



23 February
2022

Auckland Air Quality Report

Monthly update

Research and
Evaluation Unit

RIMU



Introduction

Auckland Council continuously collects air quality data to assess compliance with national standards and provide information to aid policy development and evaluation. The data the council collects enables us to quantify ambient air quality in the region and note spatial and temporal variations. This report presents a monthly update on air quality in Auckland. It has three sections: sections A and B present tables and graphics illustrating air quality status in the Auckland region based on the data collected from continuous monitoring sites across the region. For this edition, section C focuses on one monitoring site – Khyber Pass Road. The monthly update is prepared using validated data which is generally available one month after raw data is collected. This update covers data to 31 January 2022.

Summary

- No breach of national air quality standards has occurred this year (1 Jan to 31 Jan 2022).
- Over 90% of the monitoring sites recorded particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}) concentrations higher than the previous year.
- All monitoring sites, except city centre sites, registered higher average nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) concentrations compared to the previous year.
- As in the previous year, the highest concentrations of air contaminants were recorded at Auckland city centre monitoring sites.

Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning
Aerodynamic diameter	Used to describe the behaviour of a particle as it moves around in the air; it compares the behaviour with that of a spherical particle of unit density.
Air pollutant/contaminant	Any substance in the air that could harm humans, animals, vegetation, or other parts of the environment when present in high enough concentrations.
Air pollution	The presence of one or more air pollutants in high enough concentrations to cause harm.
Air quality	Is the degree to which air is suitable or clean enough for humans, animals, or plants to remain healthy.
Air quality index (AQI)	Score out of 100, based on dividing a pollutant concentration by a relevant standard. It can be used to approximate relative impact of different pollutants.
Ambient air	The external air environment (does not include the air environment inside buildings or structures)
Black carbon (BC)	Is an air pollutant made up of tiny soot-like particles discharged into the atmosphere from combustion processes.
CO	Carbon monoxide, a type of air pollutant.
Exceedance	An exceedance defines a period of time during which the concentration of a pollutant is greater than the appropriate air quality criteria.
Ground-level ozone (O₃)	At ground level, ozone is considered an air pollutant that can seriously affect the human respiratory system. It is a major component of photochemical smog.
Monitoring site	A facility for measuring the concentration of one or more pollutants in the ambient air; also referred to as 'monitoring station'
NESAQ	National Environmental Standard for Air Quality.
NO₂	Nitrogen dioxide, a type of air pollutant
PM	Particulate matter is made up of a mixture of various sizes of solid and liquid particles suspended in air.
PM₁₀	Particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometres or less; a type of air pollutant.
PM_{2.5}	Particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometres or less; a type of air pollutant.
SO₂	Sulphur dioxide, a type of air pollutant
µg/m³	Microgram of pollutant (1 millionth of a gram) per cubic metre of air, referenced to temperature of 0°C (273.15 K) and absolute pressure of 101.325 kilopascals (kPa)
n/a	Not applicable

Data can be viewed on the [environmental data portal](#) , [LAWA](#) or requested from environmentaldata@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz. Full state and trends analyses and reports are prepared every few years (last report; [Trends in Auckland's air quality 2006-2018](#)).

See the [frequently asked questions](#) about the Auckland air quality monitoring programme.

Section A – Data tables

Table 1. Summary information about Auckland air quality monitoring programme 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2022

Number of Continuous Monitoring Sites	10	
Location of Monitoring Sites	Queen Street, Customs Street, Khyber Pass Road, Penrose, Henderson, Takapuna, Glen Eden, Pakuranga, Papatoetoe, and Patumahoe	
Standard Contaminants Monitored	PM ₁₀ , CO, NO ₂ , O ₃ , and SO ₂	
Other Key Contaminants Monitored	PM _{2.5} , and Black Carbon	
Number of Exceedances Of NESAQ In 2022	0	
Number of Exceedances of Auckland Ambient Air Quality Targets In 2022	0	
Maximum PM₁₀ 24-Hours Mean (Jan 2022)	30.2 µg/m ³ (60.4% of NESAQ)	<i>Recorded at Queen Street on 18 January 2022</i>
Maximum PM_{2.5} 24-Hours Mean (Jan 2022)	13.3 µg/m ³ (53.2% of Auckland target)	<i>Recorded at Queen Street on 5 January 2022</i>
Maximum NO₂ 1-Hour Mean (Jan 2022)	119.0 µg/m ³ (59.5% of NESAQ)	<i>Recorded at Customs Street on 20 January 2022</i>
Maximum SO₂ 1-Hour Mean (Jan 2022)	18.0 µg/m ³ (5.1% of NESAQ)	<i>Recorded at Penrose on 30 January 2022</i>
Maximum O₃ 1-Hour Mean (Jan 2022)	56.0 µg/m ³ (37.3% of NESAQ)	<i>Recorded at Patumahoe on 28 January 2022</i>
Maximum CO Running 8-Hour Mean (Jan 2022)	0.35 mg/m ³ (3.5% of NESAQ)	<i>Recorded at Khyber Pass Road on 25 January 2022</i>
Written Reports Framework	Monthly Updates, Annual Report, Trends Report, and State of The Environment Report	

Table 2. General changes in concentration of key contaminants monitored for the last 13, 25 and 37 months.

