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Auckland's Metro Programme Newsletter

May 2023

Rail Network Rebuild update

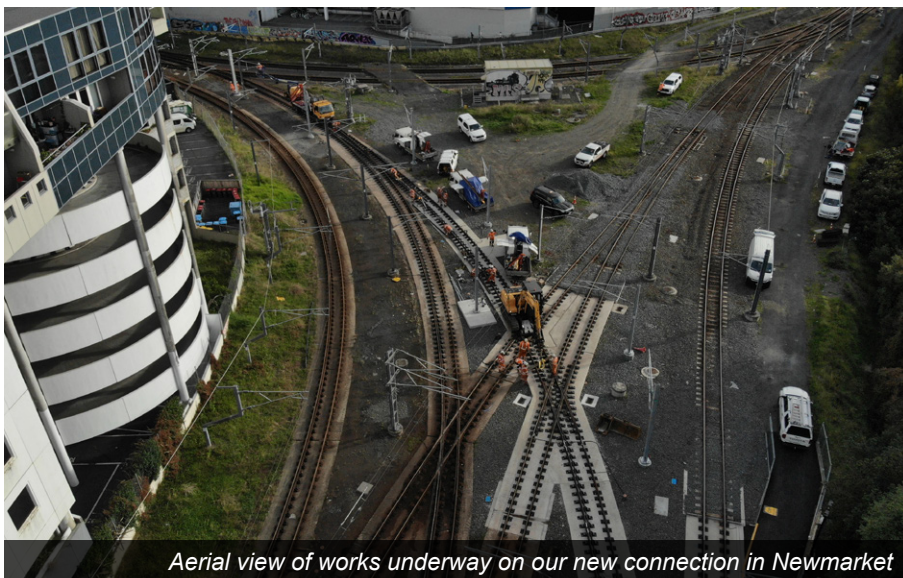
Auckland's Rail Network Rebuild work along the Eastern line is progressing well. Teams have replaced nearly 1.7km of foundations and around 1km of new drainage. One of two new high-speed crossovers has been installed – these will increase the reliability of commuter train services by allowing them to easily pass longer, slower freight trains. Some worksites are entering their next phase – the track rebuild – as teams focus on temporarily reopening one track to allow special event train services on FIFA game days.

Over the next few months neighbours around Meadowbank, Panmure and Sylvia Park should keep their eyes open for our ballast delivery trains which are carrying large quantities of rocks to go under the new track. Our tamper machine which adjusts the tracks and rail grinder will be out and about too. These works, along with vegetation removal, will happen in phases and will be ongoing until the track fully reopens.



This work is part of the \$1.5 billion programme to make rail travel easier, faster and safer. We thank neighbours and commuters for their on-going patience as teams work long hours to get this important job done. Please continue to take extra care in the area as teams will still need to access the

track at different times. Find out more at kiwirail.co.nz/akl and check out 'where we are working' for details of our upcoming rebuild activities. Visit AT.govt.nz/JourneyPlanner to find out how you can still get around using public transport while this work is underway.



Aerial view of works underway on our new connection in Newmarket



Works underway in New Lynn

For any queries, email us at contactus@kiwirail.co.nz

Third Main – Wiri to Quay Park update

A major new stretch of rail track in South Auckland has been laid which, when operational, will provide more capacity for passenger and freight services. Almost 4km of new rail track was laid from Puhinui Station to just north of Papatoetoe Station in just a few days in early April. KiwiRail, and contractor Downer, have been collaborating on the earthworks associated with this new rail track since early 2022.

Using specialist machines, KiwiRail teams laid the sleepers first and then rail track was placed on top. This work is part of the Third Main – Wiri to Quay Park project which is funded by the Government through the New Zealand Upgrade Programme.

The section between Wiri and Westfield junctions is the busiest section of rail in New Zealand. Westfield junction is where KiwiRail's Southdown Container Yard and our Westfield Yard joins the network. The Eastern line also branches out from the Southern line here. Close to Wiri Junction is the Manukau branch line, Ports of Auckland inland port and Auckland Transport's electric train stable facility.

The Third Main project comprises a third new rail track between Westfield and Wiri junctions as well as major improvements at Quay Park where rail connects with the Ports of Auckland in downtown Auckland. The project is expected to be completed in 2024.



