

Northern Corridor Improvements:

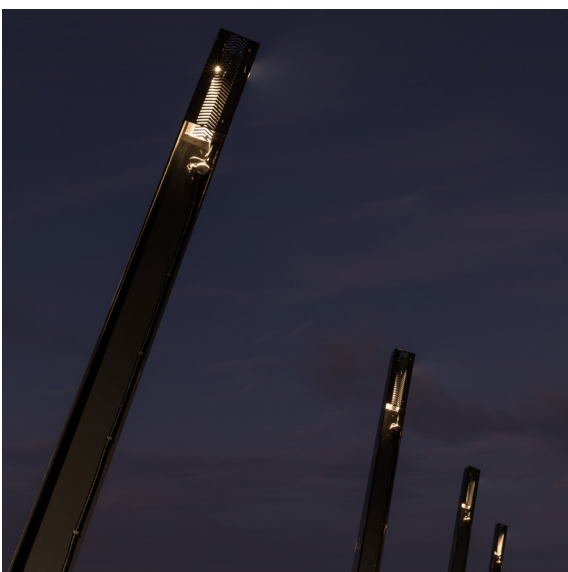
Urban design narrative



As part of creating a welcoming community for people who travel through the area, Mana Whenua and Waka Kotahi have worked together to share the story of this region which reflects its cultural history and importance.

Inspiration for the designs throughout the project area are drawn from the concept of ara (tracks), awa (waterways) and the ridges and valleys situated in Ōkahukura, Albany. While tracks are symbolic of nature and expressive of a journey, they also recognise the importance of travel on foot by Māori through an ancestral landscape. Whether people are travelling through the area today on foot, bike or in a bus or car, the design elements on the bridges, barriers and retaining walls they pass reconnect people to the ancestral landscape.

There are three key themes across the project which are Taenga (arrival/welcome), Mahi (gathering/work) and Ngā Hau e Whā (navigation).



Taenga (Arrival/Welcome)

Albany Busway Bridge

For people arriving from the North, their gateway into the area is the Albany Busway Bridge.

The design of the bridge reflects a waka with the light poles positioned in a way to symbolise the hoe (paddle) stroking through the water for movement.

The bridge barriers are a combination of a Puhoro design on the top which were often carved into waka and a design representing the moana/awa (sea/water) on the bottom. The Puhoro design here represents speed, swiftness and agility, which tie in with the bridge used for buses on the Northern Busway to help get people around quickly on a reliable public transport network.

The retaining walls of the bridge are a Pātiki design which are based on the diamond shape of the flounder fish to represent the different types of kai (food) caught and transported on waka.

Puhoro (top) and Moana/awa (bottom) bridge barrier designs



'Waka lights' symbolise the hoe stroking through water



Pātiki retaining wall design

McClymonts Road Bridge

This majestic 12 metre high pou whenua adorns the McClymonts Road Bridge along with panels wrapped around the pier. The panels themselves are a statement of art and reflect the Puhoro design. The genealogy of the Puhoro design has links to water and the creation of life. In this sense, these panels represent the coming together of people, resources and minds.

The bridge barriers reflect traditional Māori timber palisade (defensive wall) and lashings often seen on Pā Tūwatawata (a fortified village).

The retaining wall panel design is known as Niho Taniwha (the teeth of the Taniwha), which is a traditional design and continues to be widely used. The Taniwha is the guardian who keeps the village safe and represents strength.

Pā Tūwatawata bridge barrier design



Pou Whenua and Puhoro design



Puhoro bridge pier design



Niho Taniwha retaining wall design



Pou Whenua adorning McClymonts Road Bridge

Tirohanga Whānui



Tirohanga Whānui means panoramic and expansive views. True to its name, it sits at one of the highest points in the area and offers exceptional views in all directions.

The design of the bridge references the areas early environmental and cultural history. The bridge is intended to tie the landscape back together and restore the ara (historic track) on which iwi traversed from coast to coast.

The design adorning the bridge abutments represents valleys, creeks and rising mist to honour what was once here. The bridge truss is coloured kōkōwai (red ochre), which represents whakapapa (genealogy) and the screen design symbolises the art of weaving.



