

## Railway Tunnel, Karangahake



**Location:** Karangahake Walkway

### Heritage Status

**Historic Places Trust Registration Number:**

**Historic Places Trust Category:**

**HDC Heritage Category:** A - Heritage Feature. National or Outstanding Regional Significance

**Other:**

**Physical Description:** Brick tunnel, 1190 yards (1086m) long with a 1:50 grade. The railway tracks have been removed and the tunnel is now part of the Karangahake historic walkway, complete with electric lighting. An air shaft is located about 600 feet in from the Karangahake entrance

**Other known names:**

**Notable features:**

**Style:**

**Materials:** brick

**Date of Construction:** 1905

**History:** The first sod of earth was turned on the Thames to Paeroa railway by Sir George Grey on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1878 at the lower end of Mary Street, Thames. The line itself was not opened until December 1897. A branch line

**District Plan Schedule**

**Number:** HAU243

**Heritage Category:** A

**Heritage Type:**

- Wahi Tapu
- Cultural Landscape
- Building
- Group of Buildings
- Structure
- Monument
- Historic Place
- Archaeological Site
- Other

**Date Period:**

1880-1910

**Significance:**

- Archaeological
- Architectural
- Cultural
- Historic
- Scientific
- Technological

**Thematic Context**

- Maori
- Early Settlement
- Industry
- Extraction
- Forestry
- Agriculture
- Transport
- Communication
- Commerce
- Residential
- Social/Cultural
- Civic
- Health
- Educational
- Church/yard
- Other

# Historic Heritage Inventory



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District Plan Schedule

Number: **HAU243**

Heritage Category: **A**

was opened to Waihi and the Bay of Plenty in 1905. The Paeroa – Pokeno railway link started construction in 1938, but was never completed.

The tunnel was built at the insistence of the Railways Department. The people at Karangahake wished the line to go through town. A temporary bridge was dug from the Karangahake portal to convey the spoil from the tunnel for the roadbed of the railway. The tunnel was officially opened on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1905, when Paeroa and Waihi were linked by passenger rail service.

Completion of works on the Kaimai Tunnel in 1978 saw the Paeroa-Waihi line decommissioned.

**Architect:**

**Designer:**

**Builder:**

**Engineer:**

**History of changes:** Tracks removed 1981; Electric lighting added

**Condition:** Good

**Integrity:** Substantially intact

**Current Uses:** Walkway

**Former Uses:** Railway bridge

**Registered owner:** Department of Conservation (managed)

**Legal Description:** Pt Sec 89 Blk XII Ohinemuri SD

**Reference Source:** Eric Lens; Malcolm, C. (1986) "Through the Karangahake Tunnel." *Ohinemuri Regional History Journal* 30:1-4.

**Associated Pictures:**