

**Route Summary Report
Hurstclough Lane
March 2018**



Description

Commences from the classified road east of Gatehouse, heading north west then south west and descending to Hurst Clough reaching the junction of Saltergate and Joan Lanes. Surfacing works proposed by Derbyshire County Council.

Legal Status: Byway Open to All Traffic

County: Derbyshire

Parish: Outseats

Grid Reference: SK212829 to 225832

Length: 1500 metres

Nearest Other Byways/Non-classified Highways/Claimed Byways

Bamford Clough lies 500m west, Long Causeway 1100m north.

Sustainability Analysis

Undertaken in 2011.

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

Comment: Sections of route are in very poor repair.

Score: 3 (4 or more user groups would find the route hard to use) – as at time of survey

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

Score: 1 (no areas of protection abut or cross the highway)

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

Comments: Since resurveyed, from parish council, local people and wider public

Score: 3 (yes many from a variety of sources)

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

Comments: Sunken lane badly eroded in sections by water damage

Score: 3 (the highway and adjacent land are affected)

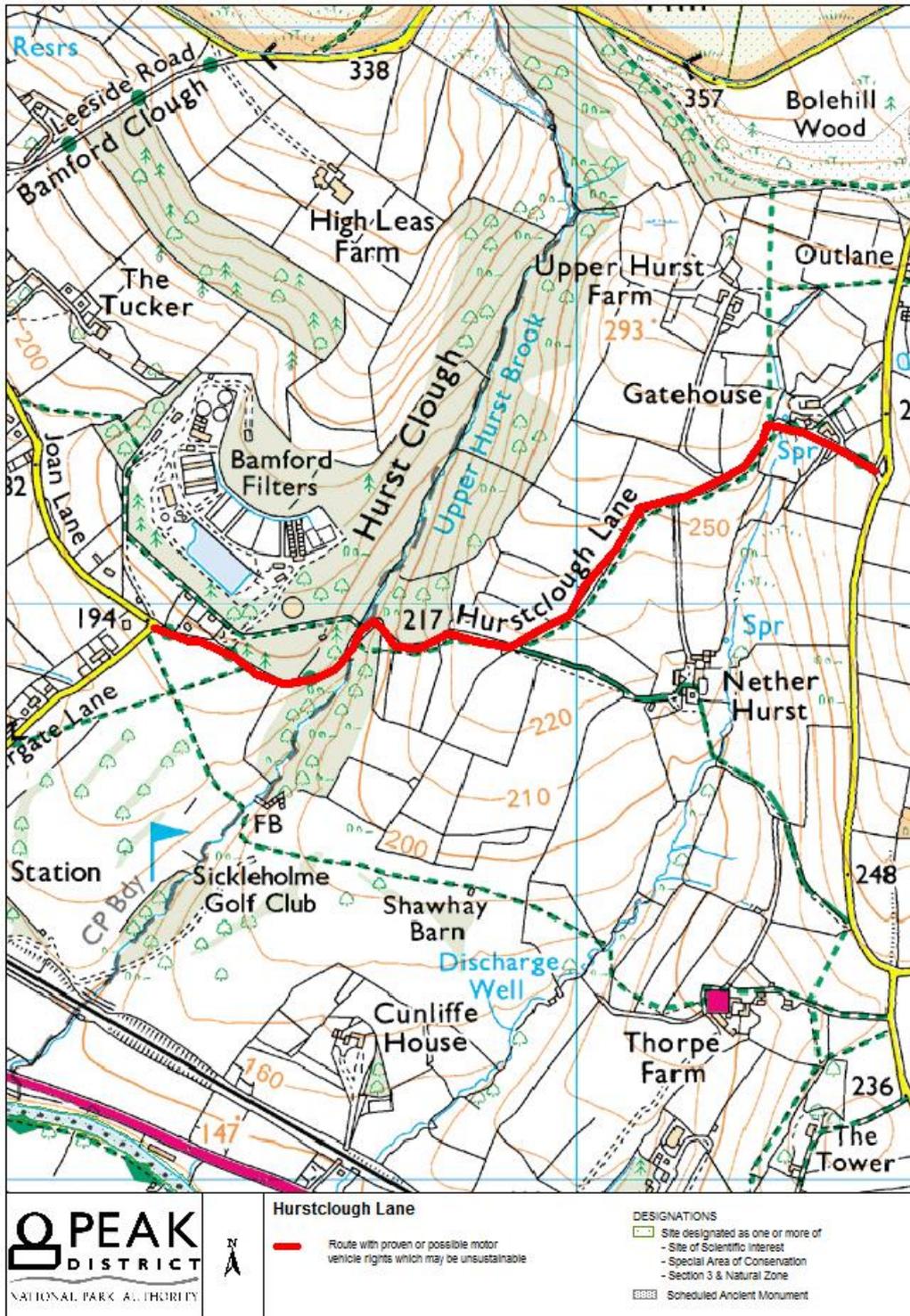
Conflict - Is the free passage of non-motorised users being prejudiced?

