

Progress update

April 2015

KEEPING TRAVELLERS HIGH, DRY AND MOVING

Key outcomes for the Waterview Connection and Northwestern Upgrade include more predictable travel times and no more flooding during adverse weather and tides.

Work continues along the Northwestern Motorway and underground between Waterview and Owairaka - from the twin tunnels and monumental earthworks to raise the causeway and the soaring flyovers at Great North Road to the necessary upgrades to the various interchanges along its length and the motorway itself.

When completed in 2017 the upgrades will give increased accessibility to the western suburbs and support the predicted commercial and residential growth in Auckland's west.

Once complete, journey times are expected to be more consistent and reliable, however, congestion is still expected during peak times when there is a high demand.

This is one of the reasons the NZ Transport Agency is investing in bus lanes and walking and cycling facilities - as part of the improvement works there will be better public transport and cycle connections.

The work on the causeway will also protect it from being submerged or buffeted by waves during a king tide or stormy weather.



A kayaker and cyclist on the flooded causeway during a king tide. The upgraded causeway will be approximately 1.5 metres higher than the original one, keeping it well out of reach of the sea.

The Northwestern motorway upgrade and the Waterview tunnels are part of the Western Ring Route which, when complete, will provide an alternative to SH1 linking Manukau, Auckland, Waitakere and the North Shore.

It provides greater flexibility in managing and operating the state highway network. Namely, in the case of incidents or events it has more options to offer travellers to ensure their journeys are not impacted too adversely.

What to do when the lanes move

Over the coming months there will be a number of changes to the lanes on SH16 between Te Atatu and Great North Road as the motorway continues to be raised and widened. However, as the lanes are shuffled about the configuration will always have the same number of lanes available in each direction.

For a safer, smoother journey, please choose the lane you need well in advance and stay in that lane instead of making sudden lane changes.

HOW'S TRAFFIC TODAY?

About to leave home and want to know what traffic is like? Real time traffic updates are readily available.

Like the NZ Transport Agency Auckland/Northland Facebook page or follow us on Twitter to get regular updates on what's happening on the Northwestern and wider motorway network.

Go to: facebook.com/nztaakl, twitter.com/nztaakl

Key dates for Lincoln and Te Atatu interchanges

Work on the Lincoln Road interchange is in its final stage. The demolition of the Henderson Creek bridge is complete and the team is working to fill the gap between the two new bridges.

In addition, the last of the street lights are going up and the site is being tidied before the construction crew leaves towards the end of the year.

Work on the Te Atatu interchange is in a "very busy phase right now," says project manager Brian Robertson of Fulton Hogan, the NZ Transport Agency's contractor on this job:

- The upgraded city bound off-ramp will open in May
- Widening work in front of Jack Colvin Park is progressing well and traffic will be moved left onto the new road in May to allow the project team to work in the median of the motorway from June onwards
- The new Te Atatu westbound off-ramp should be partially open to traffic by the end of June
- The new westbound on-ramp should also open in late June
- The southbound overbridge on Te Atatu Road is being jacked up over ANZAC weekend. Shortly after that (early May) the beams will go in for the new footpath on the city side of the overbridge
- The southern cycleway underpass under Te Atatu Road is being constructed in three stages with stage one on track to be finished in



Image: Greg Kempthorne

early May. Traffic will be then moved slightly to allow the middle section to be completed and then traffic moved again for the third and final stage. Construction of the underpass should be complete in July

- Work on the shared walking/cycling path continues with the link between Lincoln and Te Atatu Roads, due to be open in November this year. Noise walls alongside the path will be installed from June

- Landscaping work will start in May with all plants in the ground ready for spring.

Brian says all work on the Te Atatu interchange upgrade should be finished in the first half of 2016.

Naturally, the work on the Te Atatu interchange needs to tie in with the work underway on the Causeway Upgrade and other projects which make up the Western Ring Route, with careful scheduling and co-ordination required.



