



Britomart Sustainability Report 2026



Dancers from the New Zealand Dance Company put on a performance of their work *Matariki* for Tamariki during Britomart's Matariki celebrations. Photo by Jinki Cambrero.



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Cover: Britomart's Pavilions, which will make way in 2027 for the upcoming Britomart Central building. Photo by Petra Leary. Left: Pavilion plantings. Photo by Victor Staaf.

Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

Kia ora,

Sustainability is often measured through annual results, but the work itself unfolds over much longer periods. Buildings are refurbished over decades, infrastructure takes years to plan and deliver and environmental improvements are usually achieved through the accumulation of many practical decisions. At Britomart, our 150-year development agreement reinforces the importance of looking beyond a single reporting year while remaining accountable for the progress we make within it.

This year offered a particularly clear example of that long-term approach, with the Chief Post Office Building becoming New Zealand’s first 6 Green Star heritage building. The result demonstrates that a significant historic building can retain its character while meeting the same high environmental standards expected of the best new developments. It also reflects the knowledge our development, sustainability and facilities teams have built through more than two decades of restoring and operating Britomart’s heritage buildings.

We are now applying that experience to Britomart Central, the major new mixed-use development planned for the centre of the neighbourhood. The building targets both 6 Green Star and WELL Platinum ratings, with energy and resource performance considered alongside the health and wellbeing of the people who will use it. Its location above Waitematā Station is equally important. With the City Rail Link now open, Britomart is directly connected to a much larger and more effective public transport network, strengthening the case for concentrating workplaces, shops, hospitality and public spaces around rapid transit.

Our emissions results this year provide a reminder that progress is rarely linear. Improved detection and reporting revealed a substantial increase in refrigerant emissions. At the same time, electricity-related emissions decreased, even as electricity consumption rose. These variations reinforce the need for better information and careful analysis to optimise our development cycle. To improve that understanding, we are implementing the BraveGen platform to bring building performance and carbon information into a more centralised system. We have also formalised our environmental management system and revised Cooper and Company’s Sustainability Framework to reflect how our approach has progressed over time. Together, these systems give our teams better tools for identifying problems, measuring progress and making informed decisions.

Sustainability at Britomart also depends on the strength of our neighbourhood as a place for people. This year’s programme included public art, performances, talks and events in Takutai Square, as well as the fourth year of our careers orientation partnership with Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi Marae. These activities create opportunities for people to connect with the city, with different cultures and perspectives, and with each other.

This report sets out the progress we have made, the areas where we face ongoing challenges, and the systems we are putting in place to improve. I hope you find it useful.

Ngā mihi nui,



Matthew Cockram
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COOPER AND COMPANY

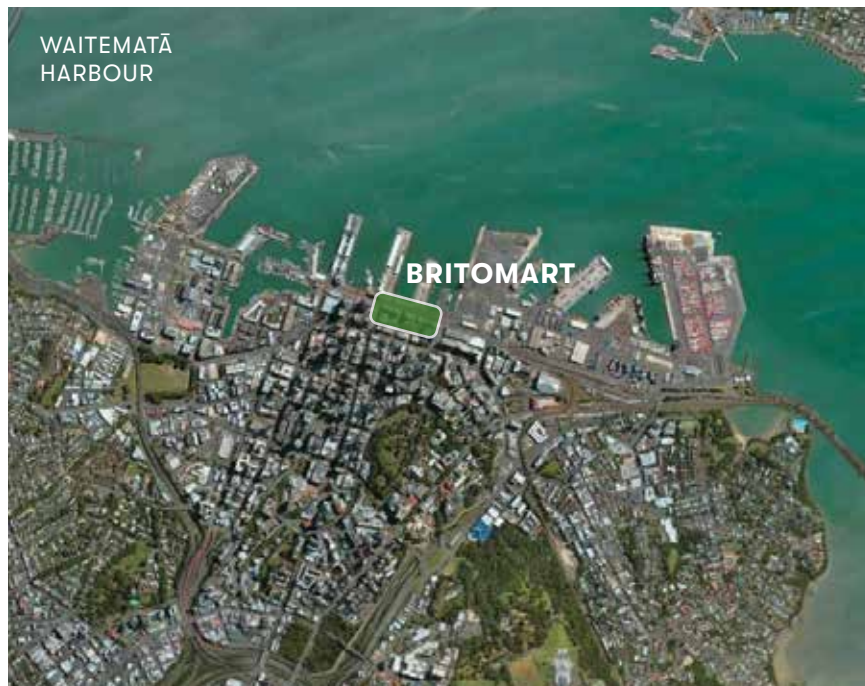


The Pavilions at Britomart has been a much-loved part of the neighbourhood, but will soon make way for an exciting new development. Photo by David St George.

The Britomart neighbourhood

Britomart is a nine-block neighbourhood in central Auckland, set above and around Waitematā Station, the city's busiest public transport hub. It is an area that combines heritage warehouses with new architecture, buildings that host a thriving business community of over 5000 workers, as well as some of the city's best food, beverage and retail offerings.

Britomart is founded on a 2004 agreement between Britomart Group and Auckland Council. Cooper and Company is the asset development manager for Britomart Group, which holds a contract for the long-term ownership and development of the Britomart precinct.

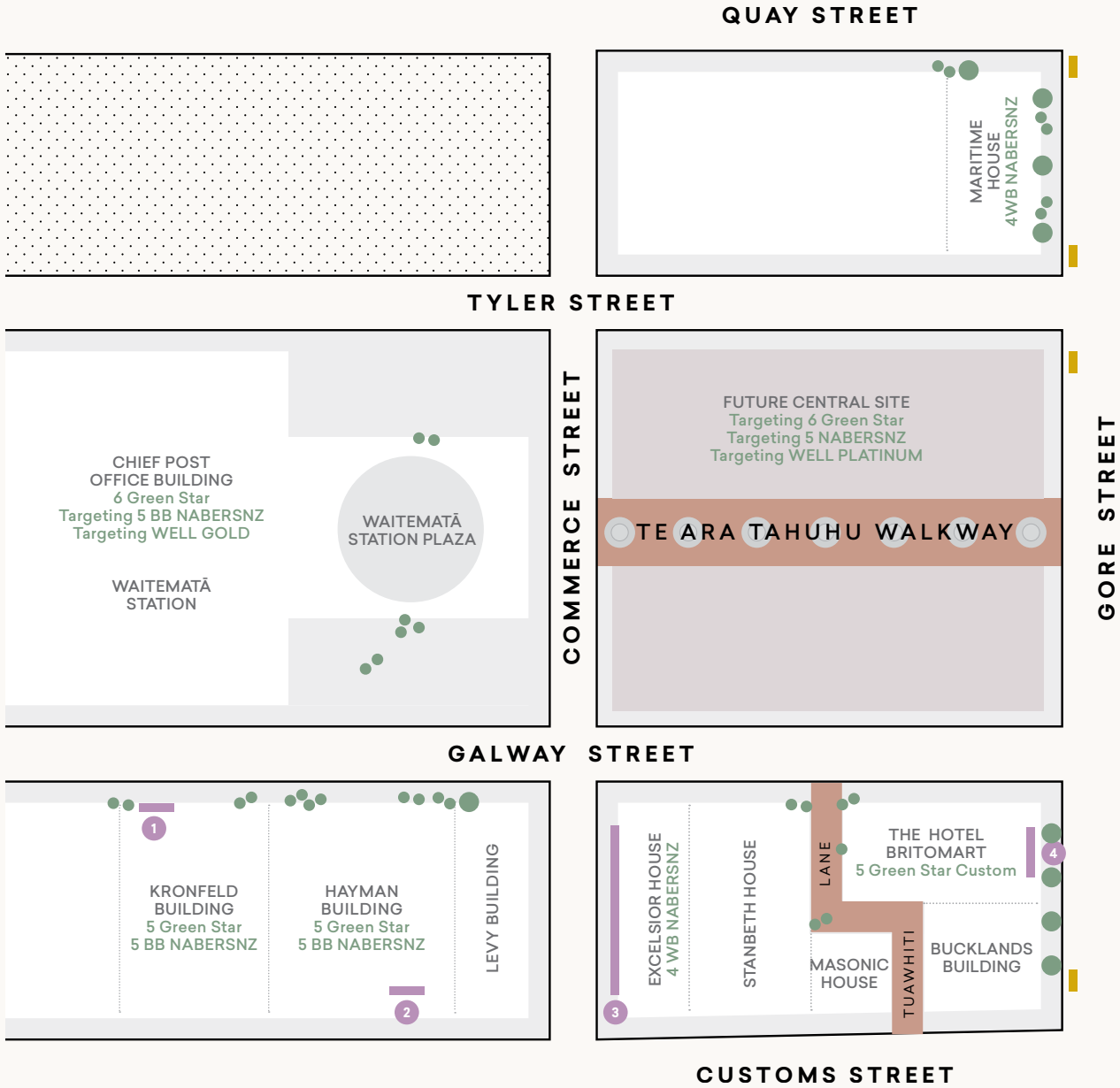


Left: Britomart sits in the heart of downtown waterfront Auckland. Right: Takutai Square. Photo by Victor Staaf.



