the road would go down that side of the Wainuiomata River valley but instead in the 1860s and afterwards it went down the east side of the river.

Wainuiomata is named after the big water or stream of Mata. Wai means water. Nui means big. O means of. Mata refers to a woman's name Roimata. This is an official version. The origins of the word are disputed and there are other translations.

Source – *Tales From The Swamp* by Vicky Alexander.



Wellington To The Wairarapa Coastal Track

The track went along the coast from Petone to the Southern Wairarapa via Pencarrow Head, Fitzroy Bay, Baring Head / Ōrua-Pouanui, Ōrongorongo Coast, Turakirae Head and then to Southern Wairarapa. It was along the beach, and at times access was restricted by the tides like at places like Point Howard and Mukamuka Point. The 1855 earthquake raised the land along the foreshore. The Pencarrow Coast Road is also known as The Great Harbour Way / Te Aranui O Pōneke. William Colenso (1811 – 1899) made a few journeys along here in the 1840s. Also people droving sheep and cattle to the Wairarapa from Wellington came along this route.

Source – *Mr Colenso's Wairarapa – Twelve Journeys 1843 – 1852* by Ian St George.



Whakanui Track

The track starts from the mouth of the Whakanui Creek that feeds into the Ōrongorongo River and goes to Sunny Grove or the Hine Road Recreation Reserve in Wainuiomata. Prior to 1982 at the top the range between the Ōrongorongo and Wainuiomata Valleys, the track went down a ridge to Nikau Creek and came out at the Hine Road Recreation Reserve.

It is named after towards in the direction where there is big decision to be made. That is, should you go up the hill over the ranges or continue up or down the river valley using existing tracks. Whaka means towards in the direction. Nui means big.

Source – *Personal Knowledge*.



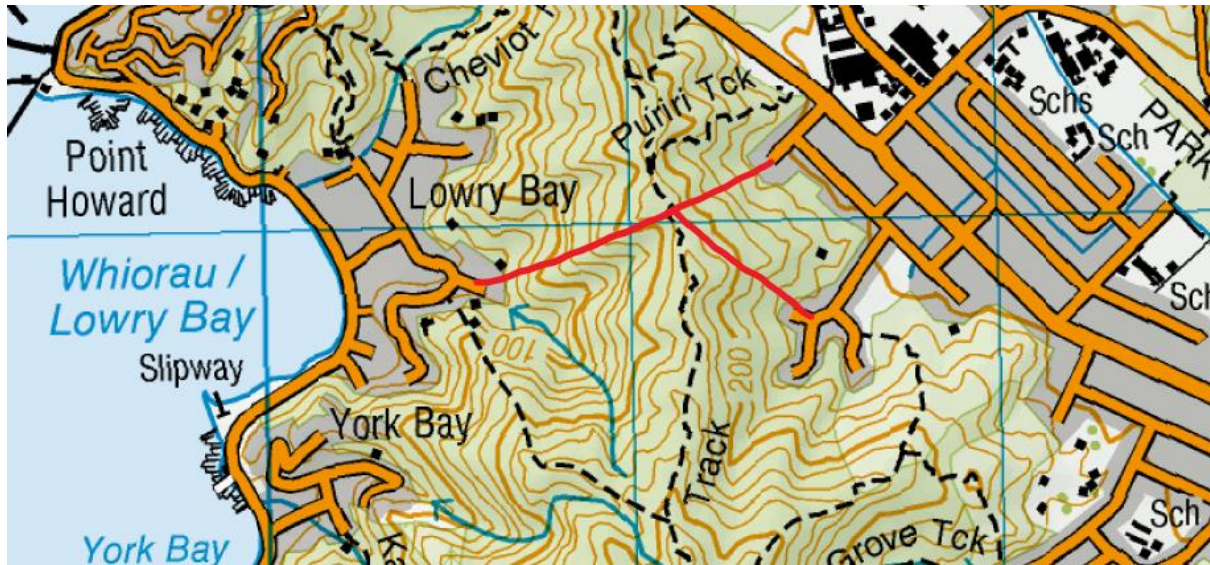
Whiorau / Lowry Bay Track

The track started from the Whiorau Māori settlement which was located about where Francis Bell Grove, Lowry Bay is, and this went to Kowhai Street or Puriri Street in Wainuiomata.