↑ indicates an increase ↓ indicates a decrease ↗ Increase but not significant ↘ Decrease but not significant

	PM ₁₀			PM _{2.5}			NO ₂			Black carbon			Ozone			CO			SO ₂			Air Quality Index(AQI)			
Site	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Last 13 months	Last 25 months	Last 37 months	Site
Customs Street	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↑	↑	n/a	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↗	↗	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Customs Street
Glen Eden	↗	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	↓	↗	↘	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↗	↘	↓	Glen Eden
Henderson	↑	↗	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	↘	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↑	↘	↓	Henderson
Khyber Pass Road	↑	↗	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	↗	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↓	↓	↘	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Khyber Pass Road
Pakuranga	↑	↗	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Pakuranga
Papatoetoe	↑	↑	↗	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Papatoetoe
Patumahoe	↗	↘	↓	↗	↗	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↗	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↗	↓	↓	Patumahoe
Penrose	↗	↘	↓	↗	↗	↓	↓	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↑	↑	↗	↗	↘	↓	Penrose
Takapuna	↗	↗	↓	↑	↗	↓	↓	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↗	↗	↓	Takapuna
Queen Street	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	↑	↑	↑	Queen Street
	PM ₁₀			PM _{2.5}			NO ₂			Black carbon			Ozone			CO			SO ₂			Air Quality Index(AQI)			

Notes

Effective dates: 13 months (1 Jan 2021 to 31 Jan 2022), 25 months (1 Jan 2020 to 31 Jan 2022), and 37 months (1 Jan 2019 to 31 Jan 2022)

PM₁₀ is monitored at Glen Eden, Henderson, Khyber Pass Rd, Pakuranga, Papatoetoe, Patumahoe, Penrose, Takapuna, and Queen St.

PM_{2.5} is monitored at Customs St, Glen Eden, Pakuranga, Patumahoe, Penrose, Takapuna, and Queen St.

NO₂ is monitored at Customs St, Glen Eden, Henderson, Khyber Pass Rd, Patumahoe, Penrose, Takapuna, and Queen St.

Black carbon is monitored at Customs St, and Henderson.

CO is monitored at Khyber Pass Rd.

Ozone is monitored at Patumahoe.

SO₂ is monitored at Customs St, and Penrose.

No PM_{2.5} data (due to faulty instrument) for Glen Eden, Customs Street and Pakuranga. No NO₂ data (due to faulty instrument) for Patumahoe.

No BC data (due to faulty instrument) for Henderson. Weather changes significantly affect concentrations of air contaminants ([see this report](#))

