

## 2 The new Tutaekuri River Bridge

The Hawke's Bay Expressway project includes a new bridge crossing the Tutaekuri River. Work on site kicked off in October 2025. Here's what you need to know.

### Flooding and resilience

- **Higher and stronger:** The new bridge is 600mm higher at the abutments and 1.2m at the crest, providing increased freeboard, the gap between the deck and peak water level, to better withstand future floods. The 2 bridges will be about 5m apart.
- **Modern design:** Built to current seismic standards for improved resilience.
- **Debris management:** Some logs and debris may occasionally collect around the bridge piers. Hawke's Bay Regional Council will continue regular river management to help minimise build-up and maintain flow.
- **Stopbanks:** Minor works at the abutments will tie into existing stopbanks without compromising flood protection.
- **Flood response during construction:** The site will be cleared ahead of any flood risk, in line with the flood warning and management plan. No floatable materials are stored near the water.
- **Lighting:** No lighting on the bridges – to protect native fish habitats.

### Safety and traffic management

- Construction is visible when driving on the existing bridge. **Temporary traffic management** will be in place to ensure safety.
- **Bridge access:** The existing bridge/expressway will remain open, with some night closures to minimise disruption. River access remains open via an alternative path, vehicle access is unavailable for the duration of the project. Car parking is available along the Taradale Rugby Club driveway.

### Construction impacts

- **Night works:** Some activities like crane lifts, surfacing, and barrier upgrades will occur at night.
- **Traffic on Guppy Road:** Expect daily concrete trucks and general site traffic between 6am and 6pm excluding school drop off and pick up times.
- **Construction noise:** Levels will vary depending on the activity.
- **Piling:** Anticipated to finish by mid-2026, with minimal impact expected on nearby homes.



### Other key info

- **Existing bridge:** Will be upgraded with new surfacing and modern guardrail. It still has at least 45 years of life left.
- **Construction timeline:** Approx. 15 months for the new bridge.
- **Future-proofed:** Designed to allow a clip-on for walking and cycling in future.
- **Reserve reinstatement:** The carpark and reserve will be restored, with new planting.
- **Hawke's Bay Trail access:** Mostly maintained with stop-go during crane operations. A one-month detour is planned during piling (timing is to be confirmed, expected early 2026).

### Construction programme

- **Now-mid 2026:** Gravel extraction, enabling works, piling and foundation works
- **Mid 2026-late 2026:** Superstructure (components above piers and abutments) and surfacing
- **Late 2026-early 2027:** Finishing works and landscaping

