

**Turnpike Project - South Pennine Archaeology Group.
Report for the Waterfoot & Hitchon Dams Branch of the
Haslingden & Todmorden Trust (B6238) – January 2026**



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and
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Introduction

This turnpike was completed in 1826, and we have tried to discover what is still extant, both on the line of and adjacent to the new road, from that period. Since the road was originally constructed, there have been many phases when the road was widened, straightened and the course of the river canalised, altered and built over. With this report we are attempting to record remains of industry etc, if any, and what means remain of crossing the river to leave the valley.

Maps Used:

W Yates 1786

C Greenwood 1818 (shows early water powered mills)

G Hennet 1828 (the first map to show this new turnpike road)

OS 1839 Old Series - 1 inch to the mile (the first OS map to show this turnpike road)

OS 1844 County Series - 6 inch to the mile

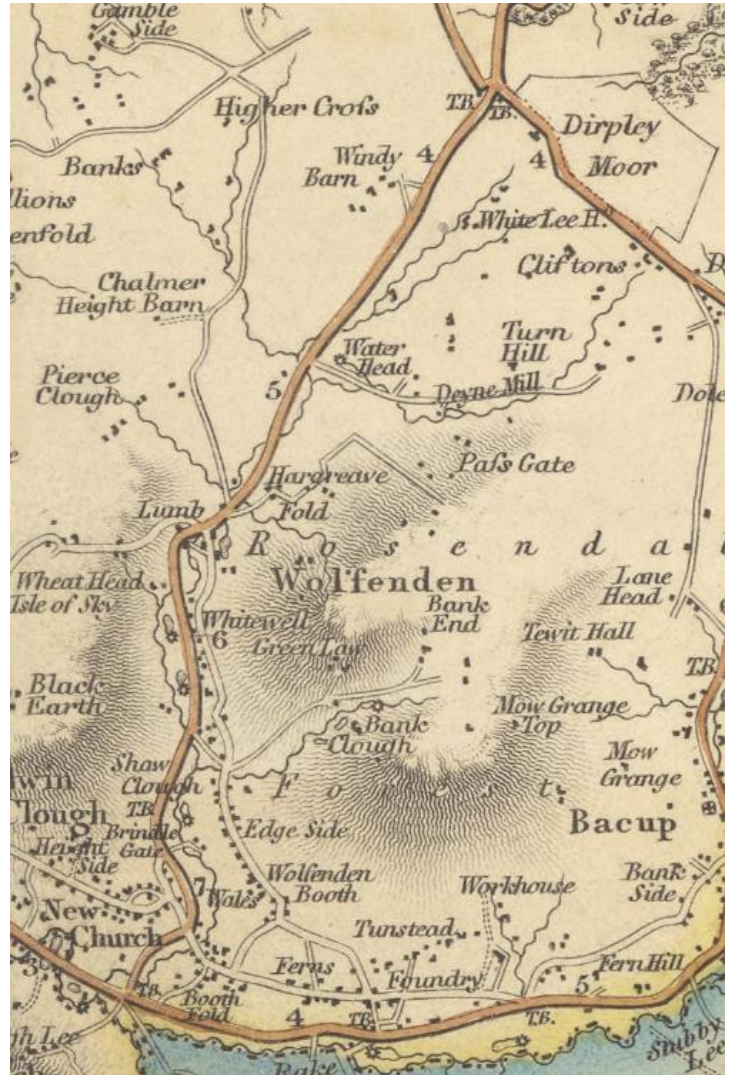
Lancashire County Council's MARIO Maps

We started by using the detailed OS1844 map before realising that we ought to check everything of note on earlier maps. The OS1844 map is used for most illustrations, as it shows details more clearly. However, we have discovered that some of these revised versions were produced at a much later date and yet still bear the original surveying and publishing dates! Therefore, occasionally some of the things shown on the OS1844 dated map were not in existence at that time. In some circumstances it has been advantageous to consult some of the later dated 25-inch OS maps and also the modern OS map 1:25,000.

When comparing maps shown on this report, please bear in mind that there is also a difference in the scales used.

Our observations are shown starting from the south at Waterfoot, travelling north to Deerplay.

G Hennet's map of 1828 was the first map to show this turnpike. It is now known as the Burnley Road East. The B6238.



