

Shatton Lane

Route Management Plan



Shatton Lane - Route Management Plan



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Introduction

In March 2006, a Derbyshire County Council Improvement and Scrutiny Committee examined the issue of the use of unsurfaced highways. The key recommendation of the Committee was that each Non-classified Highway in Derbyshire would be surveyed to define whether it is sustainable or unsustainable.

National Park staff acted behalf of Derbyshire County Council to conduct a baseline survey of routes within the National Park. A full condition survey of all 180 'other routes with public access' has been completed and prioritised.

At it's meeting on 7th March 2008, the National Park Authority requested that the routes showing highest priority from the survey should be subject to management plans, in order to determine the most appropriate courses of action.

This plan is therefore intended to inform the Highway Authority (Derbyshire County Council) and the National Park Authority to enable the development and review of measures to improve the management of the route.

1 Description

Shatton Lane commences from the southern end of the classified road south of Old Lees Farm, and ascends in a south-west direction passing the signal mast. The route then continues generally southwards to meet Abney Restricted Byway 5 (not vehicular).

Legal Status:	Non-classified Highway
County:	Derbyshire
Parish:	Brough and Shatton
Grid Reference:	SK201815 to 192805
Length:	1700 metres

Nearest Other Byways / Non-classified Highways / Claimed Byways

The route was generally considered to be used as part of a circuit continuing on Abney RB 5 (non-vehicular access) and Brough Lane or Duper Lane. The formalising of Abney 5 as restricted byway has ended this situation legally.

Another NCH lies to the north linking to Offerton whilst a few kilometres to the south there are several routes around Eyam and Great Hucklow areas.