Sustainability at Britomart

Britomart has embedded sustainability throughout the neighbourhood, from green building certifications and public art to streetside plantings, rainwater harvesting and Littatrap to keep plastic out of drains that flow to the sea.



- ART
- GREEN SPACES AND PLANTING
- CONSTRUCTION
- LITTATRAP
- RAINWATER HARVESTING

- and so we find them all over the universe now**
An abstracted necklace by Emily Parr.
- Āhuaiti's Algorithm**
A painting by Shane Cotton in the lobby of the Hayman Kronfeld Building.
- Maunga**
A mural by Shane Cotton on the western face of the Excelsior Stanbeth Building.
- Long Burning Flame, Look to Whiria**
A painting by Shane Cotton in the lobby of The Hotel Britomart.
- Te Rou Kai**
A fountain and 16 sculptural stones by Chaz Doherty, Renata Blair and Bernard Makoare.
- Symphony**
Three translucent artworks by Shannon Novak in the Westpac overbridges.
- Heat Haze**
A vibrant installation by Sara Hughes on the emergency train station exit.



The heritage stairwell in the Chief Post Office Building, with a new three-storey chandelier designed by Cheshire Architects and Monmouth Studio. Photo by Sam Hartnett.

Mana Whakahaere Governance

Britomart's sustainability efforts are focused on three interrelated pillars – economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability.

As urban investors with a long-term focus, our core work is refurbishing, designing, building and operating resource-efficient, healthy, beautiful buildings and public spaces that invite people to experience the rewards of connecting in person in a thriving central city district.

As part of this, we operate social programmes to support the wellbeing of the people who work within our organisation and pro-social activations for the benefit of the people who work, shop, eat and spend time in our neighbourhood.

We regularly report on our sustainability efforts, both internally and externally, and work with recognised accreditation agencies to verify the value of the efforts we have made.

As our sustainability policies and practices evolve and deepen, we report on key changes in our approach and on our performance against the previous year's targets.



Passers-by outside
Maunga, a five-storey
artwork by Shane
Cotton on the west face
of the Excelsior Stanbeth
Building. Photo by David
St George.

About Britomart

Britomart’s Stakeholders

Peter Cooper
Cooper and Company’s founder and owner.

Britomart Board of Directors
The group of people governing Britomart’s work.

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei
The local Māori iwi who hold mana whenua over the land Britomart is built on.

Auckland Council and Auckland Transport
The local council that Britomart works alongside and the organisation responsible for the Waitematā Railway Station beneath the precinct.

Britomart Group employees
The team members who develop, manage and run the Britomart neighbourhood.

Lease partners
The corporations, organisations, retailers and hospitality outlets who lease space within Britomart.

Downtown community
The residents and businesses who live and operate in the downtown area.

Visitors and guests
People who shop, eat and spend time in Britomart.



Our 2027 Goals

Mana Whakahaere Governance

- To optimise our BraveGen intelligence dashboards to expand live sustainability insights and reporting
- To conduct a GRESB Management assessment
- To review our Sustainability Framework in June 2027 and update as required

Te Tangata People and Culture

- To grow lease partner participation in our 2027 Sustainability Week by 25 percent
- To hold three community-focussed activations connected to the Britomart Central project

Te Taiao Environment

- To establish a baseline NABERSNZ Water rating for all suitable buildings
- To host one sustainability-focussed art exhibition or installation before September 2027

Left and above: Spring plantings in the Pavilions and Galway Street. Right: Cafe-goers at Daily Bread, in the Hayman Kronfeld Building. Photos by Victor Staaf.



Report Card 2026

Every year we set ourselves new sustainability targets and report on how we did with the previous year’s targets.

Mana Whakahaere Governance

01

To complete the revision of Cooper and Company’s policies and procedures to ensure they are set up to apply for best practice certifications in future.

All policies and procedures have been completed and shared with the Cooper and Company team.

As updates and additions are made to meet the requirements of Green Star, WELL Certification and our Environmental Management System, our master document will continue to be updated.

Te Tāngata People and Culture

02

To prepare Britomart’s Scope 3 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reporting to be ready for the 2025/6 financial year, reporting in 2027.

This will be reviewed once the BraveGen implementation is completed.

03

To hold four community events or activations centred on Britomart’s lease partners.

This year’s first lease partner event was a corporate golf tournament hosted at Flush Golf. Off the back of the very positive feedback about the first round, a second tournament took place.

In June, lease partners were given first chance to book attendance at the first of the free Britomart Talks series. Over breakfast, Sarah Williams from Westpac talked with Jeremy Hansen about changing how New Zealanders feel about their bank.

Britomart Sustainability Week in September gave businesses the opportunity to showcase their own sustainability efforts alongside those of the Cooper and Company team. As part of this, Les Mills ran an exercise competition for lease partners to take part in. Read more on page 44.

Te Taiao Environment

04

To collaborate with the Motutapu Restoration Trust to expand the reach of the next Greening the City event.

The Greening the City event in April 2026 raised over \$12,000 for the Motutapu Restoration Trust, another record amount from the event.

Planning is now underway for a large-scale volunteer day planting trees on the island, which will give workers around Britomart the opportunity to take part.

The Motutapu Restoration Trust also took part in Britomart Sustainability Week 2026, holding a stall in Takutai Square to talk about their work and recruit volunteers.

05

To work with a data management agency to set up an automated data collection and reporting portal to improve the efficiency of our certification and sustainability analysis processes.

After assessing options, the Britomart team decided to implement the carbon accounting and building performance management system developed by BraveGen. The implementation will be project managed by the sustainability team in collaboration with the facilities management team and is expected to be completed by the last quarter of the year. For more details on the system, see page 28.

06

To undertake a review of the waste recording and reporting systems at Britomart with a view to being able to generate more specific data for Britomart Group and lease partners.

As part of targeting a 6 Green Star rating for the upcoming Britomart Central development, we have appointed an operational waste specialist. This will allow us to look at this from a precinct-wide perspective, with the Central development being a subset of the overall waste management strategy. The possibility of reporting more specific data for lease partners will be included in the brief to the waste management specialist.

Our Green Building Ratings

Britomart has an ongoing commitment to work with the New Zealand Green Building Council’s Green Star rating system for all significant building refurbishments or new developments.

Britomart’s biggest green building story in 2026 was the confirmation of the Chief Post Office Building’s 6 Green Star rating. The rating means the Chief Post Office is New Zealand’s first 6 Green Star heritage building, proving that historic buildings adapted for commercial use can perform to the same high standards as new ones when refurbished well.

New Zealand Green Building Council chief executive Andrew Eagles described the rating as a landmark moment for Aotearoa. “Achieving a 6 Star Green Star rating in a Category 1 heritage building sets a new benchmark for what’s possible when efficiency, sustainability and heritage are treated as complementary, not competing, priorities,” he

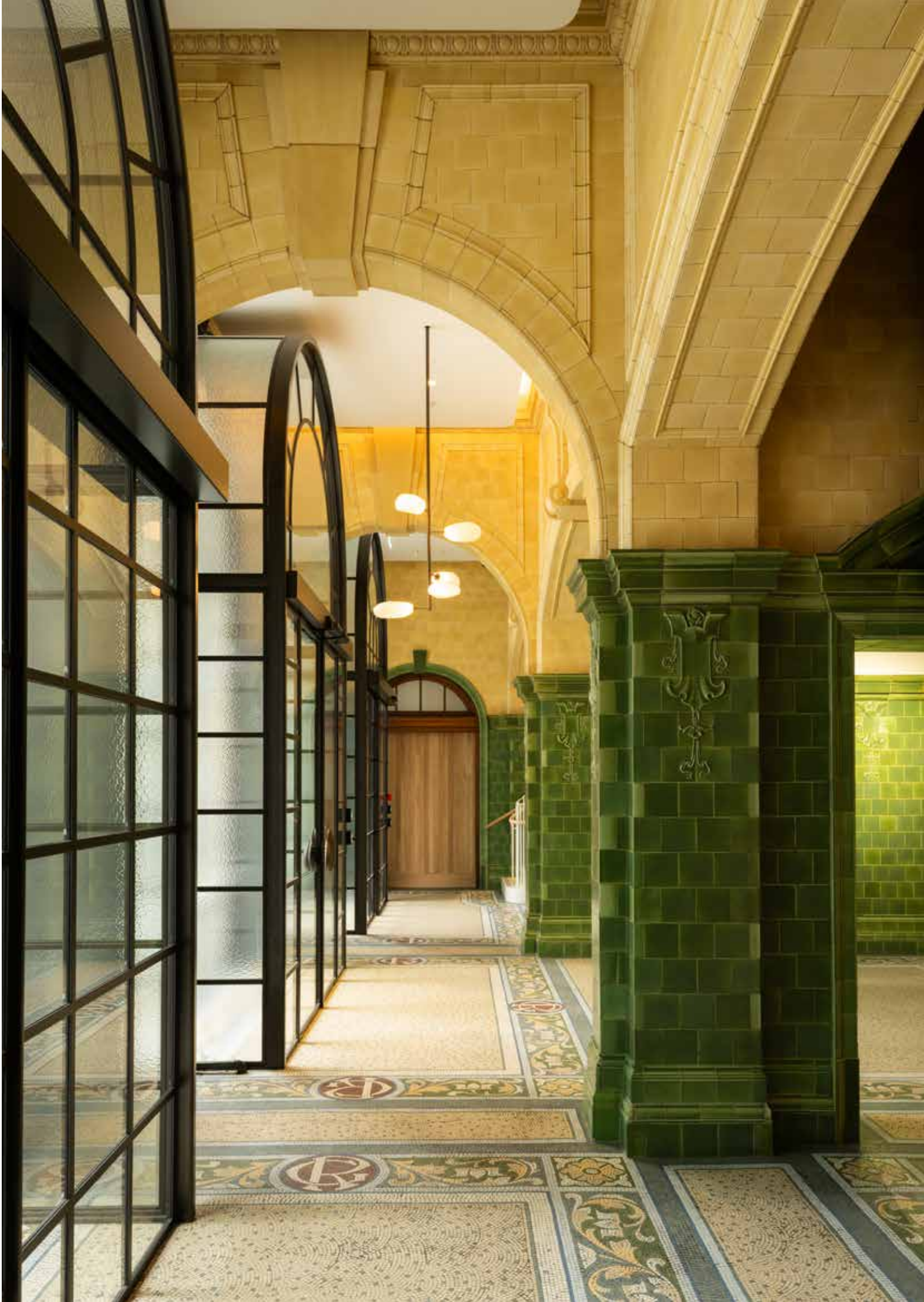
said. “This project shows that some of our most treasured historic buildings can be restored, modernised and still meet the highest standards of quality and efficiency. It’s a fantastic example of how we can honour the past while delivering healthier, lower carbon spaces for future generations.”