- 1. Baltic House (SD 83395 21918) is still extant, and the original gateposts can be discerned. The house is present on the 1839 map.**



1844 OS Map



Gate posts



Baltic House (north side)

2. River Crossing over Whitewell Brook, in existence before the turnpike construction (SD 83747 22460). The 1839 map shows a track and a ford coming from Edge Side Lane, crossing the river, probably with stepping stones, to join the new turnpike. It is in a similar place to the present footbridge, (shown on the 1844 OS map). Adjacent to the ford is a street on the west side, called Hippings Lane, and this provides a clue as to there being a crossing here (hippings is an old name for stepping stones).

The footbridge, supported and constructed from huge stone slabs, is still extant by the side of the road over Whitewell Brook replacing the ford.



1839 OS Map showing the ford, slightly downstream, which by 1844 was replaced with a footbridge, still present today but with modern railings.



Position of the western end of the old ford (above left), which is opposite Hippings Lane.



3. Edge Side Mill (SD 83668 22756) Very little trace is left of the original building, of what became a huge complex.



Greenwoods map (above) of 1818 before the turnpike, showing that Edge Side water powered mill existed then.



1839 OS Map



1844 OS map) showing that the road had been moved away from the river and that the mill had been extended

Edge Side mill *continued*

We have ascertained the position of the original mill to be opposite the lower end of the dam. This end part of the dam is still shown on the modern OS map, but has been filled in recently. We discovered the head race arch leading to the water wheel, along with remnants of the North wall of the Mill. The Dam overflow (weir) exit is still extant, which flows under a more modern mill building, to enter Whitewell Brook.



1893 OS Map, providing a clearer picture of the dam, weir, sluice and mill.



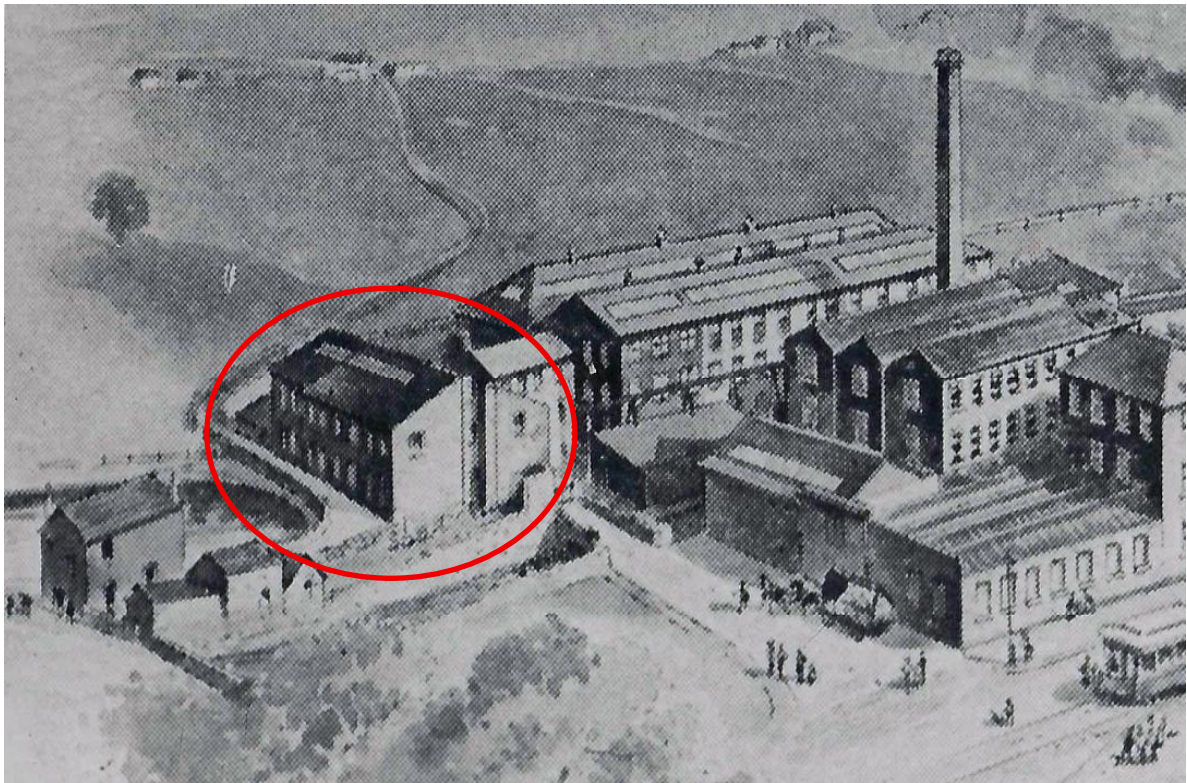
The overflow from the dam (weir) still exists (above), emerging from under a more modern mill building



