

Network Rail reopens railway between Aldershot and Guildford following 40-metre landslip

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Train services restarted from 6 January on the line between Guildford, Aldershot and Wokingham, following a 40-metre landslip near the small village of Wanborough over the Christmas period.

During Storm Bella heavy rain caused the embankment to deteriorate leaving the track unsupported; the line was closed for safety reasons and emergency work was carried out. Network Rail engineers stabilised the site near Westwood Lane bridge, sinking 17-metre long steel sheets into the ground to prevent the earth from moving any further.

Mark Killick, route director, Network Rail Wessex said: “Our engineers have worked tirelessly to carry out these essential repairs, and I want to thank everyone involved for their efforts and to passengers and local residents for their patience and understanding.

“The emergency work is now complete and the line has reopened for critical workers, however our team will stay on site to deliver the remaining activity and ensure the embankment is secure for years to come.”

Derek Butcher, Network Rail Southern region's route asset manager for geotechnics, said: "London Clay is not a material we would build railways out of these days, but our Victorian ancestors weren't so advanced with their knowledge of soil mechanics. At this location the embankment had absorbed so much water over December, it moved out from underneath the track, leaving the railway unsupported."

Photo credit: Network Rail