

Media Release

01 October 2019

Blessing kicks off Tomarata Bridge repairs

Work is underway to repair the Tomarata/Insley Street Bridge in Mangawhai, with the blessing of Te Uri O Hau.

A ceremony was performed on Thursday 26 September by Kaipara District Council.

The bridge is failing due to the corrosion of concrete and damaged reinforcing steel, with four support beams under the bridge in need of replacement.

Kaipara District Council General Manager for Infrastructure Jim Sephton said Council was working with its contractor, affected residents, visitors and the nearby Mangawhai Beach School to minimise disruption during repairs.

“We understand the repairs will be inconvenient for some people during the repairs and we appreciate their understanding and patience,” Mr Sephton said. “We’d prefer that visitors coming to Mangawhai from out of town should use the Kaiwaka turn-off to avoid the bridge.”

“We’ll complete the work as soon as possible, but it could take until March 2020 depending on how much corrosion contractors find in the structure once they break ground.”

“We have a great team on the project but they are dealing with a lot of constraints. They are working over water and there isn’t a lot of room underneath the bridge. We’re not working at night because construction machinery can be noisy and disruptive for the community. We’re striking the best balance we can between getting the job done quickly, ensuring everyone’s safety, and minimising disruption.”

Safety barriers and temporary support beams have been installed on the bridge while repairs take place, and there will be three 48-hour closures in mid-October, mid-December and late January. The bridge will be open at other times, but traffic management will be in place and motorists should expect delays.

During the closures, local light traffic will be diverted along Cames Road. Security will be in place to ensure heavy vehicles do not use Cames Road, and Council is improving the road’s carriageway and drainage. Long distance and heavy traffic will be diverted along State Highway 1

and the Kaiwaka-Mangawhai Road, and Council is planning ahead with the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) to manage traffic flows during the busy summer period.

Pedestrians can cross the bridge but may occasionally have to be escorted for safety reasons.

Mr Sephton said repairing the bridge was a better option than replacing it in terms of costs and timeframe.

“Repairing the bridge will cost around \$2.5 million with an NZTA subsidy of 61%. Replacing the bridge would have cost over twice this amount and with a lower chance of getting the funding subsidy. In addition, building a new bridge would have taken longer and caused more disruption for people who live along the diversion route than repairing the existing one,” he said.

Download the Antenno app to be notified of disruptions to the bridge and road network.

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For more information, please contact Trish Hayward, Communications Advisor, on thayward@kaipara.govt.nz.

Information for caption: Iwi Relations Manager Francis Toko carries out the blessing.