

Auckland Airport gets multi-billion-dollar investment for redevelopment



Auckland Airport. Photo Credit: New Zealand Herald

[Auckland Airport](#) has announced that it is undergoing its biggest redevelopment since the airport opened in 1966, with a brand-new domestic terminal to be fully integrated into the international terminal.

“This is a major investment for Auckland Airport, one which we have been working towards for many years,” said Patrick Strange, Auckland Airport’s Chair, in a press release. “The domestic terminal is almost 60 years old and needs replacing. It’s nearing capacity and it’s no longer fit for purpose and hasn’t been for some time. If it wasn’t for the pandemic, we would already be well underway with its replacement.”

Auckland Airport has been consulting with its major airline customers since May 2011 on a replacement for the aging domestic terminal and plans to build an integrated terminal. Over that time 21 concept designs have been developed by Auckland Airport and discussed with major airlines as part of the consultation process.

“We have worked with major airlines for over a decade on this. We’ve considered all feedback, including potential alternative locations and even further delays to infrastructure development. All of this has been carefully thought through and we have made changes where appropriate, but now we need to get on with it,” Strange said.

“Every dollar we spend on this infrastructure will serve travelers, airlines and New Zealand well into the future. It will ensure New Zealand’s main gateway is resilient and sustainable, supporting airline ambitions for a low-carbon future and strengthening our infrastructure in the face of increasingly severe weather events due to climate change.”

Following an earlier decision in 2019, the Auckland Airport Board today reaffirmed its commitment to the integration of domestic and international travel, giving approval for the project to move into the final stages of design. The terminal integration program – a significant part of the airport’s wider 10-year-capital program – will bring domestic travel and international travel together under the same roof for the first time since 1977, via an expansion at the eastern end of the existing international terminal building.

The integration program is also an important enabler in allowing Auckland Airport to carry out key upgrades on the airfield to ensure the airport remains resilient.

“This is all about building the gateway Auckland and New Zealand need,” said Carrie Hurihanganui, Auckland Airport’s Chief Executive. “A new domestic terminal integrated into the international terminal will make Auckland Airport fit for the future, providing a much-improved experience for travelers – something they’ve clearly and repeatedly told us they want.

“They’re asking for a domestic facility that offers modern spaces, efficient passenger processing areas, improved bathroom facilities and faster baggage systems, as well as better connections between domestic and international travel and via public transport and the city. In short, renovations just won’t cut it anymore.”

Set to open between 2028 and 2029, the combined terminal will serve the larger and more efficient domestic jet aircraft flying to and from Auckland to New Zealand’s other main centers, alongside international operations.

“It will make travel easier and faster, cutting domestic jet to international transfer times to a five-minute indoor walk. A new check-in experience will provide state-of-the-art facilities for both domestic and international travelers, including the ability to check in and store your bag at any time throughout the day.

“Smart baggage systems will save time and reduce stress at either end of a flight. There will be faster links to public transport via the new Transport Hub we are building on the doorstep of the international terminal. We will also provide new gates and other facilities to help airlines smooth and speed-up turn-around times.”

Along with ground power units for aircraft, the upgraded airfield surrounding the new combined terminal will provide charging for electric ground handling equipment and vehicles. Design and construction materials for the combined terminal will be selected to reduce the building’s carbon footprint as much as possible, alongside a focus on waste minimization and water efficiency.

“Sustainability is a priority for us – this investment will help us move towards climate change goals and create a more sustainable airport,” said Hurihanganui. “We have worked very closely with major airlines to understand their needs and requirements, including the investment they’re making in larger domestic aircraft, and their planned future low-carbon aircraft. We are supporting airlines by installing ground power units at each gate to supply power to aircraft, helping to reduce fuel use. Without the right airport infrastructure any airline aspirations to a low-carbon future will not be achieved.”

Hurihanganui said Auckland Airport is currently in consultation with major airline customers over the 2

charges they will pay in the future to operate at the airport, with future prices set with reference to the Commerce Commission's regulatory disclosure framework and target return parameters updated as at the start of each five-year pricing period. Prices are then reviewed and reported on by the Commission.

"We recognize that in today's environment price changes are challenging. As we step forward, we are ambitious but mindful of cost, ensuring our infrastructure program is fit for purpose."

While the new combined terminal is under construction, domestic travel will continue to operate from the existing domestic terminal.

"To make sure every journey is a comfortable one until the new domestic terminal opens, we will be upgrading and renovating traveler facilities at the current domestic terminal, including bathrooms, help desks, and dwell spaces."