This year also saw the announcement of Britomart’s second project targeting a 6 Green Star rating: Britomart Central, a new mixed-use development featuring premium retail, hospitality and office space. This building will be the first to target a 6 Green Star rating under the NZGBC’s rigorous new expanded framework. For more details of the Britomart Central project, see the story on page 52.



Left: A rendering of the intended 6 Green Star Britomart Central building. Right: The heritage entrance to the 6 Green Star Chief Post Office Building. Photo by Sam Hartnett.

BUILDING	Year Constructed / Refurbished	Green Star Design and As Built Rating
CHARTER CUSTOMS BUILDING	2008	4 Star Build
EAST BUILDING	2011	5 Star Design
THE HOTEL BRITOMART	2020	5 Star Custom Design, 5 Star Custom Built
HAYMAN KRONFELD BUILDING	2022	5 Star Design and As Built
KIWI BUILDING	2024	5 Star Design and As Built
CHIEF POST OFFICE	2025	6 Star Design and As Built



Energy efficiency: Our NABERSNZ performance

The NABERSNZ rating system is a way of measuring the energy efficiency of commercial buildings. At Britomart, we’ve been bringing buildings under this system since 2017, and now have 10 buildings rated, with the Chief Post Office to come in 2027.

The last year was a steady one for Britomart’s NABERSNZ ratings, with some work done to refine and improve the existing ratings. The Australis Nathan Building was the subject of some focus to remedy an issue that was bumping electricity use higher than it needed to be, and we’re hoping the current rating will lift in the next year.

The Hayman Kronfeld Building’s nighttime facade lighting is also under review, as while it adds to the attractiveness of the street at night, it also accounts for a reasonable slice of the annual electricity usage. Both the Stanbeth Excelsior Building and the Levy Building will be excluded from this year’s NABERSNZ assessments as they have been under renovation, so the electricity figures for the year would not be representative of a normal year of operation.

As we have brought forward the timing of Britomart’s Sustainability Report from December to September, we have not yet completed a full ratings cycle for our buildings and have therefore not included 2026 ratings in this report.

This year we’ve also been assessing buildings for their suitability for the new NABERSNZ water ratings. Five buildings appear suitable for rating, and following the implementation of the BraveGen platform, a decision will be made on how to proceed by the end of the year.



BUILDING RATINGS	Rating					
	2020*	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1. EAST	4.5 BB	4.5 BB	4.5 BB	4.5 BB	4.5 BB	4.5 BB
2. ALTRANS QUAY			5.5 WB	5.5 WB	5 WB	5 WB
3. CHARTER CUSTOMS	3.5 BB	4.5 BB	4.5 BB	4.5 BB	4 BB	4.5 BB
4. EXCELSIOR STANBETH	5.5 BB	5.5 BB	Withdrawn	4 WB	4 WB	4 WB
5. AUSTRALIS NATHAN	5 BB	5 BB	5 BB	4 WB	4 WB	3.5 WB
6. HAYMAN KRONFELD					4.5 WB	3.5 WB
7. MARITME						4 WB
8. KIWI						BB rating to come
9. LEVY						5 BB
10. NORTHERN STEAMSHIP						3.5 WB
11. CPO						BB rating to come

WB = Whole Building rating BB = Base Building rating
* Years prior to 2020 not included



Left: Cafe-goers at the Daily Bread stand in the 5 Star NABERSNZ-rated Hayman Kronfeld Building. This page: The Kiwi Building had a 5 Star NABERSNZ rating confirmed this year. Photo by Photo by Sam Hartnett.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Our Progress

We’re now seven years into our greenhouse gas reduction journey. Over time, we’ve learned that annual fluctuations are less important than the big picture; as we replace aging plant and move towards full electrification of our buildings, the reduction trajectory will keep going in the right direction, even though some years will have bumps – like this one.

In 2019, Cooper and Company started tracking Britomart’s greenhouse gas emissions in order to establish a baseline from which we could work towards reductions. We partnered with Toitū Envirocare and tracked our Scope 1, 2 and mandatory Scope 3 emissions* for the FYE March 2020. This formed our baseline year against which we’ve been tracking since.

Over the last six years, we’ve completed refurbishments of seven heritage buildings – Buckland and Masonic, Hayman and Kronfeld, the Kiwi Building, Maritime Building and the Chief Post Office, with the refurbishment of the Levy Building, Excelsior House and Stanbeth Building underway, and added The Hotel Britomart to the neighbourhood.

We’ve also been through a pandemic with widespread building shutdowns over the course of a year, and seen significant changes to the way workplaces function, with hybrid work becoming normal.

Last year we reported that for the second year in a row, our

total emissions of 686.94 tCO₂e** were on track for our target reduction of 5 percent below our 2020 baseline (730.03 tCO₂e). This year, things look a bit different.

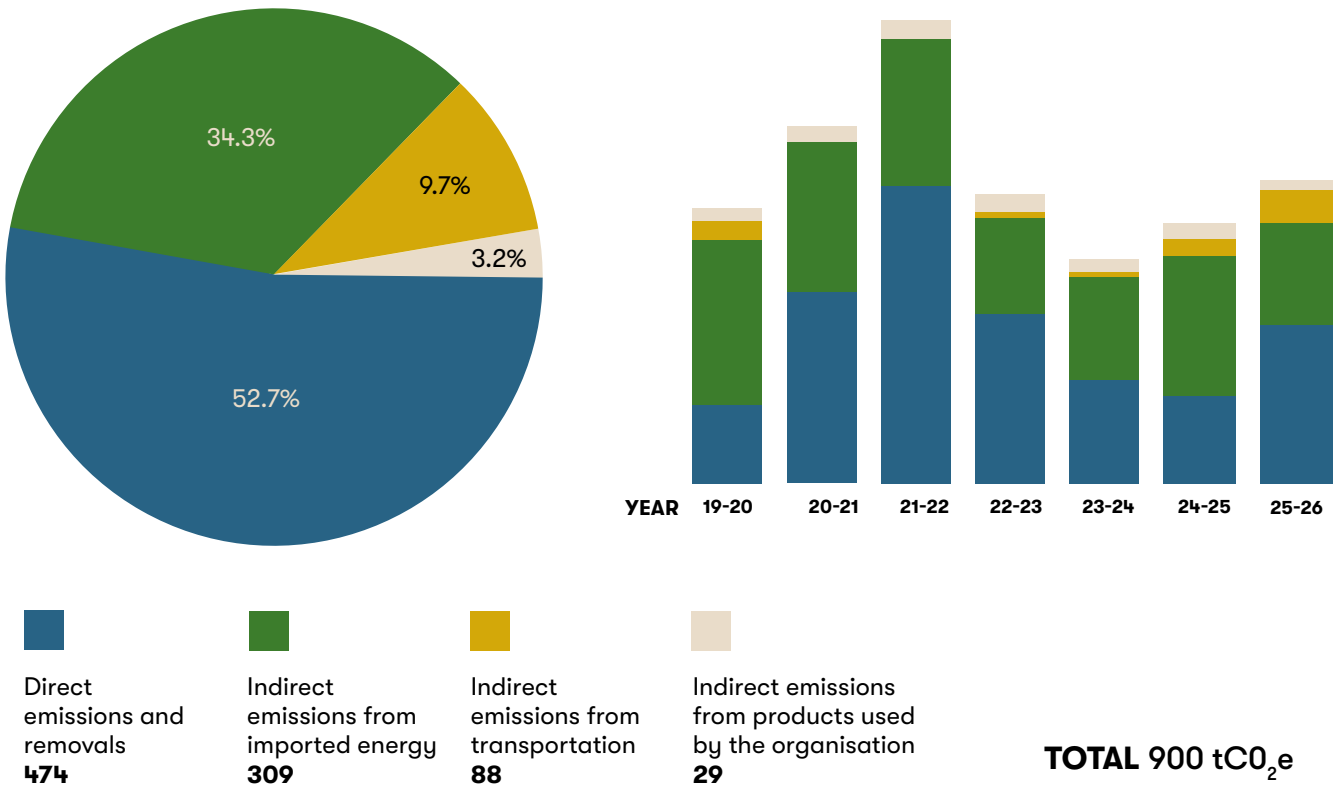
One of the key challenges we’ve faced is that we started our emissions assessments at a time when many of our heritage buildings had aging mechanical plant. Old plant is more prone to refrigerant leaks, and those have made up a significant portion of our emissions – in some years the largest share.

