

Noise wall a first for New Zealand

A transparent noise wall will be erected early next year alongside the motorway through St Marys Bay ensuring that the iconic, pohutukawa-clad cliffline remains an important feature of Auckland's landscape. It is the first time the technology has been used in New Zealand.

Piling for the noise wall is almost complete and foundations panels are being laid ready for delivery of the transparent barrier panels early next year.

The noise barrier will comprise around 500 acrylic 'soundstop' sheets chosen for their high transparency and resistance to weathering and ageing. Each panel will be 2m wide, and individual heights will vary depending on the panel's location along the cliff.

Bird watchers will be pleased to know that the panels will be treated with 'Bird Guard' – embedded horizontal stripes between the acrylic layers that provide a visual barrier, deterring birds from flying into the otherwise transparent material and injuring themselves.

According to the manufacturer, the acrylic sheets are 11 times more break-resistant than window glass of comparable thickness, making them a better option than safety glass and ensuring they meet all the safety requirements for noise control materials.

The first acrylic panels are due to be installed in early October, for rigorously testing before the main installation.

