



**8 June  
2023**



# Community Newsletter

## **Muriwai Beach cyclone recovery**

### **Lifting of the outer cordon – no date yet**

The Tāmaki Makaurau Recovery Coordination Office is still working with members of the Muriwai community to confirm the date to lift the outer cordon on the corner of Waitea Road and Oaia Road. We will communicate this date, mitigation measures and future works as soon as we can.

### **Geotech update: Funding for voluntary buyout**

On Thursday 1 June Minister Grant Robertson announced the government would support a property buyout scheme for residential properties where these are designated as ‘Risk Category 3’ by the local council.

As part of the assurance process, an individual assessment of properties will be needed to confirm whether it is unsafe to live on.

The Risk Categories are defined in the table below:

Risk Category		Definitions	Examples
1	Low Risk	Repair to previous state is all that is required to manage future severe weather event risk.	Minor flood damage to repair but no need for significant redesign/retrofitting.
2C	Managed Risk	Community level interventions are effective in managing future severe weather event risk.	Local government repairs and enhances flood protection schemes to adequately manage the risk of future flooding events in the face of climate change effects.
2P		Property level interventions are needed to manage future severe weather event risk, including in tandem with community level interventions.	Property specific measures are necessary, e.g. improved drainage, raising houses etc. Benefits accrue to property owners, but some may face affordability issues.
2A		Potential to fall within 2C/2P but significant further assessment required.	Interventions may be required and/or possible but there is insufficient information to provide an initial categorisation. (2A may subsequently move to 2C or 2P, or to categories 1 / 3.)
3	High Risk	Future severe weather event risk cannot be sufficiently mitigated. In some cases, some current land uses may remain acceptable, while for others there is an intolerable risk of injury or death.	In the face of enhanced climate risks, the property may face unacceptable risk of future flooding. Other properties could be subject to unstable land that poses an ongoing risk.

In the briefing it was noted that there were approximately 700 Category 3 properties in New Zealand, of which approximately 400 are in Auckland. These numbers for Auckland exclude landslide-affected properties (e.g. properties in Muriwai) as the numbers of these will not be known until our engineering consultants GHD finish their assessment work (which for Muriwai is approximately the end of August, see [Muriwai newsletter 27 April](#) for more information). The government is aware that the numbers may change once landslide-affected properties are considered.

Auckland Council will start communicating with affected homeowners around the region from the week commencing 12 June about the assessments for risk categorisation. Because the work by GHD is still underway in our west coast communities, we will not be able to confirm which category specific properties fall into, until this is completed. We are working with GHD to identify properties that can be easily categorised more quickly.

However, even once Category 3 properties have been confirmed, there is a significant process to go through to achieve any buyout and this will take time. Owners who are confident that their property is Category 3 should be prepared for this timeframe.

### **What is the difference between the government's buyout 'risk categories' and Auckland Council's Rapid Building Assessment (RBA) placard categories?**

The placards placed on properties during the council's RBA process are different to the government's risk categories. This is because they serve very different purposes.

The rapid building assessments, [specified by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment \(MBIE\)](#), quickly establish how safe a building or property is, immediately following a weather event. Rapid building assessments are not an engineering assessment service, nor do they consider the long-term suitability of the location for occupation.

The government's risk categories are intended to assess the long-term suitability of the site.

Because of these differences there may be red-placarded properties that fall into Categories 1 or 2, and there may be properties with no placard (or a white/yellow placard) which are identified as Category 3 once the detailed risk assessment is undertaken.

### **What is the difference between a white placard and no placard?**

Some residents have expressed concern over the potential for a white placard recorded on their Land Information Memorandum (LIM) to affect property values and have expressed a preference that this be removed to show no placard.

The council is obliged to disclose the fact that any placard has been issued on the LIM under [Section 44A](#) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

