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Building for the long haul: Auckland Airport to partner with Hawkins on construction of new domestic jet terminal

- Auckland Airport enters into contract with Hawkins to manage the construction and delivery of a new domestic jet terminal building – the major structure in AKL’s terminal integration programme
- Terminal integration programme to be an economic engine for NZ creating 2,500 jobs at peak and supporting many thousands more
- Project set to create employment and business opportunities in South Auckland

Pile foundations mark the next major phase of development for Auckland Airport’s integrated terminal programme – new infrastructure that will have decades of ongoing use at New Zealand’s gateway airport.

The piling work comes as Auckland Airport signs a key contract for approximately \$800 million¹ with Downer Group subsidiary Hawkins Limited to manage the construction and delivery of the domestic jet terminal building.

Chief Executive Carrie Hurihanganui said the building, alongside the airfield, integrated baggage systems and associated facilities that make up the planned \$2.2 billion domestic jet terminal project, would provide the essential resilience and capacity needed to support the economy and future of travel.

“We’re pleased to announce that we have partnered with Hawkins on the delivery of the domestic jet terminal building – the most significant element in Auckland Airport’s ongoing upgrade,” said Ms Hurihanganui.

“It’s investment for the coming decades and beyond, creating essential resilience, greater capacity, improved processing for domestic jet travellers and their baggage, and a greater experience for everyone who travels, visits, and works in our aviation precinct.

“It will also create a boost for the economy, creating a strong pipeline of work for the construction industry, generating thousands of jobs, and an upturn in activity to benefit suppliers and New Zealand’s subcontracting workforce.”

¹ Planned expenditure for these works noting that a fixed price lump sum amount for the works is expected by mid-2026 and achieved through a competitive tender process contractually controlled by Auckland Airport.

Auckland Airport's terminal integration programme involves a complex series of transformational projects spanning airfield, utilities, transport and terminals. Work began in 2022 and all the key projects are well underway, with over 23% of the infrastructure programme complete.

This next major phase of development involves expanding the international terminal further to the east to construct the new domestic jet terminal building. Featuring a new headhouse and a 240 metre-long gate pier, the facility will deliver 44% more processing space for passengers and 26% more airline seat capacity, with an additional 10% flexible seat capacity also provided through bus lounge operations. A key highlight for travellers will be a short indoor walk between domestic jet services and international flights.

Ms Hurihanganui said the build is programmed to take five years, with construction completion followed by operational testing of the new terminal set for opening up to the public in 2029.

"Auckland Airport has a long-standing relationship with Hawkins - one of New Zealand's largest construction companies. We know they have the track record and expertise to successfully deliver such an important aviation asset for New Zealand," Ms Hurihanganui said.

Ms Hurihanganui said the ambition for the project extended well beyond aviation.

"Being a good neighbour to the South Auckland community is extremely important to us, so we have set up the project contract in a way that will ensure benefits will flow directly back into the local community."

Downer Group Chief Executive Officer, Peter Tompkins, said: "Downer and Hawkins are proud to be involved in this significant project, which will deliver a world-class terminal for travellers, airlines and the people of New Zealand.

"Hawkins is Aotearoa's leading construction business, having delivered iconic projects that have left an indelible mark on the New Zealand landscape since 1946.

"We also have a proud history of supporting the communities in which we operate, and are committed to creating employment and supply chain opportunities for the local community throughout this project."

Ms Hurihanganui said the new domestic jet terminal represents the first new terminal constructed at Auckland Airport in almost 50 years and follows years of consultation with major airline customers.

"Our goal is to keep travel affordable for travellers, delivering a functional design that is simple and cost-efficient and focused on doing the basics really well for customers," said Ms Hurihanganui. "That means making the terminal easy to get around, providing comfortable seating, a place for people to plug in their computer or phone, and modern bathroom facilities. That's what travellers want and that's what we're building.

Ms Hurihanganui said Hawkins is on the job, installing the building's ~600 steel piles 35 metres into the ground, strong enough to support more than 6,000 tonnes of steel, concrete slabs and timber structural flooring, roofing and other building materials that are earmarked for the construction of the facility.

“Building in a live operating airport environment is no small task, and while we’re focused on minimising the impact on travellers as much as possible, we know change is disruptive and we thank travellers for their patience as the build progresses,” said Ms Hurihanganui.

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