



# Ngāti Tama ki Taranaki

Mt Messenger Bypass project – the story

Rukuhia te kawau o Parininihi

Rere ake ana

Ki ngā hihi o te ata

Ka pō, ka ao, ka awatea!

The kawau (cormorant or shag) of Parininihi  
dives deeps

Then flies upwards

To the rays of the sun

From the darkness, to the dawn, to the light  
of day!

This booklet, compiled for Ngāti Tama uri, gives an overview of the Mt Messenger Bypass project to help inform our decision on an offer from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency to exchange land for the project and receive appropriate cultural compensation, including pest management over 3,650 hectares (9,020 acres) in perpetuity.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Tama

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*Restoring our culture,  
environment and  
economic well-being  
for Ngāti Tama  
descendants*

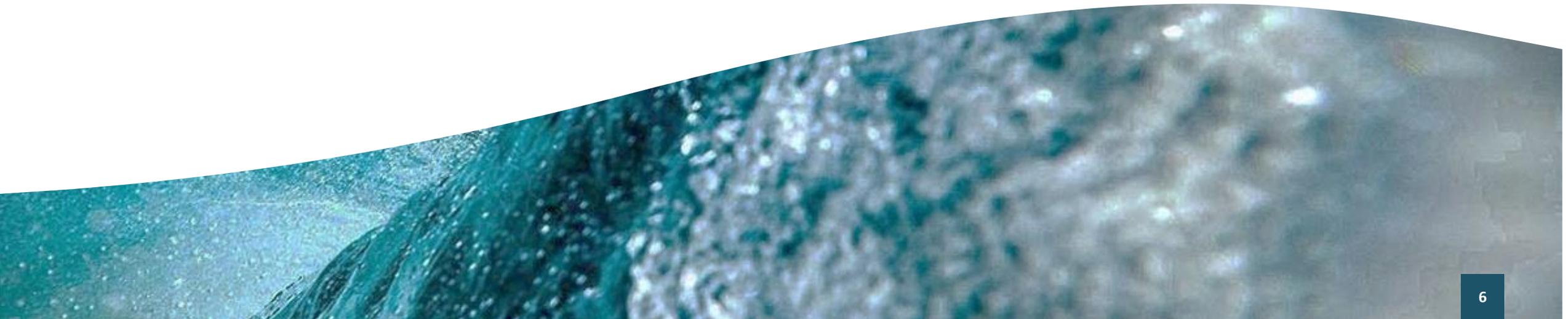
# Taking action

- By supporting the Mt Messenger Bypass project we're protecting the Parininihi for our mokopuna and their mokopuna. Our involvement will strengthen Ngāti Tama culturally and environmentally – bring back ancestral land and provide us with work and business opportunities. We hope this will attract our people back home.
- The project's ecology\* work will be one of the largest intensive habitat restoration projects in New Zealand. It includes ongoing pest management over 3,650 hectares including the Parininihi (where the forest has been seriously degraded by pests over many decades). Tens of thousands of native plants will be planted and over time we'll see a significant increase in wildlife – kiwi, bats, birds, lizards, fish and more.
- Taking action as manawhenua and kaitiaki for this rohe creates beneficial outcomes for, our local communities and wider region. Improving the highway at Mt Messenger – making it safer and more resilient is good for everyone.

\* Ecology refers to living things and their relationship with the environment

# Mt Messenger Bypass

A safer and better road



# Working with the grain of the land

The design sensitively works with the Parininihi terrain including the maunga, and avoids the culturally and ecologically significant Waipingao catchment. It keeps low in the landscape by aligning with the Mimi Valley as much as possible and the Mangapepeke Valley.

## **Key features**

- 5.2 km long and runs east of the existing highway with additional work at the southern end creating about 6km of improvements.
- Two bridges of approx. 125m long over significant wetland and 30m over a stream. Plus a tunnel (approx. 235m) under the ridgeline south-east of Mt Messenger.
- Lower and less steep than the other proposed options and the existing route, providing a more efficient route.
- Road summit height is 110m compared with 175m for the existing road.

## Change for the better

The Mt Messenger section of State Highway 3 is steep, windy and narrow, and prone to road closures. Across the region – the public, local communities and local government have advocated strongly for a safer and better road.

Over the past three years the rūnanga has been working with Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) and its alliance partners to select and design a modern fit-for-purpose road.

Our land is highly valued taonga and this has been front of mind in our kōrero and decision-making with NZTA.

A \$200 million bypass is proposed, to be built over four years to improve safety, resilience and route availability and help to develop the region.



