

TREES ON NEW SOMERSET & DORSET RAILWAY LAND AT MIDFORD

The New Somerset and Dorset Railway (NS&DR) have purchased the plot of land on the disused Somerset and Dorset Railway at Midford in order to restore it to 1950/60s condition and also with the long term aim of assisting in any eventual re-opening of the line.

Since the cessation of train services in 1966 the land has become overgrown with vegetation including a large number of trees, none of which are of any particular value. The NS&DR have embarked on a programme of tree removal from the site which will take place progressively over the next couple of years. Work undertaken to date has centred on the station/platform area and the results visible in the photographs below:



Many of these trees on site are growing out of the steep rock sides of the embankment into which the line was cut and are causing damage to the rock face, which in places is breaking away in large portions. This loose rock is presenting a latent danger to pedestrians and cyclists and portions may now have to be brought down in a controlled manner. See example photos below:



We intend to remove the remaining inappropriate trees and stabilise the embankment with grass and shrubs and encourage the return of native wild flowers (which are now beginning to show on the cleared areas). With regards to the clearances themselves, in order to avoid damage to wildlife most work will take place outside of the bird nesting season (which is normally recognised as being between March to end July).

There may be occasions, however, when some tree removal takes place during the nesting season, eg for safety reasons. Should this be the case then care will be taken to ensure that no nests are disturbed and in this respect a close visual inspection will be necessary to ensure this is the case before work commences.