

£2.2 million Coatbridge upgrade keeps freight moving

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Network Rail engineers will work around-the-clock over the next two weekends to upgrade a vital junction at the heart of Scotland's rail network.

Whifflet South junction, located between Coatbridge Freight Terminal, and Mossend/Eurocentral near Motherwell on the West Coast Mainline, will be upgraded for the first time since its installation over 50 years ago.

Due to the complexity of the project, the railway between Coatbridge and Motherwell will be closed over two weekends, Saturday 20 to Sunday 21 and Saturday 27 to Sunday 28 August.

No services will run through the junction during those weekends and ScotRail will operate replacement bus services between Motherwell and Rutherglen via Whifflet/Carmyle, and between Motherwell and Cumbernauld.

Work to renew the junction will see jointed rail, timber sleeper and worn-out ballast (supporting stone) replaced with strengthened track, concrete sleepers, and fresh stone.

Decades of carrying heavy freight trains has taken its toll and the upgrade is designed to increase reliability and reduce the amount of maintenance required on the track and signalling equipment.

Eddie McLoone, Project Manager for Scotland's Railway said: "The £2.2 million investment in renewing Whifflet South junction is vital to keeping freight services flowing between Mossend and Coatbridge Freight Terminals and the rest of Scotland's Railway.

"We know this work will cause some disruption, but such a vital upgrade can't be delivered without closing the railway to allow our engineers access to the track.

"We would like to reassure freight customers and rail passengers that every effort has been made to reduce the impact of our activities as much as possible. Thank you for your understanding."

Passengers can check how their journey may be affected by visiting www.nationalrail.co.uk or www.scotrail.co.uk. We've been working closely with our freight colleagues to keep their vital services moving, using diversionary routes to the North and South wherever possible.