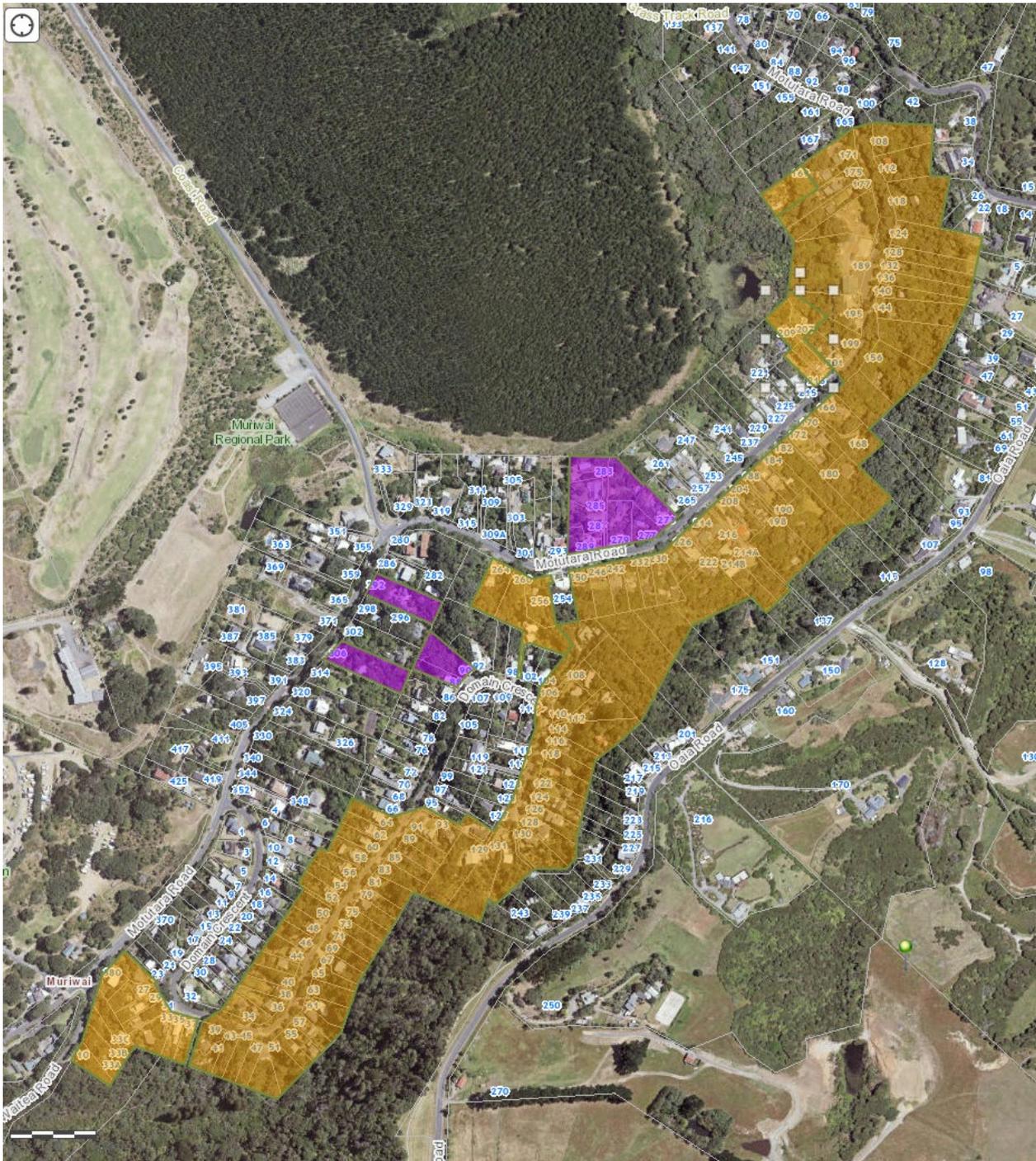
We can confirm that:

1. A white placard indicates that a building has suffered light or no damage and can be used. However, a white placard does not necessarily mean the building is safe, and owners may wish to obtain their own engineering checks.
2. White placards are automatically marked as 'closed' 21 days after they are issued. The LIM would then note the status of the white placard as 'closed'.
3. If we confirm a placard has been recorded against a property by mistake, for example, if a placard is placed on the incorrect address, it will not be noted on any future LIMs.

### **Placarding review advice updated**

GHD have been monitoring the performance of slopes around Muriwai during the rainfall in May. MetService reported Auckland had its wettest May since records began in 1962, with 271mm recorded.

This gives GHD valuable information about the stability of the slopes and has allowed us to refine our approach to re-placarding and give more clarity to homeowners. These changes are shown in the figure below:



Map showing areas being investigated by GHD.

Properties are highlighted in different colours to show the different approaches to re-placarding that are now available based on this new assessment. It should be noted that this figure does not relate to the government announced buyout scheme. We need further assessment by GHD before we can confirm potential risk categories, and these will not be available until the GHD study is finished in late August.

The colours shown on the figure are:

**Brown** – These properties are likely to be within the influence zone of the debris flows from the main slopes in Muriwai. The placards for these properties will be reassessed following completion of the area-wide assessment by GHD. The results of this assessment are necessary to make these

reassessments. Once the GHD work is complete (late August) each of these placards will be reassessed. Owners of these properties do not need to do anything for this to happen.

**Purple** – These properties are likely to be outside the influence zone of the debris flows from the main slopes in Muriwai and have not been affected by smaller-scale local landslides. GHD is working on reassessing the placards of these properties. Owners of these properties do not need to do anything for this to happen.