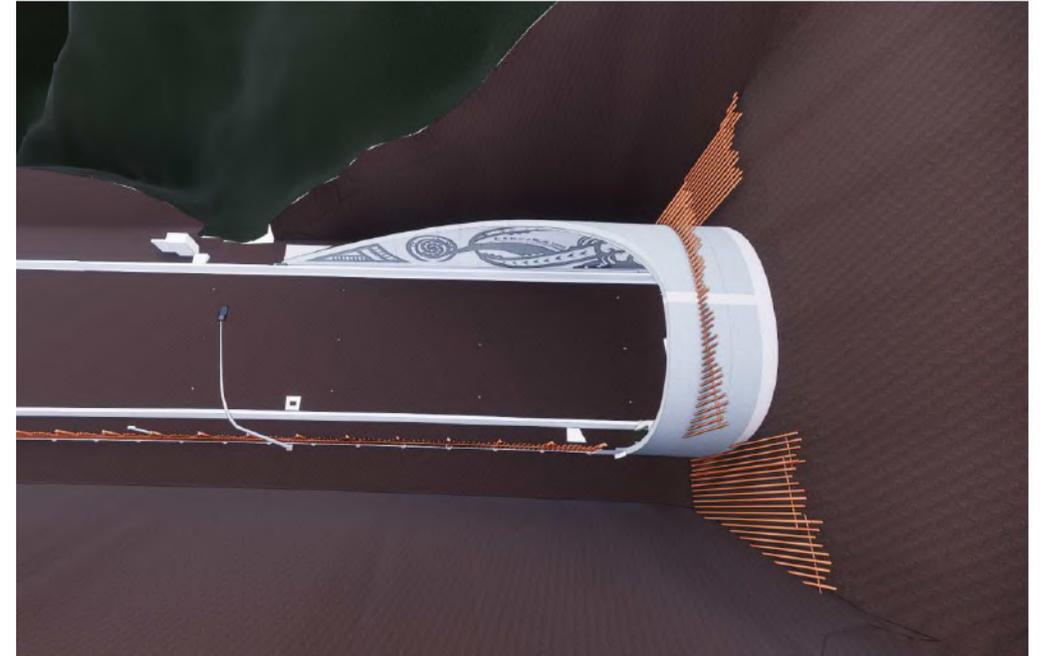
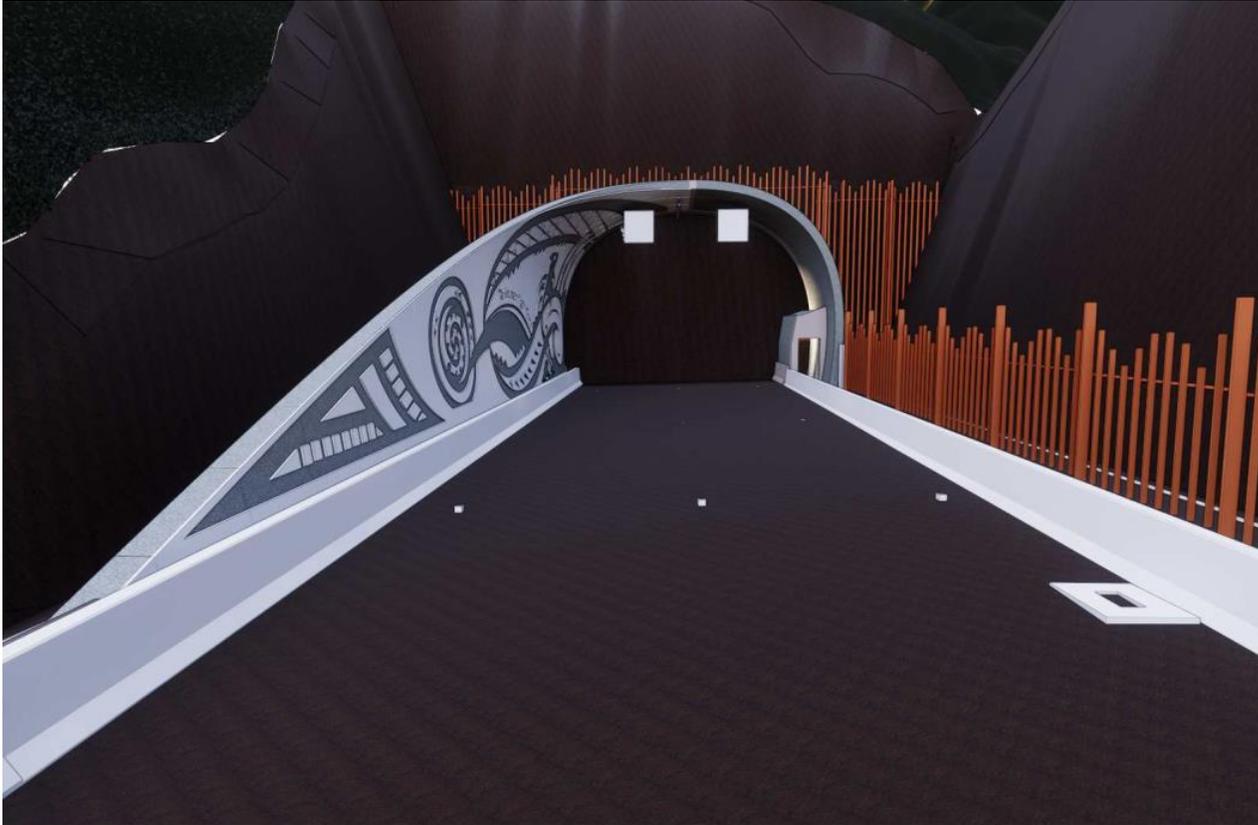


A 3D map of the Mt Messenger Bypass (gold line) showing how the new route is less steep and runs with the grain of the land.

