

Ravenscraig project prepares for one of the largest bridge lifts in Europe

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Scotland's Railway is preparing for an intense 10-day programme to install a 5,000-tonne bridge on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) at Ravenscraig in North Lanarkshire.

The £16.9 million project is being delivered through an agreement between North Lanarkshire Council and Network Rail, to construct a new road under the railway line as part of the ongoing regeneration of the former steelworks site.

For the last 10 months, Network Rail and STORY Contracting engineers have been casting the bridge at Network Rail's compound next to the WCML and are now preparing to move it into position from April 1 to April 10.

Working around-the-clock, the team will begin this phase by excavating approximately 36,000 tonnes of material from the railway embankment and removing the track and overhead line equipment.

In a feat of innovation and engineering, the bridge and support structure, totalling around 6,000 tonnes,

will then be driven into position using remote-controlled vehicles called self-propelled modular transporters (SPMTs) in what is believed to be the biggest move of its kind in Europe.

The track and the overhead line equipment will be reinstated before a series of signalling work takes place and the line is reopened.

Once the new bridge is in place, the council will progress with the construction of a new dual carriageway with pedestrian and cycle paths from Airbles Road/Windmillhill Street to Robberhall Road, as part of a wider investment to open the area for future development.

The work is being carried out at the same time as the £160m investment at Carstairs on the WCML to reduce disruption for customers. During this project, ScotRail services between Glasgow Central and Lanark will be affected, and passengers should check their journey in advance.

Jeremy Spence, Senior Programme Manager, Network Rail said: "This project represents more than £16 million worth of investment in the local area from North Lanarkshire Council and [Glasgow City Region City Deal](#).

"Given the sheer size and scale of the bridge, it also represents a significant piece of engineering work, made possible by successes in innovation and collaboration with our major contracting partner, STORY.

"The upcoming intense period of activity marks a major milestone in this huge construction project, with Network Rail, Story and North Lanarkshire Council working closely over the last year to get it to this point

"Once our work is complete, it will allow the council to continue the regeneration of the area that will bring vacant and derelict land back into use while helping to create jobs and connecting people and businesses across the whole region.

"We would like to thank passengers and our lineside neighbours for their patience and understanding while we carry out this vital work."

John MacArthur, Managing Director, Story Contracting (Scotland), said: "As our teams gear up to safely deliver this major milestone of moving a 5,000-tonne structure during an intense 10-day blockade, it's great to reflect on all the hard work and commitment that has gone into the project so far.

"Working with our key supply chain partners, we've poured 2500m³ of concrete to form the structure, and put in 51,300 hours on site, whilst also being able to invest in the community by providing over 400 hours of work experience for local young people.

"We are therefore very proud to be supporting Network Rail and North Lanarkshire Council on this fundamental piece of civil engineering infrastructure."

Updates on the bridge work are available on Network Rail's project page at: www.scotlandsrailway.com/projects/ravenscraig and via Twitter @NetworkRailSCOT

If you are planning to travel on the West Coast Mainline during this time, please check how your journey may be affected by visiting www.nationalrail.co.uk or by checking individual train operators' websites.

Further information on the project is available on North Lanarkshire Council's project page at: www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/ravenscraig-south-citydeal

Photo credit: Network Rail