

AT SOUTHERN STATIONS REVIEW – December 2014

Introduction

This paper sets out the decisions made by the AT Board in December 2014 following consideration of a review of rail stations on the Southern Line which addressed:

- Proposal to close Te Mahia station
- Optimal location of stations in the Takanini area to serve future growth.

Te Mahia Station

Te Mahia rail station is located on the Southern Line between Manurewa and Takanini. A proposal to close Te Mahia station was consulted on in 2013 as part of the review of Southern bus services. Three options for the station have been reviewed:

1. Full upgrade.
2. Minor upgrade.
3. Closure of the station.

An assessment of catchments, demand, alternative transport, and stakeholder views has been undertaken to assess these options.

Station Catchment

Figure 1 below illustrates the existing Te Mahia station walking catchment and those of surrounding stations, together with future development areas. The Te Mahia catchment to the west is largely severed by Great South Road and by SH1 to the west. Figure 2 below illustrates station walking catchments with Te Mahia closed.

Figure 1 – Southern Line Station Catchments

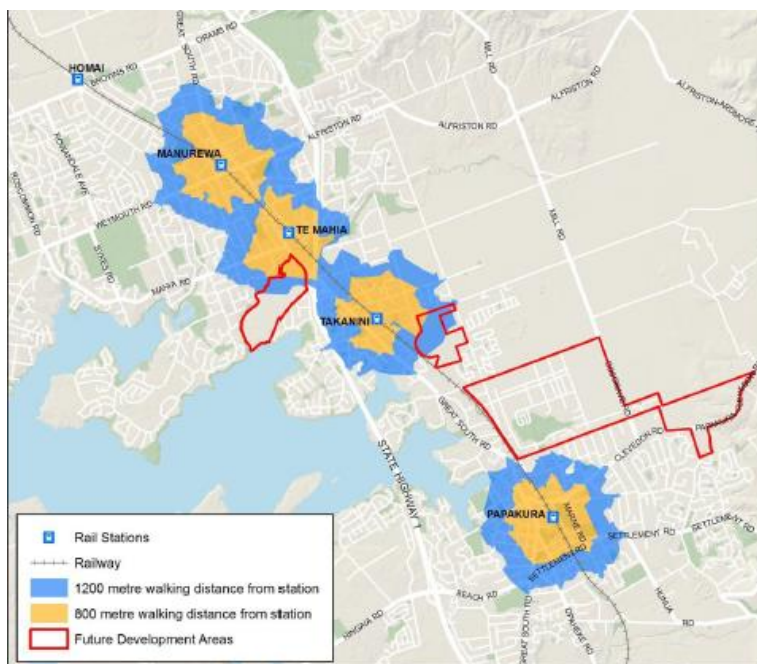
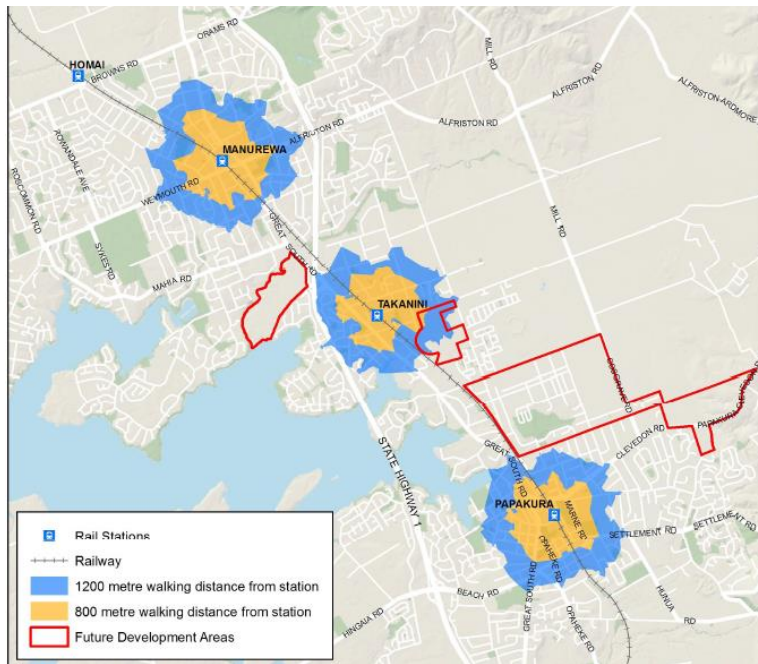


Figure 2 – Rail Station Catchment with Te Mahia closed



The figures above illustrate that the closure of Te Mahia station would result in a significant gap in the walk up catchment for rail in the Takanini area.

