

Kopu Bridge Replacement



Final piling is completed from the eastern work platform in early May.

New project milestones are being reached in May at both ends of the new Kopu Bridge project. The project remains on target for completion in mid-2012.

Last span completes western deck

The west bridge abutment is now complete. This connects the bridge to land and will eventually connect to the new approach road that will be carrying traffic from the Waikato and Auckland regions. The final set of four bridge beams on the west side of the bridge have been lifted and locked into position. This will allow the deck on this side of the bridge to be completed.

Completing the deck means construction vehicles can be driven onto the bridge from the western end, and installation of concrete barriers and other essential 'bridge furniture' can begin.

On the northern edge of the bridge, where the cycle-walkway is located, metal barriers and handrails are under construction. Once the bridge is completed, a concrete barrier will separate vehicle lanes from the cycle-walkway.

Approximately two-thirds of the bridge structure has been constructed so far.

Bridge piling completed

The new bridge will be supported by 15 concrete piers and the abutment structures at each end.

Ten have been constructed from the western bank. Of the remaining five being constructed from a temporary work platform extending from the eastern bank, two are now complete.

Pile driving for the whole project is now complete, which is quite a milestone and removes the uncertainty of piling depths and cost for the project.

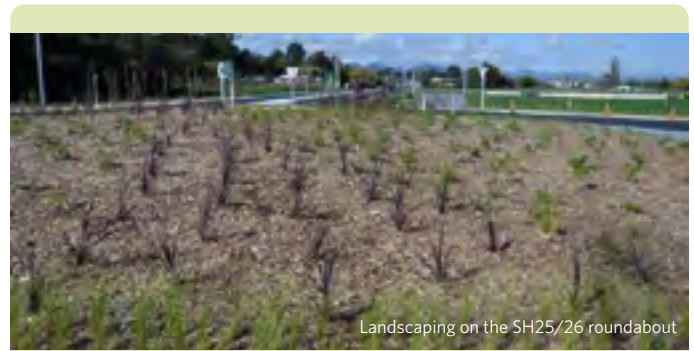
Bridge beams are now being lifted and bolted in place across the navigation span of the bridge where boats will travel. The navigation span features the longest bridge beams, which are 42 metres long.

The eastern abutment - where the bridge meets the eastern approach road - is also under construction.

Landscaping begins

The arrival of the cooler autumn weather signals the start of the planting season and so the central island of the new two-lane SH25/26 roundabout has been planted. There is a lot more landscaping work to do but the site will probably not be ready for the bulk of it until the next planting season in 2012.

A new timber retaining wall has been built just north of the new roundabout to reduce the chance of small slips from the adjacent steep bank landing on the new footpath.



Targets for soil settlement

On the approach routes for the new bridge, large embankments of preload rock have been placed, with still more to come as ground conditions allow. The weight of this rock will settle the soft soils to a point where it can support the weight of the new approach roads.

As settlement targets are achieved on different sections on the approach routes, preload rock will be removed and the areas prepared for road construction. In total, some 10,000 cubic metres of rock will eventually be removed – approximately 670 truck-and-trailer loads. Once the preload rock is removed, road construction can begin.

Soil settlement rates to date are in line with what the project team expected. If this continues, the approach roads will be built next summer.



Future local road link to roundabout

The new SH25/26 roundabout includes a leg that allows for a future local road connection directly to the Kopu industrial area. The planning process to designate the complete local road link is currently being progressed by Thames Coromandel District Council in consultation with interested stakeholders.

Some of the spare preload material from the bridge project has recently been placed where the future linking road will go. This land is owned by the Crown.



Enter our school video competition and win...

The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) is inviting local schools to enter a Kopu Bridge School Video Competition, which includes students filming on the bridge construction site. The competition is a partnership between the NZTA, Brown's 100% Appliances in Thames, and regional broadcaster Central TV. The competition is open to teams of year 7 and 8 students attending schools in the Hauraki and Thames Coromandel districts.

Schools can win a \$1200 Panasonic high-definition video camera, and students can win MP3 players. The winner will also see their winning video broadcast on Central TV, and will be interviewed on Central TV's Mishmash Kids Show.

For more information, email Project Communications Advisor Grant Hubbard: grant.hubbard@nzta.govt.nz.



For more information

For more information, go to www.nzta.govt.nz/kopubridge