**No colour (including those off the map)** – These properties are likely to be outside the influence zone of the debris flows from the main slopes in Muriwai. Some have been affected by smaller-scale local landslides, resulting in placards. Because these small landslides require site-specific remediation or assessment, we recommend that the owners of yellow or red placarded properties in this zone contact their insurers and engage a professional geotechnical engineer or engineering geologist to inform them about the next appropriate steps. Owners of properties in the purple or brown zones are welcome to get independent geotechnical advice. In general, for these zones, we do not recommend this, as it will be expensive and not provide any value over the work being undertaken by GHD.

Please note that 254 Motutara Road is a special case, as it's already been marked as white.

## **Need mental health support?**

We understand the ongoing uncertainty may cause distress, so if you need support please visit the [Auckland Council website for a list of available services](#). Free local support is also provided via [Kindred Family Services](#). Residents can book directly for 1:1 counselling or they can pop down to The Surf Club at Muriwai on Wednesdays for a group chat with Helen.

## **AT update**

Auckland Transport's work continues in Muriwai, with good progress being made. We will provide future updates to the community as information comes to hand.

## **Waitākere Ranges Regional Park**

Several tracks within the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park suffered significant damage, with some tracks remaining closed due to slips, damaged structures, or dangerous trees.

Our staff are continuing to assess damage and accessibility, with a view to opening more areas as soon as possible while considering the impact on locals. This includes geotechnical assessment on some tracks.

The forested area within the Waitākere Ranges remains subject to a rāhui by Te Kawerau ā Maki and our staff are working closely with Te Kawerau ā Maki to audit relevant tracks to ensure these can reopen safely.

We ask the public to respect all closures and not remove any barriers or signage currently in place for their own safety, and to not add to environmental damage in the area, including the threat of spreading kauri dieback disease.

We continue to encourage visitors to check our [map of open and closed tracks](#) on the Auckland Council website before heading out.

#### Tracks that have recently reopened:

- Byers Loop ( 2 June)

#### Damaged tracks are likely to reopen in the short to medium term:

- Mercer Bay Loop Track
- Comans Track
- Ahu Ahu Track
- Gibbons Track
- Muir Track
- Slip Track
- Caves Track (Whatipū)

#### Damaged tracks that will not be open for some time:

- Laird Thomson Track
- Tasman lookout Track
- Marawhara Track
- White Track
- Lion Rock Track
- Lake Wainamu Track (full loop)

#### Damaged tracks awaiting geotechnical reports:

- Gannet Track / Takapu Refuge
- Quarry Track
- Lookout Track
- Edwin Mitchelson Track
- Auckland City Walk
- Knutzen and Kitekite tracks (including access to Kitekite Falls)
- Zig Zag track



Work underway at Mercer Bay Loop track.

## \$1.3m paid out for rates relief

Last week Auckland Council paid out around \$1.3 million in rates relief to properties left uninhabitable because of the flood and cyclone events.

The rates relief fund, communicated in this newsletter, was open from 18 April to 5 May and received 806 applications. Relief payments covering the full third and fourth quarter rates instalments were credited to 792 eligible rates accounts.

We are very mindful that many ratepayers have ongoing financial challenges because of the extreme weather events. If people are experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to pay their rates, we encourage them to call us on 09 301 0101 to talk through the support, payment and postponement options available to them.

### Emergency relief fund

In addition to the \$1.3 million in rates relief, the Emergency Relief Fund, opened by the Mayor on 31 January received 2539 applications by the cut-off date of 6 March.

The fund provided financial support to individuals, community groups and marae in Auckland experiencing hardship after being affected by the January 2023 Auckland Anniversary weekend flooding and was extended to those impacted by the February cyclone.

While applications to the fund was oversubscribed, the total fund raised \$3.7 million – thanks to generous donors and support from the government.

Over \$2 million has so far been paid out, with the remaining applications currently being processed for payment.

