

Lynebeg rail bridge successfully installed on Highland Mainline

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Despite the impact of Storm Arwen, Network Rail has successfully demolished and replaced the bridge over the railway at Lynebeg, south of Inverness on the Highland Mainline between Perth and Inverness. It's part of supporting work ahead of the dualling of the A9 between Tomatin and Moy.

In continuous working across 78 hours from Friday night until Tuesday morning, the 1884 Victorian masonry structure was demolished and replaced with 660ton twin-track concrete box structure.

The construction team used a Self-Propelled Modular Transporter (SPMT) system to carry the structure from the site compound, where it was constructed offline over a 10-week period, before manoeuvring the massive 660-ton structure several hundred meters along the B1954 and sliding it to its final position.

Two 750-ton cranes then lifted seven concrete wingwalls, which were also constructed on site, into position. Before the railway was fully reinstated and checked ahead of re-opening to traffic early on Tuesday morning (30 November).

The new bridge will strengthen, safeguard, and futureproof the route for the long-term including dealing

with the weight and volume of traffic which passes over it on a daily basis and accommodating any future double-tracking of the line should that be proposed in the future.

During the same 78hour possession, a 1200x800mm pre-cast box culvert and a 900mm twin wall plastic culvert under the track, at two locations to accommodate the forthcoming A9 works.

Minister for Transport, Graeme Dey, visited the site following the complex operation to see first-hand the new rail bridge.

Mr Dey said: “The success of the Lynebeg rail bridge installation marks a significant milestone for the A9 Dualling: Tomatin to Moy project, as the first tangible improvement to the transport infrastructure as part of the project’s advance works.

“Not only is this new structure safeguarding and improving connectivity on Scotland’s Highland Mainline, these works will help to deliver the ongoing A9 Dualling programme and will enhance the local infrastructure for the benefit of the surrounding communities.

“I would also like to thank all passengers whose travel plans were affected by these works and the local community for their patience during the construction of the new bridge.”

Billy McKay, Network Rail’s Programme Manager for the Lynebeg bridge replacement works, said: “We are delighted that the work to replace the bridge at Lynebeg was completed successfully and the railway re-opened to traffic as planned – despite terrible weather conditions and the impact of Storm Arwen.

“The installation was complex due to requirement to remove the existing railway infrastructure including cabling, track and the embankment, before the concrete bridge could be pushed into its final position. And all against the clock due to the need to reinstate and re-open the line to traffic at the end of the possession”

“As well as upgrading the railway bridge, the team is delighted to have played a part in supporting the future dualling of the A9”.

Works will continue on site for several weeks to complete the new structure, including cladding the concrete wing walls with the recovered stone from the original stone arch bridge which was constructed as part of the Highland Mainline in 1884.

Photo and video credit: Network Rail