# Bypass features

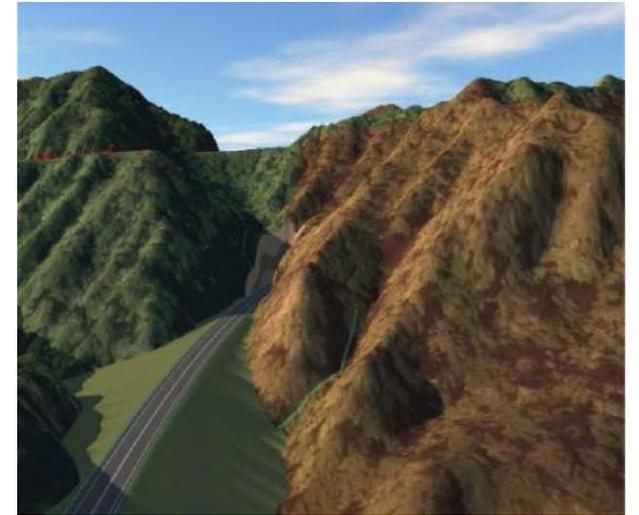
Treading lightly on the land

## Tunnel (approx. 235m long)



Illustrative view of the tunnel's northern entrance

# Tunnel

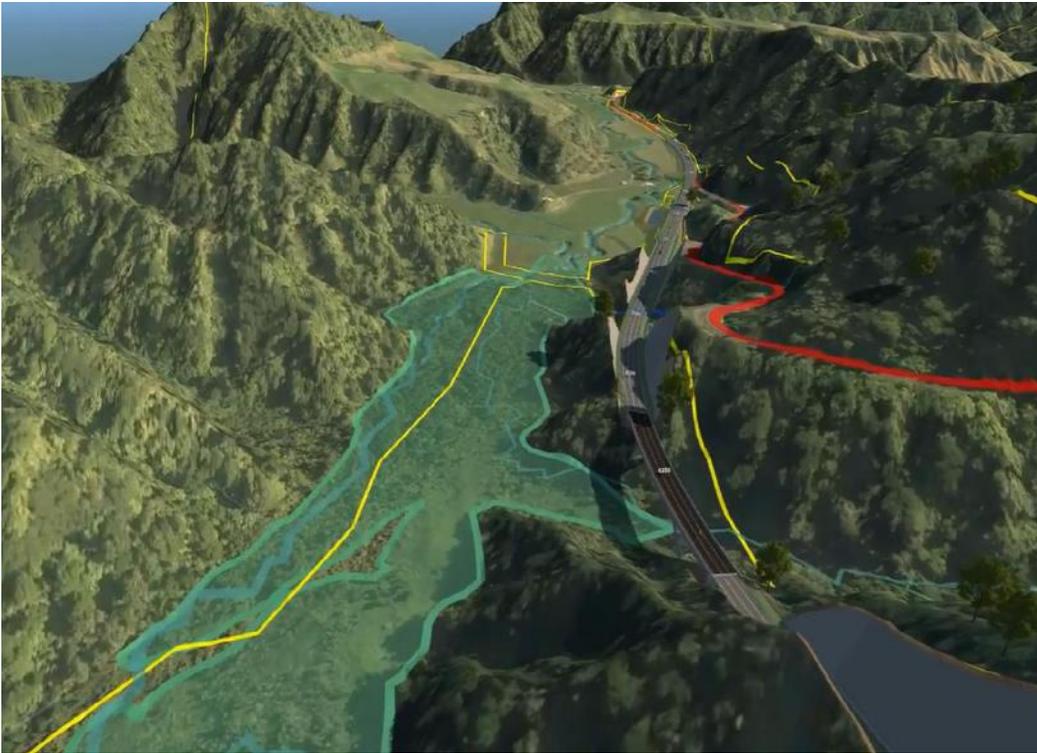


Illustrative view of the tunnel's southern entrance

Bridge (about 125m long)



## Bridge over sensitive wetland



The red line marks the existing State Highway 3 with the translucent green areas showing the sensitive Mimi wetland.

# Enviro-design

The design of the bypass takes into consideration environmental factors including:

- A bridge that carries the road over a stream that feeds into the Mimi River avoids impacting on the significant ecological swamp mire wetland. The bridge has been designed so that no piers (bridge supporting structures) need to be built in the valley bottom to reduce impact on the environment.
- The road is positioned to minimise the impact on the natural water systems of the Mangapepeke valley.
- The tunnel through the main ridge allows uninterrupted movement of wildlife from one side of the new road to the other.
- Stormwater culverts (pipes) that pass under the road have been designed to allow kiwi and other animals to move safely from one side of the road to the other.
- There will be fencing at all locations along both sides of the road to prevent kiwi (and other ground-based birds) from walking on the road and getting hit by vehicles.
- The route layout avoids as many old and ecologically important trees as possible so that only 16 significant trees will have to be removed for construction.



# Cultural expression

Our stories through design

# Telling our stories through design

Elements of the cultural design acknowledge and express stories about people and places significant to Ngāti Tama. A Maori designer has been working with the runanga and NZTA to understand our landscape, history, sites of significance, landmarks and values. Some of the concepts guiding this work include:

- The importance of working with and respecting the land.
- Recognising Ngāti Tama's traditional role as northern 'gatekeepers' of the wider Taranaki region.
- Three pou depicting the defence line that reflects the historical 'Te Wero' (challenge) when entering Taranaki from the north. Also the design on the tunnel's northern entrance features 'Te Kauae o Ngāti Tama' – the jaws of Ngāti Tama.
- Other key aspects of the tunnel entrance design include a waterfall (Te Rerepahupahu) and a bird signifying the area's native bird life. Also a circular element representing the mauri (life force) and continued protection of the area. Ancestors are symbolised by purapura whetu (stars) in the upper jaw and the eight tribes of the Tokomaru canoe are reflected by markings in the lower jaw.

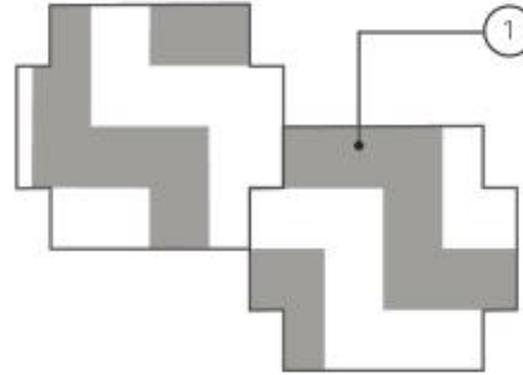
Northern entrance to tunnel



## Bridge (small)



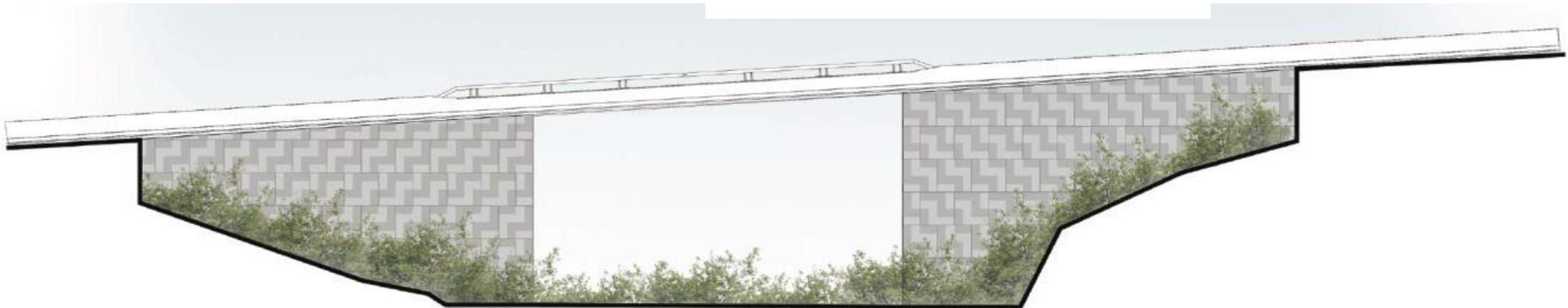
Standard cruciform precast panels



Poutama Pattern applied to standard cruciform precast panel. Two unique patterns required

