

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



This photo shows the paving machine laying asphalt on in the south of the project during asphalt trials.

Ticking off milestones

We've reached a number of milestones over the last few months including laying the first asphalt on the new motorway as well as connecting the alignment from the north to the south.

With 18.5 kilometres of motorway under construction, we need a lot of asphalt – around 140,000 tonnes. That's about one quarter of all the asphalt laid across Auckland in a year.

With such a large amount of asphalt to source, the most efficient way to do this was to establish a dedicated local asphalt plant.

The Silverdale plant will produce 2000 tonnes of asphalt per day at its peak, which is then transported to site by truck.

On the Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorway we are using open grade porous asphalt (OGPA).

The OGPA surface will help to reduce road noise. It also assists with water runoff, increasing resistance and making the road safer for motorists.

To further enhance the quality and longevity of the asphalt, and optimise production, we have brought in special machinery (pictured above) which will allow us to pave the road in one continuous width.

This is the first asphalt paving machine of its kind in New Zealand.

Open Day update

As many of you are aware, this year's Public Open Day had to be postponed from its original date of 20 February due to the Auckland region being in COVID-19 Alert Level 2.

We had chosen this date because we were at a stage where we would be able to take you to see some cool parts of the project. We are planning to reschedule for later in the year during another window where there will be lots of interesting things to come and see.

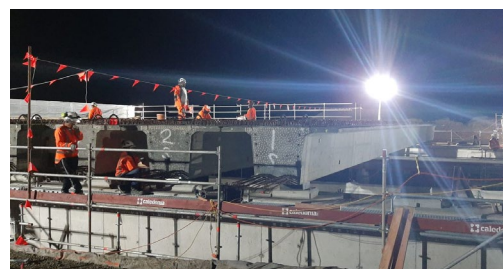
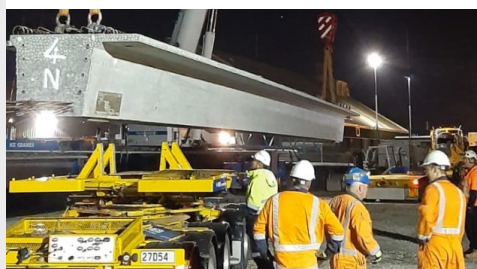
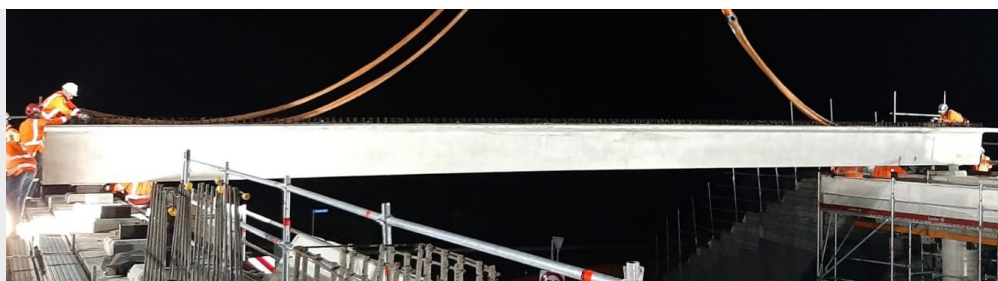
It's looking like this will be around September or October. If you had a ticket to attend on 20 February, you will get early access to tickets. Please keep an eye on our usual channels for updates.

CONNECTED FROM NORTH TO SOUTH

The final beams were installed on Woodcocks Road Bridge in March – meaning we are now connected across the project from the north to the south.

The 12 beams, which were lifted into place across three nights, are the last to be installed on our structures.

Thank you to everyone for your patience during overnight works such as these. We know they can be disruptive and we are grateful for your co-operation. We have more work to do in this area which will involve night time road closures, we will keep you posted.





Southern link emerging

As we approach our final 12 months, there is plenty to be done across the project, particularly at each end of the alignment where we connect to the existing roads.

Motorists who use Hibiscus Coast Highway to travel north will have noticed the on-ramp has shifted, and now sits on part of the new alignment.

This allows us to carry out earthworks in the area where the on-ramp was located, as part of work to connect the motorway to Arawhiti ki Ōkahu (the viaduct over Ōkahu Inlet) after the Johnstones Hill Tunnels.

