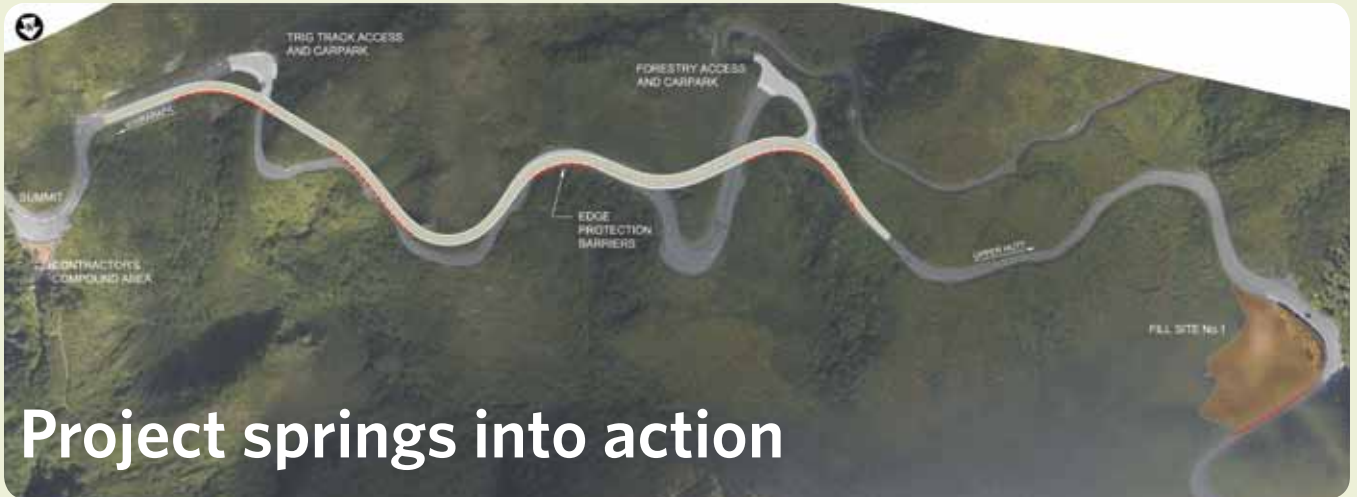




## 2 Muldoon's Corner Easing project - update



### Project springs into action

**Spring heralds the start of major earthworks to realign State Highway 2's Muldoon's Corner near the summit of the Rimutaka Hill Road.**

The \$16.5 million upgrade will not only improve safety by easing a number of tight curves, including Muldoon's Corner, it will improve visibility, and provide better protection from the drop into the valley.

Currently, the large number of trucks that travel over the hill are often unable to pass each other when travelling in opposite directions on this near 1km section of highway due to the number of tight bends. Muldoon's Corner is particularly difficult to negotiate.

Work is being programmed to consider traffic and environmental effects, such as the fish spawning season, as we need to ensure the protection of nearby streams.

This is why earthworks are just starting now and won't be carried out in areas affecting streams between the months of May and August in the coming years.

Although we are working on a short section of road, progress may be slow at times due to weather conditions (ie heavy rain or snow in winter), the need to maintain traffic flow over the hill and the difficulty of cutting into the hillside and transporting this material to other locations on the worksite.

This project has been in the pipeline for a number of years but a financial injection provided by the government's Jobs and Growth plan has allowed it to be brought forward 30 months ahead of schedule.

The project is expected to take up to three years to complete and has a target completion timeframe of mid 2012.

# Maori blessing

As well as waiting until the fish-spawning season was over, we also would not start any work disturbing the land until local Kaumatua blessed the project site.

We were delighted to have Sam and June Jackson visit the site last month and perform the karakia. Representatives from local Iwi, NZTA, Opus International Consultants, Hawkins Infrastructure, and the Hill Road Committee were invited to attend the blessing.

On the duly appointed day, the exceptionally inclement weather (howling wind, horizontal rain and barely 4°) broke, and the sun shone, as we stood at the summit to hear Sam's prayer and June's haunting call drift down the valley.



NZTA Manager, Project Management Services David Arrowsmith, Kaumatua Sam and June Jackson and NZTA Project Manager Simon Cribb atop the Rimutaka Hill Road summit last month.

## Traffic management – what is it and what can you expect?

During the project it is expected that 'peak hour traffic flows' will be maintained, that is, commuter and holiday traffic should expect to travel as normal without being affected by the project between the following times:

- 6am to 9am for southbound lanes, Monday to Friday
- 3.30pm to 6pm for northbound lanes, Monday to Friday
- 10am to 6pm, both lanes at the weekend and public holidays

Traffic management may take the form of lane changes, closures or shoulder closures where you will see orange cones, water-filled plastic barriers, and concrete barriers. Some speed restrictions may also apply. Later on in the project we may use guys with stop/go signs. If we do, uphill traffic will be given priority to reduce the need for uphill vehicles, particularly heavy good vehicles, stopping and starting on steep gradients.

The first item of work, and traffic management, for the project team is to close the downhill passing lane on the southern (Wellington) side of the summit from next week. Road cones will be in place while concrete barriers are installed to provide a safe zone for the earthmoving trucks that will be manoeuvring in and out of the site as well as for personnel while they are working in that area.



## The numbers

State Highway	2
Road First Built	1850s
Daily Traffic	5,300
Project Cost	\$16.5M
Time in Pipeline	10 years
Project Brought Forward	30 months
Project Timeline	3 years
Length of Road	1km
Design Speed	55km/hr
Lane Width	3.5m
Total Road Width	10m
Total Earthworks	300,000m <sup>3</sup>

## FYI

If you travel over this section of SH2 regularly you may already have noticed our contractors, Hawkins Infrastructure, have set up camp at the summit on the site of the old café. They also have a site office based in the carpark at Kaitoke Country Gardens.

### Contact details

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