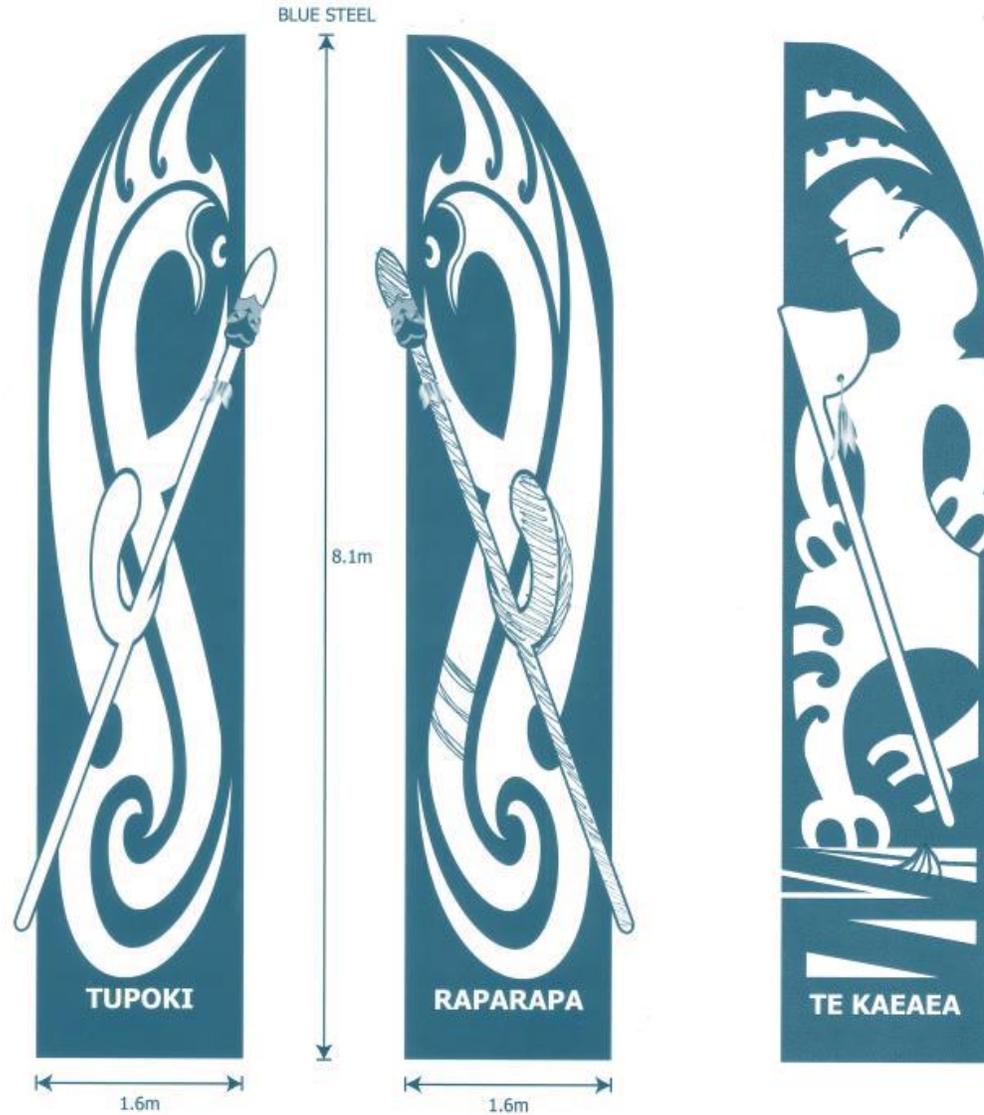


① Formliners cut from printed image and laid into mould prior to casting precast element



Poutama Pattern applied to standard precast panels

# Pou



The three pou depict the defence line, reflecting the historical 'Te Wero' (challenge) when entering Taranaki from the north.

# Environment

Treading lightly on the land

# Bypass impacts on the environment

- There will be damage or removal of vegetation within:
  - Kahikatea, swamp maire and pukatea swamp forest ..... 2 ha
  - Original rimu/totara/rata/tawa forest ..... 21 ha
  - Secondary forest (manuka, tree fern) ..... 9 ha
- 16 significant trees (large rimu, matai and hinau) will be removed. Although deliberate efforts have been made to design the bypass to avoid as many old and ecologically important trees as possible.
- Loss or diversions of sections, of the Mangapepeke and Mimi streams.
- Altering wildlife habitat occupied by long-tailed bats, kiwi, forest and wetland birds, lizards, fish and invertebrates.



Image source: Tiaki Te Mauri O Parininihi Trust

# Project footprint

- Like many other forests throughout the country, our land where the bypass will go, has been significantly depleted over time by unfenced cattle and animal pests including goats and pigs.
- The project's large and comprehensive environmental programme has been designed to reverse these effects and help towards creating a thriving forest.
- Remaining wetland areas throughout the route will be part of the project's mitigation (replacement) planting and offset planting (to balance the effects of construction).



Damage is caused by animal pests including unfenced cattle roaming on our rohe and grazing the understory of the forests.

