

Mauao slips – questions and answers

What happened?

In early April, when much of the country was hit by ex-cyclone Debbie, a section of the Mauao base track fell away in a large slip.

The slip exposed a drop of about 30m above where the track used to be. It is on the Pilot Bay side of the mountain approaching sandy beach.

We don't know how long it will take to repair the damage or to restore public access to that part of the track. Previous slips of this type on Mauao have taken weeks, and sometimes months, to restore safe public access.

Other areas of the base track have also shown instability, so we have closed a large segment of the base track while we assess further.

When will the base track open again?

We don't know at present. We have had staff and contractors out working in all kinds of weather to minimise damage so we can get it open again as quickly as possible.

Why can't Council put in an engineering solution?

Mauao is a significant natural landscape with many springs and steep erosive terrain. Unfortunately, there is no engineering solution that could prevent erosion events from taking place in this environment, especially when we have so much rain in such a short time.

It's not possible, appropriate or affordable to retain the entire coastal alignment or every slip on the maunga.

Staff and contractors work hard to ensure visitor safety at all times and to minimise track closures or disturbances to the public. When slips occur we respond immediately and this sometimes requires short-term closures.

Unfortunately, significant damage was done to an area of the base track during this recent event and it will take time to resolve. All the other tracks on Mauao remain open and we are working hard on a solution to open the base track as soon as possible.

How can the community help?

Right now our staff and contractors just need the space to do their jobs, so please keep away from the site. It's a dangerous environment and requires skilled professionals to do the work.