Comments: Route is narrow, sections are steep, visibility is poor

Score: 3 (3 or 4 issues regarding the width, visibility, slope and speed of use by vehicles)

Total Score = 13/15





Representation on this map of a route is no evidence of a right of way.
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Levels of Vehicular Use

Wednesday 31 October 12 – Sunday 25 November 2012 (26 days)

Daily Totals	Large Vehicles only	Motorcycles Only
Mondays	12	2
Tuesdays	17	0
Wednesdays	24	5
Thursday	20	4
Fridays	24	11
Saturdays	35	24
Sundays	39	43
Mon-Fri Total	97	22
Sat-Sun Total	74	67
Overall Total	171	89
Average Per Day	6.6	3.4

Thurs 22 Jan 2014 – Fri 21 Feb 2014 (31 days)

Daily totals	Large Vehicles	Motorcycles only
Mondays	28	4
Tuesdays	37	3
Wednesdays	26	18
Thursdays	33	5
Fridays	34	6
Saturdays	41	17
Sundays	44	48
Mon-Fri total	158	36
Sat-Sunday total	85	65
Overall total	243	101
Average per day	7.8	3.2

Friday 24 April 2015 – Thursday 9 July 2015 (77 days)

Daily Totals	Large Vehicles only	Motorcycles Only
Mondays	41	13
Tuesdays	10	0
Wednesdays	13	11
Thursday	0	8
Fridays	6	8
Saturdays	28	60
Sundays	24	39
Mon-Fri Total	70	38
Sat-Sun Total	52	99
Overall Total	122	137
Average Per Day	1.59	1.78

Thursday 8 October 2015 – Thurs 9 June 2016 (246 days)

Daily totals	Large Vehicles	Motorcycles only
Mondays	44	0
Tuesdays	27	2
Wednesdays	21	0
Thursdays	40	3
Fridays	40	4
Saturdays	42	44
Sundays	40	29
Mon-Fri total	172	9
Sat-Sunday total	86	73
Overall total	258	82
Average per day	1.04	0.33

Friday 18 August 2017 – Thursday 5 October 2017 (49 days)

Daily totals	Large Vehicles	Motorcycles only
Mondays	67	9
Tuesdays	67	2
Wednesdays	50	3
Thursdays	51	9
Fridays	42	6
Saturdays	39	21
Sundays	54	28
Mon-Fri total	277	29
Sat-Sunday total	93	49
Overall total	370	78
Average per day	7.55	1.59

Conservation interest

Ecology - An ecological survey was carried out in January 2013 (Appendix 1).

Landscape - The route lies within Derwent Valley landscape character area – lower lying landscapes associated with the valley of the River Derwent and its tributaries. Separates the limestones of the White Peak from the prominent gritstone edges of the Eastern Moors to the east and high moorland of the Dark Peak to the North. The settled well-wooded agricultural character is characteristic of this area.

Cultural Heritage - An archaeological report summarising desk-based research was provided in February 2013 (Appendix 2). The route runs through a range of Historic Landscape Character areas. Adjacent to the track is a possible prehistoric barrow.

Peak District Local Access Forum Comments

The Green Lanes Sub-group surveyed the route and met in August 2012 and February 2013. Appendix 3 sets out their individual observations. The group recommended:

- Repairs to maintain historic surface
- Monitor use

The Sub-group re-inspected the route in July 2015 and their individual observations are set out in Appendix 3.