Shatton Lane





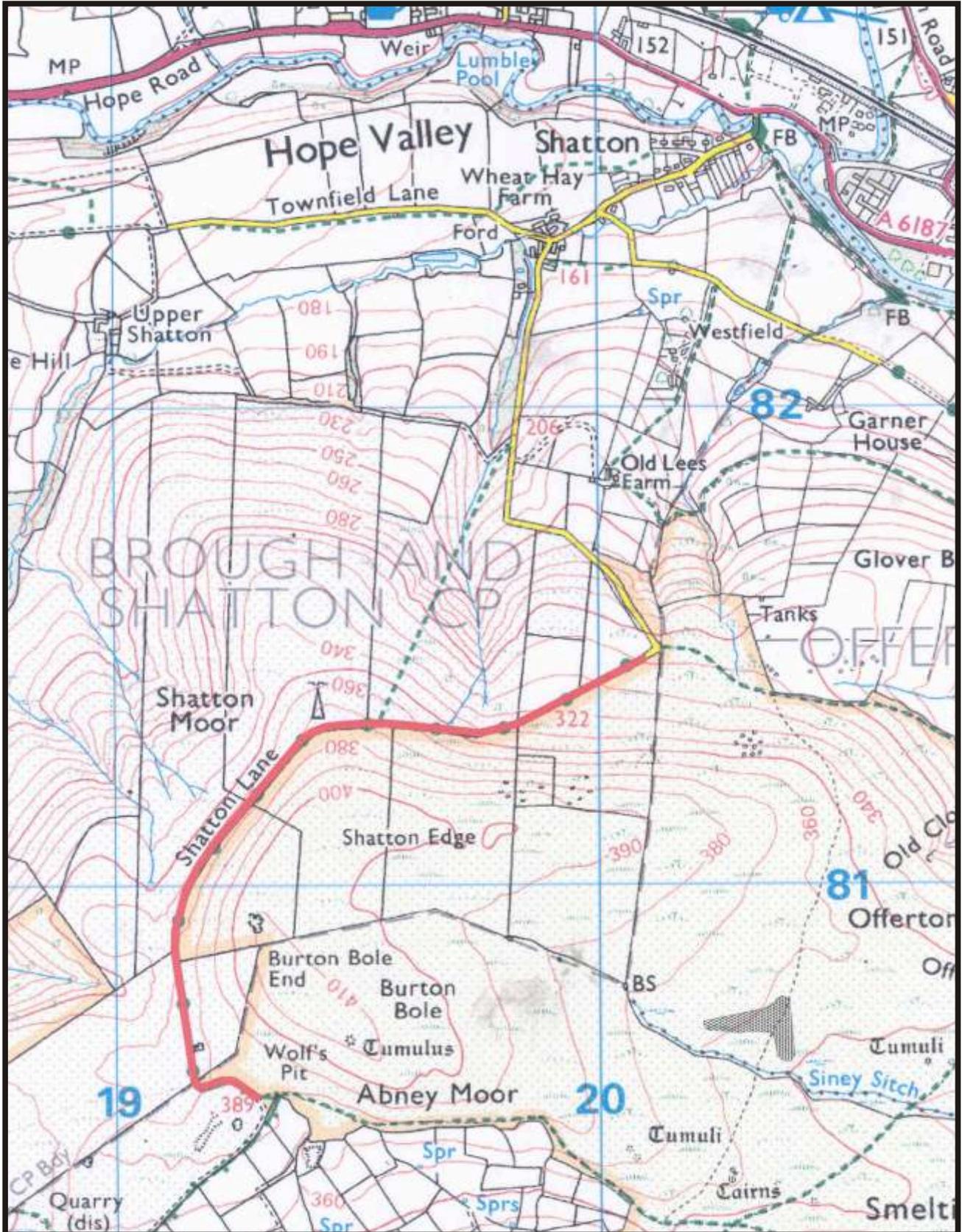
Shatton Lane

 Route with proven or possible motor vehicle rights which may be unsustainable

DESIGNATIONS

-  Site designated as one or more of
 - Site of Scientific Interest
 - Special Area of Conservation
 - Section 3 & Natural Zone
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument

Representation on this map of a route is no evidence of a right of way.
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2 Report

2.1 Sustainability Analysis

The ability of a route to sustain use is largely dependent on the existing route surface, the topography and the drainage of the route. The surface can vary from mineral soils or grass to a stone-surfaced track. On most routes some engineering works have been carried out to alter the natural surface and drainage.

Each Non-classified Highway in Derbyshire has been surveyed to define whether it is sustainable or unsustainable.

The methodology was considered and approved by Derbyshire County Council Improvement and Scrutiny Committee in March 2006, the Peak District Local Access Forum in December 2005 and the National Park Authority as part of its 'Strategy to Manage Recreational Vehicular Use of Unsurfaced Highways and Address Off-road Use' in October 2007.

National Park staff, acting on behalf of Derbyshire County Council, conducted a baseline survey in the National Park. A full condition survey of all 180 'other routes with public access' has been completed and prioritised.

The survey was intended to provide a quick review of all routes to place each into one of three broad categories:-

- Sustainable
- Unclear
- Maybe unsustainable

Method:

1. Does the route show serious signs of physical damage resulting from usage?
Yes/uncertain/No
2. Is the route subject to any protective designation (for heritage or wildlife)?
Yes/uncertain/No
3. Have there been any complaints about vehicular use conflicting with other uses?
Many/Some/None
4. Is the character of the route being damaged by vehicular use?
Yes, a lot/Yes, a bit/No
5. Is the free passage of non motorised users being prejudiced?
Yes, a lot/Yes, a bit/No

Each positive response registers '*may be unsustainable*' each negative response registers '*sustainable*' and other responses register '*unclear*'.

One or more '*Maybe unsustainable*' responses will put the route in the '*Maybe unsustainable*' category at this stage. No '*Maybe unsustainable*' responses but one or more '*Unclear*' responses will put the route in the '*Unclear*' category at this stage.

All '*Sustainable*' responses will put the route in the '*Sustainable*' category at this stage.

All routes recorded as 'maybe unsustainable' will be the subject of a management plan.

