

## The Kaihu Valley Trail (KVT) Update 9 - September 2022

The Kaihu Valley Trail is a 45km walking and biking track being constructed from Dargaville to Donnellys Crossing. It will form part of the Ancient Kauri Trail that extends from Omapere to Maungaturoto and become one of the Great Rides around New Zealand.

*Prepare to be wowed by a valley of dramatic contrasts, through farmland and forest, along an enchanting river, capturing historical and cultural stories along the untamed west coast of Kaipara.*



### Progress in Parore

Fencing is well underway along the trail. These pictures were taken just north of Parore West Road on a glorious day a few weeks ago. The fencing contractor is Contour Fencing from Waitotira and they are doing a grand job.

Landowners along the first portion of the trail have given very positive feedback about their experience with the crew from Ventia who are constructing the trail. We look forward to connecting with our northern landowners to refine the route as work progresses further north.

## Future funding

In 2020, as part of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) awarded \$4 million to Kaipara District Council to construct The Kaihu Valley Trail.

When the project was initially scoped in 2019, our contractors indicated that KVT could cost \$10 million to build. Initial funding of \$4 million is not enough to complete the trail, so we are constructing the trail along the old railway line where possible, and in some areas the trail will be on low volume roads until further funding is sourced.

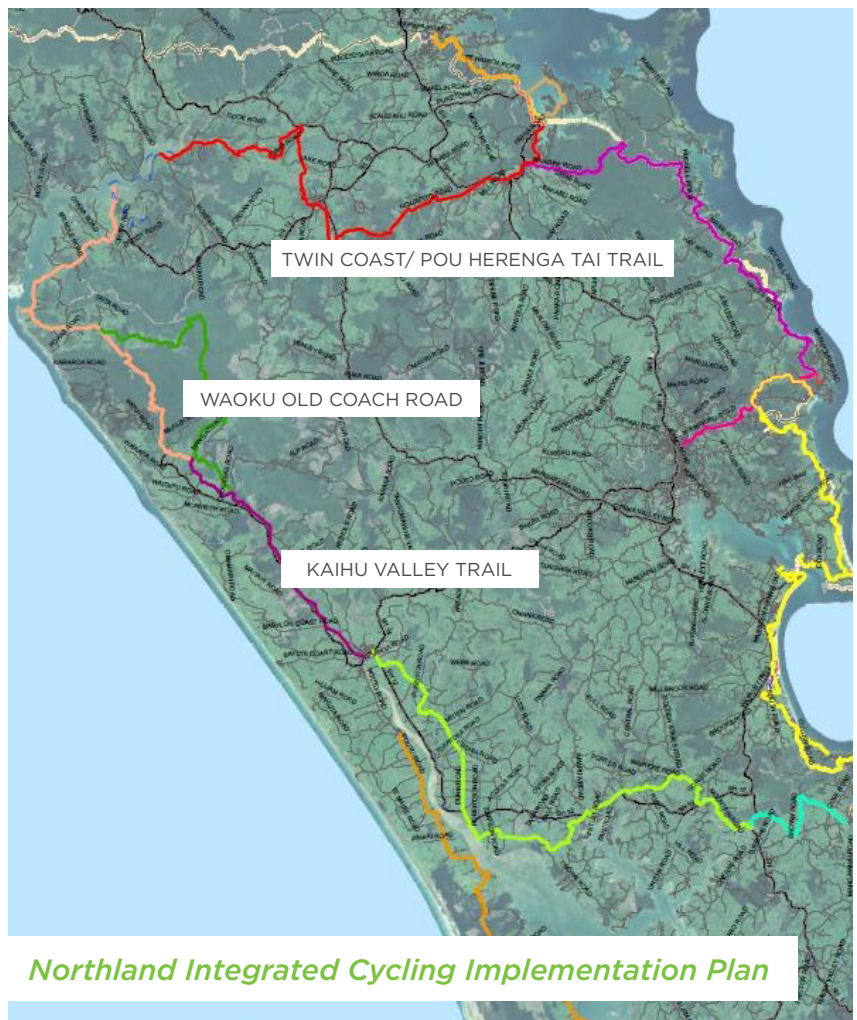
Looking to the future, the project team is working on a business case to deliver the full 40/45km trail so we are ready to apply to any funding opportunities that become available.

## The big picture

Cycling has been highlighted as a key opportunity in the Twin Coast Discovery Route Plan 2019, to increase visitor activity, benefit the economy and help visitors see more of our region.

The KVT is the first of five priority routes identified in the Northland Integrated Cycling Plan, which evaluated 13 cycle routes across the district.

One of the other routes is Waoku Old Coach Road. This route would take Kauri Coast Cycleway cyclists off SH12 for a portion, and improve the connection from KVT to the Twin Coast/Pou Herenga Tai Trail.



Northland Inc are working with Northland Transportation Alliance to develop a business case for the Waoku Old Coast Road trail. The trail crosses the boundary between Kaipara District and Far North District, so both councils will work collaboratively on the project. Better connections between Northland's two Great NZ Rides has great potential to increase visitor numbers - particularly outside the peak summer season.



### Parore Bridge

The Parore Bridge will be a wire suspension bridge, with an approximate span of 65m and a 1.5m deck width. The bridge will be built above the 100 year flood levels identified by NRC and site works are planned to start in October.

We are working with local iwi and landowners to help tell the stories of the area and hope they will be incorporated into the bridge design.

### Finds so far

Workers uncovered this perfectly preserved brown salt glazed stone ware in Parore. Stamped 'DENBY BOURNE' it is 11cm high and in mint condition, it was used to fill ink wells for writing and may be from the Victorian era.

Workers have also unearthed two ink wells under the eye of archaeologist Tore Kronqvist, along with an intact champagne bottle and several pill bottles.



### Kaihu flax

Wetlands in the lower Kaihu River valley were dominated by flax – which led to the foundation of the flax industry at Flax Mill (modern day Parore).

From the 1870s the rights to the Kaihu valley and surrounding land and its resources were leased by Māori to businessmen trading in flax, timber and kauri gum. The Kaihu Flax Company founded a flax processing plant in 1871.



If you have any questions about the trail you can contact our Community Engagement Advisor, Amanda Bennett at [kaihutrail@kaipara.govt.nz](mailto:kaihutrail@kaipara.govt.nz) or call 09 439 1206.