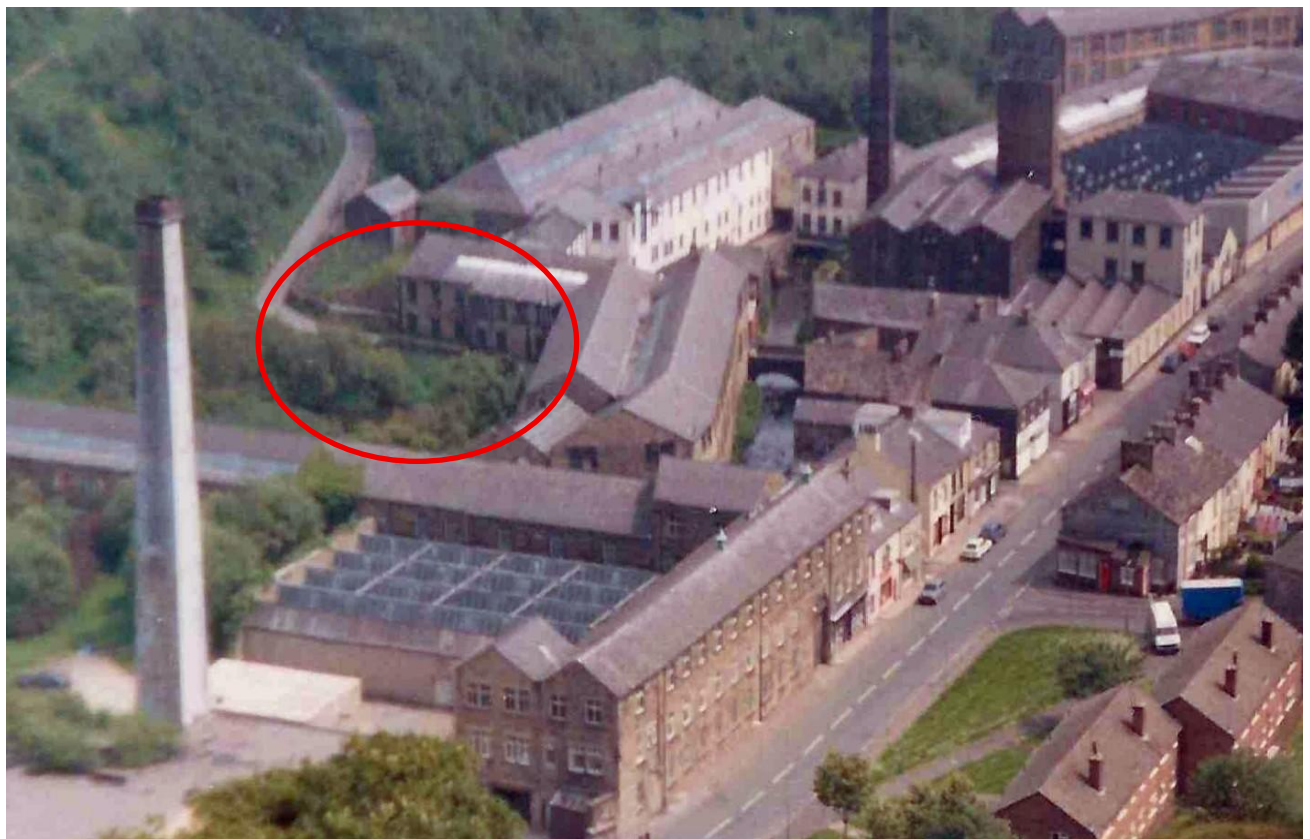
Above - Head race tunnel (sluice) and outside of northern wall



Inside of the northern wall of the mill. The arch cannot be discerned from this side as a ramp has been built over it. The trees shown on the photograph are growing out of the mill dam



The first Edgeside Mill (circled) from an Artists impression C1900



Old part of Mill and end of Dam. Overview from C1976 taken from Seat Naze

4. Scout Turnpike remains? at SD 83523 22879 There are the remains of a building here. Could it possibly have been on the footprint of the Toll Booth? It is not shown on the 1839 OS map BUT, upon studying different maps we find that it was present on Hennet's map of 1828 – See below
(The hydrant on the photograph was used to replenish the steam trams with water, and therefore is relatively modern for our purpose)



Hennet's map 1828



OS 1839 (Toll Booth not shown)



1844 OS Map



(of interest – There is a water supply through the rear wall (far left))

5. Culvert at SD 83654 23447. The culvert is extant on the West side of the road but on the East side the stream has been culverted and therefore there is no trace.