Results:

The above methodology has been refined in order to clarify the questions/answers, and allocated scores to enable a statistical comparison.

1. Does the route show serious signs of physical damage resulting from usage?

Is it difficult for user groups to use this route? (for users groups we have defined walking, cycling, horse-riding, carriage driving, and vehicles).

3 points – 4 or more user groups would find the route hard to use,

2 points – 2-3 user groups would find the route hard to use

1 point 1 or no user groups would find the route hard to use.

Score = 3

Comments:

Since very recent repairs the situation has improved at the worst location, it may be that the score of this section can now be reduced, however, at the time of survey a section of the route was impassable for most users. Since Shatton Lane has already been designated part of the initial 8 priority routes and many issues and actions have been investigated, it would seem reasonable to still include the route at this stage.

2. Is the route subject to any protective designation (for heritage or wildlife)?

We have defined protective designation as Scheduled ancient monument, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation or Section 3 and Natural Zone.

3 points a route crosses or abuts a protected area and vehicle users are (for whatever reason) leaving the highway,

2 points – the route crosses or abuts a protected area,

1 point – no areas of protection abut or cross the highway

Score = 3

Comments:

Crosses a designated area and use is also potentially facilitating illegal use of connecting Abney Restricted Byway 5.

3. Have there been any complaints about vehicular use conflicting with other uses?

3 points - Yes many complaints from a variety of sources,

2 points - Yes from localized sources or individuals,

1 point – few or no complaints

Score = 2

Comments:

Strong local feelings exist about the route.

4. Is the character of the route being damaged by vehicular use?

3 points – the highway and adjacent land are affected,

2 points – the highway is affected,

1 point – little or no affect (including 1 or 2 minor areas of damage on the highway)

Score = 2

Comments:

Sections of the Highway have been damaged but recent repairs have addressed the worst issue area.

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

Are there issues regarding the width, visibility, slope and speed of use by vehicles?

3 points yes (3 or 4 issues),

2 points yes (1 or 2 issues),

1 point – minor/no issues

Score = 2

Comments:

High speeds have been noted and a section of the route is fairly steep.

Total Score = 12 / 15

2.2 Engineering Report

- *Width (including latest road safety and engineering advice used for roads)*
- Wherever possible a minimum width of 3m to be achieved. Otherwise a practical width to be constructed to suit site conditions.

- *Incline (as above)* This will be dictated by existing ground levels and could vary extensively. (gradient 1:20 to 1:10)

- *Drainage Issues*
- 1. A 'V' section ditch / channel along desired sections where gradients dictate the water shed.
- 2. A piped carrier drain + inspection chambers / Head walls. As required.

- *California Bearing Ratio* - DCC highways laboratory to investigate. (If necessary)

- *Repair Specification*
- 1. Preparation - Site clearance (As required)
- 2. Earthworks - Grade & trim existing ground - Infill severe rutting with graded limestone.
- 3. Surface construction:-
 - a) Stone sub-base to areas as required
 - b) Re-cycled materials / topping to areas as required.
- 4. Stone infill to areas where standing water prevails to raise levels to desired profile.

- *Cost to repair - £ 158k*

- *Estimated annual maintenance cost £ 5 - 10 k..*
- *Additional comments by engineer*
- *Metal surface (If required) - £ 275 k.*

Note:- A saving of £ 40k could be made on the main cost (£158k) if a metal surface was constructed.

Historical Maintenance

Potholes filled throughout the length in spring 2008. At the same time, the track was shaped at irregular intervals to shed water into the lower verge.

Potholing is also carried out occasionally by Aquiva, the company servicing the transmitter mast, between it and the tarmac road.

2.3 Conservation Report

2.3.1 Ecological Report

Site Designations

The route does not pass through, or abut onto, any SSSI, SPA, or SAC

More than 90% of the route passes through Section 3 Moorland.

Description and ecological interest

The southern section of the lane crosses part of Abney Moor containing typical moorland vegetation communities of high ecological value.

