



# Auckland's Metro Programme Newsletter

## December 2022

Sign-up for work updates  
Send your details to  
[contactus@KiwiRail.co.nz](mailto:contactus@KiwiRail.co.nz)

### Regular Christmas network-wide closure

More than 1,000 people will be working across the Auckland rail network over the Christmas break.

During our annual network shutdown - from 26 December 2022 to 15 January 2023 - the entire network will be closed to commuter trains.

Work over the Christmas/New Year period includes progressing our three major NZ Upgrade Projects (Wiri to Quay Park/Third Main, Papakura – Pukekohe electrification, and Southern Stations); KiwiRail and Link Alliance continuing track works at Waitemata (Britomart), Newmarket and Maungawhau/Mount Eden – to support the City Rail Link (CRL); and making a start on Stage 1 of the Rail Network Rebuild (see more on p3).

These are all large-scale rail projects,

which have been going for around two years. Our aim is to finish as many of them as possible by the time CRL is completed, which is expected by the end of 2024. Combined with CRL, these projects will deliver a much improved, more reliable railway for Aucklanders – with more frequent trains.

Over the Christmas break, teams will also be carrying out general maintenance, which is needed to keep trains running. That includes replacing worn rail and sleepers, while track maintenance machines - tampers, ballast cleaners and rail grinders - will be operating across the wider network.

While most of the work will be done during the day, some sites will continue into the night. Maintenance machines can also work day and night.

To keep New Zealand's supply chain functioning, KiwiRail will continue running freight services in Auckland. The impact of the works on freight will be minimal.

The extended access to the rail corridor without commuter trains running allows us to get a huge amount of work done over a short period of time. It is a much more productive and efficient way of working, which allows us to progress projects faster and carry out more regular maintenance than we could do at weekends or evenings.

Trains will be running on Christmas Day, but from 26 December 2022 to 15 January 2023 buses will replace trains across Auckland.

KiwiRail will continue to move freight for its customers.

### Ballast cleaner in Auckland

Our biggest track machine will be back over the Christmas shutdown.

Stretching out over 300m, the ballast cleaner is easy to spot. It's big, yellow and noisy, and moves very slowly cleaning and sorting old ballast and laying new ballast.

Around 55,000 tonnes of ballast is being delivered to Auckland for the Christmas work and the first stage of the upcoming Rail Network Rebuild.

Ballast is a specialised layer of stone that the rails and sleepers sit on and maintaining it is vital for the proper functioning of the network.

The ballast cleaner will be working on parts of the Eastern Line over the Christmas/New Year period, which will



save having to do that work when we close the Eastern Line for Stage 2 of the Rail Network Rebuild in late March 2023.

From late January the ballast cleaner will be doing work as part of Stage 1 of the Rail Network Rebuild – starting in

Onehunga (where traffic management will be in place at level crossings), before working on the Southern Line, between Otāhuhu and Newmarket.