1844 OS Map



Culvert looking back towards the road



Steps down to the Culvert on west side of road

View from west at the steps, towards the east side (right), where there is no trace of the culvert.



6. The Arch at SD 83654 23447 (in the same place as the above culvert) appears to have been originally built for Whitewell Bottom Mill. The mill and an adjacent bridge was built over the river (see 1839 map) However, the river south of the mill appears to have been slightly re-routed since, because it's been canalised. The arch here is therefore on the route of the original river where it emerged from underneath the mill. According to the 1891 map the mill had been extended when converted to steam power from water.

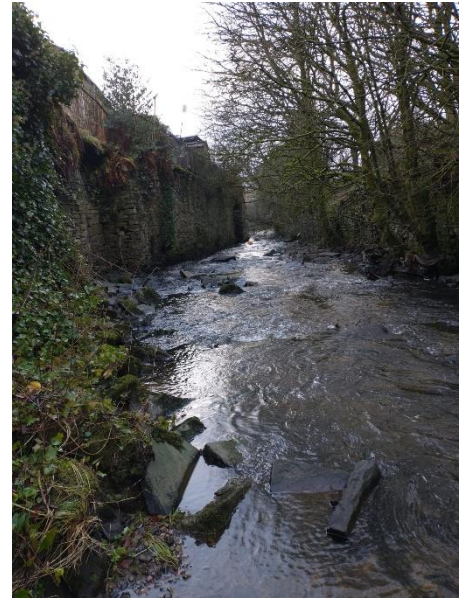


1844 OS Map (above)



1839 OS map with the mill ringed

Looking downstream (above right) to where the river has been canalised to enable foundations for a row of houses to be built by the roadside



The mill originally straddled the river (see above 1844 map), and the river came through the arch. *(The culvert terminates here as well)*

7. Culvert at SD 83616 23587 – This was the feeder stream, culverted under the new turnpike road for Whitewell Bottom Mill dam (now a playing field) on the West side, so no trace there. The stream and actual culvert are still extant on the east side but is now culverted under both the road, and the playing field, on its western side, where it empties into the Whitewell Brook.



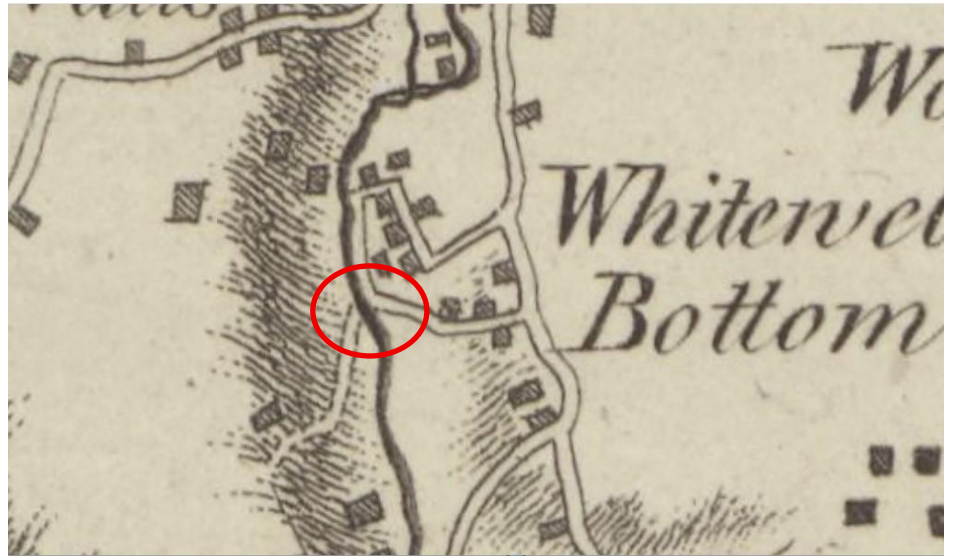
1844 OS Map



2025 culvert on the East side of the road looking toward the West

8. River Crossing at SD 83510 23725 over Whitewell Brook, at what is now Whitewell Bottom Bridge (shown below) on School Street.