The remainder of the route descends diagonally down Shatton Moor and is enclosed between drystone walls. The marginal vegetation consists of acid grassland, heathland, wet flush and bracken scrub. On the downhill side of the lane, bracken-dominated and species-poor grassland communities predominate. The uphill side is largely embanked and contains a number of bracken stands interspersed with species-rich acid and acid-neutral grassland, grass-heath transition communities and wet flush vegetation. The grassland communities include locally frequent tormentil, heath bedstraw, violets, eyebright, harebell, wavy hair grass, fairy flax, bird's foot trefoil, cat's ear and self-heal; dwarf shrub species include bilberry, heather, cross-leaved heath, crowberry and cowberry. All these patches qualify as Category A grassland under the standard PDNPA pasture assessment scheme.

The small wet flushes are also species-rich and contain, among others, four species of sedges, three rushes, round-leaved water crowfoot, marsh willowherb, marsh bird's foot trefoil, water forget-me-not, water starwort and cuckoo flower.

A badger sett is located within 50m of the route.

Vehicles leaving the highway

The section of the route crossing Abney Moor is open on both sides. At the gateway opposite Wolf's Pit, a track to the SW has been worn by vehicles, but this could result from farm or recreational use, or a combination of the two.

Below this point, the lane is confined on both sides by intact drystone walls and at present there are no opportunities for off-highway driving.

Impacts

The lane surface on Abney Moor is uneven and stony but not obviously damaged; the edges have a narrow grassy margin, contrasting with the moor proper, and consistent with regular use by vehicles and pedestrians.

On the sloping section of the route, a footpath has been created on the lower side in places, presumably to avoid the rough and uneven bed; tracks show that motor bikes also use this. The uphill side containing the most ecologically valuable areas is quite steeply embanked along most of its length and is perhaps less susceptible to encroachment and damage from increased vehicle use.

2.3.2 Landscape Character Assessment

Shatton Lane lies within the Derwent Valley character area, characterised by its 'lower lying landscapes associated with the valley of the river Derwent and its tributaries.' One of the key landforms are the wooded slopes and valleys, with 'narrow winding, often sunken lanes'.