Existing and Future Demand

The 2014 rail patronage survey shows Te Mahia to be 39th out of 40 for patronage with 496 weekday boardings and alightings. Patronage has increased by 5.3% since 2013 compared with 22% for the network overall. Forecast patronage with and without Te Mahia station is shown in Table 1 below.

The wider Takanini area has been identified for significant growth in the PAUP, two major SHAs have been approved, and the Manukau Golf Club was sold to developers in 2013 and is expected to accommodate approximately 500 new houses. Part of the site will be within walking distance of the Te Mahia station.

Table 1 – Forecast am peak boardings with and without Te Mahia station

Station	2021 with Te Mahia	2021 without Te Mahia	2041 with Te Mahia	2041 without Te Mahia
Manurewa	1080	1120	1490	1530
Te Mahia	50	-	50	-
Takanini	310	310	850	860
Papakura	1290	1300	3460	3480
Total	2730	2730	5850	5870

The modelling suggests that there will be no patronage growth at Te Mahia station over the period to 2041 and virtually no change to overall patronage on this section of the rail network with the station closed. It also indicates that some users of Te Mahia station may transfer to Manurewa. However, these forecasts may not fully address the impact of development.

Further, current fare boundaries may suppress demand at Te Mahia station. Proposed changes to the fare structure will result in Te Mahia being in the same fare zone as Manurewa. Passengers who may previously have sought to avoid the additional fare stage when travelling north by using Manurewa may in future choose to use Te Mahia.

Bus Alternatives

The area is currently served by half hourly bus services along Great South Road, some of which allow for interchange at Manurewa station. Frequency will increase to 15 minutes with the introduction of the new network in late 2015/early 2016.

Stakeholder Views

Consultation in 2013 resulted in 495 submitters providing feedback, with 16 submitters supporting closure and 479 submitters opposed. A signed petition was also received seeking to save the station, with 1503 signatories. The submitters who provided feedback included the Mangere - Otahuhu, Otara -Papatoetoe, and Manurewa local boards, together with groups representing those with disabilities. There were also several public meetings, including one held by the Mayor in Manurewa attended by approximately 90 members of the public.

The core issues raised by those supporting retention of the station were:

- Expected population growth in the area including the Manukau Golf Club development means that excellent public transport options should be provided for new residents
- Existing users of the station support retention
- Train is more user friendly for people with disabilities and the elderly
- Local residential areas would be isolated with closure
- The station should be upgraded.

Conclusion

Modelling suggests that there will be no patronage growth at Te Mahia station over the period to 2041 and little change to overall patronage on this section of the rail network with the station closed. A half hourly bus service providing access to Manurewa station is also in place and frequency will increase with the introduction of the new network. This suggests that there would be limited negative effects from closing the station.

However, the closure of the station would result in the Manukau Golf Club development not falling within a rail station walking catchment, and result in a gap in the walk up coverage provided by stations on the Southern line. There has also been very strong negative reaction to the proposed closure from local residents, disability organisations, community groups and the local boards, on the grounds that it will impact significantly on existing users and will not support future growth and development.

It is therefore recommended that Te Mahia station remain open while the impact of development in the area becomes clear. It is also recommended that minor improvements are made to improve access, signage and shelter at the station. Patronage at the station should be monitored and, if patronage fails to increase once development takes place, then a further review of station retention should be undertaken. Should patronage increase to a sustainable level, opportunities to improve connections between the station, and surrounding developments could be explored.

Board Resolutions

The AT Board:

1. Approves that Te Mahia station remains open.
2. Approves a minor upgrade of Te Mahia station subject to the availability of funding.
3. Approves that patronage at Te Mahia station be kept under review and that, if patronage fails to increase once development in the area takes place, a further review of retention of the station be undertaken.

Optimal Location of Takanini Area Stations

A review was undertaken of Southern rail stations to assess the optimal location of stations to serve future growth in the Takanini area. Significant growth is planned for the Takanini area and several SHAs have been approved.

The area is served by the existing Takanini station and there has been a long standing proposal to provide an additional station at Glenora. The proposed Glenora station would be located approximately 1km south of the existing Takanini station, to the rear of the Southgate shopping centre on Great South Road at its intersection with Walters Road.

The proposed station is intended to serve growth in the wider Takanini area, including the Addison SHA and the facilities at Bruce Pullman Park. Its location at the rear of the Southgate shopping centre is also intended to provide users with the opportunity to use retail facilities before or after their travel. The proposal for a station at Glenora has received strong support from the Papakura and Manurewa Local Boards and from the Manurewa Papakura ward councillor.

