

RAIL UPGRADES

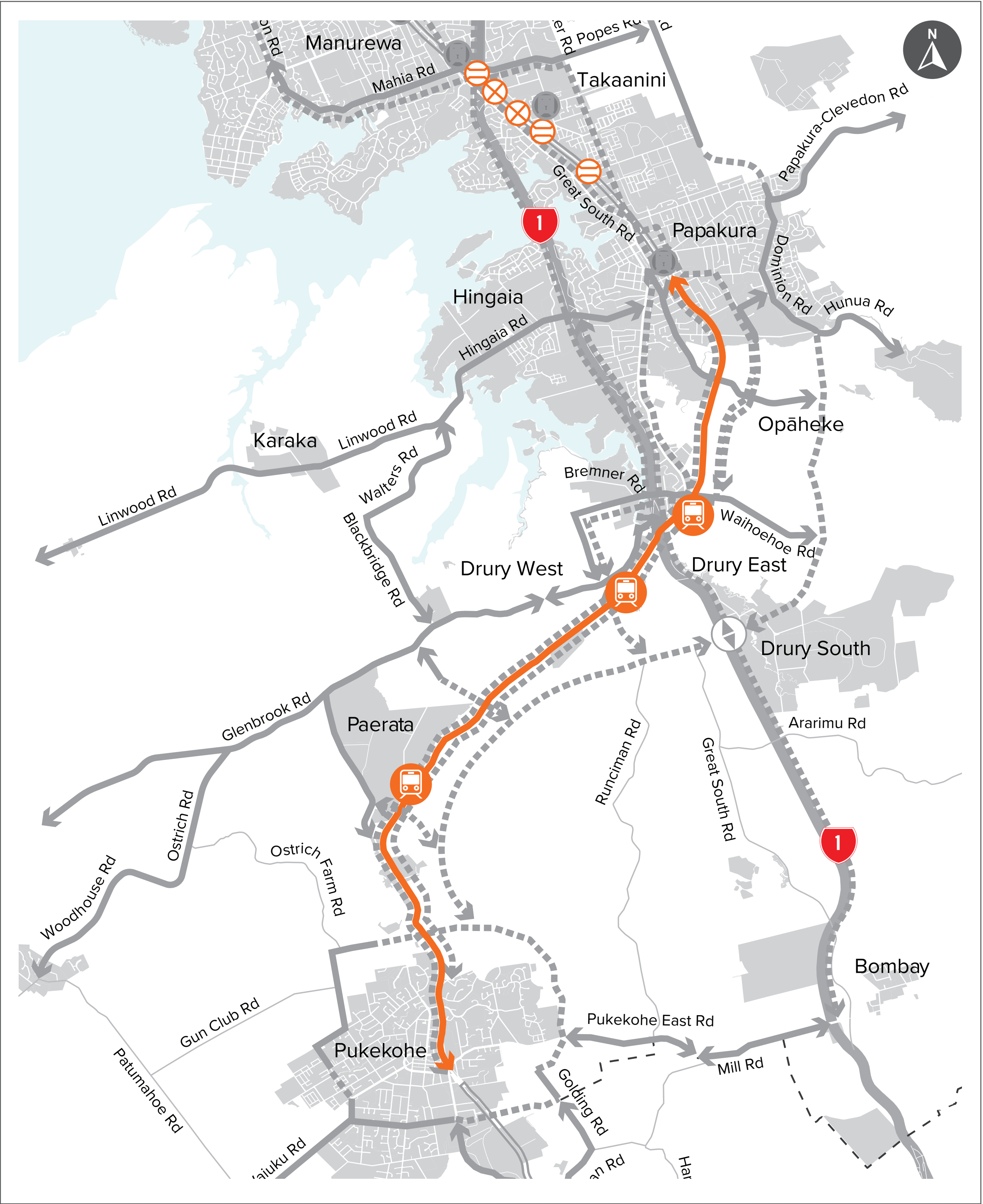
The project described in this profile has been identified by an indicative business case and will require further technical investigation and engagement before its final detail, location or land requirement is confirmed. It is also yet to be prioritised for funding for delivery over the next 10-30 years.

Purpose

Proposed improvements to the rail network in the south would enable rail to play a much greater role in meeting the current and future travel needs of the community. Public transport needs to become a dominant travel choice in the south to enable the transport network to support this planned growth. Upgrades would provide greater capacity and access to the network as well as safety benefits. Work on these projects is being done in partnership with KiwiRail as a key partner to the Supporting Growth Programme.

Description

- Rail upgrades would include the following projects:
- Rail upgrade from Papakura to Pukekohe, including electrification and further long term capacity upgrades
 - Closure of existing level crossings at Manuroa Road and Spartan Road to vehicles
 - Three new railway stations at Drury East, Drury West and Paerata
 - Separation of Mahia Road and Popes Road (between Roscommon Road and Mill Road), from the rail corridor



- Grade separation of Taka Street
- Grade separation of Walters Road.

Key benefits

The rail upgrade would provide opportunities for freight and passenger rail to operate more independently of each other, and more efficiently by increasing the capacity of the existing network. This in turn would enable the passenger rail network to be frequent, fast and reliable. New train stations would provide increased access for current and future residents in the south and increase the network capacity for future urban growth developments. There are also many opportunities to work closely with

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developments to align key strategic transport links such as train stations with the future developments, enabling a wide range of transport choices for future residents.

Current status

Engagement was undertaken regarding several options for the rail network in the south in 2018 and following analysis of feedback and technical investigations, a preferred corridor was approved mid-2019. We have a general study area within which further investigations will be undertaken. In early 2019 the programme's draft indicative plans for these long term rail upgrades were included in Auckland Council's consultation materials for structure plans, and feedback received during this time will be considered as part of the next stage of the programme's planning.

The Supporting Growth Programme is working closely with KiwiRail to support route protection of these projects.

Other rail projects in the south are being progressed in the shorter term by KiwiRail. The most critical rail network upgrades (identified as part of the Auckland Transport Alignment Project) are focused on realising the benefits of the City Rail Link, providing for growing freight demand between Wiri and Quay Park and extending rail electrification from Papakura to Pukekohe.

Next steps

During the next phase of work, the project team, in partnership with KiwiRail, will consider whether any additional land is required for the proposed rail improvements, including train stations.

This will include social, cultural, environmental and technical investigations as well as further engagement with project partners, stakeholders, landowners, and the community.

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