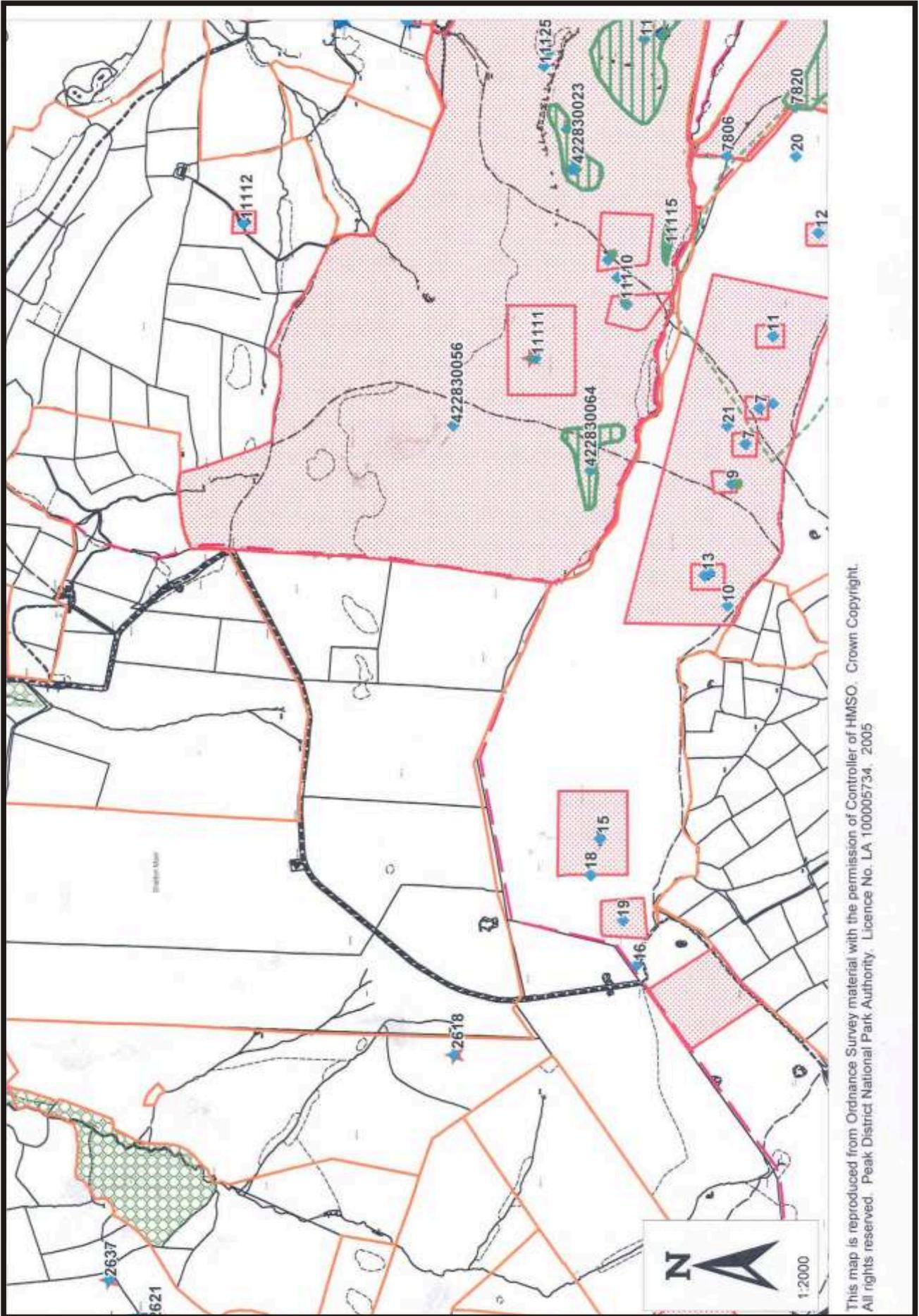
2.3.3 Cultural Heritage Report

Please see map on next page illustrating Cultural Heritage Features on or close to the route.

We have no detailed archaeological information relating to this route, however it is likely to have been created when much of the surrounding waste and common land was improved and enclosed in the mid 19th century (see below).

Historic landscape character information: the route runs through land which is characterised as Post-1650 Encl - Parliamentary Enclosure Award. Allotted and enclosed as shown on the Brough & Shatton Enclosure Map of 1850.

Map illustrating Cultural Heritage Features on or close to the route



2.4 Evidence of levels of use

Friday 6 June 08 – Friday 4 July 08 (29 days)

Daily totals	Cars only	Motorcycles only
Mondays	4	5
Tuesdays	2	3
Wednesdays	1	14
Thursdays	0	8
Fridays	3	5
Saturdays	2	12
Sundays	4	22
Mon-Fri total	10	35
Sat-Sunday total	6	34
Overall total	16	69
Average per day	0.55	2.38

Observations relating to the Implementing of Actions

What are the challenges that must be faced in relation to managing this route - are the resources in place to do so, and if not, how may they be sourced?

Ownership and agricultural access

We believe three landowners require access along Shatton Lane, although use is not regular.

Arqiva Services Ltd. need to ensure that safe and unrestricted access to the transmitter is maintained. They also carry out occasional routine maintenance to the lane below the mast to facilitate access to it.

Comments from other parties

Observations of motor vehicle user group

'During one of my visits, I witnessed a tractor traverse the rutted ground with ease. So, any suggestion that the farmers cannot reach their fields is incorrect.

My understanding is that the policy adopted by the PDNPA on 5 October included the tenet not to pursue a TRO solely on the basis of lack of maintenance.