An alternative location for a potential additional station to serve the area was identified at Tironui, to the south of Walters Road approximately halfway between Papakura and Takanini.

The review considered the following station options:

1. Add a new station at Glenora and retain Takanini station
2. Add a new Glenora station and close Takanini station
3. Add a new station at Tironui and retain and upgrade Takanini station.

The findings of the review are presented below.

Table 1 – Transport Assessment of Station Options

Criteria	Option 1 Glenora + Takanini	Option 2 Glenora only	Option 3 Takanini + Tironui
Forecast am peak patronage 2041	8,480	8,360	8,480
Capital costs	Station capital cost range \$18.4m to \$21.7m excl. land and park and ride.	Station capital cost range \$18.4m to \$21.7m excl. land and park and ride.	Tironui Station capital costs to be confirmed. Upgrade of Takanini station, improved access and park and ride costs to be confirmed.
Station land requirements	Additional land required for Glenora station 1,390m ² to east of rail corridor.	Additional land required for Glenora station 1,390m ² to east of rail corridor.	Can fit station within corridor at Tironui.
Catchment coverage of SHAs	Addison SHA 100% Takanini strategic Area SHA approx. 7%	Addison SHA 100% Takanini Strategic Area SHA approx. 7%	Addison SHA 100% Takanini Strategic Area SHA approx. 26%

Figures 1, 2 and 3 below illustrate the walking catchments for each station option.

