

The Kaikoura Trail

The **Kaikoura Trail** takes you on a cycle tour of the Kaikoura district and gives you the chance to explore some of the places you don't see from the highway. Mt Fyffe and the Seaward Kaikoura Range watch over you for the entire trail, and you will get many glimpses of the ocean as you make your way around. Loosely following the perimeter of the Kaikoura plains and skirting the Kowhai and Hapuku Rivers, the Kaikoura Trail sections are as diverse as the scenery.

The Kaikoura Trail is suitable for riders in good health with basic off-road biking skills. A basic mountain bike is required. The Trail is also suitable for E-bikes. Motorbikes and horses are not permitted on our single trails.

No crossing or riding of State Highway 1 is required. Cycle the entire loop or cycle a section or two as time allows. The Trail can be ridden in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. The single trails are two-way shared trails so be ready to give way to other riders and walkers at any time. Obey road rules when on-road. Keep left. Ride with respect to the Trail and the environment. Ride within your ability and to the mountain bikers' code of conduct.

There are 10 sections of the Kaikoura Trail which when linked together create an exciting, scenic and exhilarating ride. The descriptions below are for riding in a clockwise direction. Look out for these signs to guide you around the Trail.



The Kaikoura Trail

1. TOWN 2.3km. The Trail starts and finishes at the I-Site carpark. Ride south along the Esplanade, turn right at Yarmouth St (just past Dolphin Encounter) and right again up Killarney St to the hilltop. Take the shared path (not the road) adjacent to SH1 down to South Bay. Cross South Bay Parade into the Lion's reserve to begin the next stage. Grade - Easy.

2. SOUTH BAY 3.3km. The trail entry is between 2 wooden posts in the north-west corner of the reserve. Ride over a small bridge then veer right to follow the white limestone beach trail west along South Bay. Enjoy sea glimpses until you reach a pine plantation where a single trail winds amongst pine trees with some gentle short climbs. The surface includes some roots, pine cones and soft sand in parts. Exit the single trail left onto a gravel beach access road which takes you under the Kowhai River bridge. Grade – Easy / Intermediate

3. LOWER KOWHAI 3.7km. Ride under the SH1 bridge onto a gravel road and turn right after about 50m into single trail through the trees. The surface includes roots and stones. The trail pops out of the trees to cross under the railway bridge then back into bush and onto a gravel stopbank. Expect traffic at stopbanks. There's a short climb up "Mt Kowhai" then back to a mainly flat meandering trail through trees, onto another stopbank to Kowhai Ford Rd. Grade - Easy / Intermediate

4. UPPER KOWHAI 3.1km. From the Kowhai Ford Rd junction follow the single trail upstream through regenerating bush. The surface includes roots and some stones and has some small gentle climbs and stopbank crossings – expect traffic. The trail meanders through bush following the Kowhai River and pops out at the Postman's Rd junction. Grade – Easy / Intermediate

POSTMANS ROAD JUNCTION

This trail junction gives riders the option to turn left and ride approximately 3km with a climb to 193m altitude to the Mt Fyffe carpark and the start of the 10km Kaiterau Trail with a climb to 562m altitude (16km return) or turn right towards Hapuku and the rest of the Kaikoura Trail.

5. POSTMANS RD 4.4km. Turn right and ride along Postman's Rd and turn left into McInnes Rd and turn right into Pooles Rd (a paper road on the right with a water tank near the road.) This section is on gravel and sealed quiet country roads with gentle climbs and stunning mountain views. Grade – Easy

6. LUKE CREEK 2.5km. Ride up Pooles Rd gravel lane approximately 450m to a small bridge on your left which is the start of single trail. Follow the single trail climbing gently through bush, across Luke Creek and onto a farm track which brings you out at the Mt Fyffe Rd – Topline Rd corner. This section includes single trail with roots and rocks and a stony (usually dry) riverbed crossing as well as grass and dirt farm

tracks. Stock may be present on the farm section. Leave all gates and fences as you find them. Grade – Intermediate

7. KOURA BAY 7.7km. Ride east along the gravel Topline Rd crossing the usually dry Waimagara creek bed to a gravel road junction where the Trail drops down into single trail through trees popping out just above Koura Bay Golf resort. Roots and rocks are present on this section. Ride along the grass trail behind the lodge and houses till the trail arrives at Koura Bay Drive where you turn left and follow the road to the entrance to Koura Bay Drive. Turn left into Bay Paddock Rd. Expect traffic. Climb gently to a right turn into Grange Rd and follow this till the seal ends at a gravelled descent towards the Hapuku River. Grade Easy – Intermediate

8. UPPER HAPUKU 2.7km. The single trail begins at the first car-parking area on the right adjacent to irrigation ponds. This single trail section follows the Hapuku river downstream on the south bank towards the SH1 bridge. This section is winding single trail with roots and rocks and some short sharp climbs. There is a stand of impressive mixed size totara trees. There are often fantails and other birdlife to keep you company on your journey. The single trail ends at a river access track – expect traffic and turn left towards the river to ride under the SH1 bridge. Grade Intermediate.

9. LOWER HAPUKU 4.3km. The single trail resumes as you ride under the SH1 bridge meandering through some

beautiful clumps of bush with wonderful birdlife. This section is winding single trail with roots and rocks and some short sharp climbs. The single trail exits onto the gravelled Lovers Lane - expect traffic. Turn left and follow the road towards the sea and Hapuku village. There are two rail level crossings here. Expect trains. Turn right then right again then left after your second railway crossing into Old Beach Rd. Grade Intermediate - Easy

10. NORTH BEACH 7.8km. Follow the sealed Old Beach Rd towards Kaikoura enjoying stunning sea and mountain views and some short gentle climbs and descents until you cross Middle Creek bridge. Turn right here and follow the trail under both the road and rail bridges and onto the North Beach Trail. The trail here is sandy gravel and grass surfaces with a few short sand bogs to negotiate. Follow the trail behind the heliport and onto the boardwalk in front of the Whaleway Station. Ride along the footpath to the end of the carpark where you go straight ahead onto the beach itself. After about 100m turn right to cross the pedestrian bridge and use the ramp at the left to return to the I-Site carpark. Mission accomplished – you have completed the Kaikoura Trail!

For more information or to donate to trail maintenance visit kaikouracycling.co.nz

