

Special Bulletin – Closure of Kintore Level Crossing

Just a reminder that the level crossing at the Boat of Kintore, where the B977 crosses the single rail-line from Dyce to Inverurie, as of the 1st June, has now been closed for 11 weeks to **all** vehicular traffic.



Network rail are currently involved in a major civil engineering project to convert the single railway track from Aberdeen to Inverness to a dual line as well as introducing 2 new stations at Inverness Airport and at Kintore. Kintore station will not be ready till 2020, however.

The first phases of the project saw the original GNoSR Victorian single line converted to 21st century double tracks from Inverness to Inverness Airport and from Aberdeen to Dyce. The current phase, which concerns Aberdeen folk in particular, sees the 8-mile stretch upgraded to dual track from Dyce to Inverurie.

This involves removal of the present level crossing and communications mast at the end of Kingsfield road where the B977 crosses the track and then the River Don at Boat of Kintore. Network Rail are removing some houses, widening the crossing, building new foundations, installing double tracks, fitting new signalling and safety systems as well as testing it all prior to it being re-opened to vehicles. The upgrade work is now ongoing round the clock, 7 days a week, to maintain the railway shutdown period of 15 weeks from beginning of May to mid-August.

The railway is currently shut down with the level crossing now closed till 16th August for **all** vehicular traffic. (including emergency vehicles.)

Consequently, please plan your journey to avoid the B977 till mid-August. You may also notice extra vehicles on the A96 as train commuters return to the roads during the period or there may be extra traffic through Blackburn on the B979 to bypass the blockage at Kintore so you may have to allow a little bit of extra time for your journey.

Road diversion signs have been put in place during the level crossing closure.

Want to know more about the history of the rail line between Aberdeen and Inverurie? – see the next page.

The route of the railway between Aberdeen and Inverurie started life as a canal. The Aberdeenshire Canal opened in 1805 between Waterloo Quay and Port Elphinstone.

In 1845, the Great North of Scotland Railway (GNoSR) agreed to purchase the Aberdeenshire Canal. They drained it a bit prematurely so canal boats were stuck but eventually the railway followed the course of the canal from Waterloo Quay to Inverurie and onwards.

By 1854, the GNoSR line had been extended to Huntly.

In 1859, the Alford Valley Railway opened, a branch line running between Kintore and Alford with stations at Kintore, Kemnay, Moneymusk, Tillyfourie, Whitehouse and terminating at Alford.

In 1885, the first express train service was introduced between Aberdeen and Elgin. Passengers had to change trains at Elgin to travel onto Inverness at that time because the Elgin to Inverness section was run by the Highland Railway and neither GNoSR or HR railway companies would allow the other's trains to run on their own lines!

In 1887, a suburban service was introduced between Aberdeen joint station in Guild street and Dyce. There were stations at Schoolhill, Hutcheon Street, Don Street, Woodside, Persley, Bucksburn, Bankhead, Stoneywood and Dyce. Not much of these intermediate stations remain today as they were closed by LNER in 1937 apart from Bucksburn, which closed in 1957.

In 1902, the Inverurie Locomotive works opened and in 1923 GNoSR ceased to exist when it was merged into the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER). The big 4, LNER with LMS, GWR and SR, were nationalised in 1948 becoming British Railways.

Interestingly, the line between Aberdeen and Keith was converted to a double line in 1900. This was put back to a single line after the BR Beeching cuts in the mid 60's.

The Beeching cuts also saw the Kintore to Alford branch line closed in 1964.

Here is an old photo of Kinaldie station, which was located between Dyce and Inverurie; it was closed in 1964 and no longer exists.

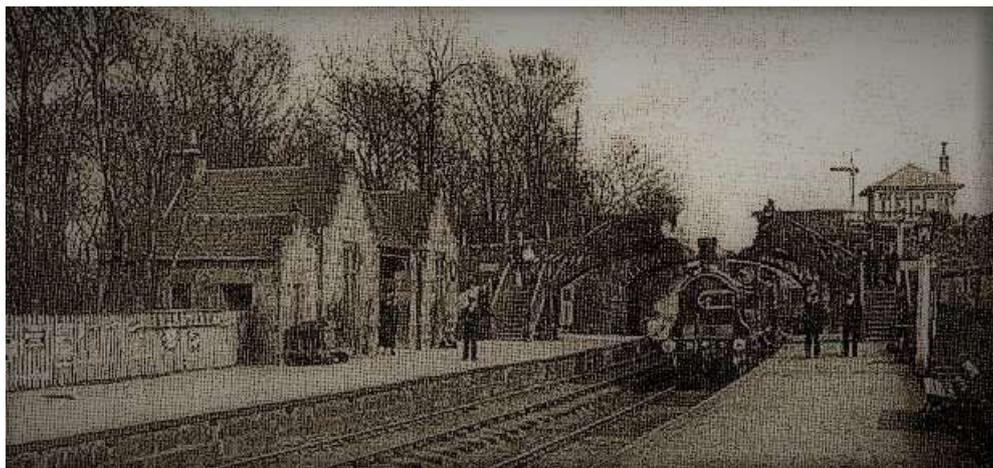


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If your driving from Blackburn, it's below the B797 before you get to Hatton of Fintray where the road bridge over the railway line is followed by a very sharp RH bend as the road runs through some woodland close to this railway line. Network Rail are currently working here as part of the dual line re-instatement.