

New £3m Metro bridge moved into place in North Tyneside

July 21, 2022



A new £3m Metro bridge has been successfully installed in North Tyneside.

The bridge, which will carry Metro services over Tanners Bank in North Shields, was carefully lowered into place using a giant crane on Wednesday night, July 20.

The 70-tonne steel bridge deck was hoisted up before being secured to its new concrete abutments, which had been installed in the days leading up to the big lift.

The 100ft crane, which towered over the site, was positioned on Tynemouth Road in a special compound which has been established during the temporary road closure there. It lifted the new bridge high above the road and slowly lowered it place in the gap where the old bridge one stood.

Works are taking place during a two-week major line closure between St James and Tynemouth.

Nexus, the public body which owns and manages Metro, said the lift went well and that it was on track to re-open the Metro line between Tynemouth and St James on Saturday 30 July.

Project Manager, Stephen Psallidas, said: "I am pleased to say the big task of lifting the new Tanners Bank bridge into place went well and it is now in place.

"The bridge has two decks, one for each Metro line, each weighing 70 tines, and both of them are now installed.

"It was a precision process to lower bridge decks of that size into the exact place so that they can carry Metro services on what is a key route between Newcastle and North Tyneside.

"The works will continue on the site as the teams put the tracks and overhead lines back in place ahead of the planned re-opening of the line on July 30."

As well as renewing the 160-year-old bridge, which had required increasing levels of maintenance and repair, the Tanners Bank project will improve height clearance allowing for better bus links and road freight access to North Shields Fish Quay, encouraging more sustainable travel and improving servicing access for local businesses.

The project, funded through a £2.7m grant from the Department for Transport's Highways Challenge Fund, £300,000 from the Metro Asset Renewal Programme, and £103,000 from North Tyneside Council, will see clearance beneath the bridge raised to allow large HGVs and double decker buses to get to and from the fish quay.

Nexus needs to replace Tanners Bank bridge due to its age. The current structure dates back to the Victorian era, on a line opened in 1839 and is said to have been the world's first commuter railway line.

The work to install the new Metro bridge at Tanners Bank is being carried out on behalf of Nexus by specialist engineering firm Taziker Industrial Ltd.