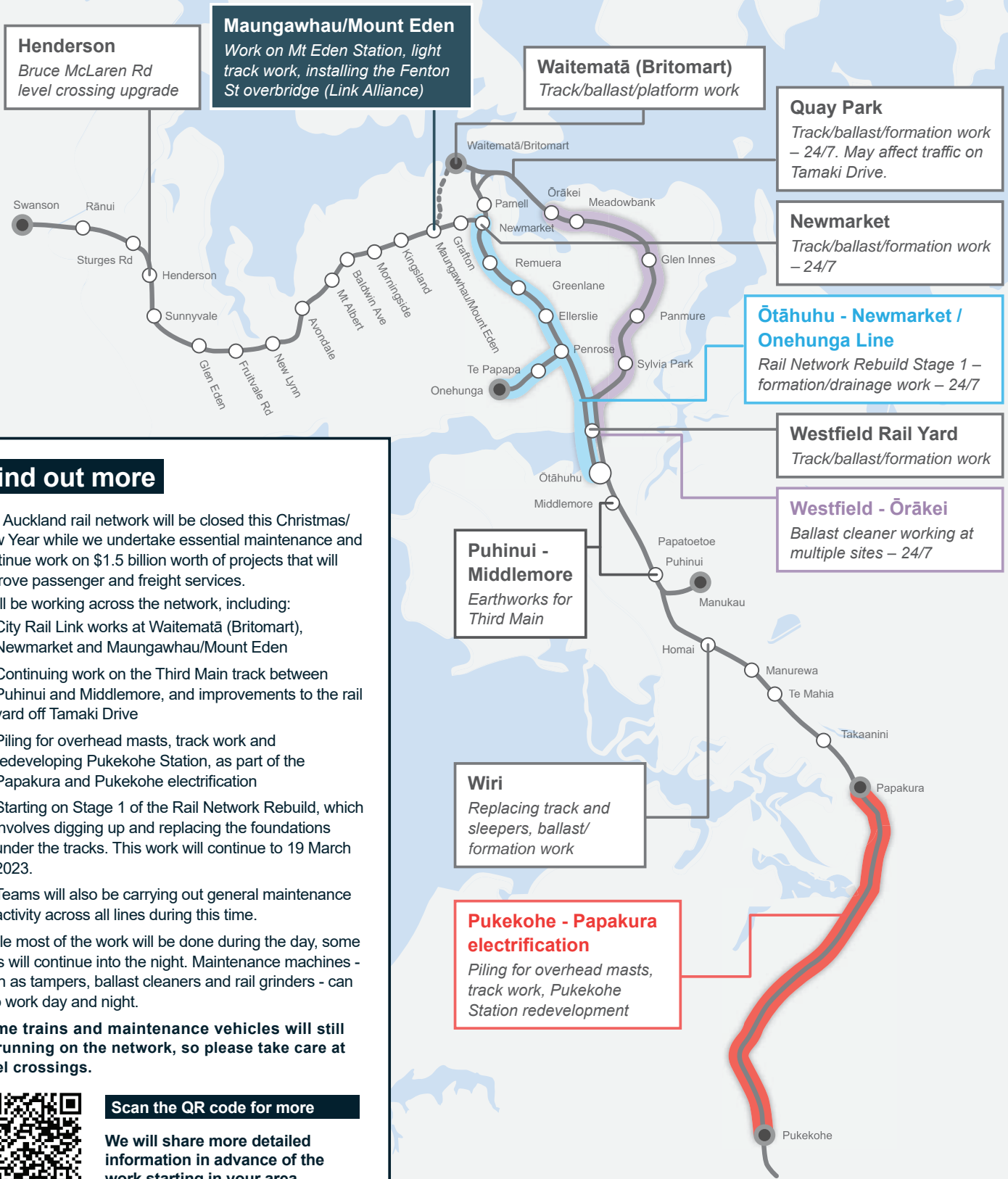
Find out more about our machines:  
<https://www.kiwirail.co.nz/our-network/looking/track/track-fleet/>

Sign up for regular email updates on works by emailing your details to [contactus@KiwiRail.co.nz](mailto:contactus@KiwiRail.co.nz)



# KiwiRail Christmas Works

26 December 2022 – 15 January 2023



## Find out more

The Auckland rail network will be closed this Christmas/ New Year while we undertake essential maintenance and continue work on \$1.5 billion worth of projects that will improve passenger and freight services.

We'll be working across the network, including:

- City Rail Link works at Waitematā (Britomart), Newmarket and Maungawhau/Mount Eden
- Continuing work on the Third Main track between Puhinui and Middlemore, and improvements to the rail yard off Tamaki Drive
- Piling for overhead masts, track work and redeveloping Pukekohe Station, as part of the Papakura and Pukekohe electrification
- Starting on Stage 1 of the Rail Network Rebuild, which involves digging up and replacing the foundations under the tracks. This work will continue to 19 March 2023.
- Teams will also be carrying out general maintenance activity across all lines during this time.

While most of the work will be done during the day, some sites will continue into the night. Maintenance machines - such as tampers, ballast cleaners and rail grinders - can also work day and night.

**Some trains and maintenance vehicles will still be running on the network, so please take care at level crossings.**



Scan the QR code for more

We will share more detailed information in advance of the work starting in your area.

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](mailto:contactus@kiwirail.co.nz). For public transport information, visit [www.at.govt.nz](http://www.at.govt.nz) or call 09 366 6400.

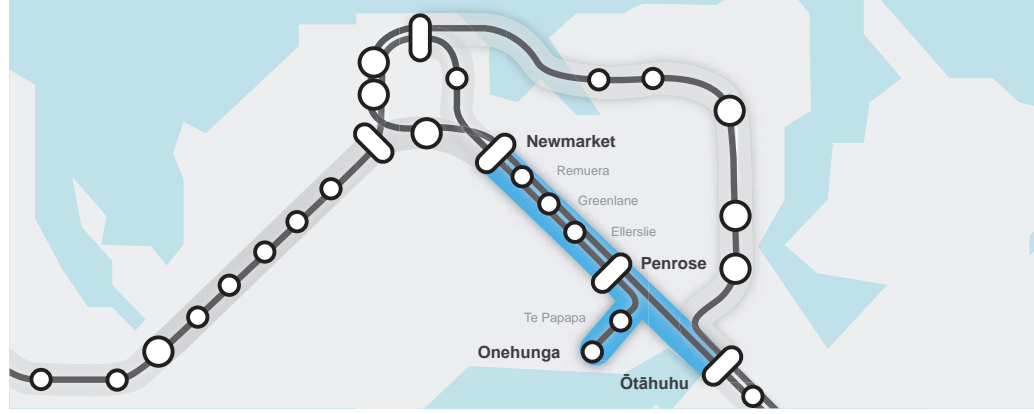
[www.kiwirail.co.nz](http://www.kiwirail.co.nz)