It is worth noting that UCRs, as 'real' roads, are not facilities exclusively for local people, nor are they primarily routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. And it should not be overlooked that the photographed section of the lane will have suffered as much if not more from heavy agricultural vehicles, which use the route 7 days a week.

I am disappointed that there is an immediate desire to close a highway because the surface is not up to the required standard. I am sure the good people of Bradwell would be somewhat dismayed if the Highway Authority closed the A6187 through the Hope Valley instead of affecting a repair, if that surface had become worn due to poor maintenance.

Finally and personally, I am left wondering at the rather parochial attitudes which prevail around this topic. Do we really have our priorities right spending time considering the implementation of an elaborate and expensive legal process (which restricts people's rights, after all) simply because of a few ruts on Shatton Edge?

Observations of the local community

Bradwell Parish Council

A site meeting took place on November 9th Peak Park, DCC, local farmers, Ramblers Association and a local off-roader.

The whole circuit was traversed from Brough to Shatton, including the illegal section. Everyone agreed that something had to be done urgently to stop the deterioration. DCC promised that new signs would be installed (within a month) at both ends of the restricted section, to replace those removed by off-roaders, and that a no-access sign would be fixed in Shatton village. Peak Park also said the restrictions would be flagged up on the proposed new website.

'Bradwell PC is happy to listen to the views of external user-groups and in fact three PC councillors, met the Chair and Secretary of Derbyshire Soaring Club in Bradwell recently, at their request, to discuss the future of the Bradwell Edge launch site.

'We are hopeful that the proposed officer actions will quickly resolve the Shatton Lane issue, but still believe that a TRO is essential for at least part of Brough Lane

2.5 Local Access Forum Subgroup Members' comments

Members of the Peak District Local Access Forum were invited to visit the site and make comments based on a methodology and proforma. They were requested to discuss the routes with other Members and try to reach a general recommendation, however, if they were unable to agree, members were invited to provide their individual observations.

Their comments are summarised as follows:

Safety Issues

1. Signed as a cul-de-sac at Shatton.
2. Shatton Lane remains a nightmare for anyone who is not into extreme sports and is probably also a safety hazard although in my opinion this is mainly on the steeper semi surfaced parts rather than the virtually impassable sections which are on the flat (the Brough end of this track offer both excitements) but it would be very easy to get a vehicle stranded up there and the deep water in the ruts may be hiding hazards to two-wheeled traffic.
3. The RB sign at the access to Abney Moor has been removed.
4. Saw 3 cyclists, 6 walkers in one hour. Evidence of horse-riding, motor cyclists and 4 wheel vehicles. Road is wide and good enough for little conflict. There is a clear cul-de-sac sign at the Shatton end but posts at the Abney end have no signs.
5. A 'No Through Road' sign marks the start of it, but at its gated termination appears to have been removed.
6. 4 wheel drives and trail bikes could easily travel at 30-40 mph which would be a problem for pedestrians and horse riders.

Cause(s) of damage

1. None. Recent repairs could be degraded by water flowing across the road.
2. There are signs of infill having been washed out down to the sides of the track, even in the short period since the maintenance. This will get worse in winter.
3. It is in adequate repair at the moment, but there is abundant evidence of illegal use of Abney Restricted Byway 5 and of adjoining moorland.
4. The actual lanes have a good sustainable surface, ie hard core, therefore can support various forms of wheeled traffic. However there is in a number of places evidence of rutting and churning by 4x4 s and trail bikes off the track and on the open moor, in particular from the wall section of Shatton Lane to the tarmac lane down to Abney. 4X4s and trail bike damage on open sections of moor beside unwallled sections.