Unfortunately, it’s not a quick or easy fix. Leaks can be repaired, but not predicted in advance, and ultimately the only solution is to replace systems. This comes at a high cost and puts the building out of commission for extended periods – which is next to impossible to do when you have multi-year lease agreements with a range of occupants in place. Britomart has a refurbishment cycle in place for buildings, so while the plant is due to be replaced progressively over the next few years, it won’t happen overnight.



Britomart Group
tCO₂e by category

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, location-based method



In the last year, our refrigerant emissions increased from 43 tCO₂e to 244 tCO₂e, which in part was due to improved leak detection and remediation after changing our refrigerant services contractor.

Business travel emissions increased from 36 tCO₂e to 88 tCO₂e, largely due to improved data capture of long-haul travel, including international travel undertaken by directors and senior leadership.

In large part due to these two factors, this year’s emissions have risen to 899.74 tCO₂e, a 31 percent increase on last year, and 23 percent above our baseline.

Electricity emissions decreased by 19%, from 382 tCO₂e to 309 tCO₂e, despite electricity consumption increasing from approximately 3.78 million kWh to 3.93 million kWh. This reduction was driven by a lower national electricity emissions factor. The 2024/45 year was a particularly ‘dirty’ year for national electricity emissions due to lower hydro generation and higher use of coal-powered generation. In 2025, hydro inflows recovered (according to MBIE, NZ reached a record 96.4% renewable electricity generation from October to December 2025, compared with a historic average of around 83 percent), resulting in the lowered national emissions factor.

There are more changes coming to Britomart soon too – in early 2027, we will break ground on a major new eight-storey building, Britomart Central, which will replace the single-level Pavilions and Showcases buildings that have been there since 2012.

Over coming years, we know our refrigerant emissions will decrease as old plant is replaced according to the planned

schedule and we are able to change to new, lower-emission refrigerants, but that won’t happen immediately.

That’s why we’ve decided to reset our baseline this year, to reflect a more normalised level of our emissions over the next six years, given the changes that are upcoming in the neighbourhood and the additional flights we are now reporting. This year we’ll also set new reduction targets to reach over the next five years. These targets will all be intensity-based instead of raw emissions, given that we will be adding a major new building to our portfolio.

*Limited reporting was chosen for our first emissions reporting due to the challenges of full Scope 3 reporting. Once the BraveGen system is implemented and our data capture is improved, we intend to move to full Scope 3 reporting.

**Britomart’s latest verification statements and results are available on request.

For Britomart’s Toitū reporting, activity data for the reporting year was collated in BraveGen where available, then exported and entered into Toitū’s eManage platform for submission. The methodology relies on source evidence such as supplier invoices, contractor reports, internal finance records, facilities data and direct email confirmations from relevant data owners, with supporting files retained for audit traceability. As BraveGen is still being implemented, the current-year process is partly integrated rather than fully automated; in particular, electricity data was gathered separately and then reconciled with the reporting dataset. From next year, the methodology is expected to be more fully integrated with BraveGen, with the platform acting as the primary system for collecting, storing and exporting Britomart’s Toitū reporting data.

Revising the Cooper and Company Sustainability Framework

Britomart has a long-term sustainability strategy and ambitions, which are formalised in a Sustainability Framework. This year, our team revised and expanded the framework to reflect how our approach to sustainability has developed over the last five years.

Long-term thinking is a core pillar of Cooper and Company’s approach to development. Even before the Britomart project came into being in 2004, Peter Cooper’s first New Zealand development, The Landing, a 400-hectare property in the Bay of Islands, had the restoration of significant areas of native bush and wetland as a priority in the masterplan.

Britomart also began with a long-term, conservation-first approach. The masterplan for the neighbourhood centred around the preservation and refurbishment of 19 Category 1 and 2 heritage buildings, and the 150-year development deed means that all decisions are made with a long-term view in mind.

Early in Britomart’s development journey, Cooper and Company began working with the newly established New Zealand Green Building Council to pursue first Green Star ratings and then NABERSNZ ratings for new buildings. Later, heritage refurbishments were also undertaken in line with high Green Star ratings.

By 2017, Cooper and Company decided to formalise its sustainability systems and approach that had been in operation into a written framework. As those systems and approach continued to evolve, the framework was reevaluated and revised in 2021 and 2026.

The latest iteration of the framework specifically focuses on the strategy for Britomart, outlining approaches to decarbonisation, sustainable operation, verification, goal-setting and reporting, as well as the tools and agencies the company works with to assess and verify its efforts.

It contextualises Britomart’s sustainability approach within the place it is located and its history, as well as within the Cooper and Company team’s relationship with the local Māori iwi, Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei.

“The revised framework gives a clear outline and understanding of the history and reasoning for Britomart’s sustainability approach,” says Cooper and Company’s director of sustainability and brand, Sarah Hull. “It’s a document we can share with our own team to give a big-picture view of our sustainability strategy, and can provide to our sustainability collaborators, like our sustainable lending partners, as a form of assurance of our efforts.”



Top: The Landing, in the Bay of Islands, was the first conservation and development project undertaken in New Zealand by Cooper and Company. Above: Plantings to bring nature into the neighbourhood are part of Britomart’s sustainability strategy. Opposite: The East Building was Britomart’s first 5 Green Star certified building. Britomart photos by Jessica Gernat.



BraveGen: Advancing our sustainability analysis

As sustainability expectations advance, the time it takes to collect and analyse information that provides insights into operational performance and carbon emissions has also risen steeply. BraveGen is a tool that will help our sustainability and facilities teams better and more easily track and improve sustainability outcomes.

It's a complex job managing the sustainability performance of a neighbourhood with nearly two dozen buildings of ages from near-new to over a century old, home to nearly a hundred different businesses and used by thousands of people every day. A huge range of factors can influence how our buildings perform, from the preferred room temperatures of individual office teams or lighting being left on overnight to the sudden appearance of leaks in aging equipment or a temporary event in the Square that causes a big bump in power use and associated carbon emissions.

To make sure we're optimising our energy-efficiency and minimising our carbon emissions, it's not enough to look at utility data on a monthly basis. That's why we're implementing the BraveGen suite of tools to help us obtain live or near-live centralised insights into how Britomart's buildings are operating.

Sustainability coordinator Tim Evans describes the software as "an all-encompassing platform for our building operational data." He says there are two key benefits: "First, building optimisation, which is all the utilities data and the Building Management System data that is used by the facilities team. That building optimisation side will provide insights into how the buildings can be run more efficiently.



Above, Left: Sustainability coordinator Tim Evans has led the implementation of the BraveGen platform. Above, Right: Cooper and Company officer coordinator Rebecca Robertson. Below: The Seafarers Building. Photo by Jinki Cambronero. Opposite page: The Buckland Masonic Building. Photo by Victor Staaf.

Secondly, there's the carbon side, which is used by the sustainability team for carbon reporting."

Utility use will be tracked live, which means water leaks, for example, will be able to be identified and addressed more rapidly. "At the moment, we might get a water leak in a building and not know about it until a month later when we get the Watercare invoice," says Tim. "The BraveGen system will be able to give the facilities team an alert that water use is inconsistently high for this time of year in this building. It'll provide the same insights for electricity, like, "Hey, historically we're having a warmer winter, but we're actually using more power. You might want to check on that."

For the carbon reporting side, the BraveGen system takes information that it's using for the building optimisation and applies emissions factors while automatically tracking changes in carbon emissions. This represents a big time saving, says Tim. "Up until now, we've been doing that manually, updating a spreadsheet with the electricity data each month until it is time to collate that data and other data for the annual Toitu submission. We're not actually tracking it live where you can then have an impact on it."

The system also allows Tim to generate one-click reporting for the wide range of inputs that go into the carbon emissions calculations each year.

"It will cut down a portion of the reporting time from two or three weeks to minutes. That's going to be like game changing, particularly for Scope 3 reporting." In the longer-term, Britomart may be able to offer lease partners the option to have their individual electricity use tracked so they can access insights themselves and make their own direct reductions. In a perfect world, we'd have all of the data in there and we could see it easily for Scope 3 reporting for Britomart."