## Rail Network Rebuild Update

Work on Stage 1 of the Rail Network Rebuild (Onehunga Line and between Ōtāhuhu and Newmarket on the Southern Line) will begin during the Christmas network wide closure. When the rest of the Auckland network reopens on 16 January 2023, this section will remain closed until 19 March 2023.

Our work is focussed on replacing the aging foundations under the tracks and improving drainage. More than 130 people will be out working in the rail corridor, and we'll be using specialist machinery – such as panel lifters, stabilisers, tampers and ballast cleaners – to help get the job done quickly. We'll also be working 24/7 where possible.



To give you a sense of scale, during Stage 1 we'll be:

- Replacing over 35,000 tonnes of ballast and renewing close to 4,500 tonnes of formation – enough to bury the pitch at Eden Park over three metres deep
- Upgrading over 5,500m of drainage – five times the length of the harbour bridge
- Replacing seven turnouts.

We'll be operating heavy machinery in a narrow, constrained environment and to best ensure safety, the 25,000 volt overhead cables need to be turned off. This is one of the reasons we're taking a staged approach to carry out the Rail Network Rebuild – so only one section of the network is closed to commuter trains at a time, and they can keep running on the rest of the network.

Auckland Transport are providing rail replacement and express buses from 16 January 2023, which will connect people who normally catch trains from Onehunga, Te Papapa, Penrose Greenlane, Ellerslie and Remuera stations to commuter services and the city centre.

### These include:

- a service connecting Onehunga, Te Papapa and Penrose to Ōtāhuhu station, where commuters can get back on trains via the Eastern Line into Britomart;
- an express service between Onehunga and Newmarket;

- a rail replacement service that stops at the affected Southern Line stations to Newmarket;
- and an express between Ellerslie, Greenlane, Remuera and Britomart.

**More information on bus replacements is available at:**  
[www.at.govt.nz/railrebuild](http://www.at.govt.nz/railrebuild)

## Designs for new Southern Stations revealed

Designs and artist's impressions have recently been made public for two of the three rail stations between Papakura and Pukekohe. KiwiRail is seeking feedback on elements of Drury Central and Paerata stations until 17 December 2022.

Working closely with Auckland Transport, the three stations and the electrification of rail to Pukekohe will provide current and future residents of Southern Auckland with greater

access to public transport.

The stations include cycleways and footpaths on the approach to the stations, a Park & Ride, bike parking and a bus interchange. Auckland Transport will be running a bus service to all three stations with the exact routes and timetables yet to be finalised.

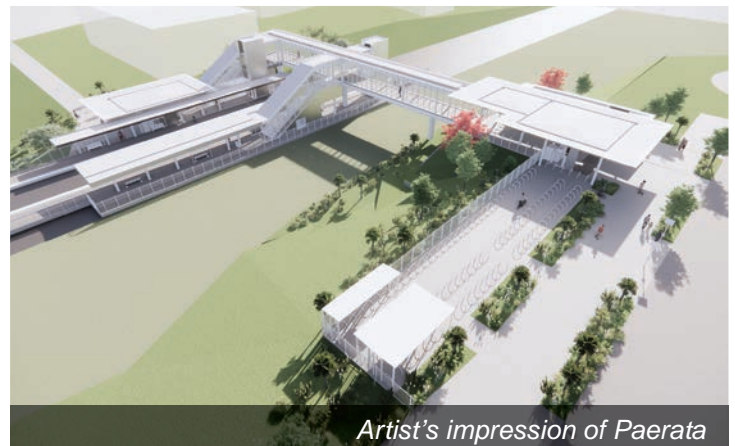
The purpose of the consultation is to identify any improvements to the road accessways, Park & Rides and interface with the station buildings. Feedback can

be provided by visiting the webpage [www.kiwirail.co.nz](http://www.kiwirail.co.nz) and search: Southern Stations or email: [contactus@kiwirail.co.nz](mailto:contactus@kiwirail.co.nz)

Construction of Drury Central and Paerata Stations will start in 2023. Subject to obtaining planning approvals, construction of the Drury West Station is expected to start in late 2023. Construction of all three stations is anticipated to be completed by late 2025.