Mahi (Gathering/Work)

Greville Road Bridge and Rosedale Bridge

The design of the motorway bridges and bridge barriers in this part of the project are known as Mangopare (Hammerhead shark) and tie closely with the theme of mahi.

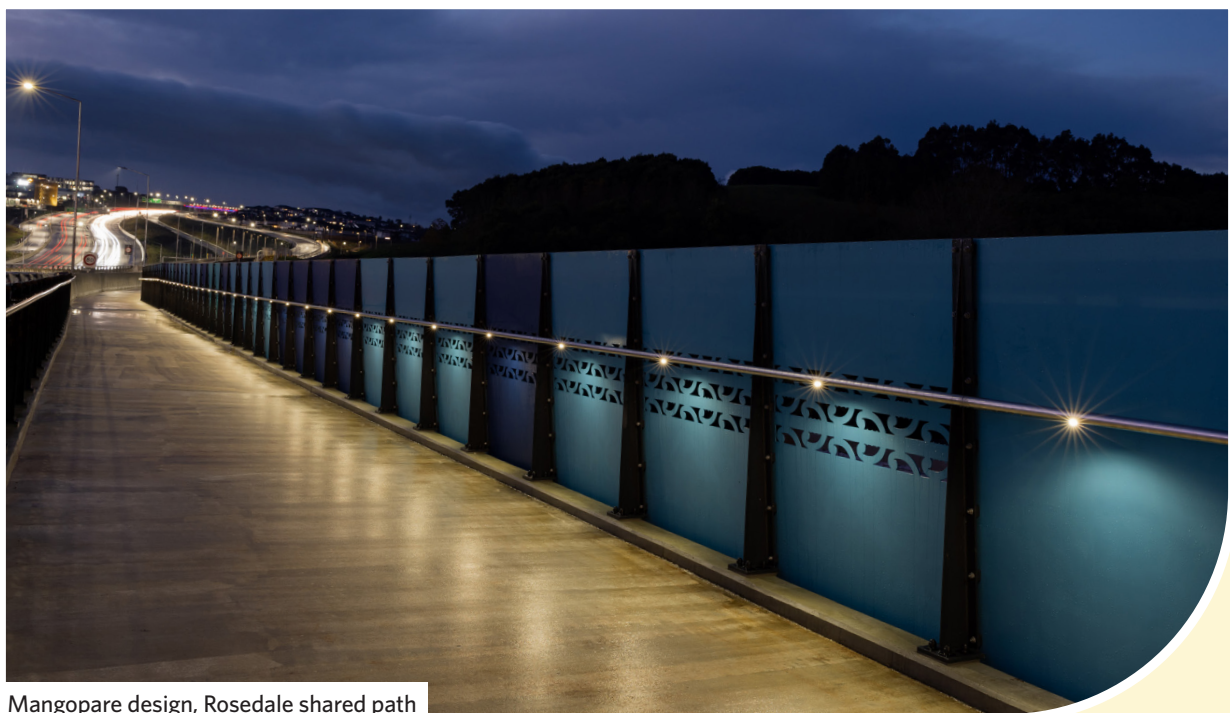
Mangopare were known for coming together in packs before heading off on their own paths and journeys and in a modern-day sense, the area is known for having tight knit communities with very busy intersections leading in all directions as people go about their day to day lives.



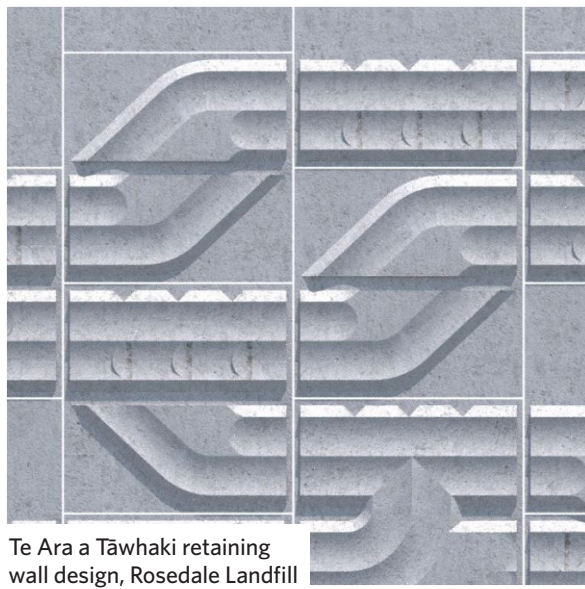
Mangopare bridge barrier design, Greville Busway Bridge



