

0.0 Mauao Base Track Remediation

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide the mayor and councillors with an update on plans to remediate the Mauao base track and seek approval to proceed with onsite construction works.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- (a) Receives the report titled Mauao Base Track Remediation.
- (b) Endorses Option 1 as the preferred remediation option.
- (c) Approves progressing to onsite construction works.
- (d) Supports staff to continue to explore long-term options for base track realignment in slip prone areas, in consultation with the Mauao Trust and to reflect the Mauao Trust's strategic vision for the enhancement and protection of the maunga.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. A significant slip occurred on Mauao during ex-cyclone weather events in April 2017. Damage to the Mauao base track resulted in closure of the track and a temporary set of stairs being constructed around the slip on the high ground. This was to provide public access until a long-term solution could be put in place.
3. A new Council was elected in October 2019 and soon after, staff were directed to explore alternate solutions for the remediation of the Mauao base track with a priority focus on:
 - (a) meeting the needs and respecting the wishes of the Mauao Trust (owners of the maunga);
 - (b) the safety of the general public using the walkway; and
 - (c) having the remediated Mauao base track open to the public prior to Christmas 2019.
4. Four options were developed in close consultation with a variety of key stakeholders, including the Mauao Trust and Heritage New Zealand, and Option 1 is recommended.
5. Work to prepare the site for construction works has begun in parallel to the preparation of this report, to ensure tight construction timeframes can be met.
6. Work to prune two established Pohutukawa trees on site has been completed as part of a routine repairs and maintenance (R&M) process, to reduce the weight loading of those trees by 10-20%.
7. Onsite construction works can begin soon after approval to proceed, which will give the project the best chance of meeting the stated delivery expectations.

BACKGROUND

8. A significant slip occurred on Mauao during ex-cyclone weather events in April 2017. Damage to the Mauao base track resulted in closure of the track and a temporary set of stairs being constructed around the slip on the high ground. This was to provide public access until a long-term solution could be put in place.

9. Council staff worked to develop a long-term solution that would in particular; reinstate universal access, accentuate the archaeological and heritage values of the site, and deliver a solution that would be highly resilient to future landslip events.
10. The total cost to deliver the option developed was ~\$6M against an approved Annual Plan budget of \$4.65M. At the Projects, Services and Operations Committee meeting on 25 June 2019, Council voted not to allocate additional funds to support this option and the report was left to lie on the table.
11. A new Council was elected in October 2019 and soon after, staff were directed to explore alternate solutions for the remediation of the Mauao base track.
12. The remediation priorities were clearly articulated as:
 - (a) meeting the needs and respecting the wishes of the Mauao Trust (owners of the maunga);
 - (b) the safety of the general public using the walkway; and
 - (c) having the remediated Mauao base track open to the public prior to Christmas 2019.
13. Staff worked closely with consultants, contractors and key stakeholders, including the Mauao Trust and Heritage New Zealand, to develop four possible options for remediation (see Attachment 1 and 2, and below 'Options Analysis'):
14. Option 3 and 4 were discounted as they required significant and lengthy consenting requirements, in particular through Heritage New Zealand, and wouldn't have met the requirement for the project to be delivered prior to Christmas 2019.
15. Option 2 was considered highly unlikely to be able to be delivered prior to Christmas 2019 but more importantly, was assessed as less resilient with a significantly shorter lifespan than the other options.
16. Therefore, Option 1 was considered the most achievable; in the timeframes available, without compromising the safety of the public, and well within the currently available budget.
17. Option 1 is supported by the Mauao Trust and the works can be conducted onsite under existing Heritage New Zealand consenting arrangements. No consents are required from either Tauranga City Council or Bay of Plenty Regional Council.
18. Option 1 reinstates the ability for Mount Maunganui Lifeguard Services (MMLS) to be able to circumnavigate the entire base track to perform rescue operations.
19. The first stage of Option 1 will be delivered prior to Christmas i.e. tree pruning (completed), minor track re-alignment, upper slope soil nails and erosion protection matting installation. The second stage will be delivered in late January/early February i.e. lower slope soil nails and erosion protection matting installation.
20. The remediated section of track will be able to be opened to the public between stages one and two but will need to be closed when the stage two works are undertaken. The existing stairs will stay in place to ensure the base track can be circumnavigated while stage two works are completed.
21. The delivery of Option 1 does not compromise Council's ability to deliver other options for further base track remediation in the future, including options 2, 3 and 4 highlighted in this report.

STRATEGIC / STATUTORY CONTEXT

22. This proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Mauao Historic Reserve Management Plan, the Open Space Strategy, the Age-Friendly City Strategy, the Disability Strategy and the draft Community Wellbeing Strategy.
23. The **Mauao Historic Reserve Management Plan** provides the management framework for Mauao. It is the overarching tool to achieve integrated management of the reserve, through conserving historical, archaeological, cultural and ecological values, whilst positively

supporting recreational values of the reserve. The plan reflects the concerns and aspirations of the owners of Mauao, the three iwi of Tauranga Moana, the wider public of Tauranga and visitors who use the reserve for historical, recreation, educational and conservation reasons.