Lowry Bay is named after Richard Jennings Lowry (1816 – 1840) was a First Mate on the Tory, the New Zealand Company Survey ship, which anchored in Wellington Harbour in 1839.

Whiorau is named after a place of many whio. Whio is a native blue-grey duck with a pale pink bill. Rau means many.

Source – *Nicholas Beynon Map*.



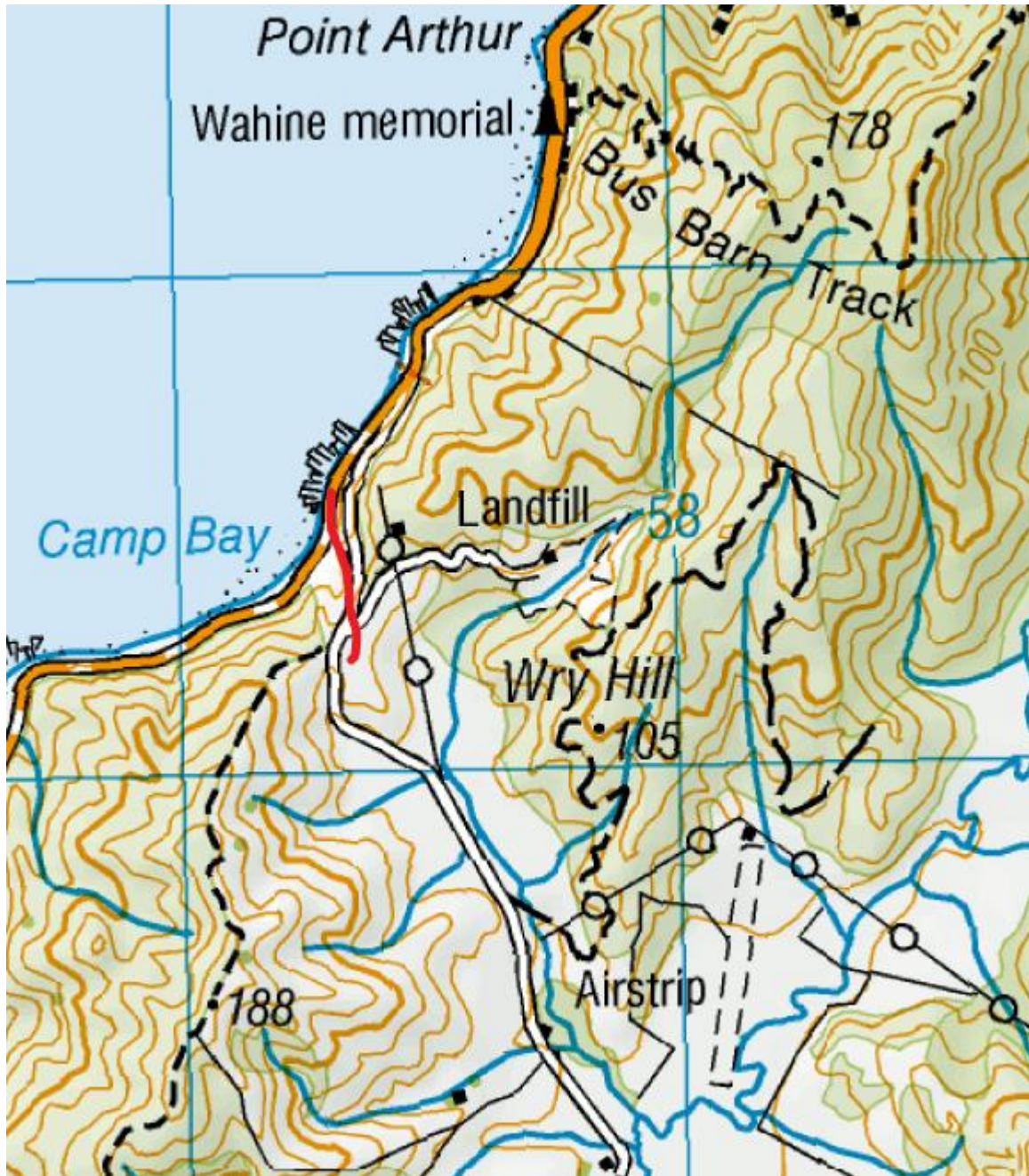
Other Tracks To and From Wainuiomata In Use Before The Wainuiomata Hill Road Was Built In 1860

Gollans Track

The track was slightly south of the now Gollans Valley Road that goes from Camp Bay to Gollans Valley. The track dates from the 1840s. The road was constructed in the late 1870s.