Figure 1 – Existing Stations with Glenora added

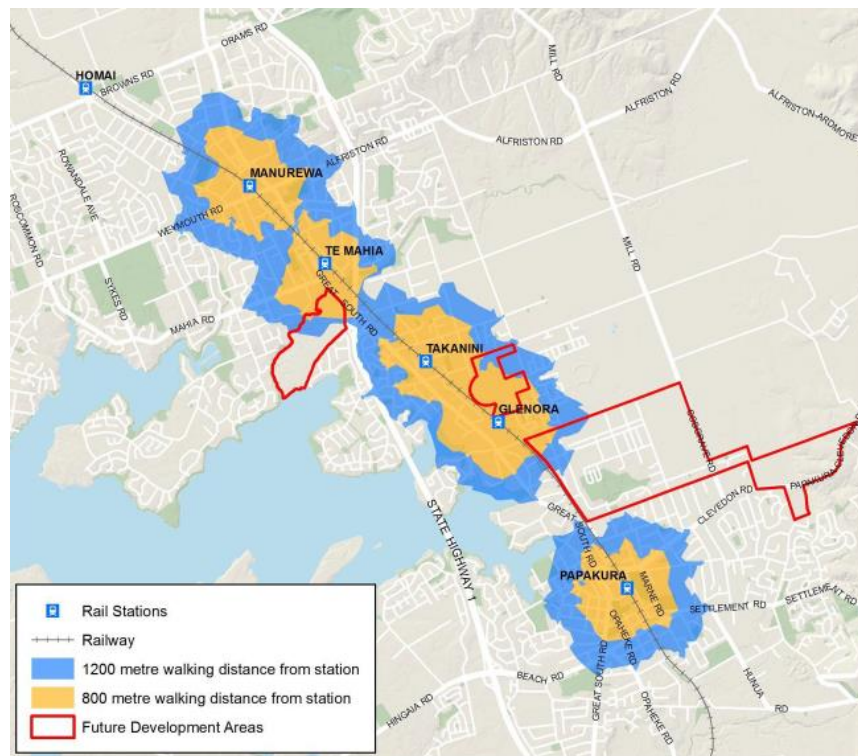


Figure 2 - Glenora added and Takanini closed

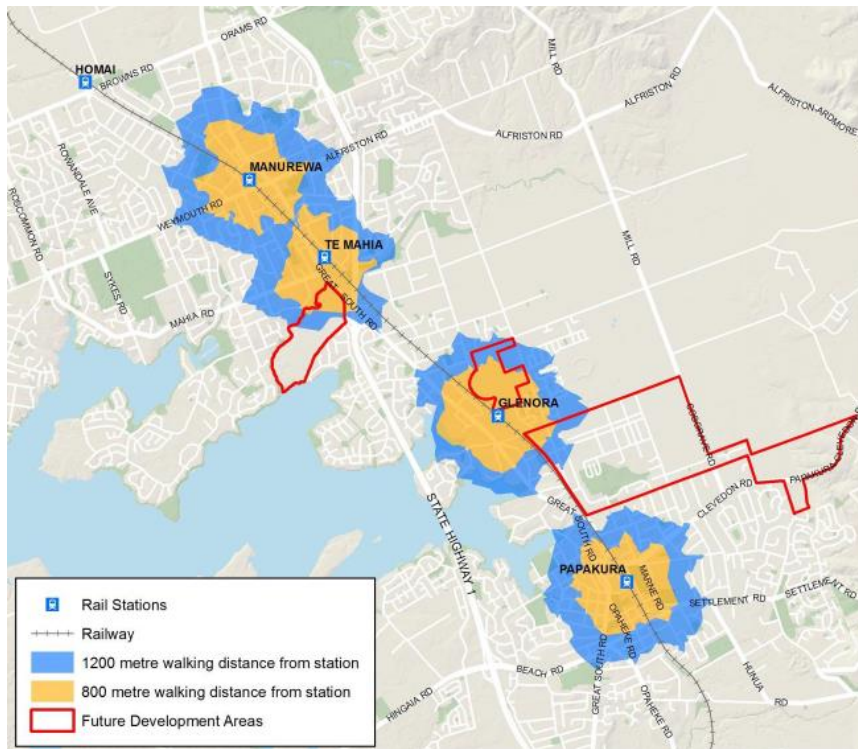
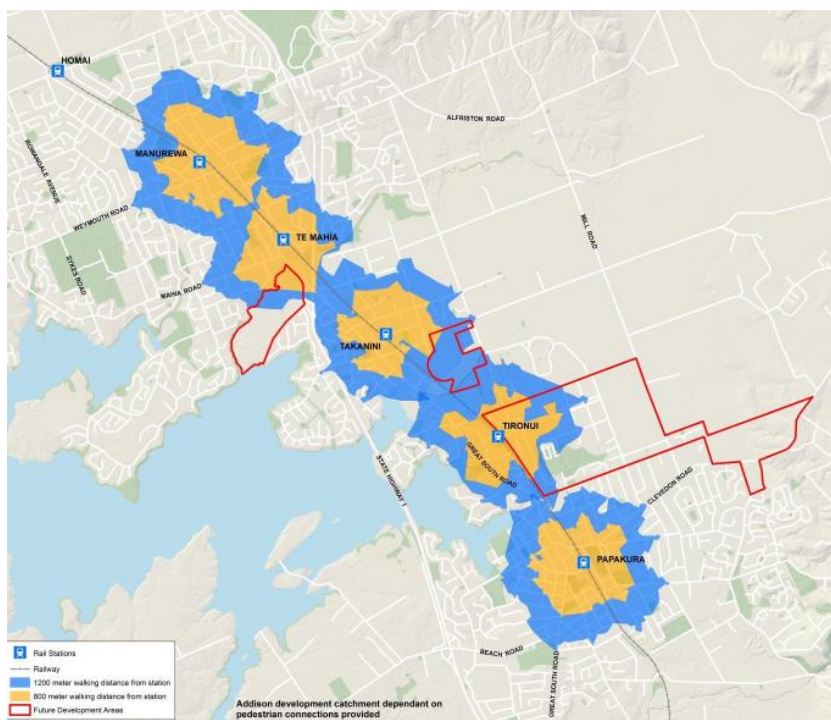


Figure 3 – Tironui added and Takanini retained



Conclusion

The review indicates that the best option to serve future growth would be the retention of Takanini station, together with an additional station at Tironui once growth justifies the investment required. A station at Tironui, together with an upgraded Takanini station, would serve significantly more of the SHAs in the area and would provide the maximum catchment for the rail corridor.

An additional station at Glenora is not supported for a number of reasons. Its catchment would overlap with that of Takanini station and, while some additional patronage would potentially be generated, only one station is likely to be sustainable from a cost perspective. Further, two stations within such close proximity is not optimal for train operations.

Provision of Glenora and closure of Takanini station would impact negatively on existing users and, while Glenora is only 1km south of Takanini, it appears unlikely to attract a significant portion of existing Takanini users given its location in the opposite direction of the majority of morning peak travel. The closure of Takanini would also leave a significant gap in walking catchment coverage for rail.

It is therefore recommended that Takanini station should remain open, and that AT confirms that it does not support the provision of a station at Glenora. It is also recommended that, if an additional rail station is required between Takanini and Papakura to meet transport demand and growth, that station should be located at Tironui.

Board Resolutions

The Board:

- Endorses retention of Takanini station
- Approves improvements to Takanini station including park and ride, subject to the availability of funding.
- Confirms that AT does not support a station at Glenora.
- Approves further investigation of a potential station site at Tironui.