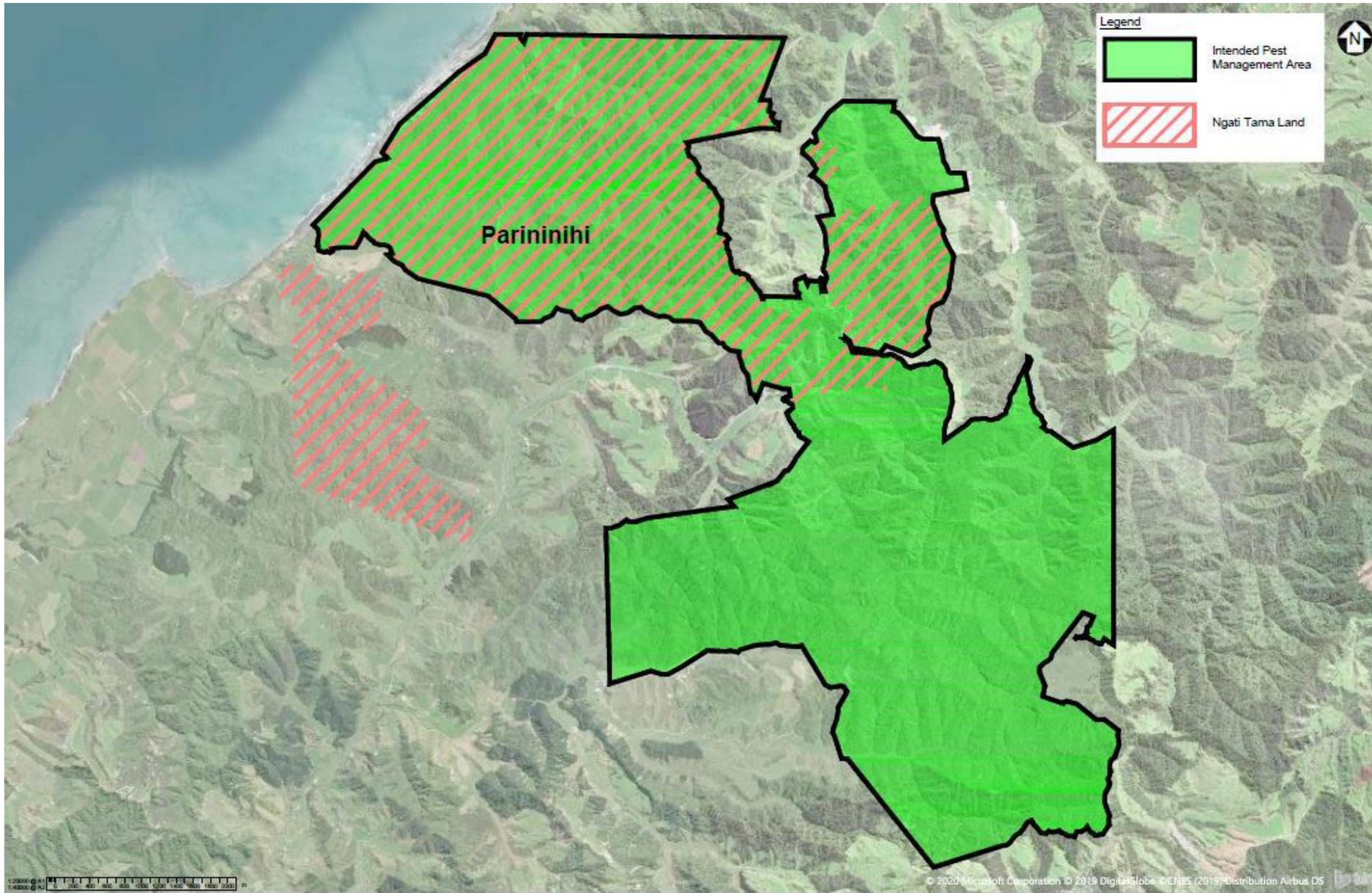
# Environmental programme

- Ongoing pest management covering over 3,650 hectares that includes the Parininihi.
- Restoration of 6 ha of Kahikatea swamp forest to recover the area that has been damaged.
- Restoration of 9 ha of mixed native vegetation.
- Investment of \$200,000 in lizard research.
- 17 ha of planting along stream margins.
- Planting of 200 seedlings of the same species for each of the 16 significant trees that has to be felled (total 3,200 seedlings).
- Riparian planting\* (along the stream edges) and measures to keep livestock away from approximately 8.9 km of existing stream to reduce stream bank erosion and improve the quality of habitat for native freshwater animals and plants.

\* Riparian planting keeps water temperatures during summer peak times, down to levels that native fish can move through comfortably. Native fish cannot live in water that is warmer than 22 to 23 degrees C. Unshaded NZ streams will exceed 23 degrees in mid summer. Riparian vegetation provides food (leaves and branches) to streams for plant eating freshwater organisms and habitat for insects, which in themselves are food for many fish species. Riparian vegetation also provide shade to a stream which reduces aquatic weed growth.



This area, at 3,650 ha for managing pests, will be the largest and most comprehensive ecological package developed for a new road in New Zealand.



## Species affected by pests



Long-tailed bats are in the forest but in low numbers.



North Island brown kiwi are present in low and declining numbers due to predation by pests. Control of pests to low numbers will result in a substantial increase in the size of the kiwi population.



Kokako have been translocated to adjacent Ngati Tama land.

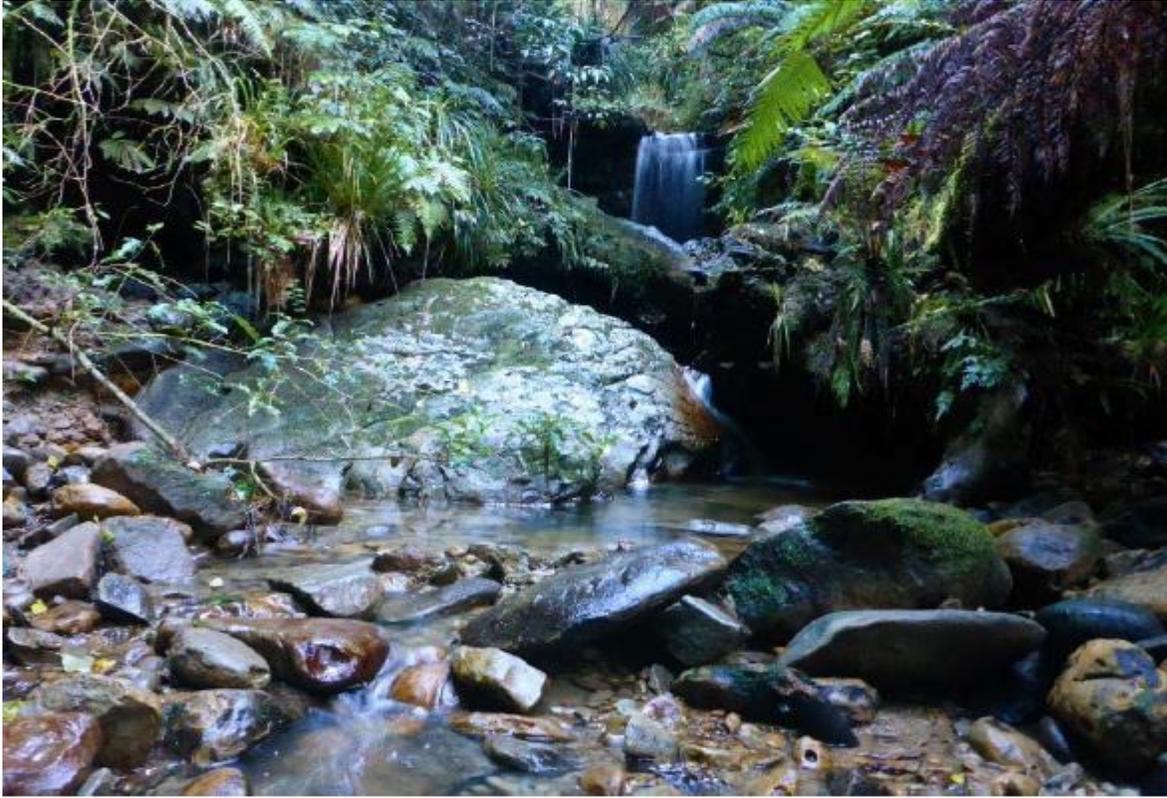
Kereru will increase in number relatively quickly once animal pests are removed.



## Environmental gains for Mangapepeke

**Right:** This waterway that flows into the Mangapepeke stream will certainly benefit from the project. The removal of cattle, goats and feral pigs from this area will allow native tree regeneration to occur, to replace the grass that has persisted because of damage from cattle. It's also likely to benefit from the project's planting programme.





By reducing animal pests further upstream, these sites will benefit from the environmental programme. The programme's regeneration of native seedlings along the channels, reduces the amount of sediment reaching the streams. While the stream quality in these two images are fairly high, further improvement will occur.