It is named after Donald Matheson Gollan (1811 – 1887) who was a New Zealand Company official in the 1840s.

Source – *Okiwi – European Occupation of the Eastern Bays, Port Nicholson* by A. G. Bagnall.



Graces / Jacksons Track

The track started from the north part of Jacksons Farm at 726 / 728 Coast Road, Wainuiomata and went to where the houses are located at Gollans Valley. John Prouse (1857 – 1930) recalls using a track in the area in the 19th century. The track dates from the 1850s.

Graces Track is named after John Charles Grace (1807 – 1886) who was a 19th century settler in Wainuiomata.

Jacksons Track is named after Charles Welby Jackson (1840 – 1926) who was a 19th century settler in Wainuiomata. He married Elizabeth Grace (1842 – 1926) whose father John Grace and family originally developed this area along the Coast Road.

Source – *Tales From The Swamp* by Vicky Alexander.



Jacksons Track

The track started from the Dillon Street area, Lowry Bay and went to Gracefield Road / Seaview Road, Hutt Valley. It went over the hill in the vicinity of where Ngaumatau Road meets Howard Road, Lowry Bay. After the 1855 earthquake the land was raised significantly so that wheeled vehicles could go around Port Howard. The track on the Seaview Road side has been removed due to quarrying. The track dates from the early 1840s.

It is named after James Jackson (1811 – 1846) and his wife Emma Jackson nee Ogden (1813 – 1888).

Source – *Hutt City Library*.



Leightons Gully Track

The track starts from the Griffins Ridge Track in the Haywards Eastern Hills Scenic Reserve, Hutt Valley and goes to the ECNZ Power Pylon Road on the ridge between the Hutt Valley and Wainuiomata. Also there is access from one of the gullies on the Lower Hutt side of the Wainuiomata Hill Road going up. It is a benched track. It is now more widely known as the Morepork Track. Quite where the track went after getting to the ECNZ Power Pylon Road is unknown. However it is thought that the track went along the Konini Firebreak Track or towards the Spooners Hill Track in Wainuiomata. The track dates from the 1840s.

It is named after Herbert Ernest Leighton (1869 – 1945) who was an auctioneer and land agent that lived on the south side of Whites Line, Hutt Valley from the 1890s. The name prior to Herbert owning the land is unknown.

Source – *Friends of the Waiwhetu's Haywards Scenic Reserve.*



Rossiter Avenue Track

The track started at the foothill of the street which now is occupied by the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, Hutt Valley. It is presumed to be a benched track. It is thought that it followed the ridgeline where the TCI (Technical Correspondence Institute) Firebreak used to be. At the top on the ridge it overlooks the Upper Fitzherbert Road area in Wainuiomata. But quite where the track went to in Wainuiomata is unknown. It was in use in 1845 but when the Wainuiomata Hill Road opened in 1860 it fell into disuse. Rossiter Avenue was called Windrums Lane in the late 19th century before it was renamed. The name Rossiter Avenue existed from the 1900s onwards. The name prior to the 1900s is unknown.

The origin of the name Rossiter Avenue is unknown. However it might be named after Thomas Rossiter (1800 – 1875) who was a whaler in the Marlborough Sounds in the 1830s.

Source – *Lance Hall Map*.



