



L&DL route section: Orton to Penrith

Distance: 35 miles (56 kilometres)

Gradient profile:



Overview: A section of the L&DL that will surprise and delight in equal measure, as it introduces riders to the very quiet minor road network of the Eden Valley, with a grand introduction via the open limestone landscape of Great Asby Scar and Little Asby Common. Aside from the bustling market town of Appleby, show-casing a fine collection of historic buildings and street-furniture, you'll pass through a number of little settlements with something of interest to enjoy.

Terrain: This section of the L&DL starts relatively high, at an altitude of just under 250m (800ft), so the initial gradual climb up over Little Asby Common, to a section high point of some 320m (a bit over 1,000ft) isn't going to tax fresh legs too much. The route then generally drops towards a crossing of the River Eden at Appleby, after which there is a bit of a pull up to Dufton and the ensuing string of hamlets that cling to the lower western flanks of the Pennines. Turning west the route swoops down to cross the Eden again at Langwathby, before a little 'sting-in-the-tail' ascent around Beacon Hill to drop into Penrith.

L&DL route description *

From the southern (B6260) approach into Orton, take the first R as you enter the village, onto the B6261, signed 'Raisebeck'. After around 3 km, just beyond the hamlet of Raisebeck, bear L where the road forks, signed 'Asby'. This delightful road climbs fairly gently up and across the limestone pavement of Little Asby Common, well worth a visit to see Springtime flowers, or the heather in Autumn. After descending from the Common, turn L at the x-roads, signed 'Great Asby'. In around 2 km, following a nice swoop downhill, turn L where the road bends sharp R, signed 'Great Asby'. This picturesque village deserves a little detour. Just beyond the Three Greyhounds pub bear R across a narrow stone bridge, which traverses Asby Gill. At the far side turn R, signed 'Burrells'. Follow this road for around 5 km, with the main point of interest afforded by an opportunity to take a small detour to view Rutter Force (waterfall) 250m off to the L after 4 km. Turn L at the next T-jct, signed 'Appleby'. Then R at the next, onto the B6260, again signed 'Appleby'. Follow this road through the centre of Appleby town, descending the wide and impressive main street, Boroughgate, described as 'one of the finest in England'. Bear R at the bottom, into Bridge Street, to cross the River Eden, then L at the T-jct with the B6542, signed Penrith. This road, which starts as 'The Sands' but soon becomes 'Battlebarrow', climbs for around a kilometre, before forking just beyond Appleby Grammar School. Bear R here, signed 'Brampton', to pass under a railway (the scenic Settle – Carlisle Line) then the A66 soon after. Follow this road, which quickly becomes a quiet country lane, as it climbs steadily to the village of Dufton. Continue through this well-appointed village, following signs for 'Milburn'. Just after passing through the hamlet of 'Knock', turn R (effectively SA) at a minor T-jct, signed 'Milburn'. Follow the road as it twists through several right-angled bends, before turning R at the next T-jct, signed 'Milburn'. Keep R where the road forks on the outskirts of Milburn, to take in the village green with its impressive 20m maypole topped by a heavy metal weathercock. Continue in a northerly direction, following signs to 'Blencarn'. After a couple of kilometres, turn R where the road bends L in the hamlet of Blencarn, signed 'Kirkland', then almost immediately L, again signed 'Kirkland'. Leaving Blencarn a grand view of Cross Fell soon opens up ahead. Turn L in Kirkland, signed 'Skirwith', then SA at the



crossroads in Skirwith after 3 km, signed Langwathby. Turn L at a T-jct in a further 4 km, onto the A686, signed 'Langwathby', to descend steeply into that village. Continue on the A686 as it crossed back over the River Eden, following signs to 'Penrith', then first R at a x-roads, signed 'Great Salkeld'. Take the next L, after a kilometre, onto the B6412, then first R after 750m, just before the B-road crosses a stream. Continue SA for 4km to Roundthorn, where R at the T-jct, signed 'Penrith'. After a further kilometre, by Caroline Cottage, turn L into Fell Lane, to descend towards Penrith town centre.