Our Environmental Management System

We're establishing a comprehensive environmental management system to protect both nature and people within the Britomart neighbourhood, based on the Toitū Enviromark system.

An environmental management system is something that typically builds up by default in businesses, before being formalised through a specific framework. That's been the case at Britomart, where a set of strong practices and procedures for protecting the environment and managing health and safety has been developed over 20 years.

This year, the sustainability team embarked on formalising that system using the Toitū Enviromark standard. "It's been great as a process for double-checking that we're compliant with everything we need to be compliant with and organising all the information into one place," says Cooper and Company office coordinator Rebecca Robertson.

The Toitū Environmark system covers a range of 16 topics, ranging from waste management practices and carbon emissions tracking to hazardous substance storage and health and safety. "A lot of it is documenting the systems that are already in place and then fine-tuning everything in consultation with our Toitū Enviromark manager," says Rebecca.

The system is due to be completed by the end of the year, once the Donesafe online documentation tool for health and safety practices has been fully implemented, after which a decision will be made whether to undergo the formal auditing process in order to achieve a Toitū Enviromark Bronze rating.





A crowd gathers in Takutai Square for the Free Fries Winter Treat community giveaway. Photo by Jinki Cambrero.

Te Tāngata People and Culture

At Britomart we work hard to foster connections between people and place with a social sustainability programme featuring art, performance, music, food and other events. Our theory is that people will be more inclined to live sustainably if they value each other and the places they share. This section of the report covers some of the highlights of our social sustainability efforts.



Left: Visitors taking in a preview of the Comedy Festival. Right: The outdoor movie series Takutai Nights was hugely popular. Photos by David St George.





TAKUTAI TUNES

Every Thursday from late November until mid-December, the lawn in Takutai Square became home to different DJs, including FOBS, DJ Gabbz, DJ Steelo and DJ Julian Dennison. Each brought their own take on easygoing sounds, accompanied by food by Tyler Street.



SUMMER AT BRITOMART

Summer at Britomart brought fun, free and family-friendly activity, encouraging people to spend time in the city centre during the pre-holiday period. Across the season, live music, choir nights, giveaways, festive markets, hospitality activations and entertainment allowed workers, residents and visitors to enjoy the warmer weather in the heart of downtown waterfront Auckland.

THE ASB CLASSIC FANZONE

To celebrate the ASB Classic, Britomart's Takutai Square became an open-air tennis fanzone, screening every match of the tournament live and free. A Monstavisio outdoor screen, with a SKY feed from Manuka Doctor Arena, meant fans could follow the play from morning matches through to evening sessions. As some of the world's best players competed in Auckland, the fanzone offered a relaxed way for the city to share in the atmosphere, whether stopping for a quick set or settling in for the finals.



BRITOMART TALKS

This year, Britomart launched Britomart Talks, a new winter business breakfast series designed to foster conversation and knowledge-sharing within the local business community. The first session was held at The Hotel Britomart, featuring a discussion between Britomart's Jeremy Hansen and Westpac Chief Brand and Marketing Officer Sarah Williams, who shared a candid take on what's shifting, what's working and what the "Goldilocks" agency model looks like. The second event took place at The Research Agency's (TRA) newly refurbished offices, where TRA co-founder Andrew Lewis and José Gutiérrez of Jose Gutierrez Architects joined Jeremy Hansen to talk about the role of workplace design in encouraging in-person collaboration and creating more engaging work environments. Light breakfasts and hot drinks were provided by Britomart hospitality partners, and guests received copies of Britomart's latest publication, The Workplace of the Future Is Here.



Britomart Talks host Jeremy Hansen with (left) TRA co-founder Andrew Lewis and architect José Gutiérrez, and with Westpac's Sarah Williams (above). Photos by David St George.



URBAN ART VILLAGE

Urban Art Village brought a free, pop-up village to Britomart, inviting people to engage with 10 imaginative structures created by students and graduates from architecture and design schools across New Zealand. Held over two days in October, the installations explored sustainable approaches to materials and making, while free guided art walks helped connect visitors with Britomart's wider public art collection.



AUCKLAND PRIDE EXHIBITION: INSIDE THE CLOSET

Throughout February, Britomart's panels along Te Ara Tāhuhu and surrounding streets showcased Inside the Closet: Fashion through the Drag Lens, an outdoor exhibition created by the New Zealand Fashion Museum to celebrate Pride 2026. Co-curated by photographer Denise Baynham and drag pioneer Edward Cowley, also known as Buckwheat, the exhibition featured life-size portraits of 13 drag artists, ranging from Karangahape Road queens to emerging TikTok performers. Each artist was photographed in hand-sewn costumes and custom couture in colours drawn from the Pride Progress flag, revealing the care and artistry behind each transformation.

AOTEAROA ART FAIR

In April, the Aotearoa Art Fair brought life and colour to the city, creating an opportunity for Britomart to highlight its public art collection to visitors, alongside several temporary works installed for the fair. Across the Pavilion panels and flags, Britomart featured Waves to the Sea, a series of original works by Judy Millar, alongside Angel Numbers on the Dash, an installation by Ming Ranginui (Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi). Photos by Jinki Cambronerio.



LUNAR NEW YEAR

To mark the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Horse, Britomart brought together a festive programme of performance and special-edition offerings. Tung Tek Lion Dance performed in Takutai Square, sharing a Chinese tradition associated with driving away evil spirits and inviting good fortune for the year ahead. Across Britomart's boutiques, cafés, bars and eateries, visitors could also collect complimentary hóngbào, red envelopes often shared as a gesture of goodwill, featuring artwork by Pippa Fay.



NZ COMEDY FEST IN TAKUTAI SQUARE

In April, Britomart hosted comedians as part of the New Zealand International Comedy Festival, transforming Takutai Square into a lively outdoor venue for live performances. The free programme supported public access to the festival and brought a broad range of comedy to the city centre, with sessions including Lunchtime Laughs, Family-Friendly Funnies and Later On Laughs.



SWEAT WITH PRIDE

In collaboration with Les Mills Britomart, EY, Westpac and Sweat with Pride, Britomart hosted an evening dance workout class, led by Les Mills dancer and drag queen Miss Geena. The event brought people together for an inclusive fitness experience that supported Sweat with Pride's fundraising and awareness efforts for rainbow communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.



TAKUTAI NIGHTS

Takutai Nights returned for a second year, bringing five evenings of free outdoor cinema to Takutai Square. The lineup featured the American comedy classic Bring It On (2000), the long-awaited sequel Beetlejuice Beetlejuice (2024), Studio Ghibli favourite Spirited Away (2001), a collection of indigenous short films presented in collaboration with Ōtaki's Māoriland Film Festival, and the New Zealand comedy-drama Boy (2010). Each screening attracted large audiences, with some of the biggest crowds seen in the Square. Local food and drink vendors offered fresh popcorn, complimentary drinks and movie-night treats.

STREETSIDE: BRITOMART

In early May, Streetside: Britomart returned to the neighbourhood for what was the busiest Streetside yet, showcasing poets, authors, playwrights, musicians and other artists in celebration of the Auckland Writers Festival. Hundreds of visitors moved through the neighbourhood on the evening, taking in a programme of short-form performances, poetry and music, panels and activities staged in Britomart's streets, laneways, and retail and hospitality venues.

Photos by David St George



WINTER TREATS GIVEAWAYS

To brighten the cooler months, Britomart brought back Winter Treats, a four-week series of complimentary food and coffee giveaways running from late July to mid-August. The giveaways began with the return of Reusable Tuesday, where visitors who brought a reusable cup received a free coffee, hot chocolate or matcha. This was followed by the distribution of 500 Amano almond croissants, free servings of Double Dutch Fries and 500 Daily Bread salted toffee and chocolate cookies, each bringing large crowds to Takutai Square.

Photography by David St George, Jinki Cambronero and Faith Ikenaiso



MATARIKI

To celebrate the Māori New Year, Britomart delivered a wide-ranging programme of free public art installations, performances, food offerings and DJ sessions. At the heart of the programme was Mangōpare, a light installation by Arama Tamariki-Enua (Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, Tumu-te-Varovaro (Rarotonga)) in collaboration with Angus Muir and Catherine Ellis, accompanied by a soundscape from Peter Hobbs. The installation was on display in Takutai Square from late June to mid-July as part of the city's wider Tūhono art trail. The programme opened with a taonga pūoro performance by Tāmaki Oro Rau, with free hot chocolates from Miann and pastries from Amano served across two evenings. Over the following weeks, students from Te Kapunga (Te Haikura a Kiwa) performed kapa haka and waiata, including a special pre-Matariki celebration and the New Zealand Dance Company brought their work Matariki for Tamariki back to the neighbourhood.. Lunchtime DJ sessions brought music to Takutai Square, while Mama's Hangi served hāngī.



Top, right and opposite: The Mangōpare installation. Above: Students from Te Haikura a Kiwa perform kapa haka. Above right: Dancers from the New Zealand Dance Company perform Matariki for Tamariki. Photos by David St George, and Jinki Cambrono.



