**Notes on meeting with Hilary Jones, Milestone Society, 5th Nov 2022**

**Present:**

Hilary Jones

Chris Walker

Ben Davies

Richard Neale

These notes follow the order given in the annotated map by Chris Walker, not the order the posts were actually visited in the meeting. The seventh additional stone, at the Chelker boundary, was added during the meeting. It was Hilary who had spotted it previously.

Hilary made the general point that DPC can carry out cleaning and maintenance on each of the posts without needing any permission, provided that we do not change anything. For example, if it was painted white before we can repaint it white but cannot change it. If we want to carry out repairs, change colours or deepen engraving, for example, then we need permission from Historic England.

1. **Ellenber boundary stone**

This stone is at the boundary between Draughton and Skipton on the A65, opposite to Ellenber Farm buildings. It probably dates to the period around 1900. It is entirely of stone and unpainted. It is sunken slightly low into the ground, so that the lettering is not all revealed. Hilary dug it out to verify the initials, which are incorrectly recorded by Historic England and undertook to notify them.

***Action by DPC:*** this stone needs to have a small area around it excavated (taking care to avoid buried cables), so that it can be read. Ben suggested gravelling this to make it stand out. It then needs a good scrub with a stiff bristle brush and soapy water. Hilary was using a gallon container of water with a drop of Flash in it.

1. **Wheelam Mile Post**

This is on the old A65 about 150m west of High Barn, on the north side of the road about halfway along to the 5-bar gate. It probably dates to around 1870. The face and lettering is of cast iron and this is bolted to a secure stone mounting. Only the stone mounting is buried in the ground.

The mile post is complete but in such poor surface condition as to be virtually illegible. Hilary advised us that the background would originally have been blue, with white lettering, but it now has the remains of a white background with black lettering. Traces of blue hue are still just apparent in at least one bare metal area. We do not need to revert to the blue.

***Action by DPC:*** this needs to be scraped and wire brushed to remove all of the remaining paint down to bare metal. Hilary used a painter’s triangular meta scraper to demonstrate this. It then needs one coat of a good quality metal primer, left to dry overnight, followed by two coats of white enamel. These should be applied on the same day to ensure a good bond between them and so discourage flaking, say at 10 am and 4 pm. The lettering is then best highlighted using black enamel applied with a narrow roller. Hilary demonstrated with a sponge roller about 30mm wide. This should be applied working from the bottom up. Hilary said that an amateur artist might get the best result. DPC do not need any permission to undertake this and it can be done by volunteers.

1. **Matchless Mile Post**

This is a stone post with triangular cross section, engraved to give the mileage to Bolton on one face and Addingham on the other. It is believed to date to the mid-18th century. The engraved lettering is highlighted in black paint and the lettered area has been painted white. It is in fair condition and has clearly deteriorated from the much better condition in the photo on the Historic England website. It is believed to have been touched up or repainted by Toby Coupe or his decorator not that long ago.

***Action by DPC:*** this needs a good scrub with soapy water to remove grime and fungal growth, followed, if necessary, by some minor touching-up, using stone paint. No permission is needed for this, provided we keep to the same colours and areas already painted.

1. **Lane End Milestone**

This is similar to the Matchless Milestone and exactly the same comments as regards upkeep and maintenance apply.

1. **Chelker Milepost**

This milepost is similar to No. 2 at Wheelam, but it is fractured into several pieces. The lettering is all on one piece, which Hilary has retrieved and given to Chris Walker for safe keeping. The other bits are missing, but as they carried no lettering, they could be replaced by sheet metal. The milepost could therefore be restored by an expert metal worker able to weld cast iron. It would then need refinishing following the technique described for No. 2 at Wheelam.

Removal and replacement would require traffic management and a suitable plan to uplift and remove both the metal section and the buried stone plinth to which it is bolted. Removal of the metal from the stone would then probably involve splitting off the two holding nuts. Cost for removal and replacement could be about £1,000 each, plus the metal worker’s charge of say £3,000. This would be beyond the resources of DPC without a substantial grant, although further advice from Ian at the Milepost Society indicates that, with patience, we might arrange with Highways to reduce both removal and repositioning costs by waiting until this section of road is closed for other reasons (e.g. maintenance).

*Addendum: information provided by Ian from the Milestone Society:*

*With some diplomacy, DPC might get cooperation from North Yorks Highways Dept to remove this milepost for DPC when the road is next closed and replace it correctly when the road is next closed after that. This would possibly eliminate the cost of traffic management, uplift and replacement.*

*Addendum: information provided by Hilary from the Milestone Society:*

*Hilary has obtained an outline order of magnitude quote for welding and sheet meta work, to restore this milepost, of around £750. This means that if we can avoid traffic management costs and finish the milepost with help from volunteers, then total refurb costs might come out below £1,000!*

1. **Draughton Height signpost**

This is a tall (1.5m) stone post with Skipton and Addingham directions labelled and indicated by a carved hand icon, with mileages barely visible. The carving is spoilt by heavy weathering. Hilary recommends getting this engraving deepened by a suitably skilled stone mason, for which DPC would need to prepare a detailed plan for submission to Historic England. Highlighting the engraving using chalk in the base of the indentations would assist clarity for photography.

The post would probably benefit from a good scrub using slightly soapy water and a bristle brush, either before or after re-carving.

1. **Boundary Stone at Addingham-Draughton Boundary, Chelker**

This stone dates from the same time as the Ellenber Boundary Stone and requires exactly the same maintenance and gravel bed, which can be carried out by volunteers with no permission needed. Care should be taken to avoid disturbing buried cables.

Richard Neale and Chris Walker

15. 11. 2022