Solutions

1. This is a cul-de-sac route which is, or should be, closed to motorised vehicles (apart from agricultural) at Abney Restricted Byway 5. Any improvements should not be seen as encouraging illegal use.
2. None required.
3. There has been substantial maintenance since June, filling all the main pot-holes and at the reduced usage reported, there has been little vehicular damage. Possible

future problems where open drains cross the track. The present maintenance and control is working but signposts need renewing and may indicate a problem with vandalism. It is also important that the signage clearly indicates where vehicular access stops to avoid use of the Abney restricted byway. Some proper drains to take water under the road might reduce future maintenance.

4. As things stand the use it attracts is sustainable. Some barrier additional to the unlocked gate (at Wolf's Pit) needs to be put in place to prevent illegal vehicular entry.

5. Fencing to prevent access to areas of open moor by motorized traffic?

Long-term management options

1. Routine maintenance of the road surface. MPV use is very low as this is now a cul-de-sac.

2. Regular maintenance of signposts, drains and potholes is essential if the improvement is to be maintained.

3. Watching brief on surface condition.

Local Access Forum sub-group recommendations

The sub-group met at Losehill Hall on 28th November 2008 to discuss their observations.

Their agreed recommendations for Shatton Lane were:

- Improve signage for all users.
- Install a barrier to prevent recreational vehicular access onto Abney Restricted Byway 5.
- Continue enforcement operations against illegal activity.
- Maintain surface repairs.

3 Action Plan

Summary of Issues

The recent clarification of Abney Restricted Byway 5 has left this route as a no-through-route for public vehicles. This reclassification has resulted in a 90% drop in use.

Recent maintenance has addressed the safety of users..

Pre-Management Plan Actions:

Repairs are complete on the NCH section of Shatton Lane. An Action Plan for the Restricted Byway section of this route (known as Abney Restricted Byway 5) is in place, with regular review, in consultation with DCC Countryside Service and the Police. New signage is on order and fencing works are proposed to deter illegal trespass onto the moor. Monitoring shows significant decline in use.

- Vehicle use has been logged
- The police have been involved in a partnership approach to address trespass issues attributed to the use of this lane
- 'No through road' signage has been erected and monitored
The worst sections of the lane have been repaired
- An Action Plan to deal with illegal use on connecting Abney RB 5 has been agreed and is being implemented with a view to police operations and barriers being installed by
- PDNPA staff

4 Recommendations

4.1 Conservation Recommendations

General

- The timing of works may be important in some cases, notably on moorland sites where the bird breeding season will be sensitive
- The extent of surfacing, and ensuring machinery avoids sensitive areas. In general there is a presumption that the extent of surfacing should be the minimum required to ensure sustainable use
- Type of materials- generally limestone material will not be appropriate in shale-grit areas, for example
- Storage of any materials obviously needs to avoid sensitive areas
- Associated drainage- need to avoid adverse impact on hydrology of areas of interest
- Repair/revegetation of any existing areas of damage.

Route specific

Shatton Lane

The main ecological consideration is avoiding expansion of off-route use. Provision of a more sustainable surface, at least along key sections, would be an acceptable solution but should avoid further land take. Any upgrading of the surface may have policy implications as the route lies within the Natural Zone.

4.2 Recommendation from local community

The stretch of route beyond the end of the tarmac should have a TRO, with locked gates and special stiles, to allow access to farmers' fields (key holders), walkers, horse riders and mountain-bikers – the benefit would be immediate. Local farmers have offered to repair the roads themselves and to maintain them for legitimate users.

4.3 Vehicle user-group recommendations

The cost of establishing a TRO as suggested with locked gates, special stiles, etc, would far exceed the cost of a few tons of hardcore provided by the Highway Authority. The responsible, recreational vehicle users would then be delighted to assist in the laying of the hardcore and hence affect the repair of the lane. We only need a few of the users to undertake a repair, which could be done probably over a weekend (preferably before the winter sets in) to a standard that would allow easy, sustained passage for all.

5 Management Proposals

Continue to monitor use levels and sustainability of route. Monitor use of RB5 and carry out enforcement operations as necessary.

Action: Peak District NPA / Derbyshire police

Priority: Medium

Timescale: on-going

