

# CASTLE HILL ROCK

Topo50 Map: BJ35Waiouru

GPS: NZTM and WGS 84

## How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo heading south on SH1 to Turangi
- From Turangi follow the Desert Road almost to the turn-off for the Tukino Access Road but turn off left at the sign for the Kaimanawa Forest
- Park in the mini car-park a few metres off the tar-seal

**Rough description:** A slightly strenuous, out-and-back, four to five hour trip including refreshment stops, on a selection of surfaces from badly degraded track to smooth, soft walking forest track. Some overgrown sections with moderate slopes and offering good views from the slopes and summit on good weather days. Care needs to be taken not to stray from the path as the tramp borders the army training ground – follow the marker poles and read the notices.

**Detail:** From the car park [011105masl] set off along the well-defined, black sandy motorable track in a north easterly direction with several options due to severe vehicular erosion. In 15min, near the top of a gentle ascent, branch right [021135masl] on to less clear track which is badly overgrown but marked with poles going SE uphill on the right.

In 30min reach a minor crest [03 1266masl] in a low bush area with an army sign on the RHS. In about 45 minutes another minor crest [04 1315masl] is reached which lies about 500metres due north of three masts. From here the path crosses a small watershed in a dip and the track can be seen ascending to the ridge ahead.

## Start of the track



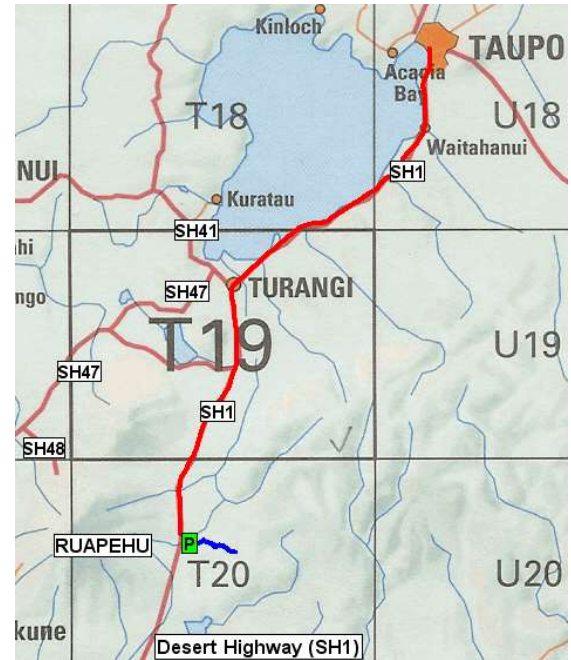
## Army sign



## View back over the Desert Road



## Access and Location



Access route in RED and tramp route BLUE

Within one hour the highest point to date is gained [051378masl] where the track bears slightly left then descends over an open stony area heading for the tree line. A good place for "smoko" is found here in the form of a small clearing [061308masl]. From this point there is some good walking through the trees on a well-defined track which had been used by a quad bike in late 2017 down through some very cold, damp beech forest.

Emerge from the trees into an open meadow area [071204 masl] in roughly 1:45 minutes. Cross the meadow, re-enter the trees to tackle a fair grunt upwards emerging from the trees in about 2:10 minutes at [081348masl] facing a large gullied area; the track goes to the right here. Continue on the poled route through the slightly boggy, exposed area to the crest with the large rock outcrop [091450masl] in 2:30 minutes walking. Obvious signs of the army having been here can be found with minor debris cast around – artefacts of flares and cooking pellets.

There is an overall altitude gain of over 700 metres with an altitude range of 1074 to 1450 metres and GPS data indicate an overall distance for the round trip of 12.6 km. The vegetation on this tramp is rather limited with stunted bush in most areas plus lots of fungi and some ferns. Higher up one mostly tramps through snow grass, hebe scrub, mantangara and mud!