This bridge has replaced a ford that crossed the river at this point when the turnpike was first built.



1786 Yates Map showing the ford across the river.



1839 OS map showing a ford but no bridge.



1844 OS map showing the new bridge

9. Rock Farm at SD 83517 24291. The barn, on the lefthand side, has been converted in to a house and is attached to the original farmhouse on the right.



1839 OS map showing Rock Farm



1844 OS map showing Rock Farm



Rock Farm with original barn on left



10. Rock Mill Dam at SD 83564 24268, with the Mill Owners's house, rebuilt on the same footprint. The dam once fed the woollen mills 150 metres to the south west (no longer extant).



1839 OS Map



1844 OS Map



Dam with Mill Owner's House – Rebuilt on footprint of original



11. Milestone at SD 83617 24397 . This is the only original milestone still extant, from when the turnpike was built. It is badly weathered so no markings can be discerned.



1839 OS Map



1844 OS Map



12. Hargreaves Arms at SD 83707 24819. The original Hargreaves Arms appears on Hennet's 1828 map and is shown on every map published since. The Inn, named after the Hargreaves family, who were very prominent in the Rossendale area, is still extant (now closed) and the surrounding buildings have been added since. It would appear that at one time it had been extended and once occupied the present parking area.

1844 OS Map



2025



13. River Crossing at SD 83797 24823 over Whitewell Brook, Lumb, leading to what was once Lumb Mill (non extant) downstream.

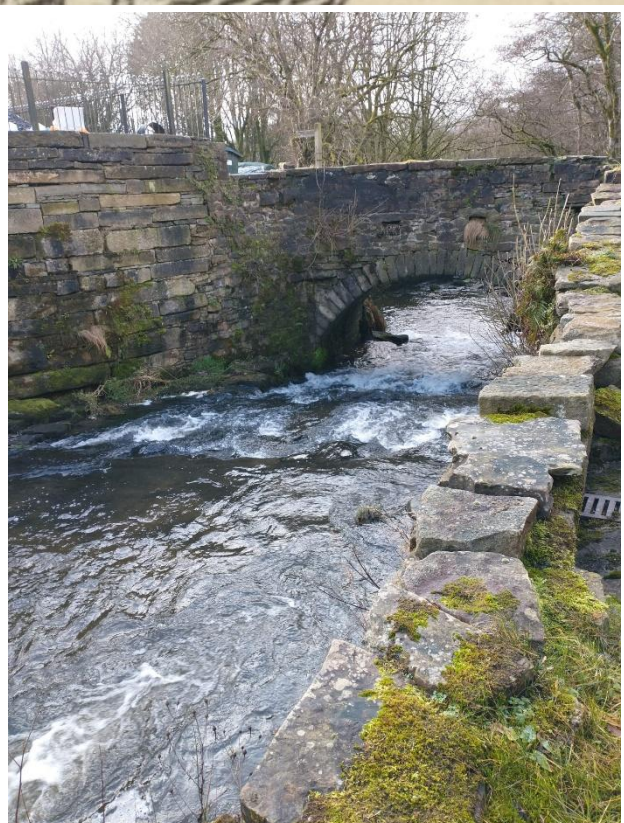
This river crossing was originally very important as it was the upper limit of Edgeside Lane where it eventually came down into the valley and crossed the river towards Walls, then over the hilltop towards Rawtenstall.

Due to discrepancies in the older maps we are unsure whether this was originally a ford, or if the present bridge was there at the time of turnpike construction.

1839 OS Map



Greenwood's 1818 map showing the pre turnpike road heading NNW, whilst the new turnpike was built north along side the river.



14,15 &16. Water Village. The new turnpike was built along side the hamlet of Waterfold



SD 84220 25783 Cottage at Water Fold (now extended to the south) is on Priestly Fold Lane by the confluence of streams



Above. SD 84242 25812 – (Top circle on map) House on Dean Road, formally an Inn called The Water Tavern. It has a datestone of 1831 but the owner confirmed that the datestone was added when the building was altered in that year and a third house was added on the right.



Above: Cottages at Water Fold SD 84202 25757, one of which has a date stone of 1693, although we have not been able to prove its authenticity.

