

SELECTION OF BRANCH RAILWAYS

To be included a branch line had to meet the following criteria:

1. It had been operated by New Zealand Rail or its predecessors at some time.
2. There is reasonable access to historic relics and viewpoints, and remnants of the railway (bridge piles, cuttings, embankments, heritage aspects) are still available for viewing.
3. Lines which although partially re-developed for use by cyclists and walkers as a cycle trail have extensive sections which have not been so converted.

Excluded are:

1. Private lines which once serviced forestry, sawmills, gold and coal mines.
2. Lines redeveloped as dedicated rail trails or for other users, such as Rotorua Railcars.
3. Lines restored and being used by vintage steam railway groups (refer Vintage Railways Guide, page...)
4. Mothballed lines under consideration for reopening or developing significant alternative use.
5. Lines which have been almost completely built over, are short and lack interesting features, and have not operated for many years.

These criteria sorted out which lines should be described, with the final number being 42. They include a couple which only just made the cut, primarily because they had something else of particular interest. For example, the Cape Foulwind branch only just met the criteria but was included because it has such an interesting local historical context, it is easy to visit and there are many other local features to explore. The same applies to the Shag Point Branch, Conns Creek and Rewanui branches primarily because of their scenic locations and the number of other interesting things to do in the area.

Branch lines which have had significant development as recreational facilities for cyclists and walkers have been briefly described at the end of each Regional Overview:-

1. North Island Regional Overview - Hauraki Plains Rail Trail; the Rimutaka Incline; and the Okaihau (Kaikohe) Branch (Twin Coast Cycle Trail)
2. Canterbury Regional Overview - Little River Rail Trail
3. Otago Regional Overview - Otago Central Rail Trail/Taieri Gorge Railway.

Vintage or steam railways operating on portions of branch lines which are described in this publication have been referenced within and/or at the end of the relevant description e.g. Weka Pass Railway in the Waiau Branch description, Pleasant Point Railway and Museum in the Fairlie Branch description.

There are many other vintage or steam railway operations elsewhere in New Zealand, such as Silver Stream Railway, Glenbrook Vintage Railway. For a list of vintage and

steam excursion operations, most of which are on former New Zealand Railways lines, refer to the Vintage Railways Guide, on page...

Other branches which have been excluded, primarily because they have lost almost all the remnants previously visible, cannot be viewed by motorists or are generally too insignificant, are listed below. Deviations have also not been included, as they were never branch lines.

- a. Whangarei-Onerahi
- b. Kumeu-Riverhead Section
- c. Mount Egmont Branch
- d. Taonui Branch
- e. Longburn to Terrace End
- f. Greytown Branch (now developed as a cycle and walking trail from Greytown to Woodside)
- g. Melling-SilverstreamSection
- h. Johnsonville-Tawa Flat Section
- i. Te Aro Branch
- j. Walton Park Branch
- k. Fernhill Branch
- l. Outram Branch

All decisions about which branch lines have been included, and those which have been excluded, were made by the authors, who have attempted to apply the selection criteria objectively and accurately.