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Rail line closed after 4,000t replacement bridge gets stuck in mud

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The railway line between Bristol and Newport in Wales is closed after a 4,000t replacement br stuck in mud during a repositioning exercise.

Works to complete the replacement bridge at Gipsy Patch Lane in South Gloucestershire su setback last week when the bridge, which weighs 4,260t and was built on site, became stuck operation to move it into position.

Network Rail and contractor Alun Griffiths had moved the bridge two-thirds of the way tov final position when it became entrenched due to poor ground conditions.

The rail line had initially expected to be reopened by 7 November, however the closure has l extended until at least 23 November allow time for the bridge to moved into place.

Situated between Bristol Parkway and the Severn Tunnel the Gipsy Patch Lane section form part of the Great Western rail route between London, Bristol and south Wales. Trains are cu being diverted via Gloucester.

A spokesperson from South Gloucestershire Council said: “Last week Network Rail and Alu established a comprehensive plan to move the bridge into place and reinstate the railway, an

have been working on this since then. This plan involves several contingency options to hel the significant complexity and risks involved.

"Work is now focused on moving the bridge temporarily off the hydraulic transporters it is to reinforce the roadway and then enable the transporters to move the bridge successfully ir Given the high risk and complex nature of the operation, Network Rail and Alun Griffiths h brought on board additional resources and specialists to assist them.

"We will continue to update the community and our stakeholders on the work as it progress further update will be issued on Monday 16 November."

The bridge lift was the heaviest lift of its kind ever undertaken in the UK. The structure was moved into place using specialist hydraulic transporters.

The bridge move begun on 25 October with overhead line equipment and track removed fr existing rail bridge, which was deconstructed on 27 October. After debris was cleared away were brought in to install sheet piles between the pile caps, which have been piled in four fo points to a depth of 24m.

The operation to move the bridge was begun on 28 October and had expected to take betwe and five hours.

A separate team within Network Rail are investigating why the detailed plan to move the br not work, in the meantime, the focus is on completing the work as quickly and as safely as p

Network Rail has been contacted for comment.

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