17. Terrace at SD 84198 25937. A Listed terrace at Springside with interesting windows on the ground floor. Originally 4 cottages with a building at either end, one a house and the other an agricultural building, both of which have since been demolished. (1135-1141, Burnley Road East, Historic England List Entry No: 1072798)



1839 OS Map (above) showing privies opposite, later demolished and rebuilt a few metres further North



1844 OS map



2025

Comments and Observations

Whitewell Brook runs for over 4 miles all the way from Deerplay Moor, entering Clough Bottom Reservoir, and from there it follows close to the turnpike road along all its length to Waterfoot. The course of the brook has been altered in several places to accomodate houses and mills and in many cases culverted.

Turnpikes, Tollbooths, Tollgates eg (TP, TB, TG)

Of the four mentioned on the map there is a possibiity that there is a trace of the one at Scout (see item 4). In Lumb village it was good to see that the toll house had been mentioned on the Interpretation Board.



Milestones

Of the three originals shown on the early maps, only one remains (see item 11), and is so weathered that no markings can be seen.



Two other milestones are present on this road, as shown on right.

They have not been recorded, as this type of milestone did not come into use until approximately 1893.



SD 83617 24614



SD 84168 26059

Dams and Mills

By using the earliest maps (eg Greenwoods 1818) we have been able to asertain that there were at least nine water powered mills in the valley, plus others on the tributaries. There is only one dam still extant, at Rock, and only one mill at Edgeside, albeit just the north wall.

Any other buildings, either on or adjacent to the new turnpike, that we were sure were there at the time of the opening of the turnpike, have been included. However, although the pre turnpike maps show buildings that possibly are still extant, we cannot prove it.

Bridges on the Turnpike

All are extant and have, off course, been altered and widened. Unfortunately, we have not been able to get underneath to investigate if the original is still there. We started to record them and then realised that they had all been altered, maybe several times, so we've shown them all here as they are now.

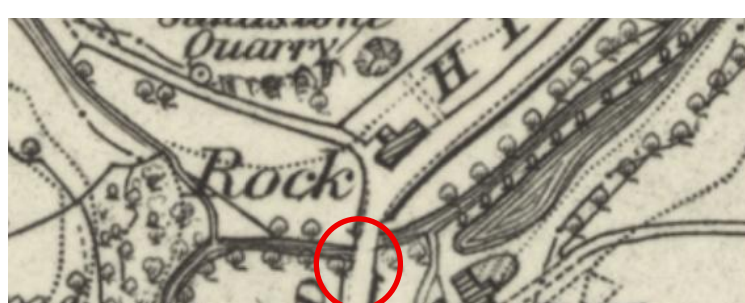
Baltic Bridge at SD 83401 21894



Hollin Bridge at SD 83623 23207



Rock Bridge at SD 83500 24250



Lumb Bridge at SD 83844 24988

At this point the old Edge Side Lane made a second crossing here and continued northwest over to Dunnockshaw and thence to Burnley. From here the new turnpike was built going North, staying close to Whitewell Brook as far as Water village.



