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Rail passengers urged to check before travelling after landslip closes line between Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury

The railway between Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury is likely to remain closed for at least two weeks while Network Rail carries out emergency repairs following a landslip near Oakengates station in Telford.

On Friday morning (8 March) engineers closed the line between Wellington and Oakengates stations in both directions to assess a failed railway embankment.

Approximately 5,000 tonnes of material has slipped beneath a 50 metre section of the railway after persistent heavy rainfall over the winter months has weakened the earthwork beneath it.

Rail engineers are working around the clock to plan major repairs to restabilise the embankment and begin mobilising engineers and equipment on site.

Before structural repairs can begin Network Rail teams need to cut back and clear vegetation from the railway embankment. This critical clearance work will help to understand the scale of the damage, check that there is no risk of further landslips and provide access for materials and equipment. Once this work has been completed, a full plan for repairs will be confirmed.

Passengers are being advised that the railway is likely to remain closed until at least Monday 25 March.

While the railway is closed, there will be major changes to journeys for West Midlands Railway and Transport for Wales customers, with rail replacement buses operating to and from affected stations between Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury. Passengers are advised to check with their train operator and at www.nationalrail.co.uk for the latest travel advice.

Adam Checkley, infrastructure director for Network Rail, said: "I'm really sorry to passengers affected by the landslip near Oakengates station which means the line is likely to remain shut for at least two weeks while we plan and deliver complex repairs to the failed railway embankment.

"While the railway is closed I want to urge passengers to check www.nationalrail.co.uk for the latest travel advice."

Jonny Wiseman, West Midlands Railway customer experience director, said: "This is a significant landslip and I would like to thank our passengers on the Shrewsbury Line for their patience while Network Rail carries out these safety-critical repairs.

"Rail replacement buses will be operating for the duration of the line closure and I urge passengers to check their travel plans carefully and leave extra time for their journeys."

Passengers are strongly advised to check before travelling at www.nationalrail.co.uk

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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