



Whau River Bridge widening takes shape

Good progress is being made on the widening of the city-bound side of the Whau River Bridge on State Highway 16 near Te Atatu. There will be eight spans in total when the bridge widening is complete and four spans are in place, so we're half way. In turn, each span is made up of three x 40 tonne precast concrete beams.

During June further beams, some weighing up to 70 tonnes, will be lifted into place during nights when there are fewest vehicles using the motorway. Our target is to move traffic onto this widened section of the motorway later this year.



Blade Wall

Behind the barriers in the Great North Road median strip, the new median is taking shape. Part of it is called a blade wall, and is shown here.



Asbestos – the facts

A small amount of asbestos has been found in the area alongside Rosebank Park Domain on the western side of the Causeway Upgrade Project.

The asbestos is in fill that was sourced 20 years ago from where Sky City now stands when material dug out from that construction site was transferred to the Rosebank Park Domain on Auckland Council land.

With the Causeway Alliance working in the Domain as part of our project, we have had the area tested by hazardous substance professionals.

The contaminated material has been managed and removed in a way that is compliant with the HSE Act.

Under the Boardwalk

Work has begun on the concrete foundation piles for the permanent boardwalk that will be constructed alongside Oakley Creek, west of the Great North Road interchange. A 70 tonne piling rig was brought to site in the chilly pre-dawn of 28 May, ensuring the oversized vehicle was off the motorway well before the morning traffic peak.

Embankment slips

Sections of the project by Oakley Creek and in the Causeway reclamation area on the eastbound side have slipped in a couple of places. The slips have been caused by localised weaker mud and the king high/low tides in February. No environmental issues have resulted – in fact, local birdlife appear to enjoy the extra bathing ponds that have been created.

The new causeway sections that we are building are strengthening the mud through the use of wick drains and preloading. Similarly, the reason for installing timber piles near the Oakley Creek slip is to strengthen the two different types of ground materials there. Piles will be used elsewhere on the project when required to stabilise the ground.



A quick conversation with site engineer, Dwayne Maki

How long have you been on the Causeway Upgrade Project?

I joined the project team in January of 2012. Originally from Saskatchewan, Canada I came to New Zealand in Oct 2005 and have spent the last nine years working on three projects; the Northern Gateway Toll Road at Orewa, the East Taupo Arterial project, and the Te Rapa Bypass in Hamilton, before joining the Causeway Alliance.

What have been your career highlights to date, before coming to NZ of course?

Not long before leaving Canada the company I was working for Alberta Firenet which involved doing geotechnical investigations for the installation of wireless internet towers throughout the Rocky Mountains to link lookout towers. I got to spend a month being flown to various mountain tops drilling test holes.

What attracted you to this role?

The challenge of building roads, bridges and tunnels

What do you think of New Zealand?

I grew up 2000 km from the nearest ocean, so it's pretty cool being close to it now. And NZ's a fair bit warmer.

Your Questions Answered

Q: Interspersed along the reclaimed stretch of the causeway are some blue upright plastic tubes with steel rods poking out the top, are these just temporary lane markers for the trucks just now or markers for street lighting or something else?

A: The blue upright rods contain settlement markers to monitor the ground activity and feed geotechnical information to our design engineers so that settlement of the preload can be tracked.

Q: How many sections of new motorway require land to be cut back? Where are these sections?

A: On the Causeway section we need to cut back the batters or slopes on the southern side in areas between Rosebank off-ramp and Rosebank Park Domain. There are also areas in the Te Atatu Interchange area between Whau and Te Atatu Road and complex works by the Well Connected Alliance between Great North Road through to Carrington Road as well as in the St Lukes Interchange area.

Q: What happens to the soil that has been cut, does it go to areas where soil fill is needed?

A: We endeavour to balance cut and fill on road projects however on upgrades to existing roads this is often not possible. Material is reused where possible. Some material is disposed to landfill.

More information

nzta.govt.nz/projects/sh16causeway

elizabeth.collins@sh16causeway.co.nz

0800 444 449 (state highways info line)