

Evershot Tunnel Cutting

Case Study: 10.06.26



Southern Renewals
Enterprise



Stabilisation Works



February 2026



15 Weeks

Universal Piling & Geotechnical successfully delivered a complex programme of slope stabilisation and drainage renewal works at Evershot Tunnel Cutting, London End, on the WEY route in Dorset. Working within both a blockade & a live railway environment and challenging access constraints, our multidisciplinary team combined rope access, specialist geotechnical drilling, drainage construction and innovative anchor design to deliver a comprehensive long-term stabilisation solution.

Project Background

Evershot Tunnel Cutting has experienced several slope instability events since 2009, with the most recent failures occurring between 2022 and 2024. Investigations identified translational failures within over-steep superficial Head Deposits, triggered by prolonged rainfall and elevated groundwater conditions.

To inform the remedial design, three phases of ground investigation were undertaken between 2022 and 2025. Designed by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of Southern Renewals Enterprise (SRE), the solution addressed both slope stability and drainage deficiencies across cuttings ranging upto 35m in height.

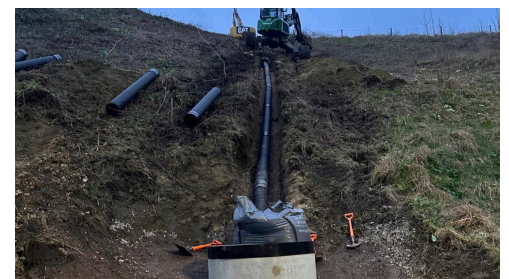
Scope of Works

Slope Stabilisation

Using IRATA-qualified rope access operatives, Universal installed a comprehensive soil nailing and draped mesh system across the upside, downside and tunnel portal slopes.

Works comprised:

- Installation of DYWIDAG R32 hollow-bar soil nails, grouted in accordance with BS 8081.
- Installation of Geobrugg Greenax G80/2 draped mesh from crest to toe, providing long-term rockfall protection and surface stabilisation.



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- Installation and testing of mesh restraint dowels.
- Temporary catch fencing to protect the operational railway, whilst also allowing for efficient ALO working.

To further improve stability, the upper slope was regraded to a 1:3 profile using long-reach excavation techniques, reducing the risk of future shallow translational failures.

Drainage Renewal

The drainage scope included the construction of new catchpits and chambers to replace a failed section of the existing drainage network identified during pre-works CCTV surveys.

Key activities included:

- Installation of temporary works and trench support systems.
- Construction of new catchpit chambers and connections into the toe drainage network.
- Jetting and CCTV verification of all completed drainage assets.

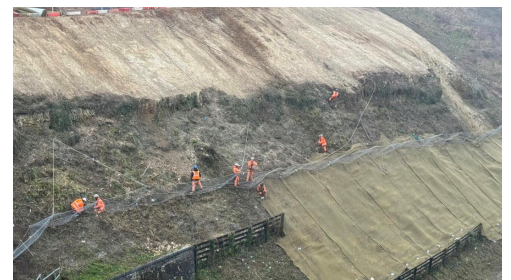
The new system was designed to operate independently of the existing flume drainage infrastructure, ensuring long-term performance regardless of the condition of legacy assets.

Innovative Flume Restraint Solution

A key project innovation was the development of an alternative restraint system for the flume drain using Platipus anchors.

Rather than relying on traditional backfill to retain the flume against the slope face, the design utilised anchors installed at 1m depth and spaced at 3m centres along the flume alignment. The system provides positive restraint against hydraulic uplift and lateral loading while significantly simplifying installation and future maintenance.

The solution delivered programme efficiencies, reduced manual handling and excavation requirements on the steep slope, and improved long-term inspectability of the asset.



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Week 49 Blockade Operations

To complete the most critical trackside activities, Universal mobilised for a planned seven-day blockade, operating continuously across day and night shifts.

Key activities included:

- Mobilisation of plant, equipment and materials via RRV.
- Installation of lower rows of soil nails inaccessible during ALO working.
- Construction of drainage assets and track-level connections.
- Installation and restraint of the upslope flume system.
- Deployment of temporary catch fencing to facilitate simultaneous working across multiple workfaces.

A subsequent 47-hour contingency possession enabled completion of final snagging works, drainage verification surveys and safe demobilisation.

Demobilisation and Handover

Following completion, all plant, temporary works and site compounds were removed, and the site was fully reinstated. Final drainage jetting and CCTV surveys confirmed compliance with design requirements, enabling handback to Network Rail in a safe and operational condition.

Outcome

The Evershot Tunnel Cutting project demonstrates Universal Piling & Geotechnical's capability to deliver complex, multi-disciplinary geotechnical and drainage solutions within constrained, safety-critical rail environments.

Through careful planning, a fully collaborative approach, innovative engineering and specialist rope access expertise, the team successfully delivered the full scope safely, on programme and in compliance with Network Rail standards, providing a robust long-term solution to a historically unstable asset.



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