Mangopare design, Rosedale Busway Bridge



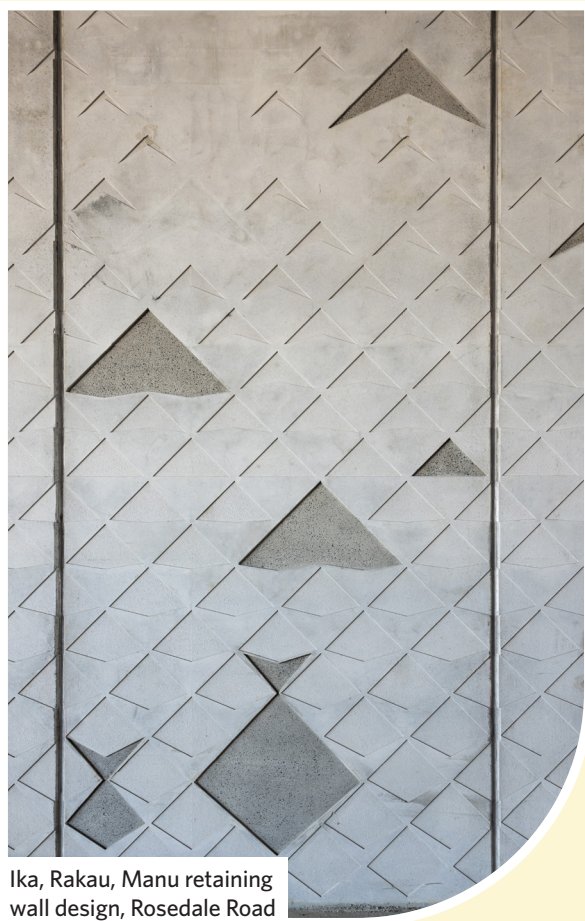
Mangopare design, Rosedale shared path



Te Ara a Tāwhaki retaining wall design, Rosedale Landfill

Rosedale Landfill

The panel design on the walls at Rosedale landfill are known as Te Ara a Tāwhaki which translates to the pathway of Tāwhaki. Tāwhaki is a semi-supernatural being who climbed to the heavens, following in the footprints of birds and in the pursuit of excellence and knowledge and Te Ara a Tāwhaki refers to the path he walked in his search.



Ika, Rakau, Manu retaining wall design, Rosedale Road

Rosedale Road

The design in this area pays tribute to Ika (Fish), Rakau (Trees) and Manu (Birds) acknowledging the connection between water, land and sky when gathering food. The niho taniwha design has been modernised to include a variety of styles which reflect fish (water), leaf (land) and feather (sky).

SH1 to SH18 underpass

The pattern on the retaining wall reflects the Pātiki design.

(1) This design is based on the diamond shape of the flounder fish. The use of the Pātiki design has been used here to represent the visual connections to open water views.

The timber wall treatment.

(2) This references the Waitākere ranges.

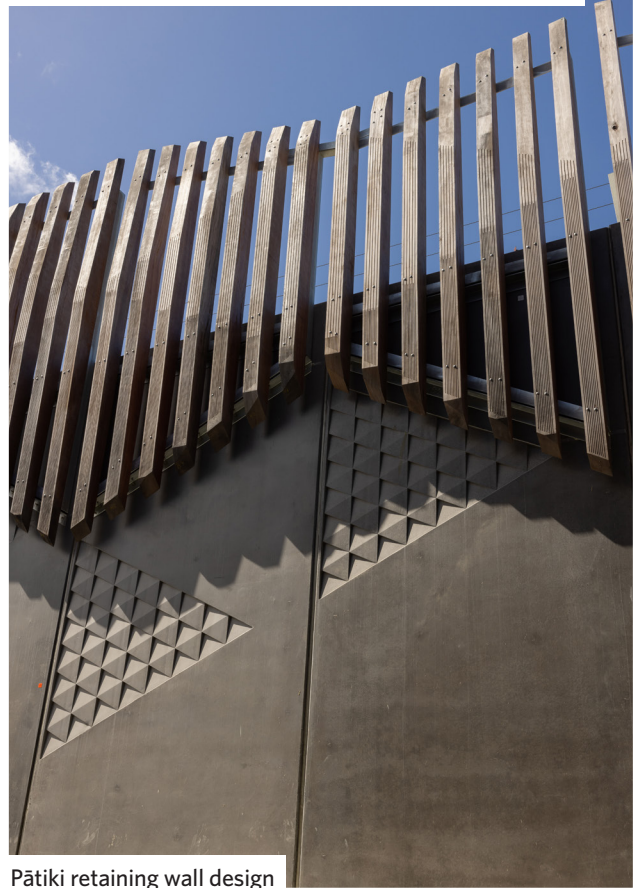
The blue barrier pattern.