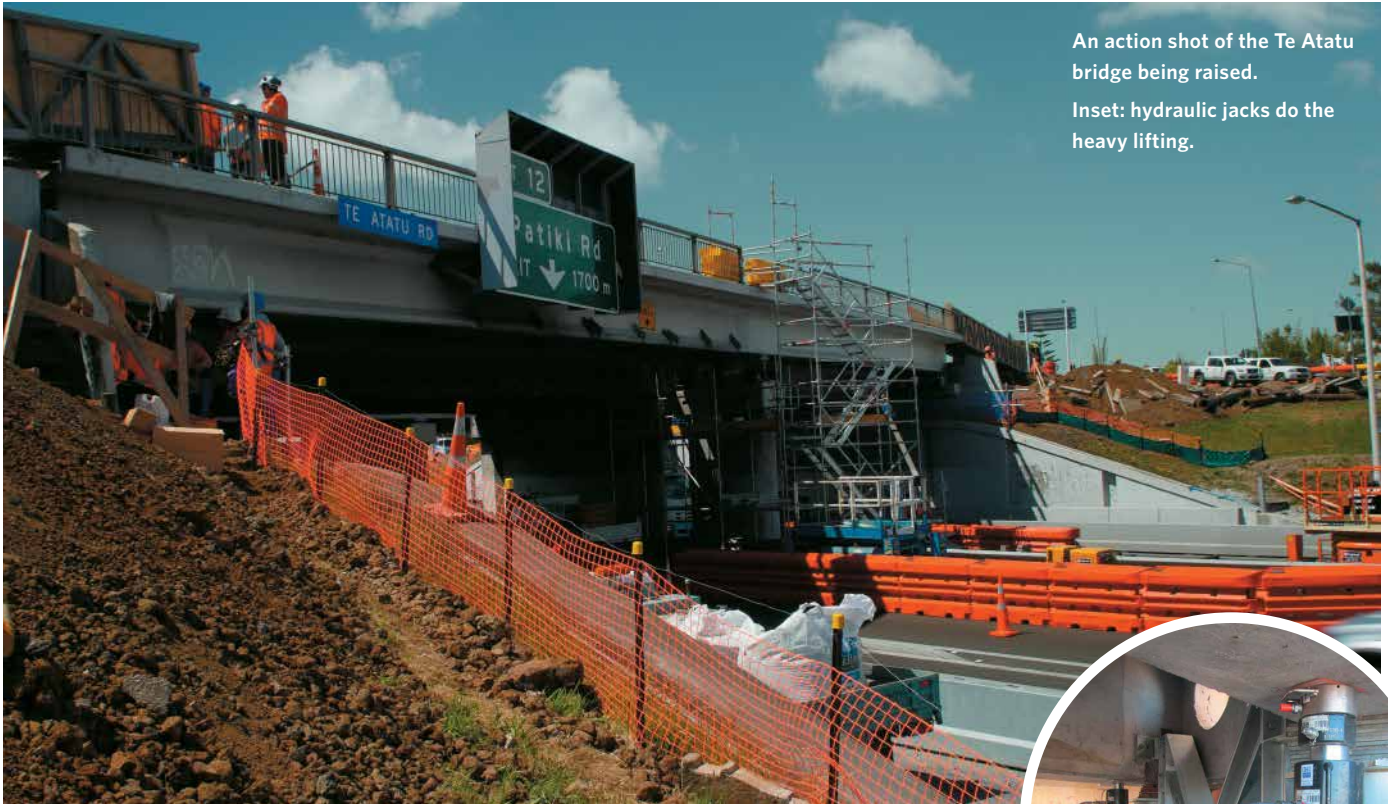
Widening means upgrade for park

The Jack Colvin Park playing fields are undergoing a major upgrade as they are moved to make way for the motorway widening.

The new field is being repositioned further from the motorway to make it safer for players and spectators.

In addition, the old seating is being replaced by new concrete terraced seats and a ball fence is being installed alongside the motorway noise wall to stop any errant balls from bouncing into traffic.

Car parks lost to the widened motorway are being replaced by a new car park between the main playing field and the practice field.



An action shot of the Te Atatu bridge being raised.

Inset: hydraulic jacks do the heavy lifting.



Raising the Te Atatu overbridge

The Te Atatu overbridge is being raised approximately 600mm to create a better height safety margin for the motorway below and reduce the chance of the bridge being hit by over-height loads.

The bridge actually comprises three separate structures. The existing pedestrian bridge, was raised in November last year, the second bridge from Te Atatu South to the Peninsula, was jacked up over Christmas and the third bridge from Te

Atatu Peninsula to Te Atatu South will be lifted over ANZAC weekend in late April.

The work to raise the bridges is very disruptive to traffic with motorway closures overnight and reduced access down to one lane in each direction to and from Te Atatu Peninsula.

We would like to say thank you, especially to the communities in Te Atatu South and on Te Atatu Peninsula, for your co-operation and patience so

far and ask for your continued support for our final lift.

We advise you to plan your journeys during this time, let out of town visitors know about the works and to expect delays while the bridge jacking takes place.



The St Lukes Road bridge over the Northwestern motorway was closed during Easter as the construction team finished work to allow traffic to switch to the new bridge. This involved raising the road pavement levels up by a metre and reinstating the traffic signals.

New home for skinks

Three copper skink lizards were released at Meola Creek Reserve in February (pictured). The trio were captured from within the St Lukes project in April last year before construction began.

The male and two female lizards have been housed at Massey University since then, dining on a menu of grubs and worms, but now have to return to finding their own dinner in their new home.



KEY DATES TO REMEMBER

- The Western Ring Route will be substantially done by 2017 and fully completed when the Lincoln Road to Westgate and Upper Harbour Highway upgrades are finished in 2021
- The St Lukes to Great North Road upgrade will be completed in the first quarter of 2016
- The Lincoln Road upgrade will be completed late 2015
- The Te Atatu Interchange upgrade will be completed in the first half of 2016
- The Causeway Upgrade will be completed by late 2016
- The Waterview tunnels will open to traffic in early 2017



There has been significant development on the Great North Road interchange. Along with good progress on the flyovers, work is going well on the construction of the tunnel on-ramps and exits, with space created for new motorway lanes.

Image: Greg Kempthorne

Alice takes a breather before final drive south

Tunnel boring machine Alice has made great progress underground on the second Waterview tunnel.

She has excavated 270 metres so far, placing 135 rings, and is taking a break as her temporary gantry, used to allow her to turn around in the Northern Approach Trench after completing the first tunnel, is removed and replaced with the two gantries she left in tunnel one.

These two gantries, about 50 metres long, contain important services for the operation of the tunnel boring machine. A third gantry that is used to build the services culvert behind Alice also has to be removed from the first tunnel, turned and installed in the second tunnel.

This gantry turnaround process will take about 10 weeks - and it's not as straightforward as it sounds. In the

trench there are only centimetres to spare when manoeuvring the gantries so precision and a delicate touch are a necessity. Once the gantries are reattached to the cutting head excavation will resume.

Alice should finish her work digging the northbound tunnel in Spring this year and the tunnels will be prepared for opening in early 2017.



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