Parish Council Comments

A response from Outseats Parish Council was received in May 2013 and is set out in Appendix 4.

Issues

People

- User conflict – recreational value for all users

The Route

- Route nature – narrow, steep, limited visibility
- Route condition – rutted, loose surface, poor drainage

Appendix 1 - Conservation Report

Date of survey: 9 January 2013

Description and ecological interest

The route runs from Coggers Lane westwards along the short stretch of Gatehouse Lane before turning south-west down to Hurst Clough and along to the junction with Saltergate Lane on the edge of Bamford.

The route runs through semi-improved acid pasture over most of its length, except for broad-leaved woodland in Hurst Clough (not designated as Ancient Woodland).

The first half of the route from Gatehouse Lane to the junction with the track to Nether Hurst has a hard surface. Below here, as the route descends quite steeply into Hurst Clough, the surface is badly rutted and pitted. Where it levels out it is wet and muddy. From the western side of Hurst Clough the surface is again hard but unsealed to the end.

Vehicles leaving the highway

The route is walled and/or fenced banked on both sides over its entire length and most of the lane is sunken to a depth of 1-2 m further preventing off-route vehicle access.

Impacts

The track surface is hard but unsealed except for about 150 m at the eastern end (Gatehouse Lane). The condition remains mainly good, with the exception of the steep section on the eastern side of Hurst Clough where the surface has been badly damaged. Here it is rutted and pitted, sometimes to a depth of 20-25 cm below the level of the thin layer of old metalling. There are loose stones and earth and some of the stone pitching has been loosened and displaced. The surface disruption and damage is consistent with vehicles ascending in low gear. Continued use by 4WD, especially ascending, can be expected to result in further deterioration.

The verges are narrow and contain rough grassland of low biodiversity value.

According to local residents, farm vehicles do not use this section of the track, but recreational use is regular and 'heavy' with groups of 6 vehicles seen. A local group in Bamford is objecting to continued recreational use.

Appendix 2 – Cultural Heritage Report

Historic Landscape Character

The bulk of the route of Hurstclough Lane runs through land which was enclosed prior to 1830 and is characterised by the irregular shape of the field parcels.

At its western end the route runs through woodland which has been in existence since the late 19th century. Prior to this it was enclosed land – enclosure having occurred before 1780. To the south of the route in this area is Sickleholme Golf course, which was established in 1880. Prior to this, this area too was enclosed by 1780.

Existing Historic Environment Record data, surveys and designations

There is only one known Historic Environment Record site in close proximity to this route. This is a possible prehistoric barrow (MSY5930) in fields adjacent to the track.

Detailed archaeological survey has been undertaken on land at the eastern end of the route (centred on: SK2228 8382) which is recorded to belong to Green House Farm.

General Recommendations

Only a small part of the route bounds an area which has had detailed archaeological survey. Ideally, the whole length of the lane should be checked by means of a rapid walk-over survey however, with the condition of surviving features being noted. Particular consideration should be given to features such as gateposts, walls and wall furniture and earthworks. The results of this work would form good basis for recording damage to any features which might have occurred already, as well as monitoring on-going damage.

On the basis of the information collected recommendations for damage mitigation could be made. This could also inform the nature of any repairs to the route.

Observations 2012/13

General

This route runs from the road leading from Hathersage (up to the west of the North Lees Estate) and in a south westerly direction to Sickleholme Golf Course and the Water Treatment works at the northern end of Saltergate Lane, Bamford. It is a pleasant route which in some places is “sunken” into the land round about and it links to a number of farms. Assume it to be popular for walking and horse riding (with a bridleway and many footpaths linking into it). It is generally in reasonable condition with the exception of a section of about 200 metres leading down to the side of Hurst Clough. Status needs checking given that the central section is not designated on the OS map and noted Derbyshire CC notice posted on 22 March re possible BOAT status issue under the Wildlife & Countryside Act.