## Remaining wetland areas



Once cattle and pests are removed, native wetland trees – kahikatea, swamp maire and pukatea – will be planted to return the wetland areas to mainly forested environments, as they would once have been.

# Ngāti Tama agreements with NZTA

Kei a tātou te tino rangatiratanga o tātou wenua o tātou kainga me o tātou taonga katoa



# Proposed Ngāti Tama agreements with NZTA

- We exercise mana whenua (customary authority) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) over the area for the proposed Mt Messenger Bypass. The land affected is part of land returned to Ngāti Tama through our historical Treaty settlement. It was previously the subject of raupatu (confiscation) following the land wars.
- Ongoing discussions and consultation between NZTA and the runanga have enabled the project to respond to cultural concerns as they have evolved.
- Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Tama has passed a unanimous resolution to enter agreements with NZTA and we're asking you to vote on the two agreements. To be successful we must achieve favourable support from those who vote, of at least 75 percent.
- There are two proposed agreements – the Property Agreement and the Cultural Mitigation Agreement.

# Property agreement



- Land exchange and payment for land in recognition of the importance of the land to us.
- We receive approx. 120 hectares (300 acres) of coastal property (with wahi tapu, pa sites and wai tapu) at Pukearuhe, in exchange for the 20 hectares (50 acres) of our land required for the bypass. We gain an additional 100 hectares (250 acres).
- A temporary lease is given to NZTA for approx. 16 hectares (40 acres) of our land during construction of the new road.

NZTA needs to occupy these areas for up to six years and will return the land to us after construction is finished.

- After the new road has been built NZTA will plant and restore vegetation on the previously leased areas.
- The value of the payment for the land purchase and lease has been assessed by our registered valuers and those for the Crown and has been agreed.

# Cultural mitigation agreement



This agreement acknowledges our relationship with ancestral land and cultural interests, and how the effects of the project may be avoided, remedied or mitigated (eased). It includes:

- recognition by NZTA of the cultural association of Ngāti Tama with the project area
- a payment of \$7.77 million to help address the project's cultural impact on our interests
- opportunities for us to participate in managing pests on our land and DOC land (over 3,650 hectares or 9,020 acres) and in native species planting, as part of

the project's environmental mitigation package

- commitments to maximise training, work and business opportunities for our members arising from the project
- our cultural input into the project's design and implementation
- cultural monitoring by us of works associated with the project.

## Jamie Tuuta heads set-up of new trust

A significant cultural mitigation payment will be made into a separate trust for the benefit of our iwi.

Iwi leader and governance expert Jamie Tuuta, who is a whanaunga to many of us, is leading the establishment of the Trust. He has begun preparing the trust deed that includes the aims and objectives of the trust, the process for appointing trustees with the appropriate knowledge and skills required.

Transparency, accountability and financial prudence will be critical to ensuring the compensation received is secure and administered for the benefit of Ngati Tama and its descendants.



## Jobs and contracting

The project will create contract work and job opportunities that involve working directly for the project or through subcontractors.

Construction work for this project includes trades people, labourers, truck drivers, plant operators, tree felling, planting, pest management (trapping, baiting, track cutting, maintenance, etc).

The project is also exploring a range of training and upskilling opportunities through HEB and Downer work programmes, as well as with government agencies.

Other opportunities include catering (on-site and for occasional events), site security, site deliveries and more.

Potential opportunity to support increased ecotourism as a result of the enlarged and managed ecological protection.



# Gilbert Road, 120 hectares (300 acres)

- This coastal property (with its wahi tapu, pa sites and wai tapu, and is where Poutama Whiria, the adze of Tokomaru Waka, was re-discovered), is located at Pukearuhe. It has regenerating bush that backs onto a huge conservation area.
- The property adjoins to Ngati Tama land and means we no longer require access permission from other landowners.
- NZTA is offering 120 hectares of coastal property at Pukearuhe, in exchange for 20 hectares (50 acres) of our land for the bypass. We gain an additional 100 hectares (250 acres).



