

New bridge to open in four months



The spectacular new Suir Bridge will be completed and open to traffic by the end of September or early October, Mr Tom Hartery of Waterford City Council confirmed this week.

The unique bridge, with its 110m pylon and 76 semi-fan shaped cable stays, will be the biggest in the Republic and the second largest in the island of Ireland.

The massive road and river crossing project uncovered the internationally important Woodstown Viking Site on the banks of the Suir and the site is now in public ownership, said Mr Hartery. "In light of that, we will now have to see where we go from here", he said.

During construction work some 3ks of the Kilmeaden railway line had to be lifted and the track will have to be relayed.

In an update briefing to South Kilkenny County Councillors, Mr Hartery disclosed that the major project was ahead of schedule, the completion date having been set for September 2010. The 0.5km bridge span will be in place across the river in or around July and at that stage local councillors will be given a 'drive through'.

Toll canopy

The toll canopy is now in place and will be in operation by September to deal with crossing traffic.

The daily commute into Waterford from both the Dublin and Limerick approaches now takes the newly constructed Newrath Link Road into Sallypark. But in another two months the old road will come back into operation. At Slieverue the new entrance to Belview Port has been completed with heavy goods vehicles using the realigned Port Road.

Local landowners and residents of South Kilkenny were thanked for their forbearance and patience during construction work. Traffic was moving smoothly and there were no hold ups in the area, he said.

A number of traffic management measures still in operation were a necessary part of the construction works and their impact had been kept to a minimum, said Mr Hartery.