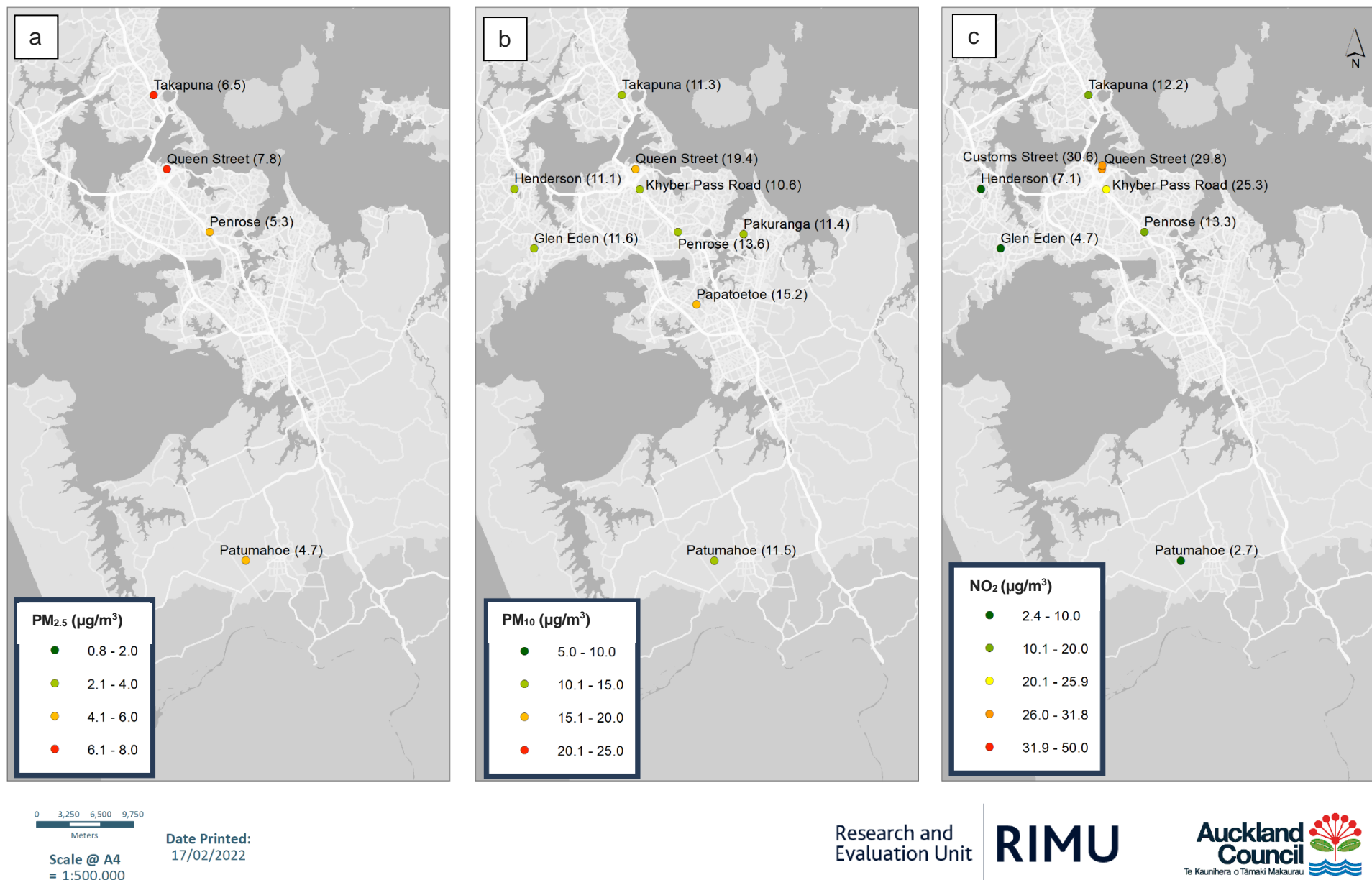


Figure 1. Maps a, b and c show the air quality monitoring sites and their last 12- months (1 February 2021 to 31 January 2022) average PM and NO₂ concentrations in brackets. Auckland city centre monitoring sites recorded the highest PM and NO₂ concentrations.

Section B. Key air contaminants across the 10 air quality monitoring sites (January 2022 compared to January 2021)

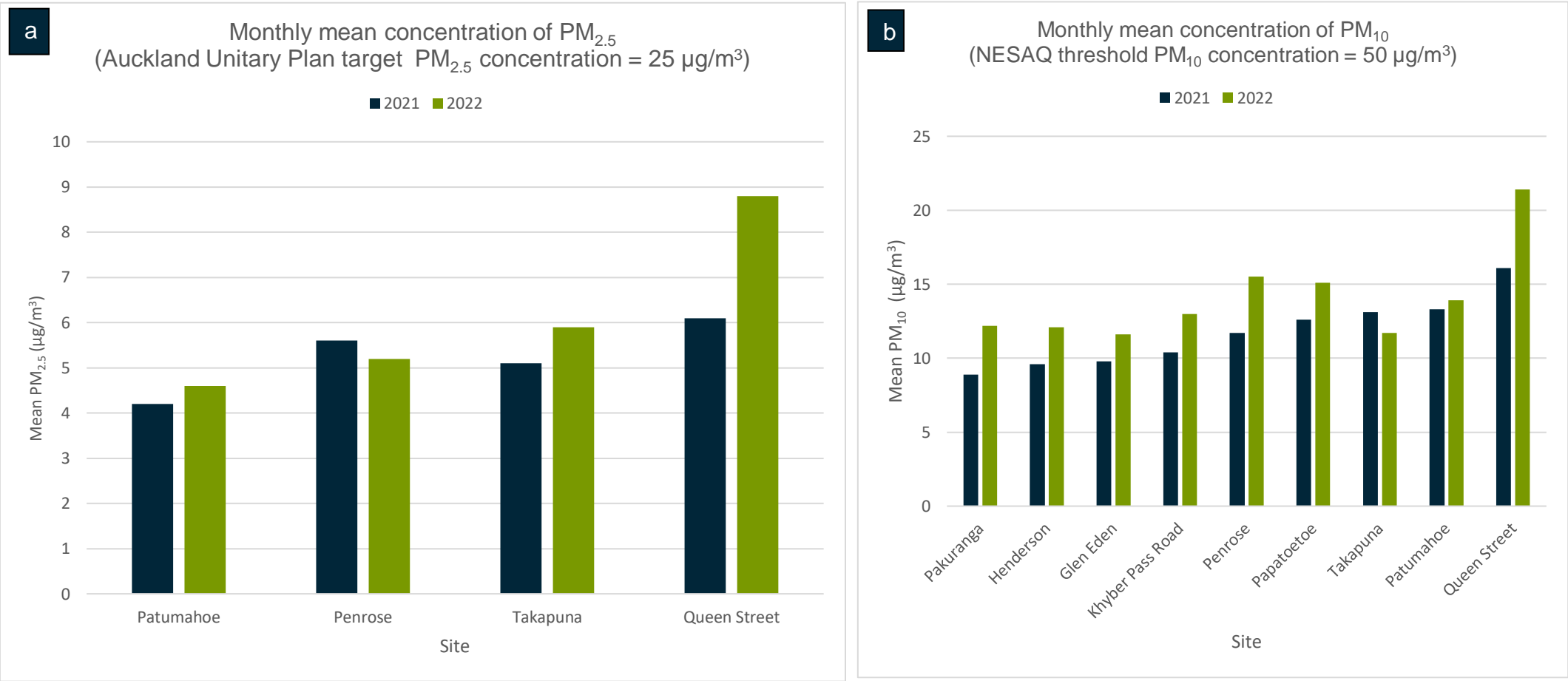


Figure 2. January mean particulate matter concentration – 2022 and 2021 compared. As in the previous year, the highest concentrations of both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} were recorded at Queen St. Plots a and b represent PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ respectively. The average particulate matter concentration in Queen St is higher than the same period of the previous year. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} have multiple sources including motor vehicles, sea salt, marine diesel and soils (windblown soil, road dust, and dust generated by earthworks, construction, and road works).

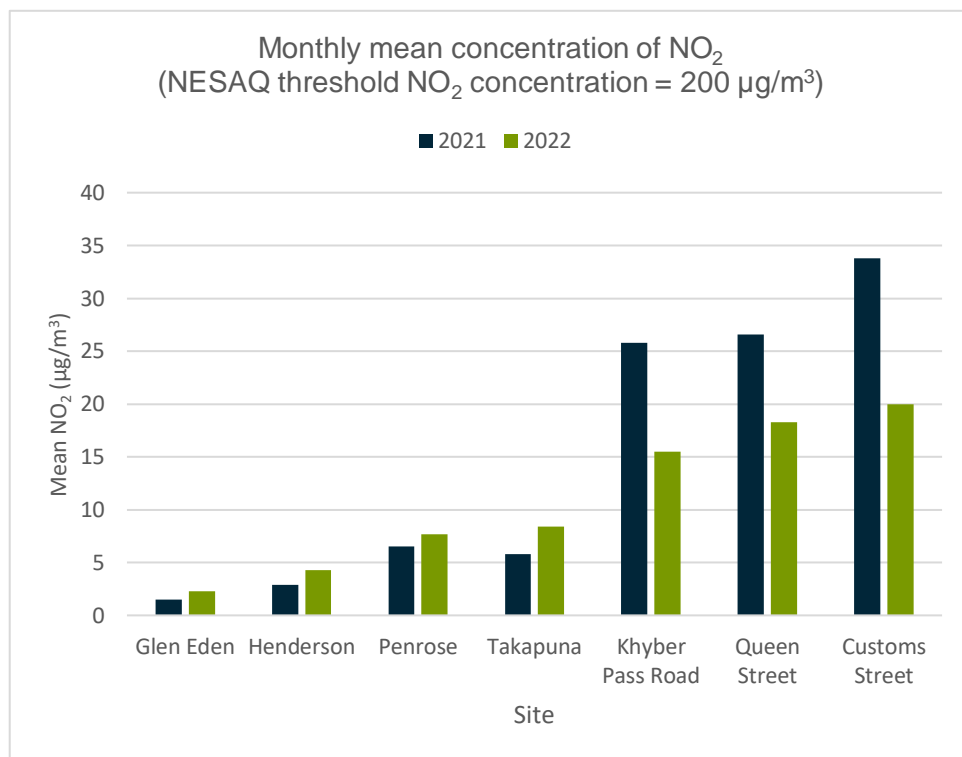


Figure 3. January mean NO₂ concentration – 2022 and 2021 compared. Auckland city centre monitoring sites recorded the highest concentrations. The main source of NO₂ is motor vehicles.

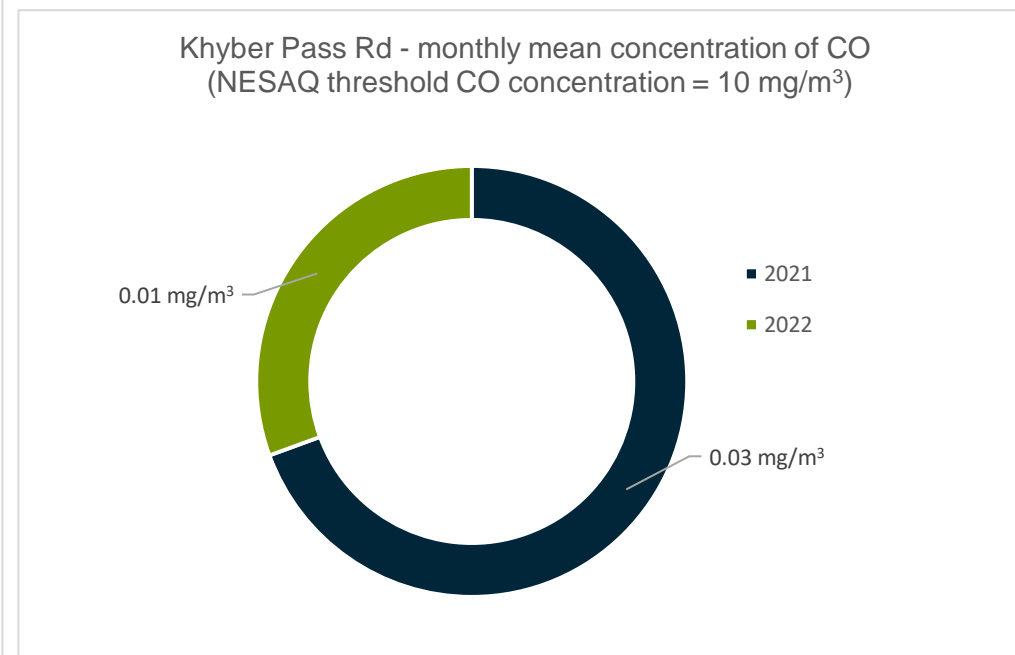


Figure 4. January mean CO concentration – 2022 and 2021 compared. The mean CO concentration is 78% less than the previous year. The main source of CO is motor vehicles. Note: currently, CO is only monitored at Khyber Pass Road.

Section C. Focus on a monitoring site: Khyber Pass Road

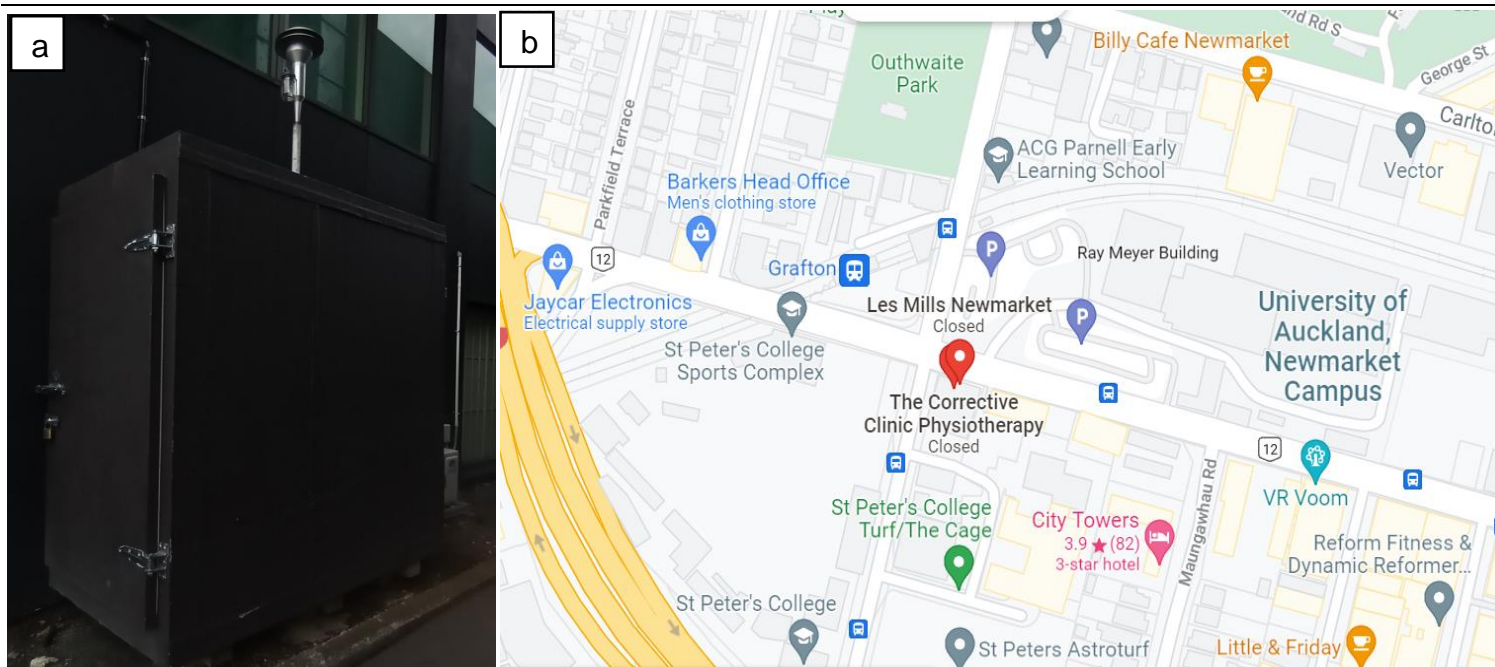


Figure 5. The Khyber Pass Road air quality monitoring site is located between 269 and 289 Khyber Pass Road, Newmarket. Image a shows the air quality monitoring shed viewed from the east. Image b is an aerial view of the monitoring site and surroundings taken in February 2022 (Source: Google Maps). Air quality monitoring at this site commenced on 29th October 1995. It was paused in May 2015 for redevelopment and restarted in September 2019. PM₁₀, NO₂, and CO are monitored at this site. The main sources of air contaminants are motor vehicles, biomass burning, and soils.

Key findings:

- Overall, Khyber Pass Road's average PM₁₀ concentration is 27 % more than Auckland's average and 45 % more than Patumahoe (a rural site).
- Khyber Pass Road's average NO₂ concentration is 45 % more than Auckland's average and 163 % more than Patumahoe (a rural site).
- Deseasonalised trend analysis result shows there is a downward long-term trend in PM₁₀, NO₂ and CO average concentrations over the monitoring period (January 2006 to January 2022).

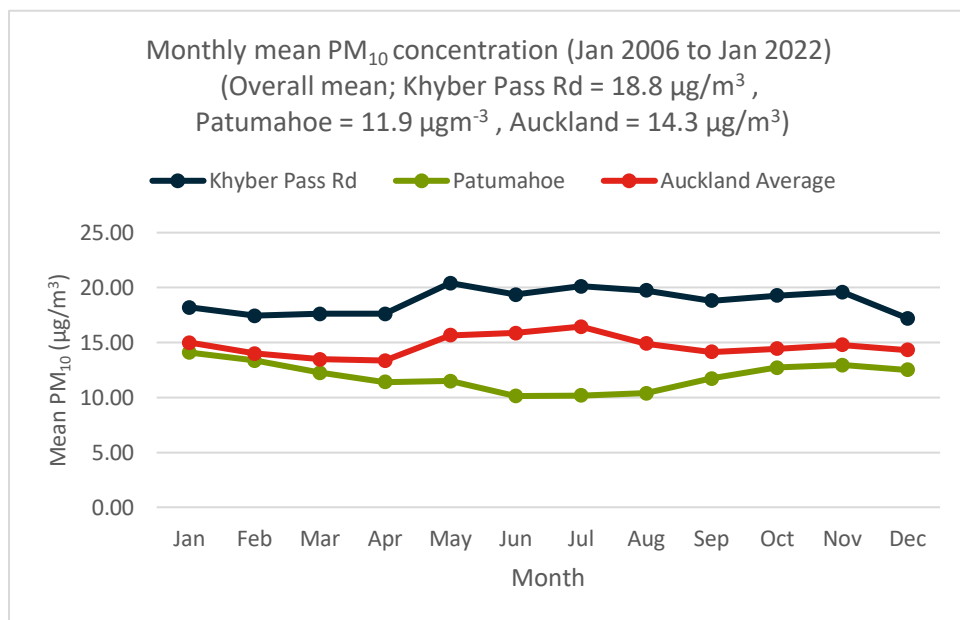


Figure 6. Temporal variation in monthly PM₁₀ concentrations – Khyber Pass Road compared to Patumahoe (rural site) and Auckland average. Overall, Khyber Pass Road’s average PM₁₀ concentration is 27 % more than Auckland’s average and 45 % more than Patumahoe (a rural site).

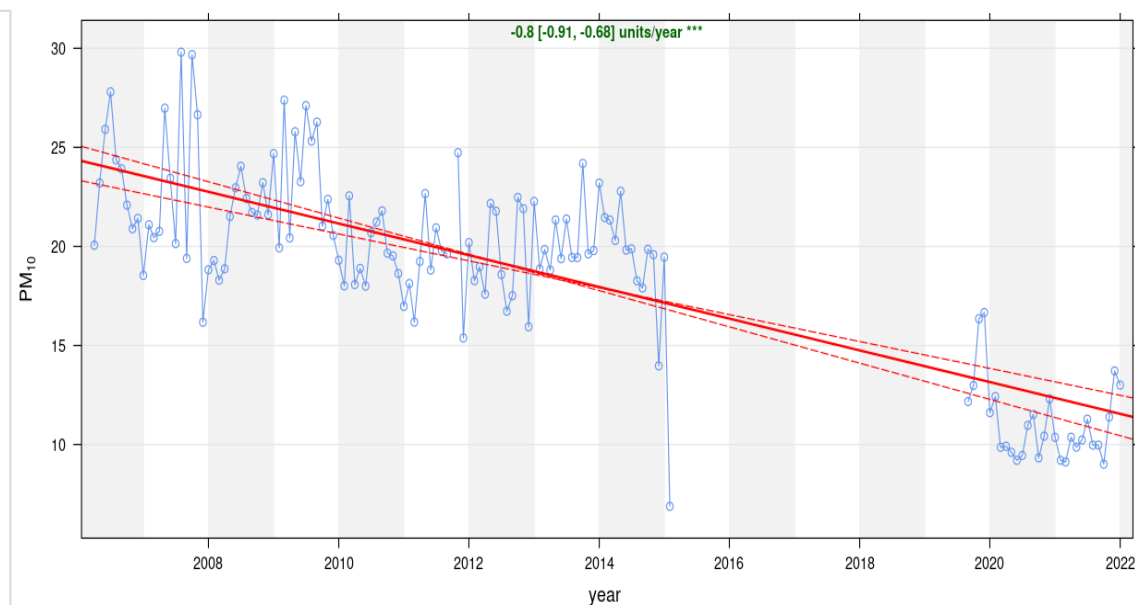


Figure 7. Deseasonalised trend in PM₁₀ concentrations showing that there is a significant downward trend (95 % confidence interval) over the monitoring period.

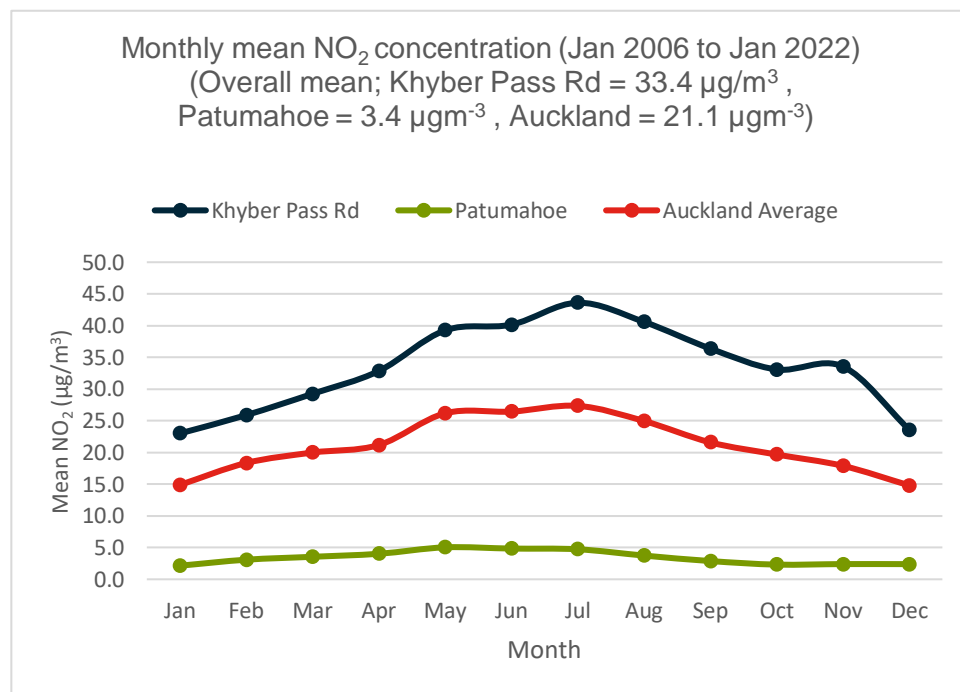


Figure 8. Temporal variation in monthly NO₂ concentrations – Khyber Pass Road compared to Patumahoe (rural site) and Auckland average. Overall, Khyber Pass Road's average NO₂ concentration is 45 % more than Auckland's average and 163 % more than Patumahoe (a rural site).

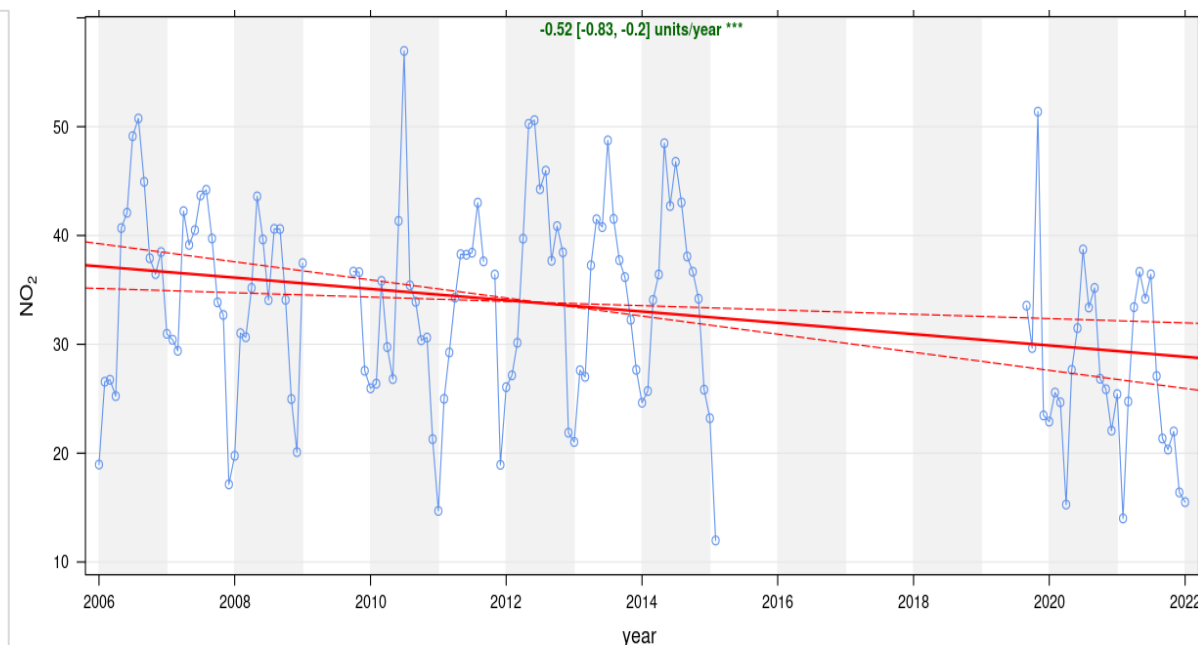


Figure 9. Deseasonalised trend in NO₂ concentrations showing that there is a significant downward trend (95 % confidence interval) over the monitoring period.

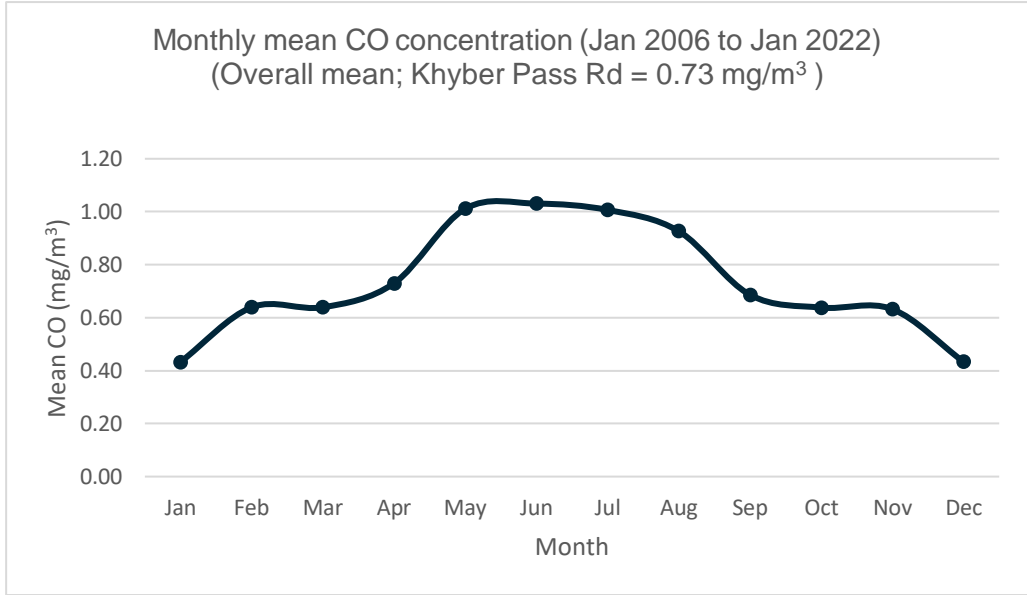


Figure 10. Temporal variation in average monthly CO concentrations. The highest concentrations tend to occur during winter months.

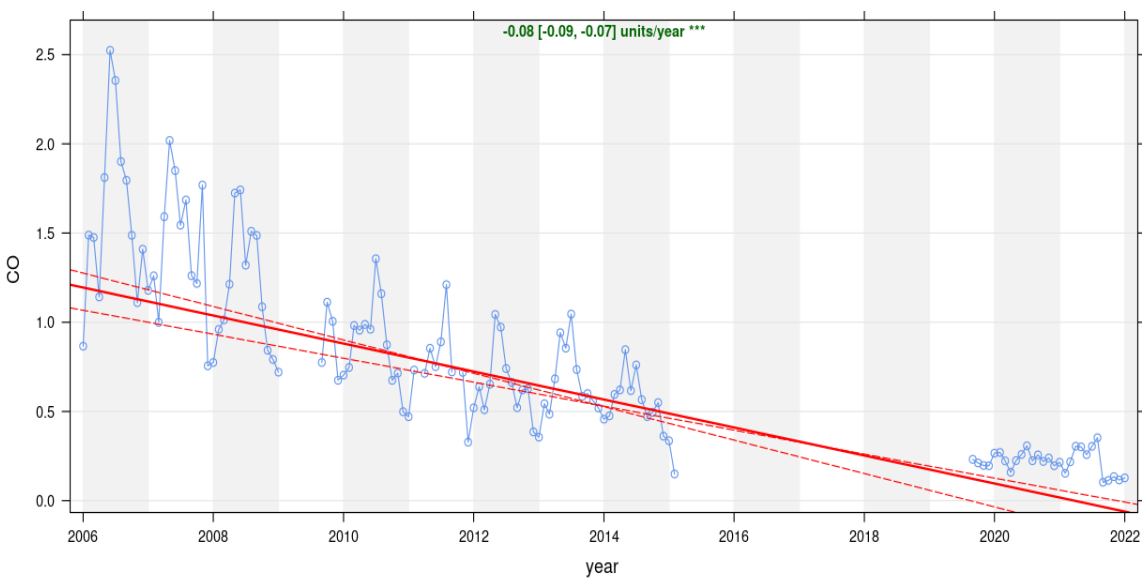


Figure 11. Deseasonalised trend in CO concentrations showing that there is a significant downward trend (95 % confidence interval) over the monitoring period.

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