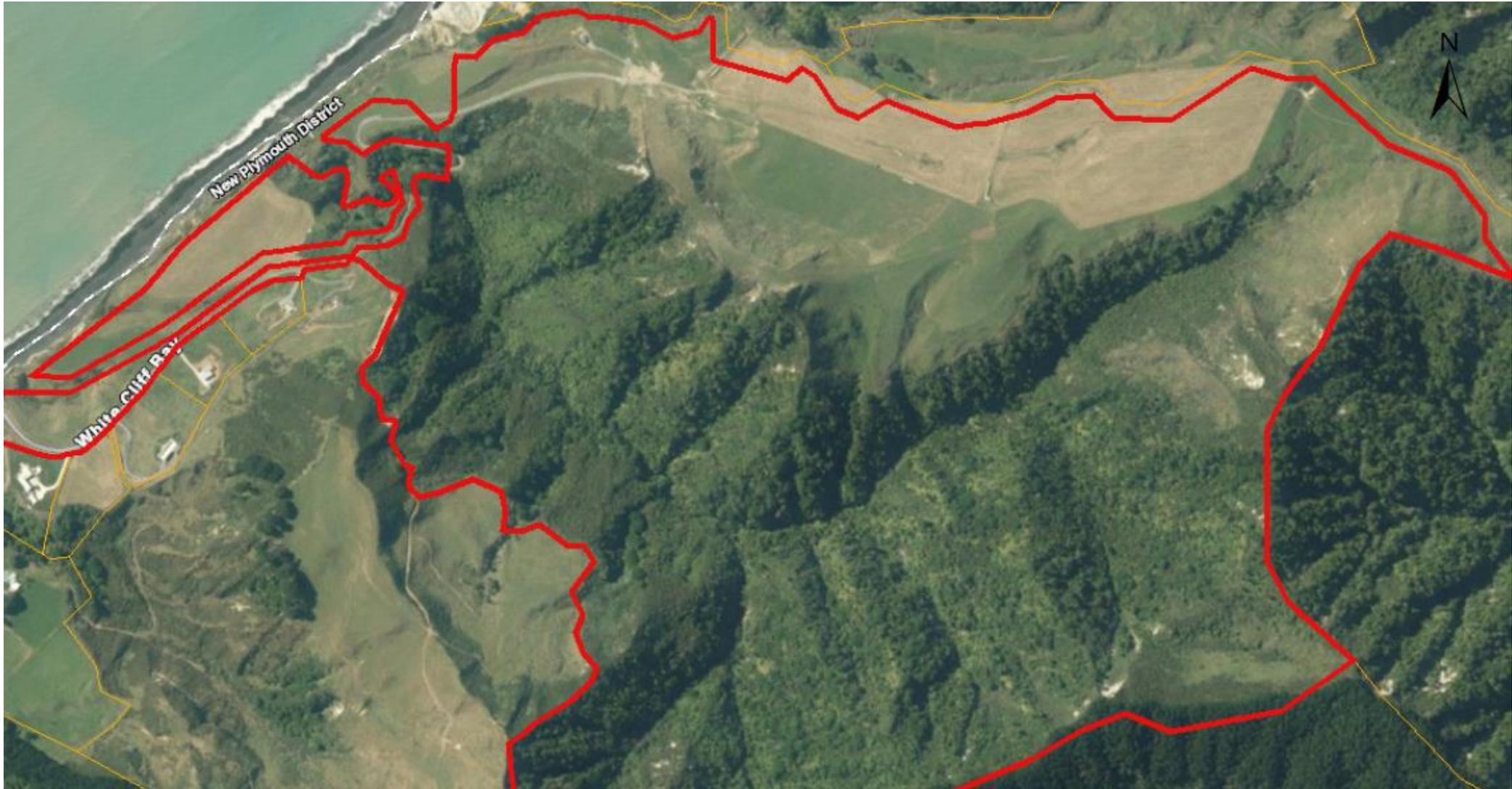
Gilbert Road property



Gilbert Road property



Portions of the Gilbert Road property are marked in red.



Aerial view of the Gilbert Road property marked in red.



# Resources

# Key messages

By supporting the Mt Messenger Bypass project, we are:

1. Protecting Parininihi for our mokopuna and their mokopuna. This will strengthen our iwi culturally and environmentally, and the project will also provide us with work and contracting opportunities. We hope this will attract our people back home.
2. Accepting 120 hectares (300 acres) of coastal property at Pukearuhe (with its numerous wahi tapu, pa sites and wai tapu, and is where Poutama Whiria, the adze of Tokomaru Waka, was hidden and re-emerged), in exchange for 20 hectares (50 acres) of our land for the bypass.
3. This agreement with NZTA will allow us to gain an additional 100 hectares (250 acres). This land gives us direct access to Parininihi so we can continue to 'tiaki te mauri o Parininihi' by reducing the pest populations (rats, possums, mustelids, wildcats and goats) and re-introducing our native birds, animals and plants.
4. Receiving a significant cultural compensation paid to a new trust for the benefit of Ngāti Tama. Iwi leader and governance expert Jamie Tuuta, who is a whanaunga to many of us, is leading the establishment of the trust. He has begun preparing the trust deed that includes the aims and objectives of the trust, the process for appointing trustees with the appropriate knowledge and skills required. Transparency, accountability and financial prudence will be critical to ensuring the compensation received is secure and administered for the benefit of Ngāti Tama and its descendants.

# Key messages

5. Exercising our duty to manaaki others in our rohe by supporting NZTA's mission to save lives and reduce serious injuries on the highway. 2,500 vehicles go over that road daily, 20% of which are trucks, and the road is no longer fit for purpose. Rockfalls and landslips are common and repairing the narrow road is becoming more problematic.
6. Taking action as manawhenua and kaitiaki for this rohe to create beneficial outcomes for Ngāti Tama, our local communities and wider region. We support families and local communities because we're part of these communities and improving the highway at Mt Messenger is good for everyone.
7. From the start, we've determined how we're travelling with NZTA – at times this has been challenging but rewarding. Due to the sensitive nature of the work, we've needed to take care in our communication. We've now reached a point where we have an agreement to share with you and seek endorsement.
8. Our support isn't politically-driven and it isn't about the rūnanga - it's about building a safer and more resilient road for everyone. As one of our whaea who drives Mt Messenger regularly has said "I'm too scared of the heavy traffic to put my mokopuna in the car with me." The new road, and a re-generating native forest and wildlife will make life better for everyone's mokopuna.
9. The construction of the new road will impact on the environment, but this will be short-term compared with the longer term environmental and safety benefits.
10. It's our responsibility to take this opportunity for positive change. Kei a tātou te tino rangatiratanga o tātou wenua o tātou kainga me o tātou taonga katoa. (We, Ngāti Tama, have chiefly responsibility for our land, our homes and our other treasures, and we have the right to determine our own future.)

# FAQs – Mt Messenger Bypass

## 1. What is the bypass?

A new 6 km route that will avoid the existing steep, narrow and winding route over Mt Messenger. It is straighter, lower and less steep than the existing route, providing a more efficient route. There are two bridges of approximately 125m and 30m length, and a 235m tunnel.

## 2. Why is the bypass needed?

The bypass will improve the safety, resilience and reliability on SH3 north of New Plymouth. It is part of a wider programme including a bypass of the Awakino Tunnel and 58km of safety and resilience improvements on SH3 between Mt Messenger and the Awakino Gorge.

Improved safety and resilience will help to save lives and reduce serious injuries. It will lead to fewer delays and road closures. There will also be better sight lines for the curve of the existing road, immediately to the south of the new bypass.

## 3. Why did you choose this option?

NZTA selected this option after extensive consultation with communities, roader users, councils and Te Rūnanga. It met the objectives to improve safety, resilience and reliability while having less environmental effects compared with other options.

## 3. Why don't you just fix up the existing road?

Making improvements to the existing road was considered as one of the options. However this will not achieve the level of safety and reliability improvements that the new bypass is designed to deliver. Realigning the existing road would have similar environmental effects and costs, with less benefits.

## 4. What time savings does the bypass deliver?

The new route is lower and more efficient than the existing section of SH3. It avoids the existing steep, narrow and winding road over Mt Messenger. The project's objectives are to improve safety, resilience and reliability although there is time saving. The typical vehicle journey on this route can be expected to save on average four to five minutes' travel time when compared to the existing route.

## 5. How long will it take to build?

The bypass construction is planned to occur over four years.

## 6. What local opportunities will the bypass build provide?

The project will create local work, training and business opportunities. This includes a range of construction-related roles and work in areas such as pest management and planting. Site support could provide business opportunities in areas including accommodation, catering, security and transportation.

# FAQs – Environment

## 1. How will the bypass impact on the landscape?

The project aims to tread lightly on the land in the project area as much as possible by:

- avoiding the Parininihi forest and Waipingao Valley, located west of the existing SH3, which are of very high ecological, cultural and landscape value
- avoiding the culturally significant peak of Mt Messenger
- keeping low in the landscape, with a tunnel being used to avoid impacting the main ridgeline.
- minimising stream crossings.
- echoing natural slopes in the earthworks.
- designing the bridge so it can be built from each side to reduce disturbing the ground and existing vegetation.