“This would be similar to what occurred when the tunnels originally broke through

the Johnstones Hill back several years ago, although on a slightly more modest scale,” says local area Supervisor Paul Hall. “Once we break through, motorists will be able to look along the alignment towards Pūhoi for the first time as they exit the northbound tunnel.”

From later this year, northbound motorists will exit the tunnels and drive onto this viaduct. They will continue along a short section of the new motorway and then re-join State Highway 1 at Pūhoi (before the second large viaduct, Arawhiti ki Pūhoi).

Southbound motorists will drive the same route in reverse, entering the new alignment near the southern end of Arawhiti ki Pūhoi.

UPCOMING WORKS

- Stop/Go traffic management continuing at Pūhoi Road intersection.
- Overnight closures are planned for Pūhoi Road from late-May, as part of work to construct the on- and off-ramps
- Overnight closures are planned for Woodcocks Road in May as part of continued work on the bridge.



Checking in with Schollum House

Some of our readers may remember that in the early days of the project, we sought new owners for a historic home in Pūhoi which needed to be removed due to construction of the motorway.

Built in 1913, Schollum House has deep ties to the Pūhoi community, which was settled in 1863 by a group of migrants from Bohemia.

In 2017 we put the call out for expressions of interest to relocate the house, and through this process the house was returned to the Schollum family, by way of Lisa Schollum.

When someone asked us recently what had happened to the home, Lisa was happy to fill us in.

Lisa says the house was built for her great-grandfather, William J Schollum MBE, who married Mary Wenzlick in 1906. It was where

her grandfather William O Schollum grew up with his four sisters. One of those sisters, Eva Schollum, stayed on until her death.

Eva had no children of her own and the house passed to the family of her husband Steve Straka, who had a daughter from a previous marriage.

The house has now been moved to the Schollum family’s land at Pukapuka, which once also belonged to William J Schollum. Lisa’s father, Patrick Schollum, still lives there with his wife Daphne, together with Lisa’s brother Kerry and his family.

Lisa has embarked on an extensive restoration of the home and plans to live there too once the restoration project is complete.

“The Schollum family is an integral part of Pūhoi’s history, as one of the founding families



to arrive there from Bohemia,” says Lisa.

“The Schollum family contributed to the creation of Pūhoi, one of only a handful of non-English speaking settlements in New Zealand. You can see the legacy of the Schollum contribution living on in the still popular Pūhoi Hotel (once the ‘German Hotel’, established by John Schollum).

“My great-grandfather was a well-known figure of the local community, serving on the Rodney County Council for many years, and six as the Chair. Funnily enough, he was also on the Pūhoi Road Board for ten years!

“This was a great opportunity to bring our original homestead back to the original owner’s land. Our goal is to restore it back to something we can be proud of and retain for our future generations.”

Meet our drone surveyor

We regularly receive questions and compliments about the project drone flyovers, so we thought it was time we introduced the man behind them - Drone Surveyor Jonathan Kubiak.

What does your job involve on an average day?

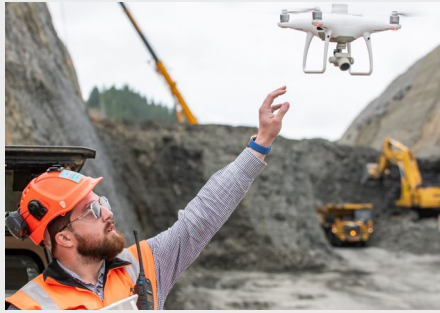
There is no such thing as an average day! I cover the whole site and have to juggle safety, battery life, the weather and computer processing.

I get calls from engineers to perform surveys as and when they need them. Examples are topographic surveys, stockpile measurements, as-built models and super-high definition models of things like rock cuts for the Geotechnical engineers to assess.

I make a cm accurate (accurate to within a centimetre of real world) 3D model of the whole site once a week, a monthly video flyover and a monthly update of the Google Street View style system for the site.

The processing takes a long time (up to 48 hours non-stop for some tasks). I run a computer that would put most hard-core gamers to shame and this runs at 100% 24/7.

The rest of the time, I keep my quality



control network up to date, help out the survey team with other survey tasks and take photos/videos for the stakeholder team.