Chapel Bridge, south Lumb at SD 83938 25258 - a skew bridge



Springside Bridge, Water at SD84190 25892



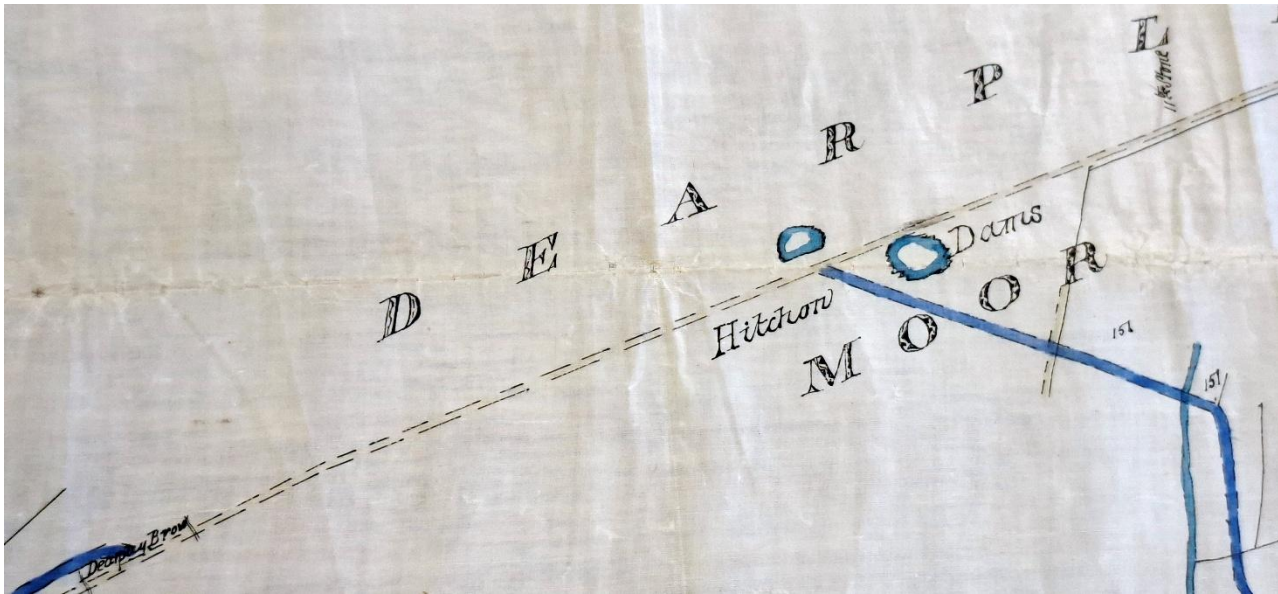
All map illustrations courtesy of The National Library of Scotland. Thanks also to LCC libraries

We hope that you've enjoyed reading this and would be grateful, if you spot any errors or anything we haven't mentioned, to let us know through The South Pennine Archaeology Group.

Note: Investigations of the whereabouts and history of Hitchon Dams have resulted in a report by Richard Matthews being added below

Hitchon Dams

Please note: Despite the spellings on some of the older maps being shown as Hitchen or Hitchin Dams, the correct spelling is HITCHON, as this relates to a family and is shown on the 1797 turnpike map below.



Hitchon Dams was a name given to an area of rough pasture to the south of the junction of three turnpike roads at the top of Windy Bank in the area of the headwaters of the Whitewell Brook. The small dams were situated at SD 8546 2758 and SD 8544 2754, one each side of the old turnpike road (now a bridleway) that originally led over Crown Point to Bacup.

A Hitchon Farm was in existence in 1734 at Dyneley, on land belonging to Richard Towneley. Another record states that John Hitchon was “leading lime to his barn” in 1782. The nearest farmhouse to this area, about half a mile from the dams towards Bacup, by the side of the first turnpike road which was built in 1754, was called Bent Hill Slack on the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey map, but on the census records of 1841, '51 and '61, this farmhouse was called Hitchon Dams. This house is also shown on Yates map of 1786. The Hitchons' were prominent Burnley landowners, farmers, builders, carriers and lime dealers during the whole of the 18th century. The latter is very significant as limestone is needed to make mortar for building houses and farms, plastering internal walls to combat damp and also for sweetening the acidic soil for agriculture. Most of Rossendale is made up of sandstone and clay, so limestone had to be brought in, the majority of it from Clitheroe, on teams of packhorses, which was very expensive. Limestone had been found in the form of stones and boulders in riverbeds and in the clay, in various parts of northeast Lancashire, brought down by glaciers in the last ice age, the nearest being in Shedden Clough, about 3 miles away. In the late 17th and 18th centuries this area was exploited by means of hushing i.e. constructing small dams and digging trenches, then letting the water loose, thus swelling away the overburden and exposing the limestone boulders beneath. Kilns were built and the limestone found was then burnt. See 'A Pennine Parish' by Titus Thornber.

It would seem that the Hitchons were in charge of the digging and hushing for lime in the headwaters of Whitewell Brook. The two dams pictured above have been identified, also Titus Thornber found a lime kiln in this area, but it seems as though nothing came of this last venture.

By 1801 the Leeds and Liverpool Canal had opened, and limestone could be brought from Skipton and Barnoldswick. Members of the Hitchon family owned a lot of land in Burnley. Joshua Hitchon owned a farm and land stretching from the Turf Moor area to the River Brun near the centre of Burnley. The Long Embankment part of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal was planned to cut through his land. Is it just a coincidence that four limekilns (still in existence) were built into the canal embankment side, adjacent to the turnpike road that came through Towneley land?

Researched by Richard Matthews 2026, with information taken from works by Titus Thornber & W Bennett