Artist's impression of Drury Central



Artist's impression of Paerata

Sign up for regular email updates on works by emailing your details to [contactus@Kiwirail.co.nz](mailto:contactus@Kiwirail.co.nz)

## Electrification to Pukekohe

Construction on this crucial project for Auckland is ramping up. Anyone living close to the tracks on this 19km section of rail will likely have already seen teams working in the area.

Teams have started using machinery to dig holes (piling) for the overhead

masts which will support the electric wires. We apologise and thank neighbours for their patience as this work can, at times, be noisy and cause some vibration. We will work in one location for a few hours or days before moving to another location along the rail tracks. We will then return on two occasions to each location to complete this part of the

job. Teams will start installing the masts and overhead lines next year.

In addition to this work, there will be teams working on the rail tracks at various locations throughout the 19km Papakura to Pukekohe section. For more information, please visit the [www.kiwirail.co.nz](http://www.kiwirail.co.nz) Search: Auckland where we are working.

## Rail Network Rebuild: the role of panel lifters

The Rail Network Rebuild – which is focused on replacing old foundations beneath the rails across Auckland - will help ensure commuter and freight services are reliable and is crucial to enable the increased service frequency which will come when the City Rail Link opens.

We talk with KiwiRail's Eru Chesley, Project Engineer – Auckland, to find out more about the work he is doing and how panel lifters will help get the Rail Network Rebuild done quickly. Eru is one of several Project Engineers in the Auckland Projects Track Team.

### ARE PANEL LIFTERS NEW TO KIWIRAIL?

No, we've used panel lifters for large-scale projects such as tunnel upgrades outside Auckland, but we've only recently started using them regularly in Auckland to deliver formation (the foundation on which the track is laid) renewals work.

They will play an important part in helping us carry out the Rail Network Rebuild. These are large-scale works with short timeframes, which means teams need to increase efficiency, work quality and carefully manage fatigue.

### WHAT DO PANEL LIFTERS DO?

These machines are great to use. They remove up to 75m sections of straight track in one go which speeds up work, as well as improving work quality and safety – meaning less overall disruption for our neighbours.

### CAN ANYONE USE THE PANEL LIFTER?

It's a highly specialist machine and operators need to be trained. One lift can involve up to eight people and use six machines.

KiwiRail now has around 20 people qualified to use panel lifters after completing a specialist course run by trainers, who travelled here from Europe.

### HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH FORMATION RENEWALS?

I started replacing track foundations around the Auckland metro last year. I work in partnership with another Project Engineer Craig Barnes, and we work on everything from ballast up to the rails, while the Civil Delivery team do the earthworks.

### WHEN DO YOU USE PANEL LIFTERS?

We're using them at worksites to replace sections of Auckland's track

foundations as this work can only be done after the track is removed. There are six machines of different sizes that we can use on straight track with easy access when we get access to the track for longer periods of time.

We've worked over the previous Christmas block of line, weekends and public holidays south of Newmarket and around Glen Innes, Sylvia Park and Panmure.

### HOW DID YOU BECOME A PROJECT ENGINEER?

I joined KiwiRail as Inventory Supervisor in 2013. As I wanted to work as an engineer, I studied Civil Engineering part-time.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE WORK?

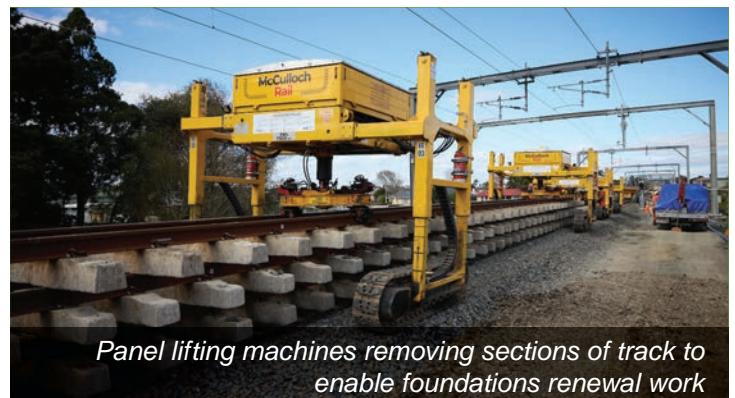
I like getting out there and delivering. It's rewarding to see the planning and coordination come together: who will be doing the work, how long it will take, ordering materials and costing it up.

### WHAT'S THE HARDEST BIT?

Sequencing works with the other disciplines and aligning our activities. Flexibility is key and also understanding how to keep safe and where everyone else fits in to what you do.



Eru Chesley, Project Engineer in Auckland



Panel lifting machines removing sections of track to enable foundations renewal work

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