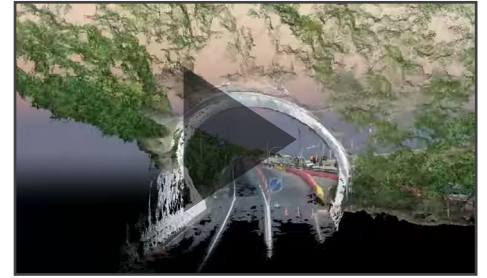
Would you recommend it as a career?

Yes - I love it. You get to be out in the open, watch iconic projects taking place and interact with heaps of awesome people. It's long days, and I'm often wet and muddy, but it's definitely worth it.

How do you create our drone flyovers?

The flyovers are made from several videos. We have "pre-programmed" flights with waypoints every 100 metres or so that we set the drone on. After that, I stitch the videos together and use various video-editor wizardry to match the clips together to make it look as close to one single clip as possible. Then I add all the labels and upload them for the world to see.

If you're interested in learning more about how we use drones on the project, check out a great video Jonathan made by clicking the image below:



Or click the following image to see our latest drone flyover (from March 2021):



You can also head to our website, YouTube channel or Facebook page for images and videos.

Our latest progress photos



Central north cut.



Looking north along Arawhiti ki Ōkahu and the new alignment.



Vermeer machinery at work.



One of our friendly team at work near Pūhoi.



Surveying the viaducts.



Environmental and Quality teams inspecting works.



Drainlaying crew.



Southern Connection team at work.



Arawhiti ki Pūhoi



Arawhiti Pua Ngahere



Tapuwae o Kahumatamomoe

The story behind our names

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and NX2 work closely with Hōkai Nuku, the alliance of mana whenua of the project area. They provide advice and collaborate on cultural, social, environmental and economic aspects of the project. As part of this special relationship, early in the construction process Hōkai Nuku gifted our structures with names. We are proud of these names, each of which was gifted for a reason.



Arawhiti ki Ōkahu – the viaduct over Ōkahu Inlet. The name is location specific and references the inlet which was named after the ancestor Kahumatamomoe.

Arawhiti ki Pūhoi – the viaduct over Pūhoi River. This name reflects the important role of the Pūhoi Awa (river) to early Hōkai Nuku tūpuna who lived alongside it, including the rangatira (chiefs) Manuhiri and Ngāwhetu.

Tapuwae o Kahumatamomoe – the bridge/overpass at Moir Hill. This name acknowledges the coast-to-coast pathway travelled by the ancestor Kahumatamomoe.

Arawhiti Pua Ngahere – the viaduct which passes through a regenerating Kauri forest. This description symbolises ecology, and the notion of regeneration for the kauri ngahere through which the viaduct passes.

Awa Hikauae – the tributary from the Pūhoi River that passes below Schedaway Hill and has been culverted by the project. This name acknowledges a significant victory in the area.

Tūhono ki Kōurawhero – Wyllie Road junction; and Kōurawhero – Wyllie Road site office. The name symbolises the abundance of a particular kind of freshwater crayfish that once filled the local streams and is the traditional name for this area.

Pukerito – Northern roundabout. This name reflects the location of the roundabout within the centre of hills.

Looking out for our feathered friends

Some of our team members in the north showed awesome initiative and willingness to go the extra mile this month after finding a stranded young seabird on site.

Billy Tuuta and Chandler Mou-hi came across the bird, thought to be a Cook's Petrel, hiding in a culvert when they arrived on site one morning.

These birds are nocturnal and during their night-time migration become confused by lights, thinking they are the sea. They then become stranded as they need a high point to take off from.

Chandler and Billy called our Environmental Team about their find. The team asked them to take the bird to a local vet, who will take care of it until it can be released back into the wild.



Pictured on left are Billy Tuuta and Chandler Mou-hi; and above is the petrel.

Warkworth A&P Show

We've enjoyed getting out into the community recently, including at the Warkworth A&P Show, which was a great opportunity to meet with locals as well as visitors from outside the area. We loved meeting you all, answering your many questions and hearing how excited you all are about the new motorway.



Project engineers Anju Kurian, Lucas Perez and Shruti Londhe.



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