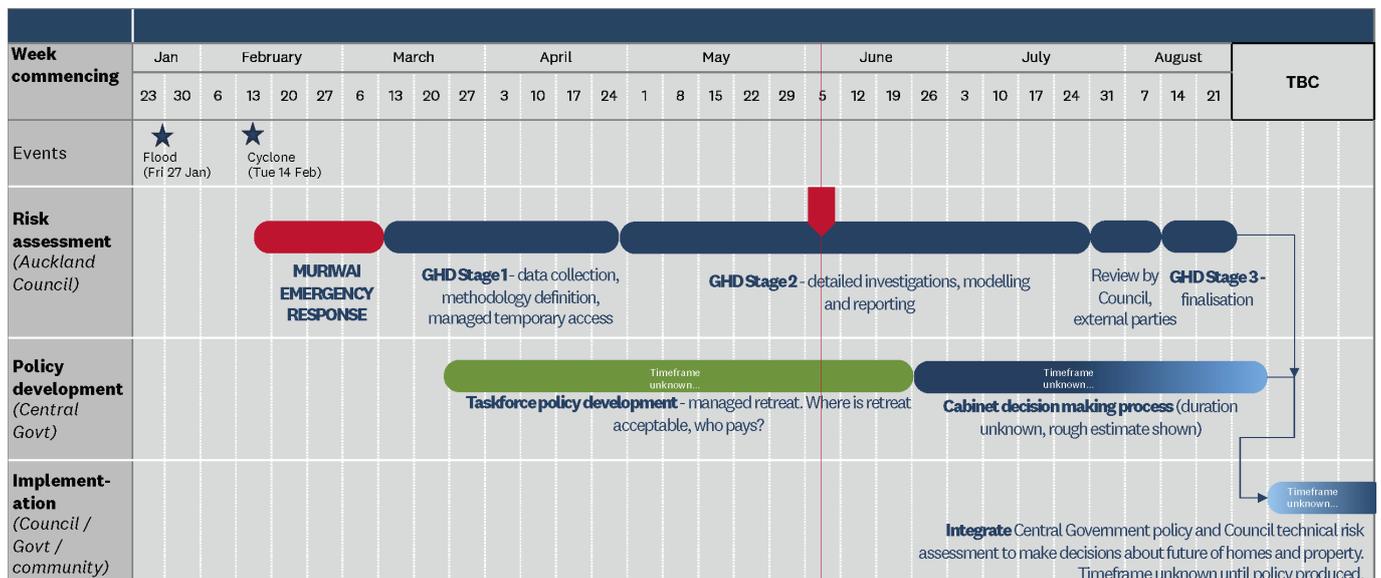
To read the full story visit [OurAuckland](#).

## High-level plan (roadmap) for properties in the current exclusion zone

- Apply initial F-angle analysis of slip hazard to properties in the exclusion zone  
**Status:** *complete*
- Perform geo-technical review of each property in the exclusion zones and identify any other risk factors  
**Status:** *complete*
- Reassess placard status based on analysis of slip hazard and site observation  
**Status:** *complete*
- Determine if the site is still considered dangerous  
**Status:** *complete*

- Contact property owners (in the exclusion zone only) on updated placard status  
**Status:** complete
- Apply updated placard status to building and update council records  
**Status:** *complete*
- Communicate managed temporary access to affected property owners  
**Status:** *complete*
- Communicate with individuals about their property placard status and assign a case manager to each property  
**Status:** *in progress / ongoing*
- Review closure of Muriwai Regional Park and Muriwai cordons  
**Status:** *a draft plan was provided to selected community members and a staged lifting of the cordons has been agreed, date to be confirmed. We will keep you updated when the cordon at the intersection of Waitea and Oaia roads will be lifted.*
- Additional geotechnical investigation, analysis and modelling of the slopes at Muriwai (GHD Stage 2)  
**Status:** *ongoing, for further information please refer to Ross's update in the [27 April Muriwai Newsletter](#) and the Geotech update story above.*
- Review status of remaining red-placarded homes  
**Status:** *once additional geotechnical work to assess risk has been completed (unless new geotechnical information becomes available in the meantime). Please refer to Ross's update in the [27 April Muriwai Newsletter](#) and the Geotech update story above.*

### Muriwai Geotech programme timeline:



## Building assessments update

Updated placard status numbers in Muriwai as of Tuesday 6 June:

- Red 1 – 98
- Red 2 – 6
- Yellow 1 – 23
- Yellow 2 – 31
- White – 305

There are different reasons why these numbers may differ each week, including:

- If remedial action has been confirmed and approved by the council's compliance team, then the placard can be noted as closed and removed off the list.
- It is identified as a duplicate and removed.
- If was confirmed as one placard for a building with multiple postal addresses but sits in our system as one legal property.

Visit the [Auckland Council website](#) to learn more about what the placard colours mean.

## Have we got your details?

If you've received this newsletter via email, then we're all good – we have your correct contact details.

If it has been passed on to you by someone else or you're reading it via a website or social media channel, you can [sign-up](#) to receive this newsletter directly to your inbox.

### Previous newsletters

If you're new to the Muriwai Newsletter, please visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/muriwai-community-newsletters](https://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/muriwai-community-newsletters) to read previous editions.



### Need help?



Visit: [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/recovery-muriwai](https://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/recovery-muriwai)  
Enquire: [muriwai@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:muriwai@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)



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