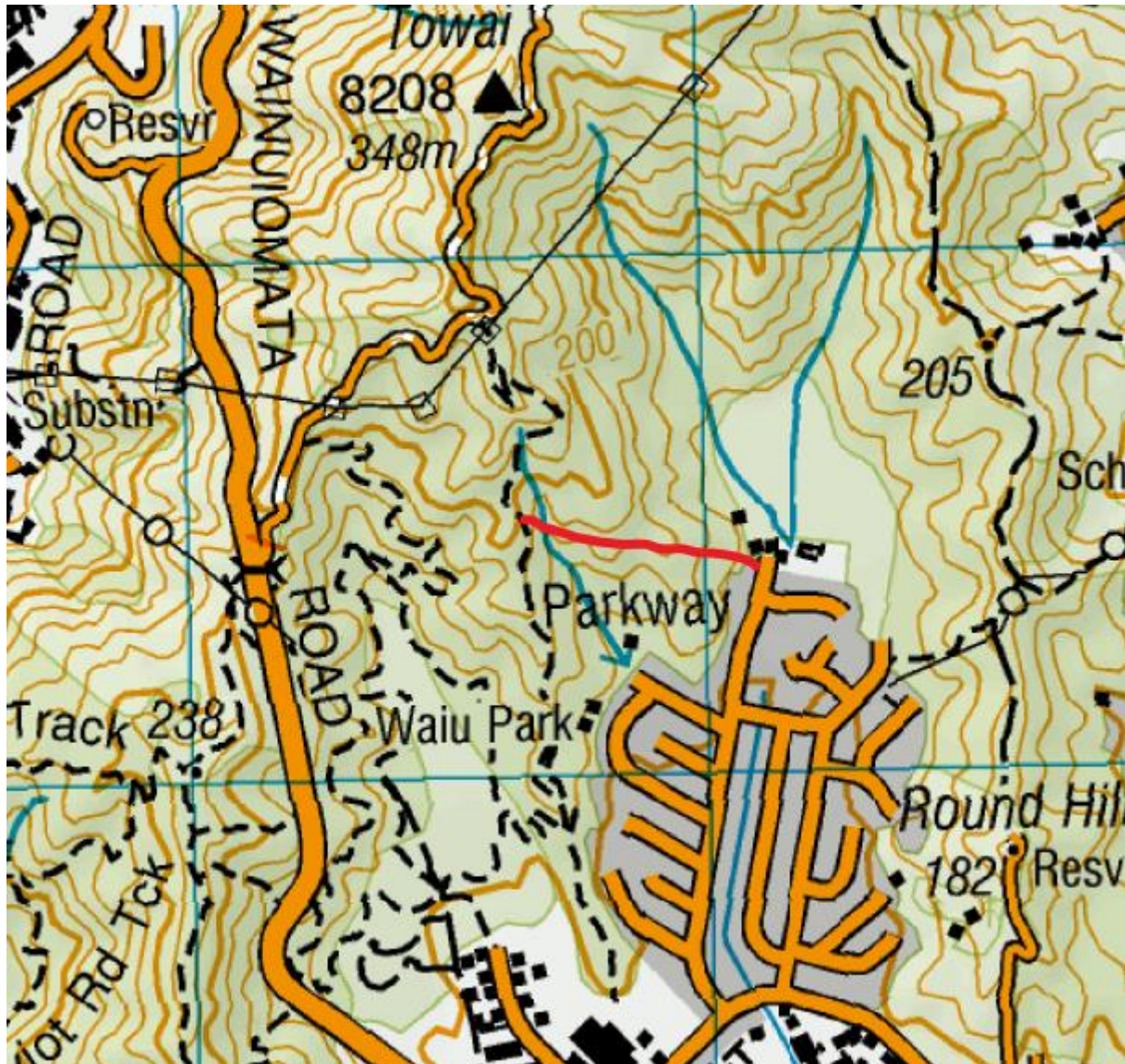
Spooners Hill To Mohaka Street Area Track

Remnants of a benched track about halfway along Spooners Hill Track heading towards Mohaka Street, Parkway, Wainuiomata. The track dates from after the 1850s.

Spooners Hill is named after an implement consisting of a small, shallow oval or round bowl on a long handle, used for eating, stirring, and serving food. The area is shaped like a upside down spoon so hence its name.

Mohaka is named after a place for a dance. Mo means a place. Haka means dance.

Source – *Personal Knowledge and Tales From The Swamp* by Vicky Alexander.



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