



Kawarau Falls Bridge Replacement Project

PROJECT UPDATE

JULY 2017



The last beam for the new Kawarau Falls Bridge is lowered into place, marking a major project milestone.

Motorists will be travelling over the new two-lane Kawarau Falls Bridge by the end of this year, although this may be only one-way.

The new bridge will be open in time to ease the traditional bottleneck during the Christmas/New Year peak. However, drivers will be using both the new bridge and the existing bridge to provide two-way traffic across Kawarau Falls. These restrictions will remain until mid-2018 while work on the bridge and installation of the water and wastewater pipelines for the Queenstown Lakes District Council is completed.

Excellent progress is being made with the new two-lane Kawarau Falls Bridge, following the recent installation of all the main bridge girders. Pre-cast concrete deck slabs are placed on top of the girders and a final layer of concrete knits it all together. The southern temporary construction trestle has gone, meaning the placement of the concrete safety barriers can be done from the new bridge deck. A northern temporary construction trestle will stay until the remaining structural components for the new bridge are all in place.

The curved sections of the bridge were positioned using a 'steel nose' to lead them as they were pushed out across the river to piers using hydraulic rams. The gentle curve of the bridge made it easier to drive this piece of equipment, although trickier getting the steel to curve around at the required angles, a task that demanded precision engineering.



THANK YOU TO THE LOCALS

The McConnell Dowell team has had a helping hand from some intrepid local residents who supported this major project happening right in the heart of their community. They were members of the local Kelvin Peninsula Community Association and the Lions, and played crucial roles in recent bridge launches.



Each visitor, kitted out in full personal protective equipment (PPE) received a safety induction briefing, a standard procedure before being allowed onsite.

They were then paired with one of the construction crew and positioned along the piers to feed 'slipper pads' in between the steel and the pier. These reduce resistance between these two surfaces allowing the steel to slide into position.

To see some video from the launches, visit the McConnell Dowell LinkedIn page or visit the NZ Transport Agency website www.nzta.govt.nz/kawarau-falls.

PROJECT UPDATE

Since our last news update, the team needed to work on the northern side of the bridge to build temporary retaining walls for the abutment. This required blocking part of the road to complete this work safely, however to reduce disruption for bridge traffic, this job was done at night.

Everyone on site put in a huge effort and finished the work in three instead of five nights. The support of the local residents over this period was great, as it has been throughout this project.

On the southern approach the team has excavated the embankment to build a temporary road. Traffic is now using this allowing a start on riverbank strengthening. The temporary road will eventually be formed into a shared walking and cycle path connecting to the existing single lane Heritage Bridge. This is being refurbished for walking and cycling in the first quarter of 2018.

Winter in the Queenstown area means icy and damp road surfaces along with more visitors in town for the ski season, so please take extra care on the roads. Temporary traffic management at the new bridge site will remain while construction work continues. This means drivers could experience short delays at this location, and should allow extra time for these in their journey plans.

UNDERWATER CONSTRUCTION WORK

The original Kawarau Falls Bridge construction team also used divers to help construct the piles underwater.

The picture shows Andy Miller (in suit) preparing to go down to the bottom of Pier 10 back in 1925.



Times have changed but the crew at the new Kawarau Falls Bridge project still use divers for important close underwater construction work. Most of the time, the team uses a Go Pro strapped to some scaffolding, which is lowered down into the river to carry out underwater inspections. This difficult, dangerous and time consuming work previously carried out by people in diving suits is now done by cameras both quickly and safely.

THE NEW BRIDGE WILL PROVIDE:

- » more predictable journey times
- » better traffic flows especially during peak ski season
- » improved links to Queenstown International Airport, Frankton Flats and Queenstown
- » safer and more efficient movement of freight and people south of Queenstown to key destination including Milford Sound and Invercargill.

Working hours

The project team works from 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday.

If you have any questions, please call 0508 KAWARAU or 0508 529 2728.

PROJECT CONTACTS

McConnell Dowell
0508 KAWARAU
(0508 529 2728) or
Phil Dowsett
NZ Transport Agency
Project Manager
phil.dowsett@nzta.govt.nz

Keep up with progress at:
www.nzta.govt.nz/kawarau-falls

 **NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY**
WAKA KOTAHI