Our partnership with Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi

Britomart’s careers orientation partnership with Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi Marae is now in its fourth year. The programme offers Year 13 students at the full-immersion te reo school the chance to visit workplaces at Britomart and learn about the different kinds of career pathways that may be open to them after they finish school.

“The Māori population is very young and the Māori economy is growing rapidly. We’re already starting to see growing innovation within financial services that’s underpinned by Te Ao Māori, by Māori values and perspectives. The more Māori we can have in the regulatory space, the easier it is for us to encourage innovation that is aligned to Māori values and perspectives.”

That’s the perspective of Jacob De Berry, cultural advisor with Te Mana Tātai Hokohoko, the Financial Markets Authority (FMA), the financial markets regulator for Aotearoa. The FMA is one of the latest organisations at Britomart to join our annual careers orientation partnership with Te Kura Kaupapa o Hoani Waititi Marae in West Auckland. Like many organisations, they are keen to recruit people who can bring a deep and nuanced knowledge of Te Ao Māori to their workplace.

“The tauira have this incredible taonga that is deep understanding of our language of our customs,” says Jacob. “And for them it’s just normal. They’re used to growing up with it. But in spaces like the one I work in, they’re kind of few and far between. So we wanted them to know that what they have is so valuable and so important to bridge that gap between different worldviews.”

Also new to the programme at the Hoani Waititi end is Renee Ngamata, who has taken over responsibility for the school’s coordination from Whaea Anna Berry. Renee says she was surprised and pleased by the degree to which the Britomart-based companies were able to welcome students whose first language is Te Reo Māori.

“It was actually really amazing. I was so surprised that even though they were corporate placements in the city, there were Māori speakers and Māori opportunities and everyone was very welcoming and it was very fun and interactive.”

This year, six career sessions were held at Britomart over May and June, with the students visiting EY (two sessions), the Reserve Bank, the Financial Markets Authority, design consultancy Tailor Inc and Café Hanoi. In previous years, other businesses have taken part too, including The Hotel Britomart, Westpac and architecture firm Monk MacKenzie.

Jacob says the FMA decided to get involved to improve the pathway for students through to their internship programme

for Māori and Pacific University students. “We wanted to open the door and let our students from kura kaupapa Māori know about some of the opportunities that are out there and let them see what financial regulation looks like.

As a former high school teacher himself, Jacob had a good idea of how to keep the students engaged through the hour-and-a-half workshop. “We had some of our workers who have come through the internship programme and landed full-time roles with the FMA talk about their journey from school into university into the FMA through the Tupu Toa programme. But the core part of the workshop was around just making connections, building relationships, making the tauira feel at ease in the space that they’re coming into, for our kaimahi as well because it’s something new for students to come into our space. I used some of my old teaching tactics with lots of games and Kahoot online quizzes and those sorts of things to get our tauira engaged.”

He says the FMA sees value in connecting what they do to Māori communities. “Linking our work to aspirations of wellbeing, financial wellbeing, economic wellbeing within Māori communities helps them connect to what we do as well show them that it’s relevant to their lives, even though they might not know a lot about financial services. Some of the tauira were familiar with financial services and trading, mostly through social media. We can take their understandings of financial services and say, “This is what we do to ensure that it’s a fair place for all New Zealanders to engage.”

Renee says the programme gave the students a chance to step outside their comfort zone. “At the kura we’re very much in our little Māori bubble and the kids are restricted to speaking Te Reo. Some of the kids are not confident in English and I know that the first week we went [into Britomart], they were real nervous. They felt intimidated and I don’t think they saw the connection as to how they would fit into these places until they had Māori speakers explaining to them: ‘These are the kind of things you could be doing’. Then they found the connection and really enjoyed it. It’s given them the foundation of everything from CVs, to talking to people, to dressing appropriately, through just being exposed to different work experiences in different places. It’s been more than I thought we were signing up for.”



Hoani Waititi students performing kapa haka during a Matariki celebration. Photo by David St George.

Workplace Design for the Future

Now that flexible work is embedded in workplace culture, organisations are faced with tough decisions. Do they mandate days in the office and risk an exodus of existing workers and alienating potential recruits? Do they invest in redesigning the workplace in the hope that an appealing office will ‘earn the commute’? Or do they pull back, reasoning that high occupancy is simply a thing of the past?

These questions are at the heart of a publication released by Britomart this year: The workplace of the future is here, which looked to four experts for insights on how workspaces can uplift and connect workers.

Jeremy Hansen, Britomart’s director of communications and community, spoke to Auckland architect Jose Gutierrez, Damien Mulvihill and Mark Simpson of Melbourne’s Design Office, Iva Durakovic, a senior lecturer at the University of New South Wales and Andrew Lewis co-founder of Britomart-based TRA (The Research Agency) about how great design can both respond to new ways of working and encourage workers to view the office environment more positively.

TRA has been based at Britomart for more than a decade, and in that time they’ve seen and studied many changes in corporate culture. In the wake of post-COVID changes to hybrid work, their research, as well as their people-centric approach, led them to decide to substantially redesign their Auckland office for a new era of work.

The refurbished office now features a warm-toned, lounge-like space at its heart. Their former space, located in the same Britomart heritage warehouse, was full of glossy black and mirrored surfaces; clients would arrive at a large reception desk and be whisked away to a sleek conference room.

In stark contrast, the renovated space, designed by Jose Gutierrez Architects, invites everyone into the shared working and gathering area at its heart. It feels like you’ve stepped into someone’s home. “It’s not ‘You must sit here and do this,’ but more, ‘You can sit wherever you want and do whatever you want,’” Jose Gutierrez tells Jeremy Hansen in his interview for the booklet.

It’s a transformation that is clearly working. TRA have a fully flexible approach to whether people work from the office or not, but “what we’ve seen over time is a steady uptick in attendance at the office,” says TRA co-founder Andrew Lewis.

In this era of flexible work, you can’t blame a lot of organisations when, faced with low office attendance, they come to the conclusion that investing in a new interior might be a waste of money. And even if they decide to push ahead, it’s easy to get stuck on decisions that feel like big bets: do you, for example, provide a workstation for everyone? Or go low on the presumption that occupancy will remain that way?



“There’s no doubt about it: it’s expensive,” Andrew Lewis says. “It’s also hard to quantify the opportunity cost of not doing it. But I think one of the biggest services you can provide is to have a space that’s really nice to be in.”

TRA started their refurbishment with the goal of “earning the commute” after years of deep thinking that followed the rise of flexible workplace approaches. They came to the conclusion that having team members together in the office delivered a range of benefits. “From a mental health perspective and from a human development perspective, when you lose the interaction with other people, you lose a lot,” Andrew says.

Fully remote work is different to flexible work, of course. But if the results of too much remote work are so clear, why aren’t we better at managing our mental health? One of the reasons, they write, is that “remote work’s costs are subtle and slow”.

In Jeremy’s other interviews, he talks to Damien Mulvihill and Mark Simpson, the founders of Melbourne-based DesignOffice, about the way they’re blending hospitality and domestic influences in their office designs, as well as academic and former interior architect Iva Durakovic about how organisations can navigate the risks and expense of office fitouts to create something that changes workers’ experiences for the better.

The publication was available in the Atrium on Takutai throughout July, can be read on Britomart’s website in the Community section, and can be requested from the Britomart team.



Above: TRA offices. Photo by Sam Hartnett.
Left: The Commons shared workspaces in Martin Place, Sydney, take their design cues from hospitality spaces. Photo by Tom Ross.



Above: TRA offices. Photo by Sam Hartnett.
Left: DesignOffice’s own premises in Melbourne’s Collingwood feature a terrace garden on an upper level. Photos by Dianna Snape.

Introducing a Week of Sustainability Celebrations

This spring, a new annual event gave businesses at Britomart the chance to share their sustainability efforts with the wider community.

Given Britomart’s long-term focus on sustainability, the neighbourhood naturally attracts businesses and collaborators that share similar values and prioritise sustainability in their own workplaces. That’s why this year, we decided to launch a week-long celebration of what sustainability looks like in different businesses and organisations at Britomart.

All week long, a poster exhibition shared stories of how Britomart-based businesses and collaborators are working to make things better for people and the planet, while an e-waste recycling station set up in Takutai Square by Abilities Group offered workers in the precinct the chance to move on old e-waste that had been sitting around at home. The Motutapu Restoration Trust and Catalytic Foundation, two long-time collaborators with Britomart, also hosted stands in Takutai Square to talk about their work and recruit volunteers in their ongoing efforts.

Les Mills held a free Monday Pilates class in the Square to help locals get centred at the start of the week, and on Friday, the Les Mills team also ran an inter-company circuit competition where teams from Britomart businesses went head-to-head to win prizes.

At The Hotel Britomart, sustainability has been embedded from before the first brick was laid, with the development team targeting the first 5 Green Star certification for a hotel in New Zealand. Tours of the hotel showcasing key features of the build were one of three events the hotel hosted during the week; they also hosted a dinner in collaboration with Everybody Eats to raise money to feed struggling families in Auckland, and on Friday 25 September, kingi paired their regular Zero Waste Dish of the week with a week-long Zero Waste Cocktail offering.

