

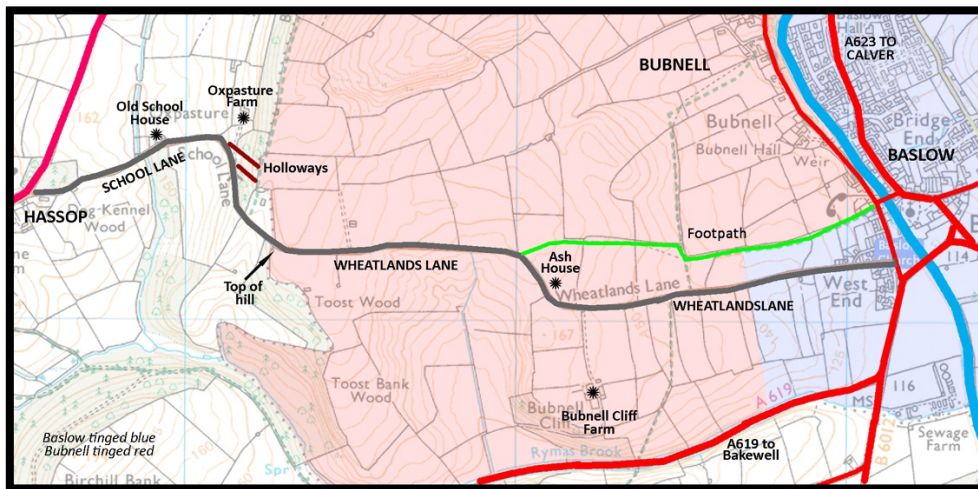
Wheatlands Lane and School Lane to Hassop

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Wheatlands Lane

Wheatlands Lane is the modern minor road from Baslow to Hassop. It starts at Bubnell Lane in Baslow, and passes uphill between the 1930s council houses of West End and Bakewell Road. It continues in a westerly direction through open farmland, passing Bubnell Cliff Farm on the left before turning briefly north for 200 metres then west again. A straight section follows before reaching the top of the hill and the parish boundary. At this point it enters Hassop Parish and is now called School Lane. It descends round the southern end of Bank Wood with Oxpasture Farm and the old Hassop School House on the right, crosses a small stream and joins Hassop Avenue a short distance from the Eyre Arms, a total distance of three kilometres.

WHEATLANDS LANE



The Traffic

Today the road is little used. In earlier times, before the 1759 Turnpike, it was one of the two roads between Baslow and its market town of Bakewell (the other was through Pilsley and Ball Cross). It was also part of a network of long distance cross country routes from east to west. The fact that it became one of the first turnpikes, shows that the route must have been well used.

The name

There are six fields (1848 Tithe Award) north of the upper part of Wheatlands Lane containing the field name Wheatlands. John Marsden 1653-1730 (local family history source) was publican at the Peacock Inn and also farmer at "Whitlands". This suggests that his homestead was near these fields. There is no trace of it today though a barn in the area may possible mark the spot. It is suggested that the lane got its name from the farm, and that wheat was grown in the area in the early 1700s.

The mediaeval route

There are clues to the route of the early pre-turnpike road. The first is narrow public footpath directly opposite the old Baslow bridge going in a westerly direction between two houses. It marks the boundary between the villages of Baslow and Bubnell. The path continues uphill to reach the straight section of Wheatlands Lane. It may be a relic of the pre turnpike road.

In Hassop parish in the wood south of Oxpasture farm there are holloways coursing up the steep hill to reach the summit north of Wheatlands Land.

There is no trace of any earlier route across the farmland but it is likely that these holloways continued across the fields. Any remains would have been carefully erased by the farmers when the land was enclosed.

BASLOW AND WHEATLANDS LANE



The Turnpike

The Chesterfield to Hernstone Lane Head (near Peak Forrest) Turnpike was opened in 1759, completing a through route of turnpikes from Chesterfield to Manchester. One branch went through Curbar Gap and Stoney Middleton, the other through Baslow and via Wheatlands Lane to Hassop and Wardlow.

There are two parts of Wheatlands Lane today that do not follow my suggested mediaeval route. The first is a long section from Bubnell Lane and past the drive to Bubnell Cliff Farm before turning twice to reach the straight upper part of the road. The second is the curved descent from the summit to Oxpasture Farm, which includes a deep cutting. Both these had more gentle inclines than the earlier route.

It is possible but very unlikely that there was an earlier Wheatlands Lane already in existence in 1759.

Enclosure

A map of Bubnell dated 1799 shows the layout of all the fields. Most are rectangular in shape typical of an organised enclosure covering the entire area. Fields in the vicinity of Wheatlands Lane appear to be based on the lane. There are no walls across the lane where the turnpike might have cut across an established field. This suggests that the enclosure (in this area at least) occurred after the 1759 turnpike. All enclosures in Bubnell were completed before 1799.

Point of interest

There is a small round structure, with conical roof that has partly fallen in, just west of the entrance to Bubnell Cliff Farm. This has recently been identified as an Ash Hut – a collection point for domestic ash later used as a fertiliser.



David Dalrymple-Smith

dds@w3z.co.uk November 2019