24. The Plan notes that the Mauao Historic Reserve is private land owned by the Mauao Trust and is available, used and enjoyed by all as a public space. The maunga is a regionally significant recreational asset used by large numbers of people. The “Base Track” around Mauao is one of New Zealand’s most popular scenic walks. The 3.4km route takes pedestrians around the base of Mauao and can be walked in either direction. It is estimated that over one million people per year traverse the base track or climb the summit. Mauao provides a well-used natural setting for recreation in an increasingly intensified urban area and is an iconic natural landscape in the Bay of Plenty. It is a “must-do” activity for visitors and a symbol of home to the local community.
25. The Plan’s mission statement is “Mauao is protected, conserved, and appropriately enhanced as a taonga of exceptional cultural, spiritual, historic and natural significance whilst providing for managed public access and use”. Three objectives were developed which represent the principal values of the reserve and these include continuing to meet the appropriate recreational and amenity needs of the residents and visitors to the city. Management statements provide direction on what can happen and how the reserve will be managed to ensure the vision and objectives for the reserve are realised.
26. Management statement 5.3.3(i) specifically provides for the provision of a universally accessible track around the base of the maunga. The statement is as follows:

Universal access shall be provided to the base track around Mauao however universal access to the summit will be avoided due the excessive adverse impacts of minimum construction standards with relation to the archaeological values. Specific events for summit access for people with disabilities will be considered as a community event and subject to approval of Ngā Poutiriao ō Mauao.
27. **Te Mahere Whakamahinga o Mauao 2018-2028** (Mauao Implementation Plan) is a holistic and adaptive tool for the management of Mauao and sets out projects that will be undertaken to preserve the mauri of Mauao. The plan has been jointly prepared by the Mauao Trust and Tauranga City Council and gives “life” to the Mauao Historic Reserve Management Plan.
28. The projects all contribute to “place making” on Mauao as they are able to facilitate delivery of public places with soul, that inspire and connect people together by making the spaces living spaces, which strengthen the connection between people and the places they share.
29. Repair of the base track will contribute to the outcomes of the Plan through providing easy access for all members of the community to places of cultural, archaeological, historical, ecological and recreational value on Mauao.
30. Repair of the base track to reinstate a universally accessible base track contributes to the place making outcomes of the Council’s Community Outcomes, Open Space Strategy, the Age-Friendly City Strategy, the Disability Strategy, the Sport and Active Living Strategy, and the draft Community Wellbeing Strategic Plan.
31. Collectively, the place making related strategic direction in these documents includes:
 - (a) Tauranga will attract people and visitors, is inclusive and healthy.
 - (b) Tauranga will protect, enhance and develop a network of open spaces for people to appreciate and enjoy. Good access to open space is a major contributor to people’s quality of life.
 - (c) Tauranga will provide accessible public spaces to enable active use by all.
 - (d) Tauranga will be an inclusive city where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in our community.
 - (e) Our built and open space environment encourages and motivates people to be active in their daily lives.
 - (f) Enhancing community wellbeing by supporting healthy living and physical activity.

OPTIONS ANALYSIS

32. Option 1 – minor tree pruning, minor earthworks and slope stabilisation with soil nails and erosion protection matting installation

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets the priority needs for the project • Approved by the Mauao Trust • Can be completed within existing Heritage New Zealand consenting arrangements • Does not require Council or Regional Council consents • Low impact of earthworks and less cut material to dispose of (40m³ to be removed) • Low impact on the established Pohutukawa trees • Stability of the slip face is enhanced • Finished slip face and cut slope will blend into the surrounding natural environment once vegetated • Reinstates universal access to the base track • Reinstates the ability for MMLS to circumnavigate the base track to perform rescue operations • Can be delivered well within currently allocated budget • Option 1 does not compromise Council's ability to deliver other options for further base track remediation in the future, including options 2, 3 and 4 highlighted in this report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires specialist machinery • Requires significant short-term post-construction monitoring • May cost more than Option 3 or 4 • 10-15-year estimated design life will require future solutions to address ongoing resilience • Risk of damage from future landslips • Susceptible to coastal erosion

33. Option 2 – reinstate the track in the existing location by constructing a footbridge to span the failed area

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact on the established Pohutukawa trees • Has the least impact on archaeologically significant areas of the site • Can be completed within existing Heritage New Zealand consenting arrangements • Does not require Council or Regional Council consents • Reinstates universal access to the base track • Reinstates the ability for MMLS to circumnavigate the base track to perform rescue operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to be completed in the timeframes required • Mauao Trust yet to confirm support • Bridge foundations would require large piled foundations to resist the lateral forces of future landslips • Higher risk of damage from future landslips • Likely more expensive than Option 1 • Estimated design life of 2-5 years with options to extend • Susceptible to coastal erosion