(3) The design on the motorway bridge references the coast of Te Waitematā.

The colours which feature inside the underpass.

(4) This reflects the changing colour of the surrounding landscape from the Eastern coastline represented by sandstone cliff, light brown, transitioning to the greens of Waitākere Ranges in the west.

Timber wall treatment referencing the Waitākere Ranges



Pātiki retaining wall design



Ngā Hau e Whā (Navigation)



Purapura Whetū (1) and Te Pae Tawhiti (2) bridge barrier designs. Parirau design representing feathers and the birds flightpath (3).

Ngā Hau e Whā (the four winds) represents the traditional Māori practices of celestial observation and navigation. The winds align to the cardinal compass points of North-South, East-West, which in turn are bound to the seasonal practices of harvesting and gathering of resources. These designs feature around Constellation Interchange and the Caribbean Drive/Paul Matthews Road/SH18 Intersection.

Constellation Interchange

The Purapura Whetū and Te Pae Tawhiti designs adorn the bridge barriers and reflect both the night sky and the distant horizon. The parirau design represents feathers and the birds' flightpath between the stars and the horizon.



Whatu retaining wall design

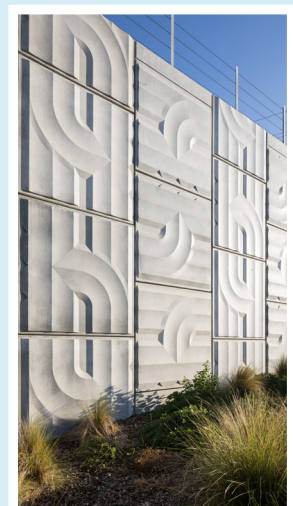
The retaining wall panels introduce the whatu (eye) design, a tribute to Matariki (Pleiades), which celebrates the start of the Māori New Year. The design appears as an eye oriented in different directions referencing north-south, east-west connections.

Whatu designed by Isthmus.

Caribbean Drive/ Paul Matthews Road/ SH18 Interchange

The bridge barrier panels represent a tāniko (hand woven) pattern which features the pātiki (flounder). The pātiki design in this space represents the link to west Auckland and Te Wao nui a Tiriwa (Waitakere Ranges).

The bridge retaining walls feature the Whakarare design and represents change, taking different paths and modes of transport: north-south, east-west (up-down, over-under...).



Whakarare retaining wall design



Taniko bridge barrier design



National Hockey Centre

As part of the development of the Northern Corridor Improvements project, three community facilities have been relocated and upgraded to deliver a range of world class sports centres for the community. The three pou whenua which feature at each of the community facilities reference the key themes of the NCI project - Taenga (Arrival/Welcome), Mahi (Gathering/Work), Ngā Hau e Whā (Navigation).



North Harbour BMX



Wainoni Park Pony Club and Greenhithe Riding for the Disabled

Artist profile

Graham Tipene's artwork can be found across Tāmaki Makaurau and he has led the design of the mahi toi (artwork) which features across the Northern Corridor Improvements project. Graham (Ngāti Whātua, Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Haua, Ngāti Manu) started his artistic journey when he studied Māori design before becoming a tā moko (traditional Māori tattoo) artist. He has been designing mahi toi for transport and community spaces since the early 2000s.



Photo credit: Mark Scowen Photography



Find out more

For more information on the Northern Corridor Improvements project, visit:



nzta.govt.nz/projects/the-western-ring-route/auckland-northern-corridor/