Other businesses that opened their doors to let locals get a closer look at their sustainability efforts included EY, with a talk on their EY Ripples programme of pro bono work supporting nature-based charitable organisations, and architecture firm Peddlethorp, who offered visitors tours of buildings they have sustainably refurbished at Britomart.

Peddlethorp’s director Richard Goldie also appeared on an evening panel talk about the design, feel and community focus of the upcoming 6 Green Star and WELL Platinum-targeted Britomart Central building, along with Emily Priest and Simon McLean from Cheshire Architects and Cooper and Company sustainability director Sarah Hull.

Finally, on Saturday, WORLD rounded off the week with some fashionable fun, hosting a workshop for people to create their own WORLD-flavoured reusable tote bags, guided by WORLD co-founder Francis Hooper, while sipping sustainable wines in-store.



Opposite: Britomart team members plant native trees (top) and learn about the Motutapu Restoration Trust’s work (below). Photos by Abigail Dell’Avo. Above: The Hayman Kronfeld Building was opened for an architectural tour with Peddlethorp. Photo by Sam Hartnett. Below: The Hotel Britomart hosted sustainable dining events and tours. Photo by Josh Griggs. Right: WORLD helped aspiring designers create their own reusable tote.





Te Taiao Environment

Britomart's environmental activities range from the creation of Green Star buildings to public events in Takutai Square. It's a broad scope of engagement with a two-pronged focus: raising environmental awareness and working to ensure our buildings attain nationally accredited standards.

This section covers our environment-focussed projects and events, as well as a report on how the newly opened City Rail Link will further boost Britomart's connectivity and contribute to a more sustainable city.



Left: Skylid by Ngāti Whātua artist Graham Tipene outside Waitematā Station. Photo by David St George. Right: The Greening the City tree giveaway. Photo by Jinki Cambroner.





GREENING THE CITY

The enthusiasm of Aucklanders for reforesting their own backyards continues to grow every year, with the 2026 Greening the City native tree giveaway raising another record amount for the Motutapu Restoration Trust – this year it was over \$12,000. Even some early rain didn't dampen the willingness of visitors to show up to choose a plant or two from the varieties on offer. The annual giveaway takes place over three days in April, with thousands of native seedlings grown at The Landing, Britomart's sister property in the Bay of Islands, given away in exchange for a voluntary donation to a nominated reforestation charity. For the last two years, the partner charity has been the Motutapu Restoration Trust, which has been slowly returning the Hauraki Gulf island to native forest cover over the past 30 years.



This spread: Visitors to the Greening the City giveaway took home native trees and plants for their own backyards and balconies. Photos by Jinki Cambrero.



Britomart Central: A new green building for the heart of downtown

Standing nine storeys tall, with a brick-lined laneway through the centre, Britomart Central will bring together premium office and co-working spaces with shops, drinking spots and restaurants.



In June this year, Cooper and Company announced the future development of Britomart Central, a new premium office development that reflects the company's commitment to high-performance, future-focused places in downtown waterfront Auckland. Designed by Cheshire Architects — the team behind The Hotel Britomart — in collaboration with Peddlethorp, the 20,000 square metre building will bring together office, retail, and food and beverage space while extending the environmental and heritage principles that have shaped Britomart's regeneration over the past two decades.

Sustainability has been embedded into Britomart Central from the outset. The building will be certified to globally

recognised environmental standards, with occupant wellbeing made a priority alongside energy and resource performance in the design process. Both a 6 Green Star rating under the New Zealand Green Building Council's rigorous new framework, and a WELL Platinum rating from the International WELL Building Institute, will be targeted.

Rather than designing for a single office lease partner, Britomart Central incorporates two lift cores that allow floors to be easily subdivided as occupant needs change over time. This adaptability reduces the likelihood of premature reconfiguration or demolition, supporting a longer functional life for the building and better long-term use of embodied materials and resources.

Opposite: Britomart Central will sit at the western edge of Takutai Square. Below: A brick-lined ground floor references the heritage buildings of the precinct while the office levels above enjoy views of the harbour from open-air balconies.



Britomart Central sits directly above Waitematā Station, and its lower brick-clad levels are designed to connect with Takutai Square and Waitematā Station Plaza, reinforcing pedestrian links through the district. The opening of the City Rail Link this year further strengthens the area's public transport connectivity, supporting a shift away from private vehicle commuting for the thousands of people who work in and visit Britomart.

The development will replace The Pavilions, a set of single-level retail structures built in 2012, with some existing tenants relocated to temporary buildings during construction. The design approach — contemporary in form but responsive to the surrounding heritage streetscape —

reflects Britomart's restored 19th-century fabric, giving the building a sense of timelessness alongside the modernity of the upper levels.

Britomart Central is the latest step in a 150-year development partnership between Cooper and Company and Auckland Council, which since 2004 has transformed the district from a gravel car park into a working, mixed-use urban precinct. With construction firm LT McGuinness now engaged for preparatory works and completion targeted for 2029, the project continues Cooper and Company's long-horizon investment in low-carbon, transit-connected, adaptable buildings in one of Auckland's most established regeneration areas.

Restoring Britomart's Excelsior Stanbeth Building

One of Britomart's oldest pairs of heritage buildings has undergone an interior and exterior refurbishment and environmental upgrade.



Excelsior House and Stanbeth House first came to life well over a century ago, with Stanbeth House being one of the first commercial warehouses to rise on Auckland's newly reclaimed waterfront. Built in 1885, it was designed by James Blaikie, whose previous claim to fame was that they worked as a plasterer in the royal residence in Balmoral, Scotland. Excelsior House followed quite a bit later, being built in 1897 and designed by Edmund Bell, a former president of the New Zealand Institute of Architects whose best-known work is the elegant Baptist Tabernacle at the top of Queen Street.

Both buildings reflect the styles of their eras: Stanbeth House draws inspiration from Florentine palazzos viewed through a Victorian lens, while Excelsior House was designed in a more stripped-back Edwardian style. Both are Category II Historic Places, although Excelsior House was cut in half in the 1930s to make way for a widening of Commerce Street through Britomart. On this cut side, Maunga, the five-storey high mural by artist Shane Cotton, has become something of a tourist magnet, with local and international visitors alike taking snaps of it. The work reflects on the way the city gathers

people from all over the country (and the world) in it, with those people remembering those connections to their homes while creating new lives here.

The former warehouses, which have been combined to form continuous floor plates (and being renamed as the Excelsior Stanbeth Building at the same time), began their lives serving Auckland's the port, stocking everything from kauri gum to saddlery, and premises from grill rooms to wine and spirit cellars.

Now, like many of Britomart's venerable heritage buildings, they're being reimagined for a new era, offering layers of heritage texture along with the best in contemporary workplace amenities.

The buildings were last renovated in the early 2000s and are currently home to acclaimed restaurants Mr Morris, Café Hanoi and Ghost Street, with new commercial tenants moving in after completion of the refurbishment later in the year.

Their revamp has been led by Cheshire Architects, the team behind the award-winning creation of The Hotel Britomart and the accompanying refurbishment of the Masonic and

Buckland buildings, which neighbour Stanbeth House. In their many years working with Britomart's heritage buildings, the Cheshire team have developed an intuitive feel for revealing the layers of history in these structures, while also updating them with beautiful modern amenities that make the office a real drawcard in a time of flexible working.

Cooper and Company development manager Dave Bensley says the refurbishment was a chance to give the building a weather-proofing upgrade, bring the electrical plant and fittings up to a premium modern standard, reveal layers of heritage that had been hidden under earlier refurbishments, open up spaces and rewrite the layout of the building to make it make better sense.

"We've moved the main entrance to the Commerce Street side, so in a way Customs Street has become the back side of the building now," he explains. The previous Customs Street lobby will still be accessible, but mostly as an entrance into new end-of-trip facilities – bike and scooter storage, lockers, elegant new showers and changing rooms. A new waste room has also been added to the area with its own door onto Customs Street. "Trucks can come through quickly, remove all the rubbish and then keep going without disrupting the precinct internally," Dave explains. "It's probably also the only architecturally designed heritage rubbish room in the city."

The building infrastructure has also been given a significant upgrade, new distribution boards, wiring, drainage and metering for the Building Management System "so that we can get better information on its operation and report on it better. We've really upped the technology, making it a smarter building so that we can better understand it for the new occupants."

On the first floor, one of those new occupants, Assemble, a recruitment consultancy, will be moving into a newly opened-up space that retains the professionally sized kitchen installed for a previous co-working tenant. "We've taken out a lot of poky little office spaces that were all through the building and brought it back to have more big open spaces," says Dave. "We've highlighted all the archwork and focused



Above and below: Concept drawings of the new office levels show a softened palette and opened-up spaces. Opposite: The Maunga mural covers the western frontage of Excelsior House.

on the heritage elements of the jarrah columns and beams and brickwork. We've also put in new trunking for flexible workspaces depending on the tenant's needs."

