

**Route Summary Report  
Cumberland Lane  
March 2018**



**Description**

The route commences on the A54 east of Sparbent, proceeding in a generally north westerly direction, then north crossing Cumberland Brook and then generally west south west, re-crossing Cumberland Brook and continuing west south west to unnamed lane east of Clough House. A Traffic Regulation Order by Cheshire CC restricts 4-wheeled motorised vehicles. Drainage repairs have been undertaken by vehicle volunteers.

Legal Status: Unclassified Road

County: Cheshire East

Parish: Macclesfield Forest and Wildboardclough CP

Grid Reference: SK 0029 6925 to 9879 6976

Length: 2000m

**Nearest Other Byways/Non-classified Highways/Claimed Byways**

Three Shire Heads lies approximately 1.5km south.

**Sustainability Analysis**

Undertaken in 2013

Physical - Does the route show serious signs of physical damage resulting from usage?

**Score: 1** (1 or no user groups would find the route hard to use)

Conservation - Is the route subject to any protective designation (for heritage or wildlife)?

Comment

**Score: 2** (the route crosses or abuts a protected area)

Complaints - Have there been any complaints about vehicular use conflicting with other uses?

**Score: 1** (few or no complaints)

Character - Is the character of the route being damaged by vehicular use?

**Score: 1** (little or none)

Conflict - Is the free passage of non-motorised users being prejudiced?

Comment: Potential for issues relating to speed in some locations

**Score: 2**

**Total Score = 7/15**



## Levels of Vehicular Use

Wednesday 10 June 2015 – Wednesday 8 July 2015 (28 days)

Daily Totals	Large Vehicles only	Motorcycles Only
Mondays	2	8
Tuesdays	0	17
Wednesdays	2	7
Thursdays	7	15
Fridays	0	23
Saturdays	0	50
Sundays	0	71
Mon-Fri Total	11	70
Sat-Sun Total	0	121
Overall Total	11	171
Average Per Day	0.4	6.1

Friday 20 May 2016 – Fri 5 August 2016 (78 days)

Daily totals	Large Vehicles	Motorcycles only
Mondays	9	14
Tuesdays	13	30
Wednesdays	4	22
Thursdays	10	8
Fridays	4	12
Saturdays	4	59
Sundays	0	162
Mon-Fri total	40	86
Sat-Sunday total	4	221
Overall total	44	307
Average per day	0.56	3.93

## Conservation interest

Ecology - An ecological survey was carried out in December 2015 (Appendix 1).

Landscape – Cumberland Lane lies within the South West Peak landscape area – an area of upland and associated foothills. Roads and tracks cross the landscape...some tracks link upland grazing to lowland settlements, while others are former transport routes. In places 18<sup>th</sup> century roads follow almost direct routes, while elsewhere such roads were abandoned and more sinuous replacements were built...to avoid steep gradients which wagons could not negotiate in winter. This is a generally peaceful landscape with small winding lanes which are often sunken on slopes.

## Peak District Local Access Forum Comments

The Green Lanes Sub-group surveyed the route and met in November 2015. The group recommended that:

- Drainage and water issues need to be addressed, and that a combination of professional and voluntary (including scouts) measures should be considered as part of these works as well as their ongoing maintenance.
- Signage needs to be clear and appropriate.
- The condition of the lane and its use should then be kept under continuous review.

## Issues

### People

- Disturbance to residents – proximity of farm
- User conflict – recreational value for all users of the route and area, nearby scout hut

### The Route

- Route condition – loose surface, section collapsed

The Area

- SSSI, Natural Zone

## Appendix 1 - Conservation Report

**Site: CUMBERLAND**

**Date of survey:** 07 December 2015

### **Description and ecological interest**

Length: 2.05 km.

The route runs from just above Clough House in Wildboardclough to the A54 Buxton-Congleton road, just beyond Sparbent.

From the minor road above Clough Cottage the track is essentially a farm track over a short distance, with a good surface. The track then ascends over a looser, stonier section, past a small plantation on the south side, and then crosses open grassy moorland to the junction with the A54.

The track is wide enough for 4WD vehicles and there is room to pass in many places. The surface is firm to hard over virtually the whole length, but there are stony sections some of them loose, both on the steeper section at the western end and on the upper central part. The loose stony stretches on top are bypassed by use of informal paths which have caused some rutting. There is another informal path on top of the bank alongside the plantation – again avoiding a loose stony section

Just below the bridge over Cumberland Brook, water runs down the track spills over the side of the brook causing obvious erosion and partial collapse of the track on the spillover side.

There are 'No vehicle' signs sited at each end. No signs of 4WD vehicles were seen (except at the bottom in the farmer's field). Farm vehicle are likely to use the upper part of the track from the Sparbent to access fields. The route is used by pedestrians and cyclists. Some broader tyre tracks were evidently made by motor bikes.

The lowest part of the route crosses an improved field; it then passes a small plantation on the south side and upland pasture on the other. The upper section is a mix of upland pasture, acidic grassland and moorland

### **Site Designations**

From the bridge over Cumberland Brook to the end at Sparbent the route passes through the Leek Moors SSSI or along its edge (980 m in total). The whole route, except for the bottom fields in Wildboardclough, are classed as Section 3 moorland.

### **Vehicles leaving the highway**

The track is open on one side along most of its length which would in theory allow access to adjoining land. No signs of this were visible.

### **Impacts**

It is possible that occasional use by motor cycles or 4WD vehicles cause wear-and-tear erosion and increase the degree of looseness/stoniness (though as stated above, no sign of 4WD use was seen). Avoidance of these sections has resulted in rutting and formation of a footpath which has caused some damage to the vegetation.