

Kopu Bridge Replacement



Kopu Bridge progress 7 May 2010

Construction of the new two-lane Kopu Bridge is advancing steadily.

This project includes construction of a new bridge, 2.5km of new approach roads including a new link road to SH26 east of the bridge, and a new two-lane four-leg roundabout at the junction of SH25 and SH26.

Progress to date

Embankments have been built along the route of the new roads to weigh down and compress the soft subsoils underneath. The subsoils so far have settled from 0.05m to up to 0.9m (at sites closer to the river). As they settle, more fill is being placed on the embankments. Eventually, the rate of settling will slow down and the subsoils will become strong enough to carry the weight of the new road. This is expected to take around one to two years.

A temporary working platform has been built out from the west bank of the Waihou River to just past pier nine's location. The platform provides access for cranes and

other construction machines to build the bridge.

The bridge will have 15 piers in total, and to construct each pier, a group of 6 or 8 steel pipes will be driven up to 60m below the river. A reinforcing steel cage is then placed inside each pipe and the pipe filled with concrete to form a bridge pile. A concrete cap is constructed on top of the piles to provide a base for the construction of the bridge pier.

Five piers are currently at various stages of construction.



Pile casings being driven beneath the Waihou River

In the near future

Construction of the temporary working platform extending from the west bank will stop when it reaches the line of the swing span on the old bridge. This will be around June 2010. Piling and all the other works associated with building the first 10 piers is being carried out from this platform.

The navigation channel will be kept clear at all times.

Work on the temporary working platform extending from the eastern river bank will begin soon. This will allow construction to start on the final five piers

While bridge construction is expected to make steady progress over the winter, there will be little visible activity on the new roads until the subsoils have settled sufficiently.

The new road layout includes a new two-lane roundabout where SH26 meets SH25 and the new approach road from the bridge. This will replace the T-intersection by the Kopu Tavern and improve traffic flows and safety through the intersection. Construction of the SH25/26 roundabout is not expected to start until November 2010 at the earliest.

The new Kopu Bridge remains on track for completion by mid-2012.



This pilecap will provide the base for a pier to support the new Kopu Bridge



One of the pile cranes being used on the Kopu Bridge project



For more information

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