## 2. How does the project benefit the environment?

It includes a wide-ranging, ongoing environmental programme to balance the impact of construction and leave the environment in a better condition than its current state. There is serious pest damage in some of the mature native forest surrounding the bypass route. The environmental programme involves substantial and enduring pest management, sizeable areas of replanting and ecology management. It is expected to greatly improve the natural environment in the project area and beyond.

## 3. What pest management is planned?

A key aspect of the project is 3,650 hectares or 9020 acres of pest management area in perpetuity (ongoing), which includes forest that extends from the coast to almost 10km inland. There will be intensive work to control pests to low levels. The main pests are deer, goats, feral pigs and cats, possums, ferrets, stoats, weasels and rats.

## 4. Where is the pest management area located?

The pest management area is sited on land largely owned by Ngāti Tama and land administered by the Department of Conservation DOC.

## 5. How will vulnerable animals and plants be protected from the effects of building the road?

Every attempt has been made in the bypass design to avoid large and important native trees, although some trees will need to be removed. The project will plant 200 seedlings of the same species for every significant tree that has to be felled.

A programme is underway to reduce the risk of harming native wildlife during the bypass construction and when the road is operational. This includes monitoring key species before, during and after construction. Where necessary some species will be relocated during construction.

# FAQs – Environment

## 6. What sort of planting will be done as part of the project?

Sizeable areas of native planting along with pest control and an ecology restoration programme will significantly improve the natural environment in the Mt Messenger area and beyond.

Over 120,000 plants will be used to plant 32 hectares, comprising:

- 17 ha of plantings along stream margins
- 6 ha of kahikatea – swamp forest
- 9 ha of dryland bush.

More than 100,000 additional native plants will be planted along the roadside margins and on the fill slopes. While every attempt has been made in the bypass design to avoid large and important native trees, some trees will need to be removed. The project will plant 200 seedlings of the same species for every significant tree that has to be removed to build the road.

## 7. What impact will the road have on the environment?

The bypass construction will have some effects on the environment, which include:

- Damage or removal of vegetation and diverting some streams.
- While the bypass has been designed to avoid as many old and ecologically important trees as possible, 16 significant trees (large rimu, matai and hinau) will be removed.
- Altering wildlife habitat occupied by long-tailed bats, kiwi, forest and wetland birds, lizards, fish and invertebrates.

A wide-ranging, ongoing environmental programme will be in place to balance the impact of construction and leave the environment in a better condition than its current state. There is serious pest damage in some of the mature native forest surrounding the bypass route. The environmental programme involves substantial and enduring pest management, sizeable areas of replanting and work to reduce the risk of harming key native wildlife species during and after construction. The programme is expected to greatly improve the natural environment in the project area and beyond.

The project will plant 200 seedlings of the same species for every significant tree that has to be felled.

# FAQs – The agreements

## 1. What is in the deal for NZTA?

NZTA want to create a road that is safer and more resilient than the exiting route, which is no longer fit for purpose. It is part of the wider programme of work underway on SH3 north of New Plymouth with a bypass of the Awakino Tunnel and 58km of safety and resilience improvements on SH3 between Mt Messenger and the Awakino Gorge.

## 2. Is this the best deal for Ngāti Tama?

Yes. The Rūnanga has been working closely with NZTA on the project over the past three years to gain the best agreement for our iwi.

We will gain 120 hectares (300 acres) of coastal property in return for the 20 hectares (50 acres) of land needed for the bypass. This is in addition to payment for the land needed for the bypass and payment to help address the projects cultural impact on our interests. The property we are gaining gives us direct access to Parininihi to continue to 'tiaki te mauri o Parininihi' by reducing the pest populations (rats, possums, mustelids, wildcats and goats), and re-introducing our native birds, animals and plants.

The agreement gives us an opportunity to be involved in pest management on our land and the DOC land, and an opportunity to participate in planting native species as part of the environmental mitigation package for the project, which is nationally significant.

There are also training, employment and business for our iwi

We have worked closely with designers to provide cultural input for key elements of the bypass.

Throughout the construction of the bypass we will provide cultural monitoring by way of a Kaitiaki Forum Group.

## What is going to happen with the money?

The money will be paid into a new trust for the benefit of our members. Iwi leader and governance expert Jamie Tuuta will establish the trust. More detail will be available when Jamie has worked through the constitution including the trust's aims and objectives, the appropriate knowledge and skills required by the trustees and the process for appointing them.

### More information

For more information about the Mt Messenger Bypass project visit [nzta.govt.nz/ag2mm](https://nzta.govt.nz/ag2mm)

For detailed technical reports (including environmental reports) on the Mt Messenger Bypass project visit [tinyurl.com/mountmessenger](https://tinyurl.com/mountmessenger)

Check out our website [www.ngatitamaotaranaki.iwi.nz/](https://www.ngatitamaotaranaki.iwi.nz/)

# Ngāti Tama Agreements with NZ Transport Agency

Not one more acre | Treading lightly on the environment

The proposed agreements acknowledge Ngāti Tama's customary and ancestral rights over our rohe, including the cultural and environmental significance of Parininihi, which the planned Mt Messenger Bypass traverses. It reflects the deep relationship we have with our ancestral lands and taonga, and the impact of the project on Ngāti Tama.



**Land exchange** - land of much greater cultural significance (wahi tapu, pa sites and wai tapu).



**Planting on Ngāti Tama land** including kahikatea, swamp maire and other wetland and forest species.



**A payment to a Trust established by Ngāti Tama** for cultural purposes, to reflect the significance of Ngāti Tama land being exchanged.



**Kaitiakitanga** - Ngāti Tama has cultural oversight of the project works.



**Ngāti Tama artwork and design incorporated** into significant elements of the route such as tunnel and bridge.



**Ngāti Tama secure ownership of any significant trees felled.**



**Employment, training and business opportunities** for Ngāti Tama members.



**Signage** explaining Ngāti Tama association with the project area.



**Significant pest management** on 3,650ha adjoining and including the Parininihi. This will occur in perpetuity (renewable 35 year term).



**Enduring legacy** Over 20 - 30 years, enrich the health and productivity of a significant part of the Ngāti Tama rohe and surrounding area encompassing the forest, wetlands and streams and native wildlife including kiwi, bats, lizards and fish.

Key elements of the two agreements are combined in this infographic.

*Kei a tātou te tino rangatiratanga o tātou wenua o tātou kainga  
me o tātou taonga katoa*