34. Option 3 – realign the existing track at the existing level by excavating into the slope above the track

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier construction process with conventional machinery • Likely to be a cost-effective solution • Does not require Regional Council consent • Good resilience from slip regression due to erosion or future landslips • Reinstates universal access to the base track • Reinstates the ability for MMLS to circumnavigate the base track to perform rescue operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not have the support of the Mauao Trust • Unable to be completed in the timeframes required • Will require Heritage New Zealand consent • Large amount of earthworks and large amount of cut material to dispose of (400m³ to be removed) • Significant impact on the maunga • Removal of the two established Pohutukawa trees • Estimated design life of 5-10 years with options to extend

35. Option 4 – create a higher-level track above the existing Pohutukawa trees

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier construction process with conventional machinery • Low impact on the established Pohutukawa trees • Greater resilience from slip regression due to erosion or future landslips • Does not require Regional Council consent • Reinstates universal access to the base track • Reinstates the ability for MMLS to circumnavigate the base track to perform rescue operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not have the support of the Mauao Trust • Unable to be completed in the timeframes required • Will require Heritage New Zealand consent • Large amount of earthworks and large amount of cut material to dispose of (600m³ to be removed) • 10-15-year estimated design life will require future solutions to address ongoing resilience • Significant impact on the maunga and likely to impact archaeologically significant areas of the site

36. Option 5 – do nothing

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No construction cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not address the priority requirements of the project • Would require authorisation from Heritage New Zealand for the temporary stairs to remain long-term • Does not address the will of the public to have the base track re-opened with universal access • Does not reinstate the ability for MMLS to circumnavigate the base track to perform rescue operations • Area susceptible to further slip regression due to erosion or future landslips

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

37. There is a capital budget of \$2.3M allocated for Mauao base track remediation in financial year (FY) 2020 (100% loan funded). A further \$2.35M is budgeted in FY2021.
38. The estimated cost to complete of Option 1 is detailed below:

Services	Description	Cost to complete
WSP Opus	Professional services – design services and construction supervision	\$82,500
Waiotahi	Construction/physical works (incl. sub-consultants) Stage 1 (upper slope – before Christmas)	\$210,512
Waiotahi	Construction/physical works (incl. sub-consultants) Stage 2 (lower slope – after Christmas)	\$346,870
TCC internal costs	Project manager – 7x weeks/20 hours per week @ \$90 per/hr and TCC Planning at \$200 per/hour for 4 hours	\$13,400
Sub-total		\$653,282
Contingency @ 10%	Risk funding allowance	\$65,328
Total		\$718,610

39. The cost to complete estimate of \$719K equates to a ~\$40K savings in FY2020 interest costs. These savings will be used to cover any post-construction monitoring costs that are required in the first few months following works completion.
40. Ongoing consequential opex, once post-construction monitoring requirements have been met, will be covered from existing R&M opex budgets.
41. The \$2.35M allocated in FY2021 can be cleared out as part of the upcoming Annual Plan process.
42. ~\$439K of design costs and professional fees currently sitting as ‘work in progress’ for this project, out of a total ~\$640K spent to date, will need to be written off as these costs cannot be directly attributable to the newly constructed asset.

PROCUREMENT

43. Staff plan to engage Waiotahi Contractors due to their ability to mobilise sufficient plant and resources in the timeframes required to meet the delivery needs of the project.
44. They are also currently undertaking a project for Council that has similarities in the work/scope of both projects e.g. earthworks, excavation, machine work, sediment/erosion control measures and embankment stabilisation.
45. The quality of their work on similar projects in the past has been good and there is confidence in their ability to complete the works on time and to a high standard.
46. The works will be undertaken as variation to the existing TC115/18 contract (Pond 25). This VO will be issued as a Separable Portion to TC115/18.
47. Council has received all relevant insurances, safety and environmental plans for these works.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS / RISKS

48. There are no legal implications.
49. Key risks to the project are included in the advantages/disadvantages section of the ‘Options Analysis’ detailed above.

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT

50. Significant stakeholder engagement has been undertaken on this project over the last 30 months. This includes a wide variety of key stakeholders and the general public.
51. In the last month, several meetings have taken place with the Mauao Trust, in their offices and on site. The Chair of Ngā Poutiriao o Mauao was involved in conversations as option development progressed. The mayor and all councillors have visited the site, some several times.
52. Heritage New Zealand have been thoroughly consulted during the design process and Option 1 has been confirmed as not requiring any additional consents.
53. Written confirmation of support for Option 1 has been received from the Mauao Trust.
54. A request from MMLS was received to request that any solution developed allows for unrestricted access for their ATV vehicle to circumnavigate the track to perform rescue operations.

SIGNIFICANCE

55. Under the Significance and Engagement Policy, this decision is considered medium significance.
56. Under the Policy, Council may decide it is not appropriate or necessary to engage on the proposal.
57. Public sentiment on the current status of the Mauao base track is well known and it is believed that Option 1 delivers a solution that clearly addresses that current sentiment and therefore, no additional engagement is proposed to be undertaken.

NEXT STEPS

58. If the recommendations in this report are approved, next steps are:
 - (a) Begin and complete onsite construction works
 - (b) Conduct post-construction monitoring
 - (c) Open the base track

ATTACHMENTS

Nil