New stretch of rail track in South Auckland

Pukekohe to Papakura – the line up

KiwiRail's project to electrify rail to Pukekohe from Papakura (P2P) in Southern Auckland is progressing well. The overhead lines started going up along the 19km route in April this year and the old building at Pukekohe Station was relocated in early May.

Our team have been working on installing the mast structures that support the overhead lines since last year. It is expected that they will all be in place by late October this year.



Our team installing the new mast structures to support the overhead lines

Stay safe, stay away

The overhead electric lines carry 25,000 volts of electricity. This is 100 times more powerful than the electricity used in your home. If you come too close, or touch these lines, it will cause serious injury or death.

Always treat the lines as live, even if there isn't a train running. Never try to touch them, throw anything at them or dangle items from bridges above them. Electricity can arc (jump) across gaps or pass through objects and water. If you have children, make them aware of the dangers. Never play with kites, balloons or other high reaching items near overhead lines.

A height restriction of 5 metres is now in place at all level crossings and is clearly sign posted. Motorists in vehicles or towing loads that exceed these restrictions should choose an alternative route or contact us on **04 474 2323** for advice.

The old building at Pukekohe Station and new stations

The old Pukekohe Railway Station building has been moved to the historic Matangi Dairy Factory site in Waikato. The building was too big for the redeveloped station which is part of the electrification to Pukekohe project. The privately owned historic site in Matangi, is being transformed into a commercial and visitor centre called Matangi Link.

The P2P electrification, together with plans to build three new stations between Papakura and Pukekohe, means the growing population of Southern Auckland will enjoy improved access to rail as well as faster, cleaner and quieter electric train journeys.



The old Pukekohe Railway Building being moved to the historic Matangi Dairy Factory site

Meet Ruth Brittain, our National Vegetation Contract Manager



KiwiRail's National Vegetation
Contract Manager Ruth Brittain

WHAT IS RUTH'S ROLE?

Ruth's role at KiwiRail is to manage a centralised vegetation maintenance contract for the rail corridor with our national tree and vegetation contractor, Treescape. A key aspect of her role is going out to sites and building strong, key relationships. All of this must happen in what Ruth describes as "a unique working environment" in terms of rules and operational requirements. "There's nothing quite like it," she says. Treescape's core work happens within the rail corridor in the three metres either side of the 4,200 metres of national track.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY CHALLENGES OF MANAGING VEGETATION IN THE CORRIDOR?

"Operationally, we need to work 24 hours a day in the metro areas. Logistically, getting into work sites is a challenge given trains are running. The working environment is high-risk. You have to operate by the book and be highly vigilant. In Auckland, the big challenge is getting any corridor access. There are so many services, therefore, most of the maintenance has to be done at night." The vegetation work in Auckland must be highly prioritised

with safe running of rail operations at the forefront. Ruth is also keen to make more visual improvements to the rail corridor in future. "Once the upgrade work is done in Auckland, it will become clearer where we can access to do planting."

