

Layla Moran MP
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

Western House
1 Holbrook Way
Swindon
SN1 1BD

**24 hour National Helpline
03457 11 41 41**

7 August 2026

Your reference: LM50093

Dear Layla,

Thank you for your letter regarding our announcement last week that Botley Road wouldn't reopen as planned by the end of August.

I want to start by saying that I'm so sorry to all residents and businesses that continue to be impacted by the closure of Botley Road. We understand the frustration it's causing to the local community and we're working as hard as possible with SGN to complete the remaining work and minimise delays. I also recognise that ongoing work elsewhere in the area is further exacerbating frustrations felt by the local community.

Following a review of the remaining work to be delivered, alongside SGN's work, I can confirm that Botley Road will now reopen on **Sunday 20 September**.

As with many complex infrastructure projects, we're constantly identifying and mitigating emerging risks as work progresses. The programme has been developed with appropriate allowances to accommodate such risks, and we've remained transparent through our regular stakeholder, resident, and business briefings whenever issues have arisen.

During recent tunnelling work to connect the new drainage system, an obstruction was identified that needed to be excavated and removed before the work could be completed. A detailed plan was developed to manage this issue. While the obstruction didn't pose a risk to reopening the road by the end of August, resolving it required the use of some of the programme's built-in contingency. If this had been the only issue we may still have been able to open the road at the end of August.

However, between 6 and 10 July, during excavation work to remove the obstruction, three minor gas leaks were detected, which delayed the completion of the excavation work. We worked closely with SGN on each occasion to locate and resolve the leaks safely. I should stress that we did not damage or cause the gas leaks through our work.

In the interests of safety and to avoid disruptive and unplanned repair work in the future, we agreed to accommodate SGN's essential work to replace a section of the gas network beneath Botley Road, alongside the completion of our remaining construction work.

SGN has been working extended hours, including earlier starts and later finishes where appropriate, to maximise productivity and maintain progress. Thanks to the collaborative approach between SGN, Kier and our project team, work continues to move forward at

pace through an integrated and closely coordinated programme of activity. Once the work is complete, we'll review the circumstances thoroughly and identify any lessons that need to be learned.

We understand that trust has been damaged by repeated delays, and we don't take that lightly. We'll continue to keep the community updated on our progress and resident and business meetings have been organised for Wednesday 9 September, from 5pm to 6pm and 6.30pm to 7.30pm respectively. We've also organised an additional two council and MP briefings to keep everyone updated on our progress and our digital newsletter will continue to be sent out regularly.

Thank you to your office for attending our briefing sessions and I'd welcome the opportunity to meet with you directly to discuss your concerns further. I've copied in my team to find a date at your earliest convenience to meet.

Thank you again for your letter. I'd like to reiterate my sincere apology for this further delay and for the impact it continues to have on residents, businesses and everyone in west Oxford who relies on Botley Road.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Jones".

Marcus Jones
Great Western Route Director