

Thursday 16 March 2017

*Briefing Note:*

***Upgrading the railway in the Swindon area – May/June 2017***

Network Rail will be working in the Swindon area over the weekends of 27-29 May and 10-11 June 2017 as part of our Railway Upgrade Plan. The work Roman Road/Ermin Street bridge and Swindon station will pave the way for electrification of the Great Western main line from London to Cardiff and the arrival of GWR's new fleet of InterCity Express trains.

**Roman Road/Ermin Street bridge**

***What does the work involve?***

We need to lower the track under the listed Roman Road/Ermin Street bridge to create room for the Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) that will power the new electric trains.

We will need to carry out site preparation works, remove rail and sleepers, remove spoil from the site, and install new ballast, sleepers and rails. We will follow this with a process known as tamping, when a machine is used to pack the [track ballast](#) under the railway tracks to make them more durable.

Tamping will ensure that the new sleepers sit fit firmly in the ballast, reducing noise and vibrations from the passing trains. We also need to carry out drainage work and follow-up work.

Due to the deep excavation under the bridge, we propose to close Ermin Street to traffic for the two core weekends of 27-29 May and 10-11 June, subject to local authority approval. Under the proposed closure, motorists would be required to follow a signed diversion via the A4312 Oxford Road, Greenbridge Roundabout and the B4006 Swindon Road. The bridge would remain open to pedestrians.

***When will the work take place?***

Preparatory work will be undertaken during the following shifts;

- From 00:55 to 08:20 Sunday 30th April, Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2017

We will be working around the clock over the two core weekends, when no trains are running on this section of the line.

- From 01:30 Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017 to 05:00 Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017
- From 01:30 Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2017 to 05:00 Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017

After lowering the track, we plan to return to carry out tamping at the following times:

- Between 22:20 on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> - 05:20 on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June
- Between 00:55 - 08:20 on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June
- Between 22:20 on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> - 05:20 on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July

Following these three shifts we will be undertaking follow up work in the area from Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August. We will be working intermittently over this period and our working times will be:

- Midweek shifts from 22:20 – 05:20
- Weekend shifts from 00:55 – 08:20

We will need to return to the bridge later this year to raise the parapets, or side walls, of the bridge to provide a barrier between users of the structure and the overhead power lines. We will publicise the dates of this work when they are confirmed.

### **Swindon station**

#### ***What does the work involve?***

As part of this programme we need to prepare Swindon station for the new fleet of electric trains by installing the Overhead Line Equipment (OLE), removing and replacing four signal gantries, extending Platform 1 and cutting back the platform canopies. Work began late last year and we plan to use the weekends of 27-29 May and 10-11 June to make further progress.

### **Additional work**

Over these two weekends, we will also be working to lower the track beneath the listed Hunts Mill bridge at Royal Wootton Bassett to create room for the OLE.

#### ***How will we manage the impact on our neighbours?***

We recognise that construction work on the railway can be disruptive to those living or working nearby. The nature of our work often means some disturbance is unavoidable, but please be assured that every effort is made to minimise any unnecessary noise and we have reminded all staff and contractors to be considerate of the environment they are working in.

#### ***Will train journeys be affected?***

From 27-29 May and 10-11 June, train services through Didcot Parkway, Swindon, Chippenham and Bristol Parkway will be amended.

High Speed trains between London, Bristol and South Wales will be diverted and rail replacement services will operate on routes through Swindon. Trains between Cheltenham Spa and Swindon will continue to run.

Please plan ahead before you travel by visiting [www.gwr.com/swindon2017](http://www.gwr.com/swindon2017) or [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk)

#### ***Find out more***

We are holding a drop in on Wednesday 29 March at Grange Junior School, Grange Drive; Stratton St Margaret; Swindon; SN3 4JY between 4.30pm and 7.00pm. Members of the project team will be on hand to answer your questions.

#### ***Contact us***

Residents with any queries about the work should call Network Rail's 24-hour national helpline on 03457 11 41 41 or email [crwest@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:crwest@networkrail.co.uk). Follow us on Twitter @networkrailwest.