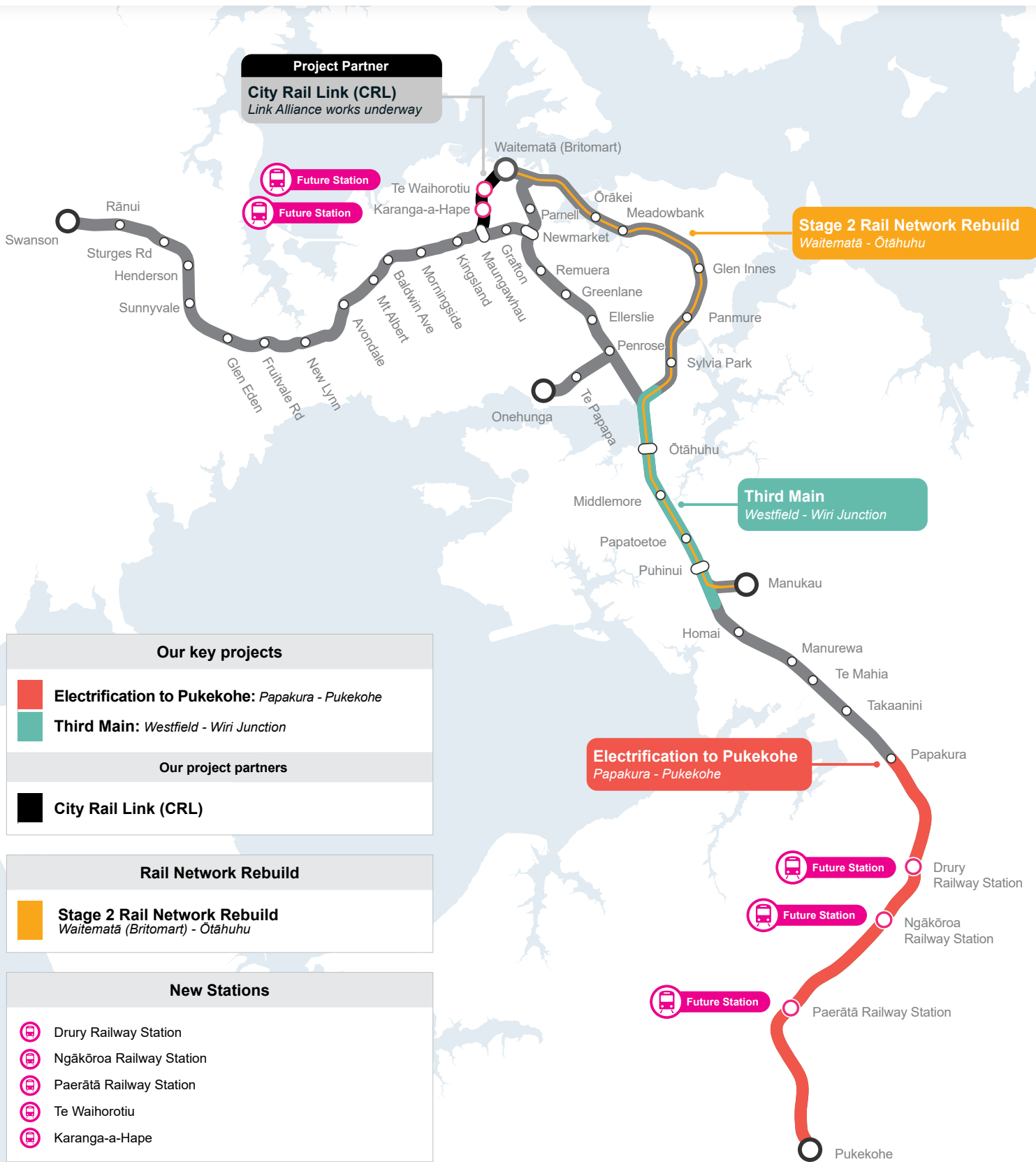
HOW HAVE THE RECENT WEATHER EVENTS IMPACTED VEGETATION MANAGEMENT?

"The recent weather events have meant an increase in emergency responses, and an increase in workload," says Ruth. Climate change is having a significant impact. "Where we're experiencing hotter, dryer periods – especially in the eastern parts of the country – we need to do more vegetation management to mitigate the fire risk. Conversely, wet and windy weather, such as that brought by Cyclone Gabrielle, destabilises the land, causing slips and flooding – and with this comes the snapping out and uprooting of trees. It's exceedingly difficult to plan for reactive events but as they are becoming more prevalent, it emphasises the need to take preventative measures to identify and manage at-risk and fall-risk trees next to the rail network."



KiwiRail Key Auckland Projects

Works from 2023



Project Partner
City Rail Link (CRL)
 Link Alliance works underway

Stage 2 Rail Network Rebuild
 Waitemata - Otāhuhu

Third Main
 Westfield - Wiri Junction

Electrification to Pukekohe
 Papakura - Pukekohe

Our key projects

- **Electrification to Pukekohe:** Papakura - Pukekohe
- **Third Main:** Westfield - Wiri Junction

Our project partners

- **City Rail Link (CRL)**

Rail Network Rebuild

- **Stage 2 Rail Network Rebuild**
 Waitemata (Britomart) - Otāhuhu

New Stations

- Drury Railway Station
- Ngākōroa Railway Station
- Paerātā Railway Station
- Te Waihorotiu
- Karanga-a-Hape

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact our Community Engagement team on 0800 801 070 ext 43042 or by email at contactus@kiwirail.co.nz. For public transport information, visit www.at.govt.nz or call 09 366 6400.

www.kiwirail.co.nz