This used to be a sealed surface way, and I remember driving along it in an ordinary saloon car 35 or 40 years ago. Parts of the surface are extant, parts have been eroded principally by natural forces following initial surface damage. The ascent going north from the Clough is quite severely eroded. At each end a sealed surface is maintained. For the greater part the lane is very deeply hollowed and narrow. It was just possible for two quad bikes to pass by me, but quite impossible for a 4x4 to pass me on the steep section. I heard it coming and retreated into one of the few gateways where it passed me, the driver unaware of my presence as he charged, as though pursued by the devil, up the track, cigarette clenched between his teeth. This characteristic is a serious problem, and makes it dangerous for legal users apart from MPV users. I suggest therefore that a one way system be enforced along the whole of the section which is not currently sealed. There is some logic for making the one way from the Stanage end down to Bamford because it would cause less damage to the surface of the steepest section. It would also be consistent with the one way system on the Long Causeway of which Hurstclough Lane is the historic extension. Resurfacing is clearly indicated to prevent further erosion, and, if this can not be done before next winter there may well be a case for a temporary TRO until it can be done. There is evidence of old gritstone slabs beneath traces of the once metalled surface, and surfacing now will serve to protect this historic feature, which is clearly being progressively damaged beyond repair. The slabs themselves display an interesting feature of concave erosion upon their surface, presumably made by the passage in times past of jiggers’ trains. A notice at the start of the way informed of the intention to enter the way onto the DMS as a BOAT. I have no doubt this classification is correct, but again would urge, for reasons of safety occasioned by the character of the way, for there to be a one way system imposed (access to land excepted)

Safety Issues

Signage

- Generally limited to routes which lead off from this lane
- None observed
- None. No warning signs

Surface and Off-site information

- Good metalled surface at either end, with stone surfacing going to the south west and then a marked deterioration of stone/earth surface which has become deeply rutted down into Hurst Clough.
- No off-site information observed

Conflicts of different use

- Appear to be between vehicular use (not sure if 4WD’s are using this as it seems motor cycle activity is more likely)
- The road is overgrown in places making for potential conflict between users
- Residents at the eastern end are disturbed by passing traffic using the lane
- Advisory signage would be helpful
- ‘Snow path’ running parallel in the adjoining fields gives a safe passage for walkers but the track is narrow, deep and with some blind bends which make safety an issue for riders

of horses and bikes. Path junctions along the route are dangerous

Width

- Generally reasonable and enables good visibility with one pinch point where the route narrows and is very rutted and difficult on the section referred to down into Hurst Clough.
- About 3 metres between overgrown hedges for most of its length
- Narrow in places but not too narrow for vehicles.

Speed

- Not apparent as an issue from my visit
- None observed
- Because of narrowness speed makes the route more dangerous

Causes of Damage

Degradation of surface by vehicle use making the surface unstable and subject to water damage. The present condition of the route is very poor and has, apparently deteriorated recently.

Recreational Use

- Vehicle logging which is planned will be important to gaining information on existing vehicular use patterns.
- Steps caused partially by recreational motors around grid SK216829 and the descent to the stream

Agricultural use / access

- Several farms are served by this lane, but there do not seem to be problems because of this. It also provides access and links to a number of paths and one bridleway.
- Negligible

Natural erosion

- Seems a possible issue on the steep section down to Hurst Clough.
- Steps about SK216829 aggravated by water scouring

Solutions

- Signage (depending upon clarification of BOAT status and central section)
- Consider Voluntary restraint and encourage responsible use
- Carry out drainage works and fill in the deep ruts in the section down into Hurst Clough.
- Monitor and Review
- Grade the steps
- Cut back the vegetation
- Repairs to track surface. Warning signs, particularly at points where paths cross the route. Restrict use to prevent further deterioration if funding for repairs cannot be found.

Long-term Management

- Repairs to surface as needs be – County Council
- Possible need to consider a TRO re at least 4WD's and possibly motor cycles
- Monitor and review
- Routine inspection for signs of steps re-appearing and appropriate action when required.
- Ensure advisory signage is put in place
- Keep drainage working properly
- Would repairs be sustainable in the long term and would they increase speed of vehicles making the route more dangerous for non-vehicle users. Long term safety problems.