Alternative return route from Appleby to Orton

From Appleby Tourist Information Centre head south up Boroughgate, following the B6260. Towards the edge of the town, turn R into Colby Lane, signed 'Colby'. Follow this minor road for around 2 km into Colby, where you turn L, signed 'Kings Meaburn'. This little road, known as Chitty Hill, twists and turns as it climbs over into the adjacent valley of the River Lyvennet, affording lovely views of the Pennines to the north-east as it goes. Turn R at the T-jct after about 3.5 km, signed 'Kings Meaburn'. Then sharp L in around 1.5 km, signed 'Littlebeck'. There follows a good romp southward down the Lyvennet river valley, taking in the attractive villages of Maulds Meaburn and Crosby Ravensworth along the way. The only real navigation decision is ensuring you turn L at the T-jct opposite Meaburn Hall, signed 'Maulds Meaburn'. Continue south out of Crosby Ravensworth, following signs for 'Orton', to climb steadily for the next 5 km onto open moorland. Turn R at the T-jct with the B6260, signed 'Orton' to enjoy an exhilarating descent down Orton Scar, back into the village of that name.

Alternative return route from Penrith to Appleby

***NB The road bridge across the River Eamont, which provides a cycle-friendly exit south-east from Penrith, was badly damaged in the December 2015 floods. It is currently closed to all traffic, including cyclists and walkers, but there are plans to repair and reopen it during 2016. Until that bridge is reopened this route is not recommended for inexperienced cyclists, as the alternative exit from Penrith necessitates use of the A6 via Eamont Bridge.**

From the Cross Keys pub in Carleton, on the south-eastern outskirts of Penrith (GR NY531297), head south-east on the minor 'no-through' road that is the access to Frenchfield Sports Centre. At the end of the tarmacked road, continue SO past a large metal gate with a sign stating 'Bridleway No motorised vehicles'. Follow this track under the A66, then L at a minor T-jct (unsigned) to pass through some more metal motor vehicle restriction barriers. R at the next T-jct, after a short distance, to join a minor road that crosses the River Eamont via an historic bridge (**currently closed to all traffic***), then passes Brougham Castle. SO at the X-roads, unsigned except for a weight restriction and small NCN 71 sticker. Follow this road for around 2 km, to a T-jct where L, signed 'Cliburn'. Descend gently for a little over 1 km then first R, signed 'Clifton'. Follow this minor road for just under 3 km, bearing left to avoid crossing the West Coast Main Railway Line. At the next T-jct turn R (unsigned) then L after a short distance, signed 'Great Strickland'. Turn L at the X-roads in the centre of Great Strickland, signed 'Morland'. Follow this undulating road for approximately 4 km, until it descends into the attractive village of Morland, where R at the T-jct opposite the church (unsigned). L at the next T-jct after a short distance (unsigned) and, after descending a short hill, R just before the Crown Inn (again unsigned). Follow this road for about 1.5 km south from Morland village, then L at the minor X-roads (unsigned in the direction of travel). After a further 1.5 km this road descends to cross the River Lyvennet via a wide ford. Use of the adjacent footbridge is recommended, as the road surface through the ford can be very slippery. A short, stiff climb on the far side brings you to another unsigned T-jct, in Kings Meaburn, where R. Turn L around 2 km south of the village, signed 'Colby'. Follow this undulating road, which offers stunning views across to the Pennines ahead, for around 4 km, to the hamlet of Colby, where R at the T-jct, signed 'Appleby'. This road climbs away from Colby to bring you to the south-western outskirts of Appleby. Turn L at the T-jct with the B6260, again signed 'Appleby'.

[Note that the summaries below relate to the L&DL and do not include the alternative loops.]



Scenic highlights: The open road across Little Asby Common, the views east towards the Pennines north of Appleby.

Points of interest: Rutter Falls, the market town of Appleby-in-Westmorland (of Horse Fair fame, held annually in June), the numerous hamlets nestled under the Pennines, each with a quaint individuality.

Refreshments: Orton (pub, café), Great Asby (pub), Appleby (several cafes and pubs), Dufton (pub, café), Langwathby (pub, café), Penrith (numerous cafes, pubs and restaurants).

Accommodation: Orton (several B&Bs, small hotel), Appleby (numerous B&Bs, small hotels, caravan sites), Dufton (several B&Bs, camping and caravan site, Youth Hostel), Penrith (numerous B&Bs, hotels, independent hostel).

*** Key to route descriptions**

R	=	right
L	=	left
SA	=	straight ahead / across
T-jct / jct	=	T-junction / junction
x-roads	=	crossroads
m	=	metres
km	=	kilometres