

Huitanguru February 2024

Far North slip repair timeline announced

More than three quarters of the 175 slips still affecting Far North roads following 18 months of severe weather should be repaired by the middle of the year.

By the close of 2023, Far North District Council roading crews had repaired 312 of the 487 slips caused by back-to-back storms and cyclones experienced since July 2022. That includes Cyclone Gabrielle last February, which brought record levels of rainfall to Northland and devastated parts of the North Island.

Of the 175 slips still impacting roads in the Far North, 112 of the most serious and complex have required detailed inspections by engineers to confirm repair options. These investigations were hampered by ongoing instability of the slip sites caused by continued wet weather.

The council's roading team finalised site assessments of emergency works in November 2023. It confirmed that repairs to 81 Far North slip sites should be completed this financial year (by 1 July 2024). It is estimated that each will cost \$100,000 or less to reinstate impacted roads to their pre-event condition. The remaining 38 slip sites are significantly more complex to repair and could take between two and three years to complete.

Council CEO Guy Holroyd has acknowledged the frustration felt by residents who have had to drive on damaged



West Coast Road in Panguru was reduced to one lane by a major underslip in August 2022.

roads or roads reduced to one lane for almost a year.

"Cyclone Gabrielle resulted in more than 140 slips and impacted 179 roads in the Far North – the highest on record for a single event. Our staff and contractors have made huge progress dealing with emergency repairs, while continuing scheduled maintenance work. During the three months of July to September last year, road crews delivered \$17.1 million worth of repairs, maintenance and improvements. During the same period the previous year, we delivered \$9.3 million."

Mr Holroyd says road crews are making the most of the summer construction

season, which began in October, to ensure remaining slip sites are safe and passable during the busy holiday season.

"The 38 most complex slips will require specialised engineering, and we estimate each will cost over \$100,000 to repair. This will require us to undertake formal procurement processes before contracts can be confirmed. Some of these repairs could take up to three years to complete.

"At the same time, we are continuing with planned general road maintenance over summer. This will include repairs to potholes, grading, trimming trees and improving drainage. Slips that existed before the major weather events will be included in this work."



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Community input helps shape Kerikeri-Waipapa

Improved roading, better cycling options and the need for more medical facilities topped the community's wish-list during the latest phase of engagement on Te Pātukurea – Kerikeri-Waipapa Spatial Plan.

Between 6 November and 4 December 2023, the council sought community views on aspirations and priorities for the future development of the area. These were developed following early engagement conducted in 2022 with hapū, stakeholders and community groups.



The November-December engagement gathered more than 500 individual pieces of feedback through surveys and by engaging with residents at several events, including the Old Packhouse Market and the Kerikeri Half Marathon.

Preliminary analysis has revealed that the community ranked Transport/Infrastructure/Services, Resilient Economy, and Protect and Enhance Te Taiao/The Environment as the key issues consulted on by the council. More specific feedback

identified improved roading, better cycling facilities, and more medical facilities as top priorities for many.

The feedback will now be analysed and incorporated into more detailed options on how Kerikeri-Waipapa can grow in a way that reflects the local culture, considers community wellbeing, the economy, and the environment. Planning will include what the area will look and feel like, where residents live, work and play, how they get to where they need to go, what infrastructure is needed, and how to care for the environment as the area changes and grows.

In mid-2024, the council will seek community feedback on growth options for the area. Once a preferred option has been identified, staff will begin drafting Te Pātukurea, which will confirm how growth will be managed over the next 30 years. Te Pātukurea is the name gifted by local hapū for the plan.

For more information, search for Te Pātukurea on our website www.fndc.govt.nz

Erosion project coasting to completion

Freese Park Reserve in Ōmāpere has reopened to the public with a major project to halt erosion of its beachfront now in its final stages.

Work began in March 2023 to build a 120-metre-long seawall along the beachfront to fill a gap between two existing seawalls. The new wall consists of large boulders placed on geo-technical fabric designed to stop vulnerable land from being lost to the Hokianga Harbour. Works included improved drainage for the reserve and new beach access from the playground. This consists of a gravel pathway to the wharf path and a new ramp down to the beach.

Remaining works include removing site fencing and completing landscaping, which will be done this year. Ngāti Korokoro hapū, as tangata whenua, plans to involve the local community and schools with the landscaping but is delaying planting until autumn 2024 due to predictions of a dry summer.

The beachfront at Freese Park has been eroding steadily over the years and risked impacting council-owned facilities and nearby private properties.

With more than nine metres of land lost in the area in the past decade, halting erosion was crucial to preventing a council wastewater pipeline, public playground, toilets, and a carpark from being claimed by the sea.

As well as the council-owned Freese Park Reserve, the new seawall protects private land at 7 Freese Park Road and 308 Hokianga Drive. The property owners made financial contributions to the project.



The new seawall and beach ramp are now in place at Freese Park Reserve, Ōmāpere.

At Rangiputa on the Karikari Peninsula, the council has re-surfaced the entrance to the existing boat ramp with a concrete base to provide better vehicle traction and has cleared rocks and obstacles from the landing area.

Both upgrades will make exploring the Far North's beautiful coastline safer and easier for boaties.

See aerial footage of the new facilities in the 'Latest News' section of our website.



Mangōnui's Mill Bay has a new floating pontoon.

New ways to float your boat

Far North District Council has upgraded maritime facilities at two busy summer locations to make launching boats safer and easier along the Te Hiku coastline.

A new and improved jetty has been constructed at Mangōnui's Mill Bay. It features new lighting, power and water supply, plus a new floating pontoon next to the existing boat ramp.



The Rangiputa boat ramp has been upgraded.

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