General

We approached from Joan Lane. Initially the surface is sealed and as serviceable as it was 35 to 40 years ago when the whole way was perfectly driveable by ordinary saloon cars, though even in this section drainage is self evidently a problem. At about the point where it descends to a stream the surface deteriorates significantly being seriously rutted, broken at the edges and very wet indeed. It is overhung with luxuriant vegetation and by nature a deeply eroded holloway, constricted in some places by fallen trees which have not been cleared. There appears to be a broken drain a little way upslope, above which point the surface gets significantly drier. Remains of the ancient trackway are exposed both by the depth of the (water) erosion, and by vehicles wearing away the sides. There are very few passing places: that is the nature of the deep holloway.

Action is clearly needed as soon as possible to prevent further deterioration of the surface and loss of historic elements. The question arises however as to what standard it needs to be prepared, to what purpose and for what intended use. To an extent this should inform decisions on any restrictions.

The character of the way is important, and this merits preserving, but at the same time it inevitably limits what use, whether vehicular or other, could be regarded as sustainable. I would hesitate to suggest any one way option whilst Bamford Clough is also closed because it is really quite some way round. However, making both one way, in opposing directions, at some future time may be worth consideration.

As regards status I believe this is a long established way and undoubtedly carries vehicular rights. I do not think trying to contest that at any Public Inquiry would be worthwhile. On status – as opposed to desirability, suitability or sustainability - I do not think there is any doubt it should at least be regarded as a BOAT.

At the moment however, to prevent further deterioration and damage to historic features, I think use by MPV's should be prohibited with urgent attention paid to drainage, which is the main cause for accelerating deterioration. Thereafter some voluntary restraint agreed with representative user groups and the local community, may be an option.

My personal thoughts as a horserider were that it was negotiable, if a little challenging in places. There is a lot of erosion and water damage which would be very costly to repair. I think this expense could be avoided if it was only accessible for walkers and horses. A lovely and picturesque route! My big concern is that it would be quite terrifying to meet vehicles along it as there is absolutely nowhere to go to get out of their way, for walkers or horses. Therefore, even though it would be an idyllic route to ride, sadly I wouldn't want to risk it as it would be very dangerous to do so if vehicles were using the route.

Safety Issues

Signage

None. No warning signs

Conflicts of different use

'Snow path' running parallel in the adjoining fields gives a safe passage for walkers but the track is narrow, deep and with some blind bends which make safety an issue for riders of horses and bikes. Path junctions along the route are dangerous

Width

Narrow in places but not too narrow for vehicles

Causes of Damage

Degradation of surface by vehicle use making the surface unstable and subject to water damage. The present condition of the route is very poor and has, apparently deteriorated recently.

Solutions

Repairs to track surface. Warning signs, particularly at points where paths cross the route.

Long-term Management

The DCC plans for repair on this route are crucial. Details of the nature of the repair work to be carried need to be known before any other decisions can be taken, this includes the drainage and the provision of adequate maintenance. It is difficult to see how any surface other than tarmac could be sustainable if the route continues to be open to motorised vehicles. Would repairs result in increased speed of vehicles which would make the route more dangerous for non-vehicle users? There are long term safety problems on this route.

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Appendix 4 – Outseats Parish Council Response

1. Physical condition of the lane

The papers supplied with your letter describe the state of Hurstclough Lane well: at each end it is metalled and in reasonably good condition. In the middle, it is pitted, muddy and rough and is deteriorating quickly. In particular, there is a section that leads from Hurst Clough itself that is very badly rutted and damaged, making it difficult for any road users (even walkers) to climb or descend; it is probably impossible for horses to get up or down this section. The damage to this section has largely been caused by motorised vehicles (4x4s and trail bikes) that rut the road badly, and then water action on this very steep section does the rest of the damage. There used to be a big drain made of half-inch clay pipes running from the bridle path to the brook bottom, but we assume that this has been damaged by vehicles over the years so that it is now not effective.

2. Patterns and levels of use

Again, your papers give a reasonably good analysis of usage: the levels of recreational vehicular use are quite significant, especially at weekends. In addition, farmers use the lane to access land, and Severn Trent use it for maintenance of the water pipes from the filter beds. Hurstclough Lane is very popular with walkers (although they tend to use the footpath running behind the hedge alongside the route, rather than risk meeting speeding vehicles in the narrow, high-sided lane). We understand that mountain bikes also use the lane. However, we believe that horse-riders now use it less than they once did, because of the bad underfoot conditions.

