

Media Release

1 March 2019

Restoration of Māngere Mountain begins

Thousands of new native trees, significant track enhancements and a major playground development are planned for Te Pane o Mataoho / Te Ara Pueru / Māngere Mountain, with some work starting this month.

From 11 March arborists will begin the vegetation component of the restoration programme with the removal of approximately 150 exotic trees, before planting around 13,000 native trees and shrubs from May to August.

Visitors can expect some temporary closures of the maunga between 11 March and early-April on days that a helicopter is assisting tree removals. Signage explaining the project and temporary closures will be placed at entrance points.

A significant portion of trees being removed are identified as pest plants in the Auckland Regional Pest Management Strategy. No existing native, scheduled or protected trees will be removed.

The new plantings will be carefully positioned to enhance sight lines to and from the tihi (summit), and over time will create a native ecosystem reflective of what was originally present on the maunga. Community planting days will be planned.

A new habitat for native ornate and copper skinks will also be created on the northern side of Māngere Mountain, incorporating over 600 new low-growing native plants. Māngere Mountain currently includes the most significant native skink habitats of any of the maunga sites in Auckland.

Paul Majurey, Chair of the Tūpuna Maunga Authority says that restoring indigenous flora and fauna and enhancing the authenticity and visual integrity of the historic maunga sites across Tāmaki Makaurau is a long-term goal.

“Native vegetation is one of the natural features of the maunga that has diminished over many decades, replaced by an increasing number of exotic



species. The many thousand new native trees we will plant on Māngere Mountain will have significant long-term ecological benefits for the maunga, providing enhanced habitat opportunity for native wildlife,” says Majurey.

The safety of visitors and the preservation of archaeology are also considerations. A band of macrocarpa trees on the ridge-line at the tihi (summit) are a particular health and safety risk for visitors, with the crowns of several macrocarpa falling onto walking racks in recent times. Several large macrocarpa are hanging precariously over a crater and are growing in spots which have intact archaeology including midden (ancient shell deposits). A tree falling there would cause irreparable damage.

The second phase of the restoration is an enhanced track network, to be delivered from next year. The tihi loop track will be recreated with wider paths, rock borders with low native plantings and rest areas at key points to take in the views. Stairs will be designed for steeper sections of the track which are currently prone to erosion from foot traffic. The emphasis will be on low-impact sustainable design techniques that enhance the natural features of the maunga.

A major redevelopment of the Māngere Mountain playground will also be delivered from next year. The aim is to create a bespoke nature-play space inspired by the landscape and the stories associated with the maunga and Māori culture. A budget of up to \$1m has been set aside for the playground, which will make it a significant new amenity in the Māngere community.

“Māngere Mountain is one of the best-preserved Māori volcanic pā (fortified village) sites in the Auckland region, with intact archaeology such as ancient kumara pits and midden which are some of the last and few remaining traces of early Māori life in Tāmaki Makaurau. All components of this restoration work are about restoring the maunga as an important indigenous landscape, and at the same time establishing a top recreation destination for visitors,” says Majurey.

More information about the Tūpuna Maunga Authority, including the Tūpuna Maunga Integrated Management Plan, can be found at www.maunga.nz.

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Notes for editors:

An artist impression of the enhanced tihi (summit) track network is on the following page. Credit Tūpuna Maunga Authority.

Vegetation management on the maunga, including the management of exotic trees and pest plants, and the restoration of indigenous flora and fauna, was signalled in the Tūpuna Maunga Integrated Management Plan which was publicly notified and the subject of a public submission and hearing process in 2016.

In 2014 a Treaty of Waitangi settlement was passed, transferring ownership of fourteen Tūpuna Maunga (ancestral mountains) to the Mana Whenua tribes of Auckland and enabling the establishment of the Tūpuna Maunga Authority.

The Authority is a co-governance body with six iwi representatives, six Auckland Council representatives and one non-voting Crown representative. The Authority is independent of the Council and has decision-making powers and functions.

Track enhancement artist impression

Now:



Redeveloped:

