

Expressway overview

This project is part of the larger Waikato Expressway programme of work. The Waikato Expressway is one of seven roads of national significance for New Zealand.

Sections update

- Longswamp - Secondary investigation. Target opening 2018
- Rangiriri - Under construction. Opens late 2016
- Huntly - Investigation and preliminary design. Target opening 2019
- Ngaruawahia - Opened December 2013
- Te Rapa - Opened December 2012
- Hamilton - Investigation and preliminary design. Target opening 2019
- Cambridge - Under construction. Opens late 2016

Work still to be done

While the Expressway is open there is still one important piece of work to be done.

This is the placement of OGPA (open graded porous asphalt) which provides a very smooth riding surface and significantly reduces road noise.

OGPA will be placed after the current chip seal surface is settled which is expected to be September/October 2014, depending on weather conditions.

Getting connected

The Ngaruawahia Section joins to the existing Te Rapa section of the Waikato Expressway near Horotiu, which opened in December 2012. The new section includes interchanges for the yet-to-be-built Huntly and Hamilton sections which are due for completion in 2019.

Until the Huntly and Hamilton Sections are completed, the only connections to the existing road network are at Gordonton Road at the northern end and the Te Rapa Section at the Horotiu Interchange at the southern end.



Joint effort: Cutting the ribbon on the Ngaruawahia Section opening are, left, to right, Waikato MP Lindsay Tisch, NZ Transport Agency Waikato/BOP Highways Manager Kaye Clark, NZ Transport Agency Regional Director Harry Wilson, Waikato-Tainui chairperson for Te Arataura (Waikato-Tainui Board) Rahuui Papa, Minister of Transport Gerry Brownlee, Waikato District Mayor Allan Sanson, Fletcher Construction GM Infrastructure, David Jewell, Waikato-Tainui kaumatua Pokaia Nepia, and Hamilton East MP David Bennett.

Our contact details

For enquiries or information regarding the Ngaruawahia Section of the Waikato Expressway.

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Ngaruawahia Section

Information sheet January 2014



First day: The scene from the Lake Road bridge looking down to the new Waikato River bridge on the day the Ngaruawahia Expressway section opened to traffic, 16 December 2013.

Thumbs up for new road

Travellers are enjoying the benefits flowing from the opening last month of the Ngaruawahia Section of the Waikato Expressway.

The new 12.3km section, which bypasses Ngaruawahia, opened to traffic on Monday 16 December and has drawn overwhelmingly positive responses.

Due to its location well away from the public eye, the new route has come as something of a surprise – it was like an early Christmas present, says the NZ Transport Agency Waikato Highways Manager Kaye Clark.

It opened two days after a ceremony and

community open day on Saturday 14 December where a large crowd assembled to watch Minister Gerry Brownlee cut the ribbon, joining Transport Agency officials and project members along with local authority figures and iwi guests from Waikato-Tainui.

Kaye says the approximately \$200 million project, built by contractor Fletcher Construction, was completed for around \$50 million below its original cost estimate of \$250 million.

“This is a crucial piece of infrastructure for the Waikato region and for New Zealand, as it is central to providing safer and more efficient transport links between the business and freight hubs of Waikato, Auckland and Tauranga.”

The Ngaruawahia Section joins to the existing Te Rapa Section of the Waikato Expressway, which opened in December 2012. The new

section includes interchanges for the yet-to-be-built Huntly and Hamilton sections. The two sections together provide an estimated average saving of eight minutes to a peak time journey between Taupiri and Hamilton.

Approximately 1000 people attended the official ceremony held on the new 142-metre bridge “Te Rehu o Waikato” (the mist of Waikato) across the Waikato River near Horotiu. People were able to walk and cycle across the Ngaruawahia Section during the day and also join in a Te Awa River Ride Cycleway opening ceremony further up the river on the same day.

Ngaruawahia is the second major section of the Expressway to be completed, while another two are under construction at Rangiriri and Cambridge, proof of the strong momentum behind this project.



Out and about: People walked, ran or cycled on a 4km section on the open day.

Project relies on team effort

Transport Agency Senior Project Manager Mercedes Santos has overseen the Ngaruawahia Section and says collaboration has been a key to a successful outcome.

“Right from the start we have tried to keep everyone informed, to engage with all stakeholders, and consult with people affected,” Mercedes says.

“When we go into a project like this we want to take the people with us on the journey. I would particularly like to acknowledge the contribution of the property owners along the alignment. Without their patience and understanding the project would not have been possible.”



Mercedes Santos

Mercedes says working closely with Waikato-Tainui and understanding their aims, aspirations and history in the area was important, and

engaging with the wider stakeholder group, including landowners, interest groups like Fish and Game and the Department of Conservation, all added to the success of the project.

She also praised Fletcher Construction management and staff for delivering on all fronts.

“With their expertise and willingness to go the extra mile we have shaved \$50 million off the estimated cost and got the road open before Christmas.”



Standing tall: Two pou stand at each end of the new bridge.



Highlight: The new bridge over the Waikato River is called Te Rehu o Waikato

Waikato River's newest crossing

The highlight of the Ngaruawahia Section is the latest bridge built across the Waikato River, called Te Rehu o Waikato. The name refers to the many significant events for Waikato-Tainui which occurred when there was a blanket of mist on the river.

The bridge is supported by four V-piers, two on either bank, which are placed above the winter low flow level of the river.

Alongside the bridge are four pou (carved poles), two at either end, which depict Waikato-Tainui ancestors and significant historical marae in the area from Taupiri to Horotiu.

Signs explaining the significance of the pou will be erected on the walkway beneath the bridge, which is part of the Te Awa river ride. Easy pedestrian access is gained by parking downstream at the Horotiu Bridge carpark.

Rollercoaster ride for Fletcher team

The completion of the Ngaruawahia Section brings mixed emotions to the people who have been involved with it for more than two years.

“This has been a great project to work on and I'm really proud of our team and everyone involved in the construction team,” says Fletcher Construction's section project chief Andrew Burgess.

The contract to build the main Ngaruawahia Section was awarded to Fletcher Construction in March 2011, with work beginning in September 2011.

“It's been a bit like riding a rollercoaster, and the project wasn't without its challenges,” says Andrew. “But at the end of the day the Transport Agency and the public have received a well-built job for their money, and a little under time as well.”

Working on the environmental impacts

A great deal of effort has gone into landscaping and planting to lessen the visual impacts of the Expressway through the Waikato countryside.

- More than 240,000 native plants, grasses and shrubs have been planted
- Much focus was placed on plantings around Lake Areare, Kainui Road wetland, the Waikato River crossing and the gully system on the former Simpson's Farm on Lake Road
- Other environmental measures saw native fish species captured and relocated as drains and streams were replaced by culverts across the alignment
- Vegetated swales are used to treat stormwater runoff before it enters local waterways. These are wide, shallow channels planted with shrubs, flaxes and grasses, which act as a filter for water coming off the road surface.
- Noise barriers were built to protect some areas from road noise.
- The final seal will be a smooth asphalt surface to reduce road surface noise.



Hitting the road: People enjoyed the chance to walk and ride on the new road ahead of opening day.

The Ngaruawahia Section numbers

NEW ROADS:	12.3km
FINAL COST, INCLUDING LAND:	About \$200m
MAIN ALIGNMENT:	9.5km of four-lane Expressway
CONSTRUCTION BEGAN:	Late 2010 on the Taupiri Link, upgrading the existing SH1B from Taupiri to the Gordonton Rd interchange in preparation for it becoming SH1 until the Huntly section is built
MAIN CONSTRUCTION BEGAN:	September 2011 Fletcher Construction began work on the main Ngaruawahia section
FEATURES:	Seven bridges, including six overbridges and a new 142 metre bridge over the Waikato River