

Liverpool Lime Street cutting retaining wall failure

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors

Ref: NRB 17/06

Date of issue: 27/03/2017

Location: Liverpool Lime Street

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Overview

At around 17:45 on Tuesday 28 February 2017, a section of retaining wall at the top of Liverpool Lime Street cutting collapsed resulting in significant debris falling onto the railway below, damaging OLE and obstructing all four running lines.

The train service in and out of Liverpool's main railway station was suspended for over a week.

Photographic and other evidence show modifications to ground levels and changes in land use over recent years adjacent to the retaining wall which appear to have resulted in significant overloading of the wall.

Discussion Points

While the investigation is underway please discuss the following with your team:

- How effectively does examination of retaining walls consider change in land use or ground level that could lead to overloading?
- How should we identify boundary walls or retaining wall parapets which have become retaining walls through ground level changes?
- How do we check that structure and boundary inspections access areas behind a wall to ensure changes and potential risks can be identified?
- How do we access third party land to undertake compliant inspections?
- How should we ensure land disposal does not impact our ability to access and maintain structures?
- How effectively do we check structures in complex cuttings?

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