In recent years, the use of sat-nav systems has added another problem – some sat-navs send drivers from the west looking for S32 1BD (a postcode which includes a popular bunkhouse) along Hurstclough Lane, causing driver distress and, at times, vehicles to become stuck and/or damaged; local farmers then have to be asked to pull them out!

3. Conflicts between different users of the lane

Hurstclough Lane is very narrow in places (barely as wide as a vehicle) and sunken, with earth banks and hedges on both sides often reaching 10-15 feet above the road surface; sections of the route are relatively blind to oncoming traffic. Therefore, walkers and cyclists are always at risk from speeding trail bikes and 4x4s (as well as farm tractors, though these generally move more slowly). These user conflicts can be coped with safely only if users travel slowly – this is not always the case at present. Furthermore, the lane's extreme narrowness means that the normal country-road protocol of one car diverting into a passing-place to allow an opposite-direction car to pass is often almost impossible; for that reason, the lane does not really work as a 2-way traffic thoroughfare.

4. Effect of use on local residents

Local residents of Outseats, living at the eastern end of Hurstclough Lane, regularly complain about the levels of noise and nuisance caused by the recreational motorised users of the lane. These are principally trail bikes and 4x4s which descend Long Causeway, then continue south to Hurstclough Lane; this is part of a popular 'circuit'. This problem has reduced recently with regard to 4x4s, because of the temporary closure of Long Causeway by DCC; however, the problems caused by trail bikes still remain, and no doubt the problems from 4x4s will return once the Long Causeway temporary closure ceases. Once again, Outseats Parish Council strongly recommends that all types of use by recreational motor vehicles should be permanently restricted on Long Causeway by way of a TRO effected by PDNPA.

5. Suitability of signage

The "Unsuitable for vehicles" signs at each end of Hurstclough Lane are damaged and in need of replacement – maybe in a larger size, as the present signs are regularly ignored by car users. The Parish Council has recommended in the past that gates (openable by motorists) be put in place where the metalling ceases at each end of Hurstclough Lane, with "Unsuitable for vehicles" signs attached (referring to the unmetalled section). The Council hopes that sat-nav users might realise that they should turn back when confronted with such gates. We make this recommendation again.

6. Suggestions for improvements

To summarise from the above, our recommendations are:

- a. Restore the now-defunct drainage, which used to work quite well. (section 1 above)
- b. Attempt to influence sat-nav designers. (section 2 above)
- c. Consider whether Hurstclough Lane should become a one-way street. (section 3 above)
- d. Apply a TRO to Long Causeway, as this would probably reduce the extent of problems with Hurstclough Lane. (section 4 above)
- e. Replace damaged signage at each end of the lane with larger signs. (section 5 above)
- f. Install gates across the carriageway, to deter use of the unmetalled section. (section 5 above)

Appendix – Historical notes on Hurstclough Lane

Hurstclough Lane is one of the original routes that brought goods from the west of the country to Stanage and beyond - to Sheffield and the inland port of Bawtry, Doncaster on the River Idle. Its importance goes back into pre-history; the moorland above Hurstclough Lane was exploited in prehistoric times, from where quantities of Mesolithic flint and chert artifacts have been recovered from erosion scars and following moorland fires. Occasional finds of flint of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages have been made in the area; these could only have travelled from the west via Hurstclough Lane.

Later, Stanage and White Path Moss were crossed by the Roman road from Brough to the Fort at Templeborough, Rotherham. Later still, in medieval times, the Hurstclough Lane was a packhorse route, where ponies laden with panniers full of salt from Cheshire headed west across the country. This is the origin of Saltergate Lane at the west end of Hurstclough Lane. Until the opening of the Sheffield-Manchester Turnpike in 1758, Hurstclough Lane was one of the most important routes in the area, part of the lane being cobbled in the middle to give a firm footing for horses.

Please also note that Hurstclough Lane has not been continually open to traffic; by 1986, it was quite overgrown and only really passable to horse-riders and walkers, in fact it was blocked for a long period by a fallen tree.