

Successful emergency landslip repair on target to reopen vital line between Salisbury and Romsey three days ahead of schedule

March 25, 2020



Successful emergency work to secure a landslip hit section of the rail line between Salisbury and Romsey will see the line on target to reopen for key workers and freight three days ahead of schedule.

The section of line just outside of Salisbury was forced to close on Tuesday February 18 following an extended period of above average rainfall and flooding. The embankment slipped, leaving the track unsupported over approximately 20 metres causing the track to dip.

Engineers have worked 24/7 to secure the line and prepare it to reopen. Repair work has been complicated by the fact that a field next to the site, and the only access to the area, has been significantly flooded. To tackle this, teams have constructed a road through the metre deep water to enable heavy machinery to work close to the affected embankment.

Works to complete the full repair requires the installation of up to 250 metres of 13 metre deep steel sheets into the embankment to prevent future landslips.

Once the railway is reopened, engineers will stay on site to deliver the remaining works.

Mark Killick, route director for Network Rail's Wessex route, said: "I'd like to thank passengers and local residents for their patience while we've been working hard to get this vital link reopened. Many people's journeys over the last few weeks will have been longer than expected and for that I can only apologise. Our priority was to make the railway safe and get the line open for passengers and freight as soon as possible.

"I'm pleased to say that we are on target to reopen three days ahead of schedule which will support key workers needing to travel and keep critical freight deliveries on schedule."

Alastair Hutton, Project Manager for Great Western Railway, said: "Our focus is to run services that can be relied on at this time of uncertainty, providing essential transport for key workers to get to and from work.

"We're pleased Network Rail has been able to reopen the line between Salisbury and Romsey, allowing us to provide these vital services once more."

Passengers are advised to check the website of their train operator before travelling as the timetable of planned services may not be up to date in all industry systems.

GWR services on Saturday 28 March are planned to run hourly and, as a response to the Prime Minister's request to carry out only essential travel due to COVID-19, from Sunday 29 March services are planned to run two hourly.

SWR services on the line are expected to commence on Monday 30 March.

Photo credit: Network Rail