## Southern access corridor



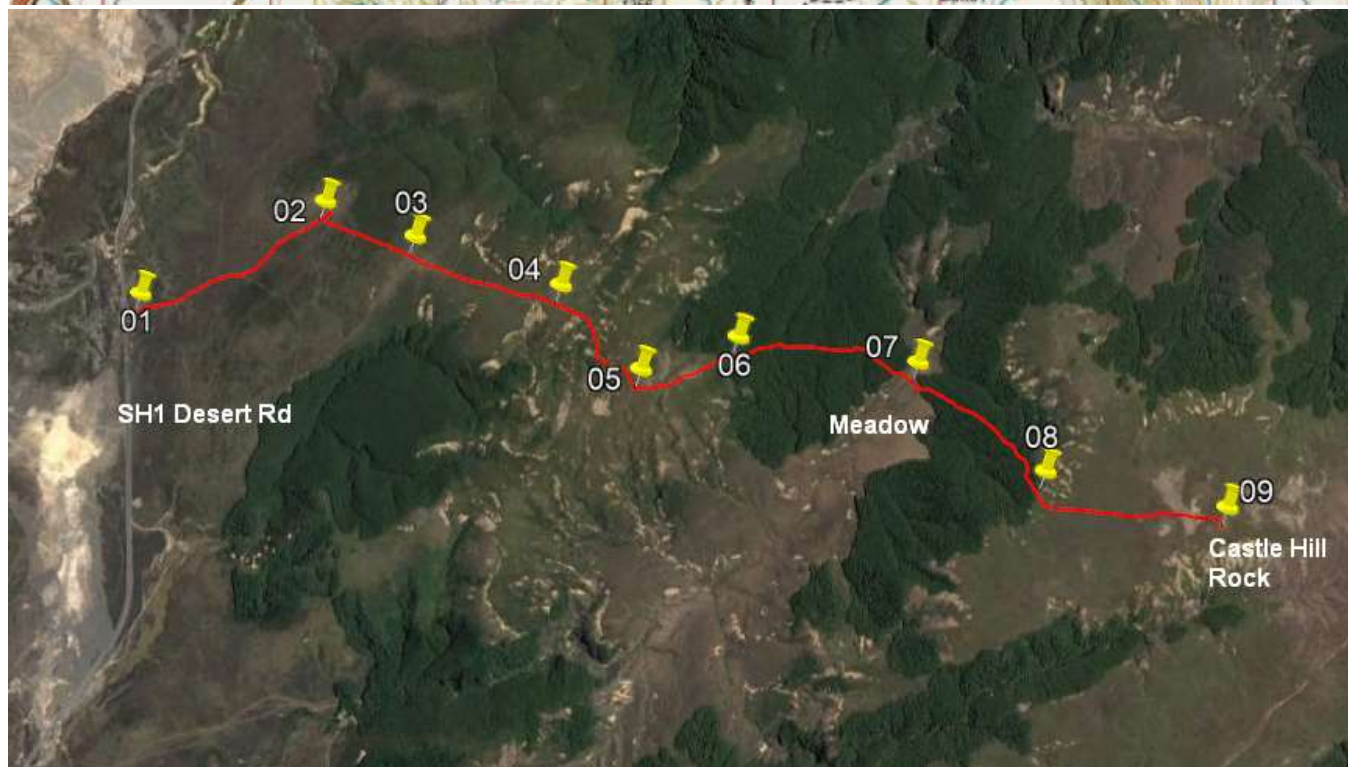
## Castle Hill rock



## Beyond the rock



### Map and Google Image with GPS data



N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1836430	5647263	1105	Car park off Desert Highway - Kaimanawa Forest notice
02	1837341	5647664	1135	15min (1.03km); branch right off track to follow poles on degraded track uphill to ESE
03	1837798	5647478	1266	30min (1.65km); minor crest in low bush area, army sign on RHS (S of track)
04	1838481	5647232	1315	45min (2.39km); 500m due N of three communication masts with view of dip and ascent ahead
05	1838853	5646834	1378	1hour (3km); crest of ridge, bear left and soon descend over stony area towards trees
06	1839291	5646969	1308	1:10min (3.55km); at tree line. Track improves dramatically through trees
07	1840105	5646828	1204	1:43min (4.41km); mid-meadow after descent through cold, wet forest on good track
08	1840690	5646312	1348	2:10min (5.36km); emerge from trees after fair uphill to face gully. Poled track goes rightish
09	1841516	5646127	1450	2:30min (6.3km); Castle rock after open exposed easy ascent and passing Trig point on LHS (N)



#### Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin GPSMap 60CSx
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level (as recorded by GPS)