

# Railway line between Stonehaven and Montrose will remain closed for nearly a month

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The railway line between Stonehaven and Montrose will remain closed until Monday February 22 as engineers work to complete repairs on a damaged bridge between the towns.

The rail bridge, located three miles north of Carmont, has been closed since January 15 after masonry fell from the sidewall on its southbound side.

Full structural assessments on the bridge - which was built in the 1840s - have now been completed by specialist engineers and plans are in place to repair the bridge and reopen the railway for passengers and freight customers.

Engineers will be working around-the-clock to fix the damaged parapet (sidewall) and also provide additional strengthening of the bridge deck beneath the southbound line.

To do this engineers will first install additional concrete supports on the bridge deck to help retain and

support the track and ballast.

The parapet wall will then be reconstructed and ties installed on the bridge to further strengthen the masonry on the structure. Once those works are complete, the ballast and track will be relaid.

Network Rail's capital delivery director for Scotland's Railway, Kris Kinnear, said: "We're working hard to quickly deliver these repairs and reopen the line, but these are significant engineering works and will take time to complete.

"The rural location of the bridge and the fact our engineers will be working at considerable height in an exposed location also mean this project is a challenging one for our team.

"We are working around-the-clock to safely reopen the railway as soon as we possibly can for our customers."

The bridge was last inspected in October 2020 and also received a detailed examination in March 2018.

There was no significant deterioration in its structural condition found in these inspections.

Investigations to establish the cause of the parapet's failure are ongoing.

Network Rail will invest over £300m between 2019 and 2024 renewing and refurbishing bridges and spends £10m each year on inspecting structures.

Additional inspections have also been carried out as a precaution on other similar bridges between Aberdeen and Montrose, and elsewhere on Scotland's Railway.

*Photo credit: Network Rail*