Layers of acoustic buffering were also added. "The acoustic properties are always quite challenging with people walking on these beautiful old wooden floors, so we've actually put an acoustic panelling on the ceilings to assist with reducing that," says Dave.

On the top levels of each building, the vaulted ceilings have been given a new lease of life, after suffering some water damage over the years. Here, the open spaces are filled with light, with views looking out to the waterfront and beautifully cleaned brickwork that tells the story of the buildings' changing uses over the years.

"There's one part where there have been a huge number of interventions," says Dave. "You've got the original window that's been bricked in, and then you've got a window within that brickwork with a header across that. Then that's been bricked over with different bricks again and a new window has been added to the side of it. So, there's just layers and layers of things that have happened over the years. So rather than trying to make that perfect, we just celebrate it and say, 'Hey, it's a hundred years of history, and that's what's happened!'"



The new CRL is bringing Aucklanders closer together

It's been 13 years in the making and now that the City Rail Link has opened, Britomart's position as the most connected place in Auckland has been cemented.

On September 13, the long-awaited City Rail Link (CRL) opened with a day of celebrations and special events through the central city. Costing nearly \$5.5 billion, New Zealand's largest transport infrastructure project has created a train loop through the city, connecting uptown, midtown and downtown, and joining the eastern and western lines together at Waitematā Station (formerly known as the Britomart Transport Centre).

The CRL represents a great leap forward for Auckland's connectivity. Residents of Maungawhau (Mt Eden) with tickets for an event at Spark Arena are now able to get to Waitematā Station in less than 10 minutes – and vice versa, with those holding tickets for an Eden Park event able to start their evening with dinner or drinks in town, before getting on a 10-minute train to Mt Eden.

Those who live on the far reaches of the Western Line in Henderson will be able to get into the city in 35 minutes, 24 minutes quicker than the current public transport. From Glen Innes in the east, you'll arrive at the new Te Waihorotiu Station in 15 minutes, 10 minutes quicker than the current journey, which requires a transfer from train to bus. In short, it puts Britomart within much quicker reach for hundreds of thousands of people.

Versions of the City Rail Link have been proposed for decades, dating as far back as the 1920s, but it wasn't until June 2013, when the New Zealand government decided to back Auckland Council's proposal for an iteration close to the present one that things began moving.

The first works began near the Chief Post Office (CPO) Building in 2016, and tunnelling and construction began in earnest in late 2019. As part of it, the 4000-tonne, Category 1 heritage-listed CPO was shifted onto temporary foundations while the CRL tunnels were built underneath. It was eventually transferred onto new permanent foundations just 2mm higher.

The building itself was partial inspiration for the identity motif that was gifted to the Waitematā Station alongside the ones for Te Waihorotiu, Karang-a-hape and Maungawhau. The identities are circular and are divided into two hemispheres, or halves, with the upper half of Waitematā Station's identity motif representing the historic Chief Post Office (CPO) building's arched windows, symbolising transition, strength and height.

The lower half of the identity represents the Waitematā Harbour and the mingling of freshwater from the Waihorotiu stream into it, a meeting that is also celebrated in Waiti Waitā,

formerly known as Skylid, an artwork at Waitematā Station Plaza designed by Ngati Whatua artist Graham Tipene.

Being an existing station, Waitemata may not have received as much press focus as the new ones, but the CRL arguably serves its users and potential users best of all.

According to the 2026 JLL Office Workers Survey, public transport is the most important consideration for workers when choosing where to work. With Britomart now having immediate access to all train lines, buses, ferries and rideshares, as well as a carpark with EV charging and two bike parks, no place in Auckland offers faster public transport links or a wider variety of travel options.

That ease of access applies to leisure activities as well as work opportunities. Annie Dundas, Director Destination for Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, says the CRL will make it far easier to plan days or nights out at events. "For major events coming up including the British & Irish Lions Women's Series in 2027, Cricket World Cup in 2028, and men's Lions tour in 2029, the CRL will be amazing," she says. "Fans flowing in and out of Eden Park will be able to hop down to Waitematā Station at the waterfront in just 13 minutes. That will make it easier to enjoy bars and restaurants before and after matches and give huge crowds multiple hospitality options."

Central Auckland's nightlife will also benefit. "More frequent trains until about midnight from Sunday to Thursday, and between 1am and 2am on Fridays and Saturdays, will make it easier to go out or stay out later for a larger group of people," she says. "It will take away parking stress and cost for a much wider group of people and make it easier for them to get to events and shows. We are really excited about the barriers it will reduce and cultural participation it will encourage for all Aucklanders."

Alongside the social and work benefits, the CRL will also make Auckland a cleaner place to be. Auckland's electrified train fleet is a contributing factor in Auckland's decreasing air pollution, and greater uptake of public transport will only improve this.

Auckland Council Director of Resilience and Infrastructure, Barry Potter, says the CRL is a real driver of positive change across the region.

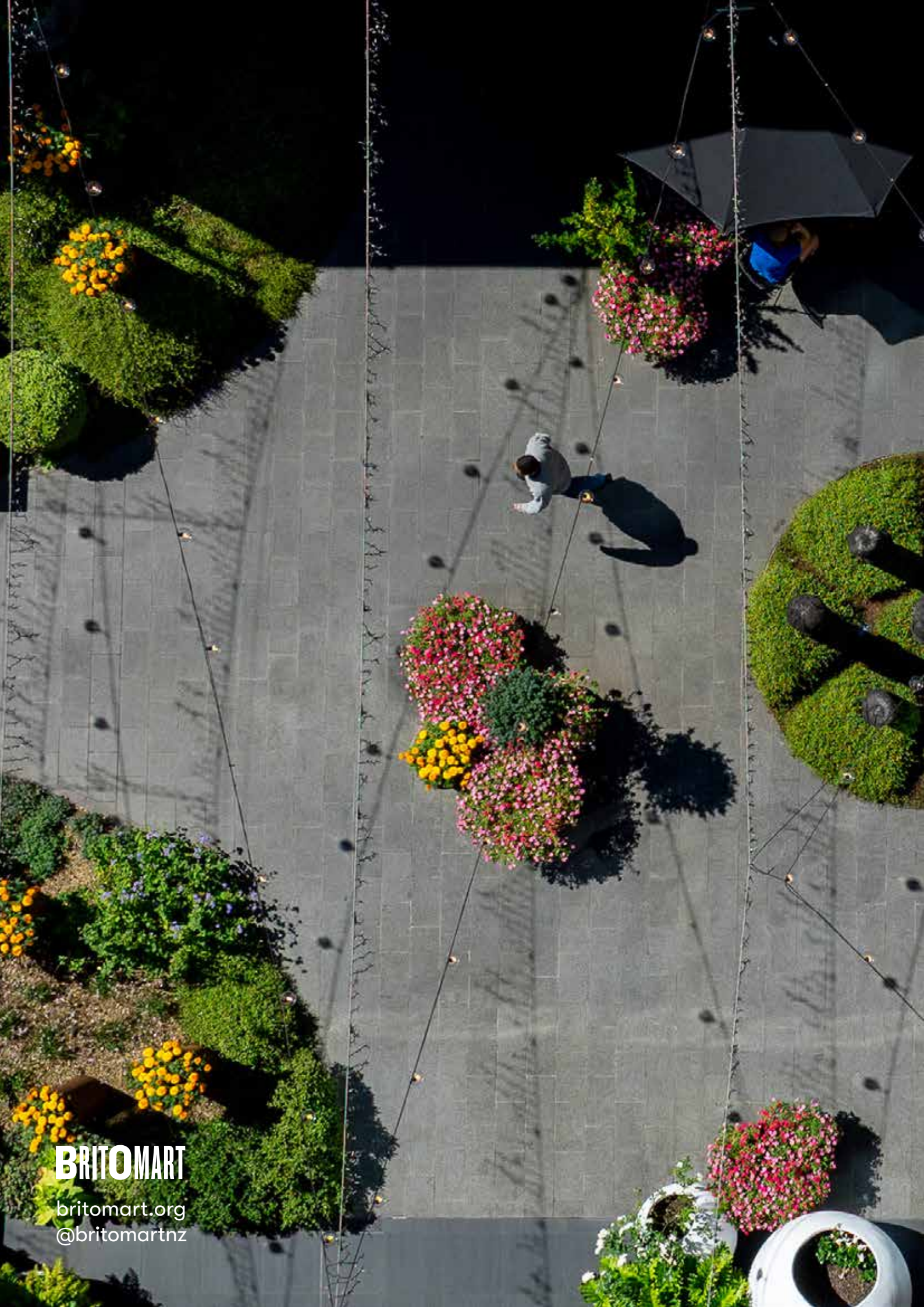
"The CRL's new stations will also drive development, just as Waitematā Station has in downtown," he says. "We're seeing high quality development around the stations, and that's massively important. It has a catalyst effect," he says. "And the more people use the rail network and the more vehicles come off the roads, the more sustainable Auckland becomes."



Skylid, an artwork at Waitematā Station Plaza designed by Ngati Whatua artist Graham Tipene. Photo by David St George.



A crowd gathered to see a performance by Taonga Pūoro for the opening of the Mangōpare installation. Photo by David St George.



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